

AN EVALUATION ON THE TURKISH HOUSE WITH EXTERIOR SOFA

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Abstract:

The renowned Turkish architect Sedat Hakkı Eldem, who is responsible for the most comprehensive study of the Traditional Turkish House, asserts in his work entitled, Turkish House Plan Types (1954), that the element of the “sofa” is the main archetype comprising the plan of the Turkish House and creates a typology based on the “sofa”. In this, Eldem introduces 4 main types of plan; houses without sofa, with an exterior sofa, an interior sofa and a central sofa. In Eldem’s typology, the most widely encountered scheme of the Turkish House is the house with an exterior sofa layout. In its most simple form, this plan consists of two rooms or series of rooms with an open sofa situated in front. The sofa situated in this way in front of rooms appears to be an anterior sofa that opens out onto the street, garden or courtyard in the form of a roofed but open veranda with wooden posts/columns or arches. This house type is called as “the Hayat house” by another well-known Turkish Architect, Doğan Kuban (1995). It is also known as the “Çardak house” or the “Balkan house” in the Balkans.

This paper will present a study and evaluation of the archetypal Turkish House, dubbed by Sedat Hakkı Eldem as “the house with exterior sofa”. Firstly presented will be the typological characteristics of the plan and then an analysis of its architectonic elements and distinct morphology followed by the sub-typologies of the plan. Some comments will additionally be given on the background of this type of plan.

Key words: Traditional Turkish House; the Exterior Sofa House; the Hayat House; the Balkan House.

INTRODUCTION

The renowned Turkish architect Sedat Hakkı Eldem, who is responsible for the most comprehensive study of the Traditional Turkish House, asserts in his work entitled, *Turkish House Plan Types* (1954), that the element of the “sofa” is the main archetype comprising the plan of the Turkish House and creates a typology based on the “sofa.” In this, Eldem introduces 4 main types of plan; houses without sofa, with an exterior sofa, an interior sofa and a central sofa (Eldem 1954). In Eldem’s typology, the most widely encountered scheme of the Turkish House is the house with an exterior sofa layout, which is the plan constituting the next phase to follow the plan of the house without sofa.

In its most simple form, this plan, which is used in country, town and city, consists of two rooms or series of rooms with an open sofa situated in front (Eldem 1954). The sofa situated in this way in front of rooms appears to be an anterior sofa that opens out onto the street, garden or courtyard in the form of a roofed but open veranda with wooden posts/columns or arches. The courtyard side of the sofa is covered with wide eaves. This is circulation space that provides an interaction between the sofa and the rooms and all of the doors of the rooms open out onto the sofa. Sometimes there is a hearth on one end of the sofa. Daily life transpires in this common space in front of the rooms. At the same time, the sofa serves as a sitting and gathering space and another of its functions is to act as service space. The sofa is the place in the house where different activities take place, depending on the economic status of the household. The sofa is called by various other names in different regions, including “*hayat, çardak, hanay, sergah, yazlık, divanhane*” (Eldem 1954). Another well-known Turkish architect, Doğan Kuban, recognized as well for his studies of the Turkish House, has called this type of house “the *Hayat House*” (Kuban 1996).

This paper will present a study and evaluation of the archetypal Turkish House, dubbed by Sedat Hakkı Eldem as “the house with exterior sofa”. Firstly presented will be the typological characteristics of the plan and then an analysis of its architectonic elements and distinct morphology followed by the sub-typologies of the plan. Some comments will additionally be given on the background of this type of plan.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PLAN TYPE WITH EXTERIOR SOFA

The most widely used plan in the plan type with exterior sofa is a series of 2 or 3 adjacent rooms set out in back of a wooden columned open sofa (*hayat, çardak*). The number of rooms situated in back of the columned open sofa looking out on the courtyard may vary to up to six (sometimes even more) (Fig. 1).

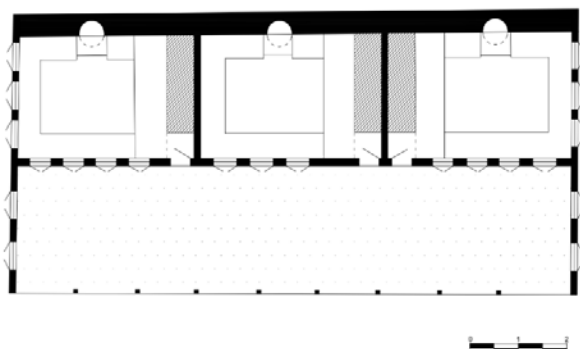


Fig. 1.
The 3-room exterior sofa
(Eldem 1954: Şekil 14).

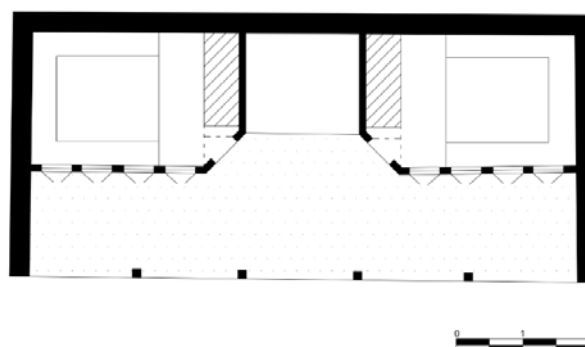


Fig. 2.
The exterior sofa with iwan,
(Eldem 1954: Şekil 5).

This layout scheme was in time developed with the addition of an *iwan*, platforms (*seki*), pavilion (*köşk*) or annexed rooms. This meant the evolution of sub-types of layout, described as exterior sofa with *iwan*, exterior sofa with pavilion (*köşk*), exterior sofa with pavilion (*köşk*) and *iwan*, exterior sofa with rooms on one side, exterior corner sofa, exterior sofa surrounded by rooms on one or two sides and an exterior sofa with rooms on three sides (Eldem 1954). The most popularly used annex is the *iwan*. In this type, an *iwan* stands between the rooms facing the sofa (Fig. 2). The doors of the rooms adjacent to the *iwan* are chamfered. There are bay window projections sometimes on the street side of the *iwans*, which are placed perpendicular to the sofa.

Other annexes in this scheme consist of raised, one- or two-step, arched or unarched platforms (*seki*), pavilions (*köşk*), pavilion rooms or rooms added to one or two sides (usually in the north-south direction) of the sofa. These platforms (*seki*) project out onto the street facade on the south and have windows. The platforms (*seki*) on the ends of the sofa are spacious and look out onto scenery or gardens (courtyard) (Fig. 3, 5). Sometimes there are pavilions or what are called pavilion rooms situated on one or both ends of the sofa. The pavilion rooms (*köşk*) that have been annexed to the sofa form a projection out onto the courtyard on the upper floors (Fig. 4). If the pavilion room has been annexed to one end of the sofa, the sofa takes on the shape of an L. When the pavilion rooms are placed on the two ends of the sofa, the sofa takes on the shape of a U. The two-winged sofa scheme was generally used in mansions (Eldem 1954). Houses with L- or U-shaped sofas are larger because they have a greater number of rooms. Pavilions, like sofas, can be circled with posts or they may have lattices or windows. The pavilion rooms were designed mostly for enjoying the view and the fresh air (Eldem 1954).

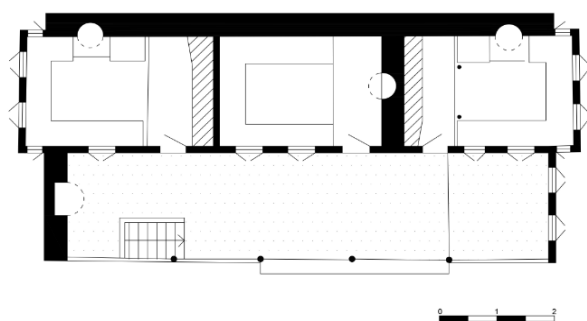


Fig. 3.
The exterior sofa with seki
(Eldem 1954: Şekil 36).

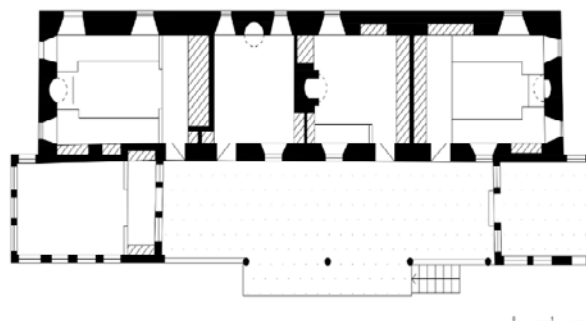


Fig. 4.
The exterior sofa with pavilions (köşk)
(Eldem 1954: Şekil 37).



Fig. 5.
Seki from the sofa (hayat). Kula

The exterior sofa type may have one, two or three floors. In single-floor examples, the sofa in front of the rooms is sometimes raised from the level of the sub-basement and sometimes has cheek walls (antea) on one or two sides of the sofa. In other cases, the house is built on a single level on a ground floor (sometimes on top of a barn). In single-floor examples, the sofa is accessed from a few steps positioned close to the center of the structure. There are also examples among these single-floor examples that do not have courtyards.

In the 2- or 3- floor examples, the house is accessed from a double-winged wooden door. The courtyard is the part of the house that is used the most and it does not always display a regular geometrical shape. If the courtyard has high, solid walls and has an earth floor, it is called “*hayat*” but if it is paved with stone, it is called “*taşlık*.” Service areas are found on the ground floor and include elements such as a barn, storage space, stockroom, a kitchen, cupboard, oven, a kindling or coal bin, a hayloft, toilet and stove. The walls of the ground floors are blind; there are no windows looking out into the street. There is sometimes a winter room in the courtyard. In some houses, there might be a room in which the house owner sells his/her wares (Akyüz, Orhun, Yıldırım, Arıtan 1999). Wooden stairs ascend from the courtyard to the upper floor.

The house is situated on one side of the courtyard or garden and its south facade looks out on this space. When the house, or indeed the neighborhood, is being chosen, the preference is to have it look to the south and be on a slight slope. The slope is needed to facilitate the flow of water and to make sure that houses do not block one another. This way, the view and the sunshine appear on the same side of the house. The posted sofa is on the upper floor but sometimes the posts of the sofa are repeated on the lower floor as well (Fig. 6). The facade with the sofa’s wooden posts look down on the courtyard or gardens. The sofa with its posts runs the length of the house constitutes the main façade of the house. The rooms project out over the street (Fig. 7, 8). These projections (*cumba* or *sachnisia*), which define the shape of the facade on the street side, appear in different forms: the single and corner projection, a square projection, a polygonal projection, a rectangular projection, a straight projection; if the blind walls of the houses are on the street side, a single and center projection or a straight floor projection (Bozer 1988; Perker & Akıcıtürk 2011).



Fig. 6.

Sofa (Hayat/Çardak) in a 2 and 3 floor houses in the courtyard (Cumalıkızık).

In the three-floor examples, there is a ground floor, a middle floor and an upper floor. These houses are usually mansions where large families live. The houses contain a room above the ground floor that is called a winter room (*kışlık*), and is situated on the floor in the middle (second floor), which has a lower ceiling than the other floors. This floor is constructed sometimes by raising the wooden beamed stone wall on the ground floor and sometimes by creating a wooden skeleton wall filled with adobe brick on top of the ground floor walls (Perker & Akıcıtürk 2011). On this floor, which can also be used as a bedroom, there is usually a kitchen, a room and sometimes a toilet. In the wintertime, daily life usually centers in this room on the middle floor because it is easy to heat. Winter rooms were usually placed on top of the barn in the courtyard in order to benefit from the heat emitted by the animals. This floor is easily heated and insulated and its rooms are smaller. The side of this floor looking onto the street has thick stone walls and the windows are constructed in smaller dimensions in proportion to the other windows in the house, in order to withstand the harsh winter elements. The rooms on this floor look out onto the street but there are never projections here. The winter room's most prominent structural element is the stove. The rooms on this floor are extremely austere.



Fig. 7.

The street sides of the houses. Projections (Cumba or sachnisia) (Cumalıkızık, Kula).



Fig. 8.

The street sides of the house. Projections (Cumba or sachnisia)(Kula).

It is the upper floors, which are the main living spaces, that are the most ostentatious and these have an open and posted *sofa* with rooms situated side by side to the back. The *sofa* may be straight, or in the shape of an L or U. The rooms on the street side project over the middle floor. This floor is also called the summer room (*yazlık*), its ceilings are higher. The rooms on this floor have lots of windows and sometimes they are separated into those below the platform (*seki altı*) and those above the platform (*seki üstü*). This separation is distinguished by both the difference in levels and by either a wooden banister or arch. The single-wing doors in the chamfered corners lead into the shoe cupboard below the platform where shoes are collected (Bozer 1988). The interior elements of the rooms include a *closet*, a cupboard, wooden cabinets with a *gusülhane* (bathing cubicle), *divans* and lamp niches on the walls (Fig. 9). The stove with its wooden hood is an indispensable element of interior decoration in these rooms. There are shelves called *sergen* that stretch out continuously over the tops of windows and walls. These shelves are where the most valuable pieces of the household are exhibited. The room ceilings are of wood and have been decorated in geometric motifs in the *çitakari* woodwork technique.



Fig. 9.

Lamp niches and sergen on the wall, Kula.

The windows on this floor have lattices and grillwork to maintain privacy. The room at either end of this floor was more elaborate than the rooms in the middle in terms of size, decoration and arrangement; this room was called main room (*başoda*). The *başoda* was generally used as a guest room and generally

situated on the south, projecting onto the street. This room usually had two faces and it was the house's most decorative room. The main room was lit up by many windows and upper windows (*revzen*) that looked out onto the courtyard and street. Access to the *başoda* was sometimes from beneath a wooden columned or arched section of platform or *seki* (*shoe cabinet*). This room, the biggest in the house, had richly decorated walls and ceiling and was accepted as the symbol of the household's wealth and the family's status in the community. The decorative elements in this room are *malakari* patterns in particular. Floral motifs are also quite abundant. With its cabinets, stove, *seki* (platform), wall and ceiling coverings, its ornamental decorations on the customary and on the high windows, this room symbolizes the house and is the honored place where the head of the household hosts his male guests and conducts important gatherings.

The structural system of the houses consist of timber frames on a base of stone or half-timber frames filled with mudbrick (*hımış*). These houses are called "*Çatma Houses*" (framework houses) because of their timber-frame construction (Eldem 1954). The ground floors have wooden beams and are of dry-rubble masonry; the upper floors are built with a timber-frame system filled with mudbrick (*hımış*) (Fig. 10). The flooring on the ground floor is of stone, while the middle floors are of wood. The system of roof covering consists of alaturka tiles over a hipped roof. Gable roofs have also been used. The corners of the wide eaves have sometimes been rounded.



Fig. 10.
Construction systems, *hımış* (*Cumalıkızık*).

EARLIEST EXAMPLES OF THE HOUSE WITH EXTERIOR SOFA IN OTTOMAN ARCHITECTURE

Sedat Hakkı Eldem separates the Turkish house into periods and has named the 16th and 17th centuries as "Period I". In this period, Turkish houses were generally built according to the plan type that featured the open external *sofa* (Eldem 1984). In the houses of this period, there are no projections (*cumba/sachnisia*) over the street. Projections appear as from the second half of the 17th century and there are a greater number of windows in the rooms (Eldem 1984). The open external *sofa* type of house is the most common to be seen all around Anatolia, including in the region of the Aegean and on the islands. According to Eldem, this is a house that is half-rural and half-urban (Eldem 1984). In the early periods of the Ottomans' settlement in Bursa and its environs, which was the first region they made their own, it was this type of plan that was preferred. Some of the most handsome mansions of 2 or 3 floors with a courtyard, an open external *sofa* plan are seen in Bursa, Birgi, Kula and Safranbolu. The Marmara Region, including Istanbul, Bursa and Edirne, led other regions in this trend.

The earliest example of the open exterior *sofa* plan scheme (the *hayat* house) in Ottoman architecture is the Fatih Kiosk in Topkapı Palace (Fig. 11). Dated to the second half of the fifteenth century, the structure is Istanbul's first to have an open external *sofa* plan scheme (Eldem 1954; 1984). The structure was built

more like an ordinary house than a mansion and a *sofa* stretches out over an open area with posts in front of the rooms (Eldem 1954).

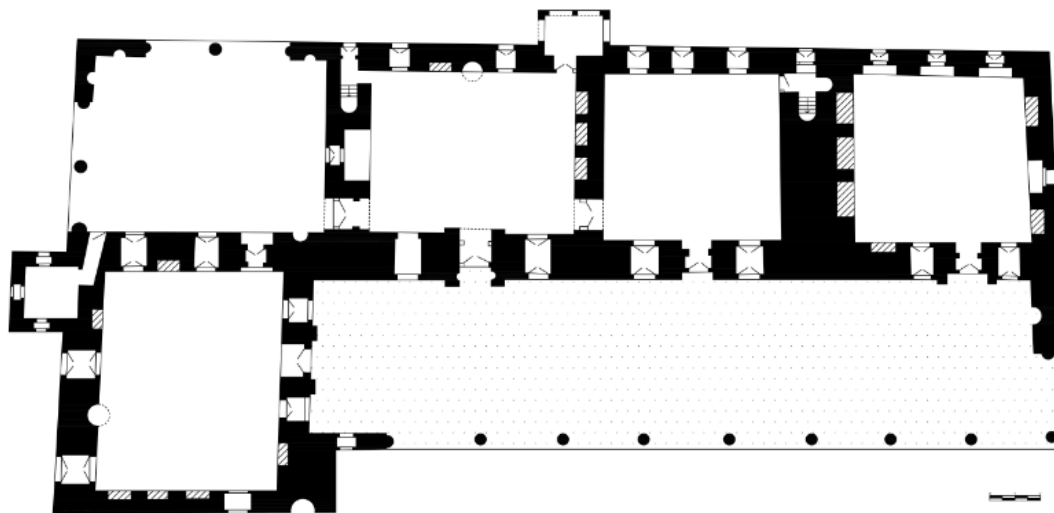


Fig. 11.
The Fatih Kiosk in Topkapı Palace (Eldem 1954: Şekil 97).

The house in Bursa's Saray Önü Neighborhood has 2 rooms with an open external *sofa* and, according to Eldem, is the oldest Ottoman house and belongs to the sixteenth century (Fig. 12) (Eldem 1954, 1984). The researcher Necibe Çakıroğlu, in her book published in 1952, *The Houses of Kayseri* states that the original sections of the Güpgüboğlu Mansion in Kayseri was built over the period 1419-1497, making it the oldest *Hayat* House remaining from the 15th century (Çakıroğlu 1952).

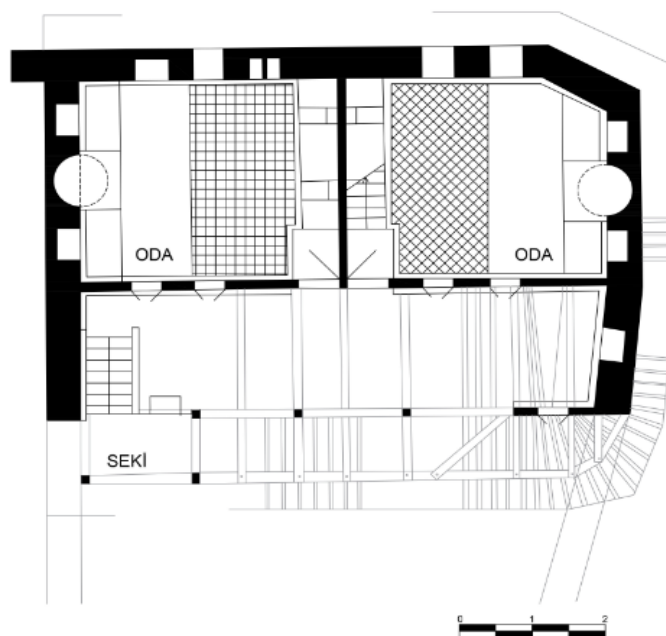


Fig. 12.
The House in Bursa Saray Önü Neighborhood (Canbulat 2016: Fig. 8.).

The open external *sofa* (the *hayat* house) type has another early example, again belonging to the 16th century - this is the Sokullu Mansion (Canbulat 2016). The structure is similar to the house in Bursa's Saray Önü Neighborhood, except for the positioning of its entrance and stairs. Here, there is an open *sofa* with posts on the upper floor and the rooms opening out onto it clearly exhibit the existence of an *iwan* (Fig. 13).

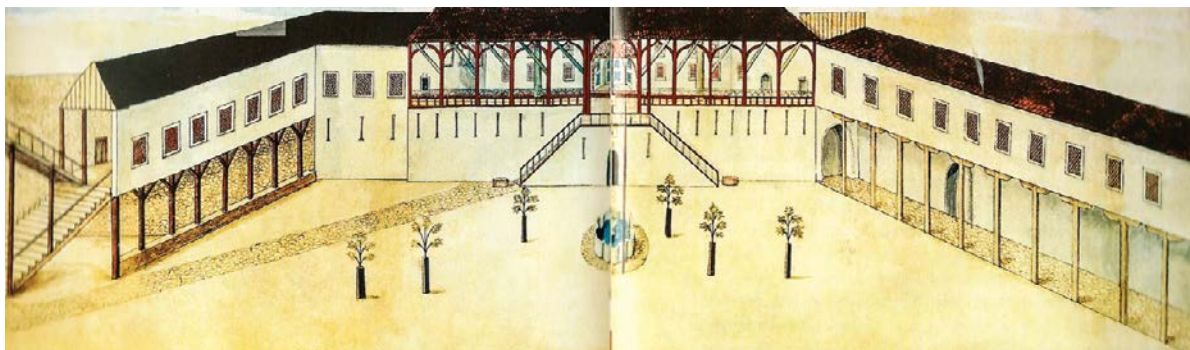


Fig. 13.
The Sokullu Mansion (Konak) (Canbulat 2016: Fig. 12.).

The open external *sofa* type of scheme can also be seen in 17th century examples. The first of these is located in Bursa's Muradiye Neighborhood and is attributed to being the house of Muradiye House or house of Sultan Murat II (Eldem 1954; Tomsu 1950). This structure, which serves as an "Ottoman Museum", features an open *sofa* with wooden posts looking out toward the courtyard and an *iwan* situated between two small rooms in the back, one large and the other smaller (Fig. 14). The house is an important example of the external *sofa* with *iwan* type and it has a large room on the side of the street (main room, *başoda*) that has windows looking out onto 3 directions. The hearth in the house is in the *başoda*. The *iwan* is considerably large and opens out into the *sofa* and features a small bay window looking over the street. The stairs to the upper floor freely flow from inside the *sofa*. The houses of Halil Ağa, Halıcı İzzet and Halil Ağa in Mudanya, the Gençğa House in Tekirdağ, the Malike House in Tire and the Manisa Ayşe Kadın house are among the examples dating back to the 17th century (Eldem 1954).

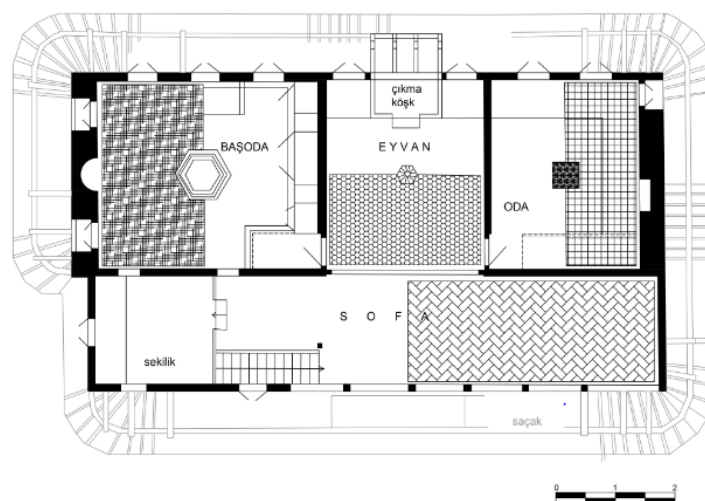


Fig. 14.
The Muradiye House or the house of Soltan Murad II (Eldem 1984-87: Şekil 30).

Another example from the 17th century comes from the Yeni Mosque. This structure was designed in the form of a house plan of the period. The scheme is based on an external *sofa* with *iwan* and 2 rooms but the *sofa* is closed and windowed (Eldem 1984; Cerasi 2014). The Yeniçeri Ağa Kapısı and the old Şeyhülislam Kapısı built on the foundations of the palace are other structures with an open external *sofa* of the L-plan type (Eyice 1983) (Fig. 15).



Fig. 15.

The central building of Yeniceri Ocağı (Janissaries Guild), also known as Ağa Kapısı. This was later turned into the home of the Şeyk-ul Islam (Eyice 1983).

Ottoman architecture includes many written documents on the existence of the open external sofa (the *Hayat* house). One of these is a document handed down by Ayşıl Yavuz. Yavuz writes that the registers of the *kadi*, who executed the sales of Ankara houses in the 17th century, mention elements such as *mahuta-i hariciye* (outer space), *mahuta-i dahiliye* (inner space), *hayat* (used in the courtyard in Ankara, gardens, *hadika* (fruit orchards), wells, garden fences, fountains, *sofa* (inner hall), *sayegan* (semi-open gallery in the Ankara region (instead of a *hayat*), *örtme* (the eaves on top of the *hayat*), a winter room with hearth (*tabhane*), a harem room between the harem and selam rooms (*mabeyn*), the men's guest room (*divanhane*), a pavilion, a bay window stretching out over the street (*sachnisia/şahnişin*), an open space beneath the rooms on the entrance floor (*oda altı*), a kitchen, cupboard, cellar, toilet, barn, hayloft, woodshed and workshops (Kuban 1995). Doğan Kuban says that these elements comprises a structural program than encompasses all of the elements of the *Hayat* house (Kuban 1995). Another researcher, Ayda Arel, relates that in court minutes written in 1559, a description of a farm is offered where there are 4 *beyt-i sufli* (stone or adobe single-floor houses), granaries, 2 gazebos, a storeroom and kitchen and 2 *sofas*, a hayloft, 4 barns, a stove and a *çatma* (framework) house (Arel 1982). This description reveals a house complex constituting a courtyard and elements serving different functions. It can be seen that simple structures were built from adobe or dry-rubble masonry while the main house was made of wood or *çatma* (framework). According to Doğan Kuban, the shape of the *sofas* in these houses is not known but it can be said that this two-story house was a *Hayat* house (Kuban 1995).

The use of the *exterior sofa* plan type at an early stage in Istanbul is further documented by the travel diary of Jean Dumont, "*Nouveau Voyage du Levant*," dated to 1694. Here the author describes the house of the Istanbul district governor, relating that there is a open space with posts (*sofa/hayat/çardak*) stretching out for the full length of the house (Eldem 1954). Stairs lead from the open space to this *sofa* with posts. John Sanderson, who came to Istanbul in the years 1584 - 1602, describes houses as generally two-storied, made of dry-rubble masonry or mixed wood-mudbrick, relating that all had brick roofs and that sometimes the ground floor living quarters of masonry were of wood and most of them, like the "*Hayat* houses", had balconies overlooking the gardens or courtyard. This is clear evidence that there were the "*Hayat* houses" in Istanbul as well (Kuban 2010).

The records of the Wakf also bear information on these houses. According to the Wakf deed of trust in the era of Sultan Mehmed II (the Conquerer), the houses in Konstantiniyye were classified in 3 groups- *menzil* (halting places), *beyt* (family) and *hücre* (cell). The word "*Beyt*" is used to mean household, home. The deed uses the terms "*tahtani*" (single-story) and "*fevkani*" (two-storied) to refer to the number of floors each *beyt* has. Some of the *beyts* have a wooden porch on top of a flat roof called a "*çartak*." The "*çartak*" is most probably a balcony made of wood. Doğan Kuban likens the "*çartak*" with a wooden upper floor to an exterior "*hayat*." With time, he says, the "*çartak*" evolved into a wooden floor rising on top of dry-masonry (Kuban 2010).

The same records also indicate that the houses of 16th century Istanbul included a type of house that had an open external *sofa* (the *hayat* house). It is also said that these 16th century houses had an open porch set up in front of a *sofa* that was sometimes called an *iwan* and was situated between two rooms (Yerasimos 2006). It is described that some houses also had a kitchen in-between the two rooms. In larger houses with more rooms, the room on top of the barn was usually the *selamlık*, where male visitors to the

house were hosted (main room/*andron*) (Yerasimos 2006). According to the descriptions of the researcher Stefanos Yerasimos, two rooms of the houses had an open veranda (*zulle/hayat/sofa*) and in this type of house, sometimes the upper floors had a *gurfe* (projection) (Yerasimos 2006). The ground floors contained a kitchen (*matbah*), stove, barn, storeroom, toilet and wells. It can be seen from the records that this type of house had examples of *tahtani* (single-floor, ground footing) and *fevkani* (2-storied). Again in the records of the Fatih Wakf, in reference to the property belonging to Emir Sultan, the noble family is said to have a house "with two rooms, a *sofa*, a toilet, a well and a courtyard" (Kuban 2007). This two-room house with a *sofa* and courtyard corresponds to the classic hayat house with an open exterior *sofa*.

A term that is frequently mentioned in the Fatih Wakf records in reference to houses is "*gurfe*". *Gurfe* refers to a bay window, projection (*cumba, sachsenia*), oriel or balcony. There is no mention in the records of the construction technique and materials used in the houses. Information gleaned from the observations of foreign travellers however indicate that mudbrick or dry-rubble masonry was used and that roofs and floors were of wood (Altınay 1935). The journals of the Wakf of the era of Fatih also refer to three-storied houses. In this case, the third floor is kept on the same scheme as the second floor, with no differences in functionality. Mention is made of, besides a ground floor, an intermediate floor and rooms with *gurfe* on the upper floor. Yerasimos says that these houses are similar to some of the houses of the pre-conquest, Byzantine era (Yerasimos 2006).

In the archives of Topkapı Palace, there are records of many houses being sold out of the hands of Christian or Jewish property owners to high-ranking Moslem palace officials (Yerasimos 2006). Of the houses belonging to non-Moslems, those in the city generally had *sofas* whereas in the rural areas, there were more likely to be *hayat* houses (Yerasimos 2006).

SOME OPINIONS ON ORIGINS

According to Sedat Hakkı Eldem, the true Ottoman/Turkish house was built on the basis of the "plan with an open external *sofa*" (the *Hayat* house) and its most original and early examples were to be found in Istanbul, Bursa, Edirne and the rest of the Marmara Region. These were the precursors of other houses of the same type appearing in the other regions of the country. Eldem writes that the houses of Anatolia are the distant rural relatives of these houses (Eldem 1954). Doğan Kuban also stipulates that the house with the open external *sofa* (the *hayat* house) was the basic core of the Turkish house and, contrary to popular belief, that houses with centralized plans did not represent the foundation of the Turkish style of house (Kuban 1995). The researcher Pierre Pinon says that the *Hayat* house represented the characteristic Ottoman/Turkish house of northwestern Anatolia and the Balkans (Pinon 2008).

The limited data on the Turkish houses of Central Asia demonstrate to us that the type of house with an open external *sofa* (the *Hayat* house) was not used by the Turks before they settled in Anatolia (Özderim 1958; Aydemir 2012; Deniz 2008; Yavaş 2007). Similarly, very few Seljuki and Artuk palaces and pavilions indicate the makings of "the *Hayat* House." Houses dating to the Turkish Era of the thirteenth century were only found in the ruins of Pecin and these have no relation to the *Hayat* house. So how then did this type of house plan become the plan that was most popular among the Ottomans as of the 15th century and what are the origins of its layout?

There are many different opinions on this. Two groups of researchers suggest that the origins of the "*Hayat* House" go back to the rural spaces of the Balkans, pointing out that this style of house was actually "the northern Greek house, the North Hellenic House or the Balkan House" (Marinov 2017). Sometimes these houses were named in reference to the region or the origins of the inhabitants. Macedonians referred to these houses as "Macedonian Houses," the Greeks called them "Greek Houses," and the Bulgarians named them "Bulgarian Houses" (Marinov 2017). The type is however generally called the "Ottoman House" (Eldem 1984). On the other hand, there are researchers that believe that calling this style of house "(Ottoman) Balkan-Northwestern Anatolian House" is more appropriate (Marinov 2017).

The Greek researcher Aristotelis Zachos asserts that the houses situated in the area stretching out from Greece, Macedonia and Thrace to the Peloponnese share a common origin in the Byzantine house. The most prominent typological feature of this style of house is the external *sofa* (*hayat/çardak*). This element of the open *sofa* (*hayat*) stands out in rural architecture in a wide geography that encompasses Turkey, Northern Greece and southern parts of the Balkans. The *Hayat* (*çardak*) type of house is to be found in the rural areas of northern Greece, in the plains and also in the mountains, amid cattle-breeding settlements. The houses in this region feature two or three rooms that have a linear *hayat* stretching out in front. There are also examples of this type of house in the cities, appearing as two- or three-story mansions. These large mansions are built with stone ground floors and are made of timber and brick on the upper floors (Biris, Kardamitsi-Adami 2001). These houses can be seen throughout the Balkans. Most of them are in the shape of an L or U and are often quadrilateral on the ground floor (Biris, Kardamitsi-Adami 2001).

According to Anastasios Orlandos, the *hayat* is actually an open veranda, a continuation of the Byzantine *iliakos*, of traditional Northern Greek houses (Marinov 2017). In the same way, Georgios A. Megas

maintains that this type of house is of Byzantine origin. He traces the background of the house to the old Greek *pastas house* (Fig. 16) (Megas 1951; Marinov 2017; Nevett 1999). Megas says that this style of house evolved from the rural houses of the Balkans, Macedonia and Thessaly (the *pastas house*) and that in Epirus and Western Macedonia, the style spread through the work of the nomadic builders that were organized in the form of guilds (Megas 1969). Megas maintains that these nomadic groups traveled to far-off areas and their masterwork came to be known as a standardized architectural style. Dimitri Philippides states that these groups moved into Anatolia and then into Romania, spreading out later still as far as Egypt and Iran (Philippides 1983). Another scholar, Anastasia Diamandopoulou, says that even the mural paintings inside the houses and the floral elements might be of ancient Greek origin. She continues to assert that the Greek master builders were the ones to thus pass on their own architectural style to the peoples of the east (Marinov 2017).

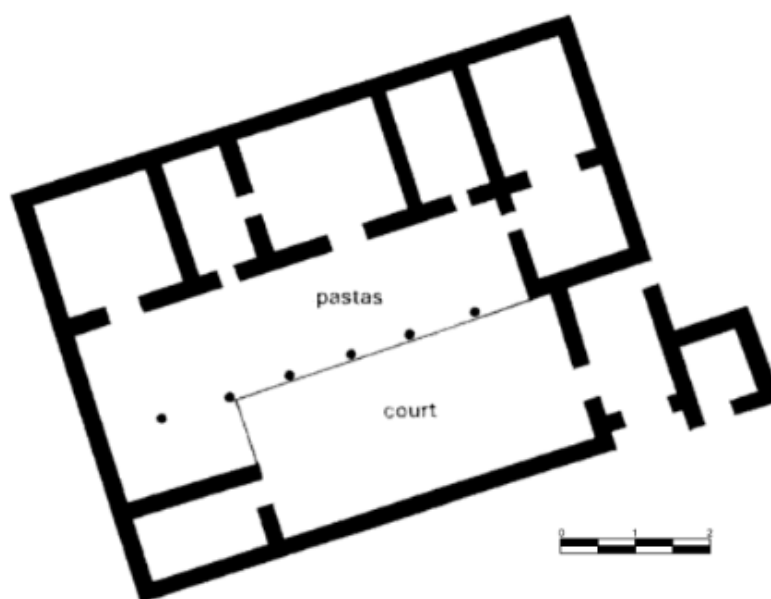


Fig. 16.
Example of Pastas House. Dema House, Attica (Nevett 1999. Fig. 15.).

According to another well-known Greek architect, Nikolaos-Moutsopoulos, the ancient Greek “pastas house” is the precursor to the Balkan house (Moutsopoulos 1962). Moutsopoulos writes that the Northern Greek or Balkan house has two fundamental elements: the *hayati* and the *sachnisi*. He too, like Megas, suggests that the origin of the *hayati* is *pastas* and, again like Megas, explains that the *hayat* is related to the Byzantine *iliakos* (Moutsopoulos 1971; 1976; 1985). The other element of the Northern Greek or Balkan House, as set forth by Nikolaos-Moutsopoulos, the *sachnisi* was first seen in Pompeii but the architect does not deny that it was also encountered in Persian architecture (Marinov 2017).

In sum, Moutsopoulos says that *sachnisi* and *hayat* are very ancient functional and morphological elements and they are not Ottoman. Both elements derive not from Ottoman but Byzantine vernacular architecture and the Ottomans adapted this into their own structures, after which it began to spread over the entire Balkan region (Moutsopoulos 1971; 1993). An important example of the use of the *sachnisi* in Byzantine architecture is in what is known in Turkish as Tekfur Sarayı (the Palace of Porphyrogenitus). This is an imperial residence and there is a *sachnisi* in the southern façade of the palace (Van Millingen 1899) (Fig. 17).



Fig. 17.

Tekfur Sarayı (the Palace of Porphyrogenitus), *sachnisi* (URL 1).

While written sources and archeological data do not provide us with much information about the Byzantine house, relevant clues can be gathered from the Byzantine monasteries. The Byzantine monasteries occupied a place both along the countryside and in the urban fabric. The living quarters at these monasteries were multi-storied and the monks would live on the upper floors. Stone was the established material for the ground floor. The upper stories were made of timber. There were wooden or stone stairs on the outside of the structures and these were covered. Porches were generally a standard part of the house. Porches also served the purpose of preventing direct access to the upper-floor cells from the storage rooms and workshops on the lower floor (Popovic 1997). The Byzantine monasteries were generally built into the construction of the *pastas* type. The street and seafront rooms had *sachnisia* and the *hayat* stretched out in front of the rooms toward the courtyard. This plan bore a direct similarity to the *Hayat* type of house. Mount Athos monastery and many other Byzantine monasteries have *sachnisia* on their upper levels. Byzantine monasteries had a tower, living quarters, sometimes a boathouse and occasionally a small church enclosed within the precinct walls. *Sachnisia* were used in the monasteries not only in the residential quarters but also in the boathouses. The *sachnisia* can be clearly seen in the Boathouse of Iveron (Fig. 18) (Nektarios-Charles 1995). *Sachnisia* were also used in some Byzantine tower-houses. B. Thomsen-Tsialis relates that in places where houses were generally two-storied, such as in Constantinople and other Byzantine towns, it was common to see a facade facing the yard with an open gallery so as to provide shade in summertime (Thomsen-Tsialis 2009).

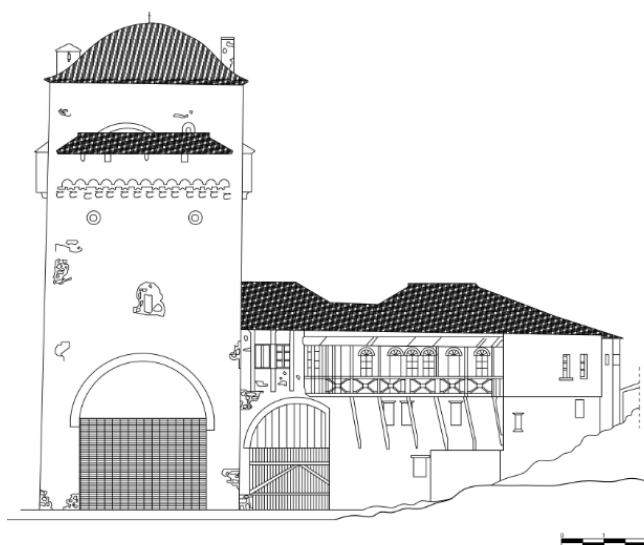


Fig. 18.

Boathouse of Iveron. *Sachnisia* (Nektarios-Charles 1995: 543).

Another resource that provides information about the use of the open external sofa (the *Hayat* house) type in the Byzantine era is the base mosaic at the Daphne Yakto villa (Kuban 1995). Dated to the mid-fifteenth century and depicting a hunting scene, the edge borders on this mosaic reveals one- and two-storied houses on an “open external sofa” scheme (Fig. 19). These houses do not yet carry *sachnesia* (Kleinbauer 2006).



Fig. 19.

The Yakto Mosaic. One - or two storied houses with open external sofa (URL 2).

Another opinion set forth about the *Hayat* house is that this type of house has existed in the cultural layers of Anatolia since even before the time of the Turks and that the Turks actually encountered this type of house when they settled in Anatolia. One of the foremost scholars to defend this view is Doğan Kuban, who says that the typology of the *Hayat* house is to be encountered everywhere in Anatolia. The open gallery with columns or posts situated in front of the rooms that was called the *hayat* or *sofa*, Kuban attests, goes back to Hittite architecture and this scheme of house is a layout that was developed in rural areas by an agricultural society (Kuban 2007). Kuban states that since the Hittites, there is a consistency in the appearance in Anatolia of a semi-closed space with a veranda in front and the Turkish House with *Hayat* is a continuation of the tradition of *Bit-Hilani* (Kuban 1995). In pointing this out, Doğan Kuban makes it clear that the impact of the structures and houses of traditional architecture should not be underestimated in the development of the Turkish House with *Hayat* (Kuban 1995). According to Kuban, the *House with Hayat* came into being on the countryside and many examples of the various types of “house with hayat” can be seen in every town and village in Anatolia (Kuban 1995). Kuban asserts that the Turkish House with *Hayat* offers a very appropriate style of house for life in the country. Its origins however emerged in a semi-rural environment and in a society where there was no strong urban tradition. Kuban declares that the term “*Turkish House*” or the “*House with Hayat*” has a cultural rather than an ethnic connotation. As from the 12th century, Anatolia was the cultural home of the Anatolian-Turkish peoples. Kuban tells us that the “*House with Hayat*” is the only type of house that can be ascribed to this region and its development occurred during the Ottoman Era (Kuban 1995). In the same way, the researcher Ragetta also maintains that the *tarma* house in Iraq and the *house with portico* in Syria and Lebanon are close relatives of the Turkish House with *Hayat* (Ragetta 2012). Sedat Hakkı Eldem joins Kuban in stating that the type of house with an open exterior sofa has its origins in Anatolian culture (Eldem 1984).

According to Maurice M. Cerasi, the wooden posted/columned gallery stretching out in from the rooms in the house called the *hayat* (portico/sofa) has its roots in Anatolia, Daghistan, Georgia, Armenia, Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia as well as in all western neighboring regions such as Cosova and Macedonia (Cerasi 2014). The renowned Turkish archeologist Tahsin Özgüç as well as Rudolf Naumann have stated that this scheme with one story or two stories with a barn on the lower level, where two adjacent rooms open out to a portico (*sofa*, *hayat*, *çardak*) with wooden columns in front, carries a local typology that is rooted in Anatolia (Fig. 20) (Özgün 1959; Naumann 1998).



Fig. 20.

One - and two stories type with open exterior sofa in Anatolia.

Another opinion as to how the type of house known as the house with an open exterior sofa (the *Hayat* house) made its way into Ottoman/Turkish residential architecture is that the Turks settling in Anatolia and the Balkans made their homes in Byzantine houses and with time adopted these houses as their own. The Ottoman Empire ruled Anatolia and Rumeli for nearly five hundred years. The Turks first settled in the rural areas of the Balkans, pushing the inhabitants of those lands into the towns (Palairret 2015). They then repopulated the Greek cities—such as Thessaloniki—that they occupied. The Ottomans brought the nomadic Turkish tribes into the lands they had occupied in the Balkans and settled them in the towns and cities (İnalçık 2012). There they established new settlements and villages. Yenice, today's Giannitsa, was founded c. 1372 by Gazi Evrenos Beg, a former Byzantine officer who had converted to Islam. Large transfers of population were carried out to achieve the Turkification of Rumeli (İnbaşı 2002). The mountain people of the Balkans were used in large part by the Ottoman state in military service (İnalçık 2012). Moving on into the fifteenth century, the Ottomans imposed their rule in the Balkans. The Ottomans made new use of Byzantine commercial and residential areas since their first occupation of the city in 1361, continuing to do this for the following forty years (Ousterhout & Bakirtzis 2007; Kuran 1996). In the wake of the Turkish occupation in the Balkans, large Byzantine estates were annexed by the sultan as his private property.

Starting from the eleventh century, the Turkish nomads that spread out into Anatolia transitioned from leading a nomadic life to assuming a semi-nomadic lifestyle in the 12th-14th centuries. The Turkmen nomads disseminated into the Byzantine strongholds and villages. In the process of settling in Anatolia, the captured villages were used as winter quarters (Eyice 1975). Some Christian villages and towns in that period agreed to live under the auspices of the Turkish chiefdoms. This period was also the time when nomadic traditions naturally blended in with the customs of a sedentary society in time. The relations and interaction between the Byzantine locals in the areas conquered and the Turkmen nomads continued despite the environment of continuous war and conquest in Anatolia and in the Balkans.

A large majority of the Turkmen lived in the rural areas as nomads. A small part settled in the cities (Ögel 1991). In this period, some new cities were being established in proximity to old settlements. Bursa's Yenişehir is a good example of this (Kuban 1995). The Ottomans achieved full settlement in the reign of Orhan I. Beginning in the fifteenth century, new neighborhoods began to erupt in cities such as Bursa, İznik and Kütahya and the nomads began to be the new villagers of these locations. The houses in the captured towns continued to be used. At the time when Ibn-i Batuta mentions the defeated Bursa (Brusa), major structures and houses still stood in the city. He writes that the Ottoman administrators, military and the newcomers from the east all settled in the Byzantine structures (Ibn Batuta 1982). When Osman Bey conquered Karahisar, the unoccupied houses there were given to refugees from the Germiyan principality. When İznik (Nicaea) was seized, the houses there were given to the soldiers, along with the women in them, Doğan Kuban states that the Turks used the Byzantine houses that they had confiscated (Kuban 1995). Eldem too acknowledges that the Turks lived in the Byzantine houses (Eldem 1984). The seized houses in the Byzantine cities were given away to the nomads together with the women in them (Andreyevich 1984). Thus, as from the middle of the fourteenth century, a new Moslem society dominated by the Turkish nomads began to flourish in the overtaken cities of Western Anatolia. Doğan Kuban maintains that the transfer of the houses in the conquered cities to the nomads, together with their Greek landlords and their wives, was an important process in the integration of Turks and Greeks (Kuban 1995).

The properties in Byzantine Istanbul were treated according to different sections of Islamic Law. According to Islamic Law, the seized land and real estate of a city belonged to the ruler. It stipulated that in the first days of the conquest, the Sultan *"bestowed the houses of the wealthy upon all of the nobles and members of the dynasty, together with gardens, fields and vineyards."* In fact, some were even granted

churches to be used as private homes. The remainder of the land and properties were recorded in the Sultan's Treasury (İnalçık 2008). The Moslem nomads settled into the neighborhoods of the conquered cities, along with Jews and Greeks. Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror proclaimed that anyone coming into Istanbul on his own free will would be granted ownership of an abandoned house or mansion of his choosing (İnalçık 1969; İnalçık & Murphey 1978). This promise resulted in a wave of migration from Anatolia and Thrace. The famous historian Tursun Beg, cousin of the Conqueror, writes that there was a flood of people settling into houses and mansions upon hearing of this proclamation (İnalçık & Murphey 1978). Some of the Moslem nomads settled into monastery houses (İnalçık 2008). According to what Tursun Bey relates, after the conquest of Constantinople, the Sultan issued a proclamation that all who came to the city of his free will could acquire a house abandoned by its owner or become an owner by settling in one of these properties. Upon this, people rich and poor migrated into the city and established themselves in these houses and mansions (İnalçık 1969; 1970; 1977). In the same way, in the area of the Bosphorus, from the European coast up to the Black Sea and Eyüp, a part of the 164 villages on the outskirts of Constantinople from where inhabitants had fled during the siege were forcibly settled by the Turkmen under order of the Conqueror (İnalçık 2008). Abdullah Kuran says that the houses of Adrianopolis (present-day Edirne) presumably served the needs of the Moslem settlers as well as the local Christian population (Kuran 1995). At the same time, in the Byzantine period, the Conqueror Mehmet II transferred many houses into the hands of the Hagia Sophia Mosque Foundation (İnalçık 1969; 1970). The Conqueror rented out the Byzantine houses in Istanbul that had fallen into Ottoman hands to both Moslems and Greeks. With time, the houses of the new urban society continued to be built by local masters who had remained Christian or had converted to Islam (Kuban 2007). The Conqueror paid a good fee to have most of the structures in Constantinople repaired and used Greek slaves for the job (İnalçık 1969).

CONCLUSION

Due to the limited historical data available, it appears to be difficult to make a definitive judgment about the origins of the type of house with the open exterior *sofa*, which is known as the *hayat* house or the house with *çardak*, seen so abundantly over a vast geography. Doğan Kuban acknowledges that in countries ruled by the Ottomans that display a multifaceted cultural history and undeniable differences, the roots of architecture lie in the regional traditions of pre-Ottoman times (Kuban 1995). He says that this type of house, in its transition into the house from the "*yurt*" (tent used by nomadic Turks tribes) type of tent, evolved over the centuries by merging with imported and local elements (Kuban 1995). Kuban maintains that as from the 14th century, the Turks, who left their mark on the Balkans, were influenced by the indigenous peoples in the region. He states that the adaptation of the nomadic Turks to their surroundings and the emergence of new designs for houses was a symbiotic development and that in time, the Turks created their own style (Kuban 1995). Sedat Hakkı Eldem's commentary on the matter of the origins of the traditional Turkish house was that this lay in the type of house that was born of Rumeli and Anatolian characteristics within the boundaries of the Ottoman lands (Eldem 1954).

These houses are a product of the Ottoman cultural environment. This also explains why these types of houses also appeared in Romania, which never became directly tied to the Ottomans despite its geographical proximity (Akin 1996). The Ottomans did not carry their houses to the Balkans but only their lifestyle and household customs. The *Hayat* house type represents a synthesis of pre-Anatolian Turkish culture, Anatolian culture, Byzantine, Balkan and Islamic cultural influences. With the crossing of the Turks into Anatolia from Central Asia, it was doubtless the case that they encountered a rich tradition of building that was embodied in the historical depths of Anatolia. The Ottomans enhanced this type of house. As a result of the reciprocal interaction and relations between the cultures, the Turks were introduced to the *hayat* house and obviously preferred it because it met their needs, but the house is actually the consolidated product of all of its cultural components.

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