

Edirne Kapı and the Creation of Ottoman Ceremonial Iconography and Topography

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The land walls of Constantinople were built under the Byzantine emperor Theodosius II (r. 408-50) in the early fifth century.¹ The Golden Gate, a fourth-century triumphal arch incorporated into the walls, was the ceremonial entrance for the Byzantine city until its transformation into a fortress in the fourteenth century.² Edirne Kapı is a gate at the highest point along these walls and served as the public gate for the northern branch of the central Constantinopolitan street, the Mese.³ After the Ottoman sultan Mehmet II's (r. 1444-46, 1451-81) conquest of the city in 1453, Edirne Kapı replaced the Golden Gate as the ceremonial entrance to the city.⁴ This

seemingly represents a break in ceremonial typography during the transformation of Byzantine to Ottoman Constantinople.

Scholarship has recognized the Ottoman appropriation of Byzantine architecture as an assertion of its role as successor to both the Roman and Byzantine Empire.⁵ R.J. Mainstone identifies the seventeenth-century Ottoman Sultan Ahmet Mosque as an architectural response to the sixth-century Byzantine church of Hagia Sophia.⁶ Edirne Kapı illustrates the extent of such appropriation. Its Ottoman additions and the rise in the gate's ceremonial importance have been the focus of limited scholarship.⁷

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¹ The Theodosian land walls protected the western side of Byzantine Constantinople and were completed by 413. See Neslihan Asutay-Effenberg, *Landmauer von Konstantinopel-Istanbul: historisch-topographische und baugeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007); B. Meyer Plath and Alfons Maria Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1943); Alexander van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople: The Walls of the City and Adjoining Historical Sites* (London: J. Murray, 1899), 40-174; and Wolfgang Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls: Byzanzion-Konstantinupolis-Istanbul bis zum Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: E. Wasmuth, 1977), 286-307.

² The precise date of the Golden Gate and whether it predates or postdates the construction of the land walls is controversial. For an overview of the scholarship, see Jonathan Bardill, "The Golden Gate in Constantinople: A Triumphal Arch of Theodosius I," *American Journal of Archaeology* 103, no. 4 (1999): 671-90. The final ceremonial use of the Golden Gate was the triumphal entry of Michael VIII Palaiologos (r. 1259-82) in 1261. John VI Kantakouzenos (r. 1347-54) fortified the area by blocking the Gate and adding towers. The site was further transformed under John V Palaiologos (r. 1341-76) with the addition of mythological reliefs to the outer entrance. Mehmet II reinforced the fortress at the Golden Gate, known in the Ottoman period as Yedikule. Sarah Bassett, "John V Palaiologos and the Golden Gate in Constantinople," in *To Hellenikon: Studies in Honor of Speros Vryonis, Jr.*, ed. John S. Langdon (New Rochelle, NY: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1993), 117-33; Aptullah Kuran, "A Spatial Study of Three Ottoman Capitals: Bursa, Edirne, and Istanbul," *Muqarnas* 13 (1996): 123-25; and Gülru Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Center for the History of Art & the Humanities, 1995), 3. For the ceremonial route of Byzantine Constantinople, see Cyril Mango, "The

Triumphal Way of Constantinople and the Golden Gate," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000): 173-88; and Michael McCormick, *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 147, 155-56.

³ The Mese was the central street of Byzantine Constantinople: starting at the Milion, it continued west to the Philadelphion where the street forked. The northern branch continued to Edirne Kapı, while the southern branch continued to the Golden Gate. Albrecht Berger, "Streets and Public Spaces in Constantinople," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000): 162-69.

⁴ Edirne Kapı's Byzantine name was the Gate of Charisius (πύλη Χαρισίου). R. Janin, *Constantinople byzantine: développement urbain et répartition topographique* (Paris: Institut Français d'Études Byzantine, 1964), 263-64.

⁵ Robert Ousterhout, "The East, the West, and the Appropriation of the Past in Early Ottoman Architecture," *Gesta* 43, no. 2 (2004): 165-176; and Robert Ousterhout, "Ethnic Identity and Cultural Appropriation in Early Ottoman Architecture," *Muqarnas* 12 (1995): 53-60.

⁶ R. J. Mainstone, *Developments in Structural Form* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1975), 306, 351-59. See also Doğan Kuban, "The Style of Sinan's Domed Structures," *Muqarnas* 4 (1987): 84; and Gülru Necipoğlu, "The Life of an Imperial Monument: Hagia Sophia after Byzantium," in *Hagia Sophia from the Ages of Justinian to the Present*, ed. R. Mark and A. Çakmak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 195-225.

⁷ The seminal survey of the walls in 1929 by Meyer-Plath and Schneider recorded and translated the inscriptions on Edirne Kapı and allows my consideration of the inscriptions' ideological significance and relationship to Byzantine antecedents. The study of Ottoman ceremonial topography is still nascent; a recent study by Boyar and Fleet notes the ceremonial role of Edirne Kapı and allows my comparison between Byzantine and Ottoman ceremonial. See Ebru Boyar and Kate Fleet, *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 53, 63.

The original Byzantine form of Edirne Kapı was destroyed in the siege of 1453 and is no longer extant.⁸ The gate as it exists today is the product of multiple phases of construction and reconstruction (Figure 1). The lower half consists of Ottoman masonry, while the upper half is modern reconstruction that imitates the original Byzantine stonework.⁹ Ottoman additions to the gate indicate its continued importance throughout the Ottoman period. A sixteenth-century marble plaque placed directly above the portal commemorates the repairs of the sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512). On the right inner wall is a seventeenth-century marble plaque that celebrates the military triumph of Murad IV (r. 1623-40). The curved lintel has eighteenth-century reliefs, now largely defaced, depicting the standards of imperial infantry divisions and relics held at the Ottoman court. This paper suggests that the Ottoman visual program of Edirne Kapı emulates the earlier Byzantine programs of the city's walls and gates, adapting Byzantine imperial iconography to an Ottoman visual language. Ottoman use of Edirne Kapı emulated Byzantine ceremony at the Golden Gate while transferring it to Ottoman triumphal space.

The Edirne Kapı visual program emulates preexisting Byzantine programs on the walls and gates of the city. These programs express three dominant imperial themes: Byzantine inscriptions continue the Roman ideals of imperial renewal—*renovatio*; inscriptions and sculptural groups celebrate military triumph; and relief crosses assert the religious authority granted by imperial ownership of the True Cross.

Byzantine emperors frequently added inscriptions to the gates and walls of Constantinople to commemorate their repairs and celebrate the *renovatio* of the state. After the

Great Earthquake of 740, the Emperors Leo III (r. 717-41) and Constantine V (r. 741-75) added to the walls a series of inscriptions which read: “Leo and Constantine, wielders of the scepter, erected from the foundations this tower which had fallen.”¹⁰ After earthquakes in 1032 and 1033, Emperor Romanos III (r. 1028-34) repaired the damage to the walls, adding a marble inscription which reads: “Romanos, the Great Emperor of all the Romans, the Greatest, erected this tower new from the foundations” (Figure 2).¹¹ A similar Byzantine repair inscription on Edirne Kapı, no longer extant, is known from a fourteenth-century manuscript.¹² The inscription notes the streets and gates repaired by the Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081-1118) and his renewal of the surrounding buildings.¹³ Such inscriptions commemorating repairs were powerful statements of an emperor's stewardship of the city, the stability of his rule, and the renewal of the empire.

Triumph is another imperial theme expressed on the walls. Although the majority of the sculptural program of the Golden Gate is now lost, in the Middle Ages the gate featured a visual program of triumph including a bronze door seized from a conquered city, an elephant *quadriga*, and personifications of victory (Figure 3).¹⁴ An inscription, formed of bronze letters affixed to the gate above the central portal, once celebrated the military victory of Emperor Theodosius over a failed usurper.¹⁵

Relics held at the imperial palace authenticated the divine appointment of the Emperor. The premier relic was the True Cross.¹⁶ Fragments of the True Cross were brought on military campaigns and used in imperial ceremonies within the capital.¹⁷ The repetition of crosses along the land walls of the city served as a reminder of the prestige

⁸ The plaque to the right of the portal in Figure 1 is a modern addition and commemorates the triumphal entry of Mehmet II in 1453.

⁹ For Byzantine masonry techniques used in fortifications, see C. Foss and D. Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications: An Introduction* (Pretoria, South Africa: University of South Africa, 1986), 67-70. For details on the 1987-89 and 1991-94 restoration projects undertaken by the İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, see M. Ahunbay and Z. Ahunbay, “Recent Work on the Land Walls of Istanbul, Tower 2 to Tower 5,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000): 227-39.

¹⁰ “Ἡ Λέων σὺν Κωνσταντίνῳ σκηπτοῦχοι πόνδε ἤγειραν πύργον τῶν βάρων συμπτωθέντα.” The inscription is on Tower 37. Transcribed in Meyer-Plath and Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, 130; and van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople*, 98.

¹¹ “Πᾶσι Ῥωμαίοις μέγας δεσπότης ἤγειρε Ῥωμανὸς νέον ὁ παμμέγιστος τόνδε πύργον ἐκ βάρων(ν).” The inscription is on Tower 5. Transcribed in Meyer-Plath and Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, 124; and van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople*, 102.

¹² The inscription is recorded in Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS. Gr. 459, fol. 75v. Cited in Janin, *Constantinople byzantine*, 263.

¹³ “Κλόνοι, σπαραγμοὶ καὶ φορὰ μακρῶν χρόνων καὶ κυκλικὴ κίνησις ἀστρατομένη, ἀφ’ ὧν φθορὰ πάρεστι τοῖς φθαροῖς ὄλοις, πτώσιν παρέσχον ἄθροον τοῖς ἐνθάδε στοᾶς καταστρέψαντα καὶ πύλας ἅμα κτίσασσι λίθους εὐφυῶς ἠρμοσμένοις • ἀλλ’ ὁ κράτιστος ὁ κρατῶν γῆς Αὐσόνων, Κομνηνὸς Ἀλέξιος εὐσεβῆς ἄναξ, αὐθις νεουργεῖ κατὰ τὸ

κρείττον φέρει δεικνύς ὁποῖός ἐστι ἐν τοῖς πρακτέοις. Μ(η)νι) Ἰουλλ(τω) ἰνδος ιε' ἔτει [6705].” Quoted in Janin, *Constantinople byzantine*, 263.

¹⁴ Bassett suggests that the elephants were original to the fourth-century gate, although they are not recorded prior to the tenth-century *Patria*. Sarah Bassett, *The Urban Image of Late Antique Constantinople* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 212. See also Mango, “Triumphal Way of Constantinople,” 183, 186; and John Wortley, trans., *John Skylitzes: A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 108, 258-59.

¹⁵ Above the west side of the central portal of the Golden Gate was a Latin inscription that recorded Theodosius's *renovatio* of the area after the defeat of an unnamed usurper: HAEC LOCA THEVDOSIVS DECORAT POST FATA TYRANNI. This inscription is reconstructed in J. Strzygowski, “Das Golden Thor in Konstantinopel,” *Jahrbuch des Kaiserlich Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 8 (1893): 5.

¹⁶ For the legend of the True Cross, see Jan Willem Drijvers, *Helena Augusta: The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of Her Finding of the True Cross* (Leiden: Brill, 1992).

¹⁷ For the use of relics of the True Cross on campaign, see George Dennis, “Religious Services in the Byzantine Army,” in *Eulogema: Studies in Honor of Robert Taft, S.J.*, ed. Ephrem Carr (Rome: Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo, 1993), 107-17; and Nicolas Oikonomides, “The Concept of ‘Holy War’ and Two Tenth-Century Byzantine Ivories,” in *Peace and War in Byzantium: Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S. J.*, ed. Timothy S. Miller and John W. Nesbitt (Washington, DC: Catholic

afforded by the imperial ownership of this relic. Crosses were added to the walls and associated with imperial inscriptions. On a tower to the north of Edirne Kapi, brick crosses visually reinforce the adjacent marble inscription that proclaims imperial ownership: “Tower of Theophilus, Emperor in Christ” (Figure 4).¹⁸ The Byzantine walls were not merely fortifications; they also presented an imperial program of *renovatio*, triumph, and legitimacy through imperial ownership of relics of the True Cross.

Byzantine ceremonial use of the walls complimented this iconography. Constantinopolitan triumphs and coronations continued the triumphal tradition of Rome.¹⁹ The procession first met on the outskirts of the city at the Hebdomon, where the emperor prayed in the Church of St. John the Baptist to a relic of the saint’s head.²⁰ The emperor was then met at the Golden Gate and, passing through the arch, continued along the southern branch of the Mese through a series of imperial *fora* before ending at the patriarchal church of Hagia Sophia and the Great Palace.²¹ Relics were likewise received at the Golden Gate. When the Mandylion, a miraculous image of Christ imprinted on cloth, was transferred from Edessa to Constantinople, the relic was received by the imperial court at the Golden Gate prior to being escorted to the Great Palace.²²

On May 29, 1453, Constantinople fell to the besieging Ottoman army and the capital passed from Byzantine to Ottoman control.²³ The Ottomans inherited the city’s Byzantine ceremonial iconography and topography. The visual program of Edirne Kapi adapted the earlier Byzantine imperial program of the walls of the city, continuing the themes of imperial *renovatio*, triumph, and the imperial ownership of relics in a new Ottoman visual language.

The sixteenth-century marble plaque placed directly above the portal praises the sultan Bayezid II for his restoration of the walls after their destruction: “The ruler of the Empire, Bayezid, the generous donor, renewed the fortress of the house of the Caliphate after it was destroyed” (Figure 5).²⁴ The inscription’s date of 1509-10 identifies the destruction as the 1509 earthquake.²⁵ The inscription was added during a civil war between Bayezid’s sons during which he retained control of only the capital.²⁶ By placing an inscription commemorating his repairs on the walls, Bayezid emulated the *renovatio* expressed by earlier Byzantine repair inscriptions and countered growing demands for him to abdicate.

On the south side of the gate passageway is a marble plaque that celebrates the victory over a nameless enemy and the peace brought to the empire by Murad IV (Figure 6). The inscription’s effusive praise includes the following:

The *Şahinşah* projects truthful power when his
pure name among the people
Is called, the world is busy healing for him.
The happily gifted leader whose welfare and
justice from *Qāf* to *Qāf*
Unites the world under the same glorious sun.
[...] Murad Han, he,
Once again has called into being the fortress of
Kostantiniyye.²⁷

The date 1635 places the inscription during the height of the Ottoman-Safavid War. In this year, the twenty-three year-old Murad IV personally led Ottoman armies against Safavid Erivan in Armenia, conquering the city and returning in triumph to Constantinople.²⁸ Following Roman and Byzantine practice, enemy leaders were brought to the city and executed.²⁹

University of America Press, 1995), 62-86. For the ceremonial use of the relic in Constantinople, see George Galavaris, “The Cross in the Book of Ceremonies by Constantine Porphyrogenitus,” in *Thymiamastē mnēmē tēs Laskarinas Mpura* (Athens: Benaki Museum, 1994), 95-99.

¹⁸ “Πύργ[ος Θεοφιλου ἐν Χ(ριστ)ῶ] αὐτοκράτορος.” Transcribed in Meyer-Plath and Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, 141.

¹⁹ McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, 11-46.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 155; and van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople*, 316-41.

²¹ Van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople*, 331-33.

²² *Ibid.*, 67

²³ For a recent study of the sources of the conquest, see Marios Philipides and Walter K. Hanak, *The Siege and the Fall of Constantinople in 1453: Historiography, Topography, and Military Studies* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011).

²⁴ “The ruler of the Empire, Bayezid, the generous donor, renewed / The fortress of the house of the Caliphate, after it was destroyed. / Those who see this renewal say: What excellent work. / 915. The chronicler said: You had this building beautified.” Adapted from the German translation in Meyer-Plath and Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, 159. See also Mehmet Ziya, *İstanbul ve Boğaziçi: Bizans ve Osmanlı medeniyetlerinin ölümsüz mirası* (Istanbul: Bika, 2004), 150.

²⁵ The September 14, 1509 earthquake toppled a number of buildings, including the Golden Gate of the older Constantinian walls. In the Gregorian calendar, AH 915 ends in April 1510, suggesting that Bayezid’s repairs were completed in six months. For the earthquake, see Mango, “Triumphal Way of Constantinople,” 176.

²⁶ Samuel Jacob, *History of the Ottoman Empire: Including a Survey of the Greek Empire and the Crusades* (London: R. Griffin, 1854), 340-41.

²⁷ The full inscription reads: “The *Şahinşah* projects truthful power when his pure name among the people / Is called, the world is busy healing for him / The happily gifted leader whose welfare and justice from *Qāf* to *Qāf* / Unites the world under the same glorious sun / Is it any wonder that the world is just water flowing from his footprint / With thanks to Allah, those in hiding departed the East / Shamed by the ruler of the heavens, the ruler of the world. Murad Han, he, / Once again has called into being the fortress of *Kostantiniyye* / Again, the ruler of the world has graciously set up / A lordly dwelling built in his majesty. / I, the chronicler of this, oh Danisi, pray: / While the earth remains, may it be of heavenly construction. 1045th year.” Adapted from the translation in Meyer-Plath and Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, 162. See also Ziya, *İstanbul ve Boğaziçi*, 151.

²⁸ H.R. Roemer, “The Safavid Period,” in *The Cambridge History of Iran: The Timurid and Safavid Periods*, ed. Peter Jackson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 284-85.

²⁹ *Ibid.* The Druze leader Fakhr ad-Din was executed in 1635.

The inscription commemorates this victory over the Safavids through extensive wordplay. The use of the Iranian honorific *Shahanshah*—King of Kings—for the sultan is a statement of Ottoman domination over the Iranian Safavid dynasty.³⁰ The expression “from *Qāf* to *Qāf*” has its origins in Qur’anic geography, where Mount *Qāf* is described as surrounding the inhabited world.³¹ *Qāf*, however, is also the Ottoman Turkish word for the Caucasus, alluding to the sultan’s successes in Armenia.³² The inscription describes Murad as rebuilding the fortress of *Kostantiniyye*, both continuing the theme of *renovatio* and associating Murad with Constantinople’s eponymous founder, Constantine.³³ By adding the inscription to Edirne Kapı, Murad created an Ottoman triumphal monument on the land walls that celebrates his victory and the resulting peace.

The curved lintel at Edirne Kapı has reliefs on its outer and inner faces. The reliefs have been defaced. On the inner face of the lintel is a surviving inscription that praises Hacı Bektaş, the patron saint of the Ottoman elite infantry corps—the Janissaries.³⁴ The inscription includes the date 1796-97, placing these reliefs during the “New Order” reforms that sought to replace provincial Janissaries with a professional army.³⁵ A few areas of the outer face of the lintel survive; a striped banner with a triangular point is partially preserved on the right side.

The insignia of the different divisions of the Janissaries are known from the drawings of a Venetian sent to Constan-

tinople in 1679 with the task of collecting information on the Ottoman Army.³⁶ A striped banner was the insignia of the guards of the royal apartments.³⁷ The flag represented on Edirne Kapı then symbolizes the Janissary division most loyal to the sultan at a period of conflict between the Ottoman court and provincial Janissaries.³⁸ Ultimately, the Janissary corps were outlawed in 1826, resulting in the destruction of their buildings within Constantinople and, likely, the defacement of these reliefs.³⁹

Below the lintel, a double-bladed sword is inscribed on the supporting capital (Figure 7).⁴⁰ The sword is *Dhū l-Fiqār*, the double-bladed sword given to ‘Aṭī by the Prophet Muhammad.⁴¹ The *Dhū l-Fiqār* on the capital follows the standard iconography exhibited by a sixteenth-century banner: bifurcated blades and a curved guard (Figure 8).⁴² The actual object—the sword given to ‘Aṭī by the Prophet—played a central role in the history of the Islamic caliphate. Originally a symbol of Shī’a legitimacy, the relic was held at the court of the Sunni ‘Abbasid caliph in the eighth century.⁴³ In the tenth century, *Dhū l-Fiqār* was at the court of the Shī’a Fatimid caliph.⁴⁴ Sunni Ottoman ownership of *Dhū l-Fiqār* was established with the conquest of Egypt when it was transferred to the treasury of Topkapı Palace in Constantinople, where it allegedly remains to this day.⁴⁵ The relic’s history suggests its vital role in legitimizing the caliph as Commander of the Faithful. Its representation on Edirne Kapı symbolizes the legitimacy of the Ottoman Empire as successor to earlier

³⁰ For the granting of the title to the Armenian Bagratid kings, see Lynn Jones, *Between Islam and Byzantium: Aght’amar and the Visual Construction of Medieval Armenian Rulership* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 30.

³¹ Robert Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Çelebi* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 222.

³² Noted in the German translation in Meyer-Plath and Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, 125.

³³ The “fortress of *Kostantiniyye*” also follows the wording found on the 1478 foundation inscription of the main gate to the Ottoman Topkapı Palace. Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power*, 34. I suggest its repetition helped unify the Ottoman ceremonial route.

³⁴ Hacı Bektaş Veli was a thirteenth-century Persian mystic. Jane Hathaway, *A Tale of Two Factions: Myth, Memory, and Identity in Ottoman Egypt and Yemen* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 55, 171; Hülya Küçük, *The Role of the Bektashis in Turkey’s National Struggle* (Leiden: Brill, 2002): 32-34; and Meyer-Plath and Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, 145.

³⁵ The “New Order” (*Nizam-ı Cedid*) reforms resulted in the overthrow of Sultan Selim III (r. 1789-1807) by a Janissary revolt. Frederick F. Anscombe, ed., *The Ottoman Balkans, 1750-1830* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 2006), 128.

³⁶ Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli, *Stato militare dell’Imperio Ottomanno* (Graz: Akademische Druck, 1972), pls. 20-22. See also Zdzisław Żygulski, *Ottoman Art in the Service of Empire* (New York: New York University Press, 1992), 9-13.

³⁷ The 14th division was known as the Royal (*Khaseki*) division. Frank H. Tyrrell, “The Turkish Army of the Olden Time,” *Asiatic Quarterly*

Review 8 (1889): 404; and Żygulski, *Ottoman Art*, 9-13.

³⁸ Anscombe, *Ottoman Balkans*, 128.

³⁹ For the destruction of Bektaşî and Janissary foundations in Constantinople, see Hans-Peter Laqueur, “Gravestones,” in *The Dervish Lodge: Architecture, Art, and Sufism in Ottoman Turkey*, ed. Raymond Lifchez (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 293.

⁴⁰ The other capital was *in situ* during the 1929 survey of the walls by Meyer-Plath and Schneider. Meyer-Plath and Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, pl. 33b. At the time of my examination of the gate in 2007 only the south capital remained.

⁴¹ To Shī’a, the gift of the sword from the Prophet to ‘Aṭī was, and remains, a symbol of the Prophet’s selection of ‘Aṭī as his successor. P.E. Walker, “Purloined Symbols of the Past: The Theft of Souvenirs and Sacred Relics in the Rivalry between the Abbasids and Fatimids,” in *Culture and Memory in Medieval Islam: Essays in Honour of Wilferd Madelung*, ed. F. Daftary and J. W. Meri (London: I.B.Tauris, 2003), 366.

⁴² Hathaway, *Tale of Two Factions*, 55; and Żygulski, *Ottoman Art*, 46-50.

⁴³ The ‘Abbasid caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd (r. 786-809) allegedly sent the commander-in-chief of his army, Yezid, into battle with Dhū l-Fiqār. Hathaway, *Tale of Two Factions*, 169.

⁴⁴ Recorded by the tenth-century historian al-Qāḍī al-Nu’mān at the court of the caliph al-Mu’izz li Dīn Allāh (r. 953-75). Quoted in *ibid.*

⁴⁵ Upon the Ottoman sultan Selim I’s (r. 1512-20) conquest of Egypt, the defeated ‘Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil III (r. 1508-16 and 1518) handed over the relic and surrendered the title of caliph. Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power*, 150.

caliphates and the sultan as successor to the prophet. The Ottoman relic of the sword of ‘Alī functioned similarly to the Byzantine relics of the True Cross as an indicator of imperial legitimacy.

While the Edirne Kapı visual program is an expression of adapted continuity, likewise its function in the Ottoman city emulates Byzantine practices. The Golden Gate was the ceremonial entrance for Byzantine Constantinople. Edirne Kapı was the gate through which the triumphant sultan Mehmet II first entered the city after the Ottoman siege.⁴⁶ Edirne Kapı, therefore, is the site of the first Ottoman triumph at Constantinople. It also served as the gate for the road connecting the new Ottoman imperial capital of Constantinople with its previous capital at Edirne, uniting Ottoman past and present.⁴⁷ Edirne Kapı became a key station in imperial triumphs, coronations, and the translation of relics. Byzantine ceremony at the Golden Gate was emulated while transferred to Ottoman triumphal space.

An Islamic topography of Constantinople was developed merely seven days after the conquest when Mehmet II discovered the burial site of Eyüp, an early companion of the Prophet, in a suburb just outside of Edirne Kapı.⁴⁸ The sultan built a mosque and tomb on the site, and the suburb was renamed after the companion—Eyüp (Figure 9).⁴⁹ Eyüp and Edirne Kapı were first integrated into the sultan’s accession ceremony by Bayezid II, the besieged sultan whose *renovatio* is commemorated above the portal of Edirne Kapı.⁵⁰ At Eyüp, the sultan received dynastic regalia before continuing to Edirne Kapı.⁵¹ There he was received by city officials and escorted down the northern branch of the Mese to Topkapı Palace.

Accession ceremonies were adapted to include the translation of sacred relics, imitating earlier Byzantine re-

ception of relics into the capital. The *sürre*, the ornamental cloth covering the Kaaba in Mecca, was translated to Constantinople in 1597 to celebrate the accession of Mehmet III (r. 1595-1603).⁵² The cloth was first placed directly on the tomb of Eyüp. The next day it was brought into the city through Edirne Kapı with great pageantry, accompanied by clerics and court officials.

The Ottoman accession ceremony adapts the Byzantine imperial coronation procession, representing both continuity and change (Figure 10). The relic of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, is replaced with the tomb of Eyüp, the companion of the prophet.⁵³ The Golden Gate, the Byzantine triumphal arch, is replaced by Edirne Kapı, the site of the first Ottoman triumph. Finally, the Byzantine Great Palace is replaced by the new Ottoman Topkapı palace. Byzantine ceremony is emulated while relocated to a new, distinctly Ottoman, route.

In conclusion, this paper suggests that at Edirne Kapı the Ottomans adapted a preexisting Byzantine program of *renovatio*, triumph, and imperial ownership of relics to an Ottoman visual language. Ornamental marble plaques added to the gate commemorate *renovatio* and military victory. Reliefs added to the lintel depict standards and relics that confirm imperial legitimacy. Byzantine ceremony at the Golden Gate was emulated while transferred to Ottoman triumphal space at Edirne Kapı, which became the ceremonial entrance for sultans upon their accession and for the reception of relics. By adapting the Byzantine imperial program to Constantinople’s new Ottoman topography, the transformation of Edirne Kapı confirmed Ottoman ownership of the conquered city and empire.

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⁴⁶ Van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople*, 88-89; D. Nicolle, J. Haldon, and S. Turnbull, *The Fall of Constantinople: The Ottoman Conquest of Byzantium* (Oxford: Osprey, 2007), 131.

⁴⁷ For Edirne as the Ottoman capital, see Kuran, “Three Ottoman Capitals,” 118-22.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁴⁹ Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbul*, 491, 508-13.

⁵⁰ Melih Kamil et al., “The Eyüp Conservation Area,” in *Conservation as Cultural Survival: Proceedings of Seminar Two in the Series Architectural Transformations in the Islamic World, Held in Istanbul, Turkey,*

September 26-28, 1978, ed. Renata Holod (Philadelphia: Aga Khan Award for Architecture, 1980), 50.

⁵¹ Boyar and Fleet, *Social History of Istanbul*, 53.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 63. The account is from the *Tarih-i Selânikî* of Mustafa Selânikî (d. 1600).

⁵³ The imperial mosque of Mihrimah Sultan Camii (completed 1565) adjacent to Edirne Kapı was built from *spolia* brought from the Church of St. John in the Hebdomon, the first station in the Byzantine processional route. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbul*, 441. This transfer, I suggest, further associated the Ottoman ceremonial route with its Byzantine predecessor.



[above] Figure 1. Edirne Kapı, portal, Istanbul, Turkey c. 1453. Photo credit: Stephan Ramon Garcia.

[left] Figure 2. Tower 5 of Theodosian Walls, repair inscription of Romanos III, Istanbul, Turkey, 1032–34. Photo credit: Christopher Timm.

[below] Figure 3. Golden Gate, portal, Istanbul, Turkey, c. 413. Photo credit: Stephan Ramon Garcia.



Figure 4. Tower 15 of Wall of Leo V, brick crosses and imperial inscription, Istanbul, Turkey, 829–42. Photo credit: Christopher Timm.



Figure 5. Edirne Kapi, repair inscription of Bayezid II, Istanbul, Turkey, 1509–10. Photo credit: Christopher Timm.



Figure 6. Edirne Kapi, triumphal plaque of Murad IV, Istanbul, Turkey, 1635. [Meyer-Plath and Schneider volume—requesting license]

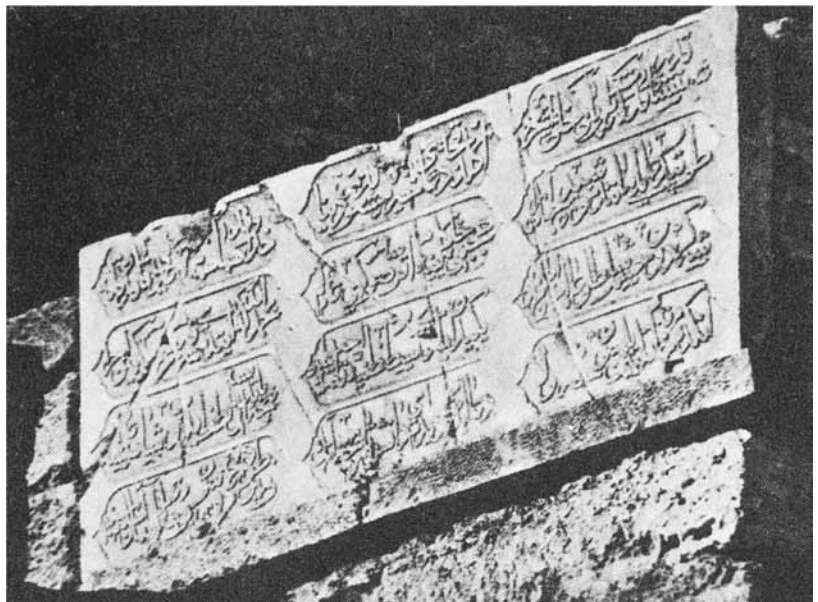
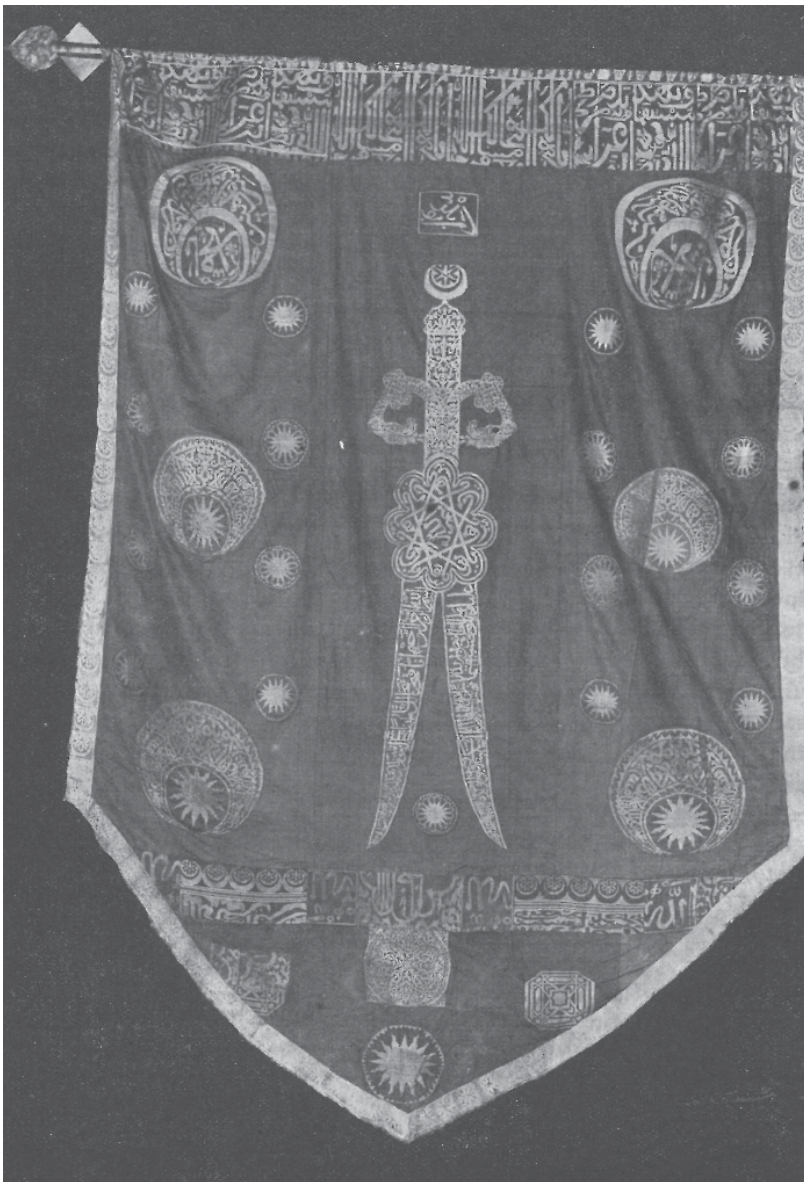




Figure 7. Edirne Kapı, detail of Dhū l-Fiqār on lintel, Istanbul, Turkey, c. 1796–1826. Photo credit: Christopher Timm.



[left] Figure 8. Dhū l-Fiqār Banner, Topkapı Museum, Istanbul, Turkey, 16th C. [Hathaway volume—requesting license]

[facing page, top] Figure 9. Eyüp Tomb and Mosque complex, Istanbul, Turkey, photograph c. 1900, Library of Congress. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.03039>

[facing page, bottom] Figure 10. Map of Byzantine and Ottoman ceremonial topography. Drawing: Christopher Timm.

