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Kentsel Dokunun Sürdürülebilirliği: Komotini/Yunanistan

Sustainability of Urban Pattern: Komotini/Greece

Gildis Tachir¹ 问

ÖΖ

Tarihi eserlerin kentsel dokusunda zaman içerisinde meydana gelen değişim, kentin sürdürülebilir kalkınmasını olumsuz yönde etkilemektedir. Çalışmada Yunanistan'ın Gümülcine kentinin kentsel örüntü analizi bölgelere ayrılarak yapılmış ve tarihi eserlerin kentsel örüntü gelişimindeki değişimi sorgulanmıştır. Gümülcine kenti 1391 yılında Osmanlı yönetimine, 1913 yılında Bulgaristan yönetimine ve 1920 yılında Yunanistan yönetimine katılmış bulunmaktadır. Gümülcine kenti farklı yönetimlerde bulunma yönü ile ön plana çıkarak, farklı sosyal örüntüler yaşamış tarihi bir dokuya sahiptir. Kentsel dokunun sürdürebilirliği tarihi yapıların korunarak kentsel gelişimin sağlanması ile mümkündür. Bu çalışma ile Gümülcine kenti bölgelere ayrılarak tarihi yapıları analiz edilmiştir. Tarihi eserlerin zaman içerisinde kent dokusunda uğradığı değişim bir tablo sistematiğine aktarılarak sonuç ürün olarak tespit edilmiştir. Tarihi yapıların korunarak sürdürebilirliğinin sağlanması kentsel belleğin muhafazasında önemlidir. Çünkü tarihi yapıların korunarak gelecek nesillere aktarılması ile kentlerin sürdürülebilir örüntülerinin değişmesi sağlanacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ana Tarihi yapılar, kent dokusu, sürdürülebilirlik, Komotini

ABSTRACT

The changes that occur in the urban patterns of historical monuments over time negatively affect the sustainable development of the city. In the study, the urban pattern analysis of the Greek city of Komotini was made by dividing it into regions, and the change in the urban pattern development of historical monuments was questioned. The city of Komotini joined the Ottoman administration in 1391, the Bulgarian administration in 1913, and the Greek administration in 1920. The city of Komotini has a historical pattern that stands out with its different administrations and has experienced different social patterns. Sustainability of the urban fabric is possible by ensuring urban development with the preservation of historical buildings. In this study, the city of Komotini and its historical buildings were analysed. The change that historical monuments underwent in the urban patterns over time was transferred to a table systematic and determined as the final product. Ensuring the sustainability of historical buildings by protecting them is important to preserving urban memory. By preserving historical buildings and transferring them to future generations, the sustainable patterns of cities would be changed.

Keywords: Historical buildings, urban pattern, sustainability, Komotini

¹ Corresponding Author: Assist. Prof. Dr. Gildis Tachir, Trakya University, Faculty of Architecture, Department of Architecture, gildistahir@trakya.edu.tr, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4863-4339





Introduction

Urban patterns change over the course of history because the environment is a variable phenomenon. When the human-environment relationship is considered as a dynamic whole, it is in an interactionbased continuum in the cause-effect relationship. While environmental conditions create needs for humans (shelter, warmth, etc.), humans also create goals to organize in parallel with the needs. Thus, the regulated environment changes and the changing environment is formed again consistent with the requirements (Hawkes, et al. 1996). The environment is changing in line with new requirements, and the changing environment is redesigned. It is seen that this continuity has persisted throughout human history (Ebrahim, 2022).

The concept of sustainability has come to the fore with the Brundtland Commission Report (Brundtland, 1987) and has rapidly started to be questioned in all disciplines. In this sense, the subject of city and its sustainability are among the study subjects (Martin et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2022). With rapid population growth and economic development, people live more in urban areas (Wei, 2018), which changes the urban patterns with the increase in building density.

Cities accumulate many layers in the historical process. These layers constitute the existing cities. Established in a center as the first settlement area, cities spread, develop and grow over time. Of course, the important thing here with the sustainability approach was to create new traces by preserving the previous trace (Yüksel, 2021).

The city of Komotini, Greece, is a qualified and multi-layered Ottoman city whose foundation dates back to 380-385 during the Roman period. It is seen that the demographic structure of the city of Komotini changed when it was left to Greece together with western Thrace in accordance with the Lausanne agreement signed after the Turkish War of Independence. This change has caused a modification in the urban pattern as well (Gökçe, 2005). Evliya Çelebi states that there were about 400 houses, five mosques, eleven masjids, two imarets, two baths, five madrasas, seven schools and seventeen inns in Komotini in the 17th century (Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi, 2005). Today, we see that the identity and cultural continuity of Komotini is interrupted as it is affected from the urban spatial development processes. It can be stopped by maintaining the spatial continuity of the city and by integrating the lost building traces with the city and preventing the loss of historical memory (Tanyeli, 2017; Manning, 2020).

In the study, the traces of the buildings existing in the historical layers of the city of Komotini during the Ottoman period were examined on an urban scale. Public structures with the strongest identity elements from the past have been discussed. The aim is to look for the traces of historical buildings in the urban pattern in order to ensure the continuity of the city and to establish a connection between the past and the future. For this purpose, research methods, such as literature review and investigation, were used. Domestic and foreign literature research on the city was conducted in detail. Visual and verbal sources were obtained. The study was revealed as an output of the assessments on various research writings and investigations about the city over time. The Ottoman period, which left an important mark on the city, has been covered. The period was examined on the basis of urban and architectural setup, and the historical buildings still existing in the present day were analysed one by one. The lost buildings were identified, and the change of the new urban pattern was analysed.

By evaluating the architectural associations formed according to the changing pattern with the Greek administration, the sustainability in the continuity of the historical pattern was left to the discussion, and the importance of sustainability by preserving the existing ones was emphasized.



1. Literature Review: Identity of Sustainable Urban Pattern

The urban pattern loses its identity with wars, disasters, increasing population and administrative changes in the historical process. However, cities, whose identity is not spoiled and whose layers are readable, are among the most important values of countries (Karaaslan, 2010). Although cities have been exposed to the problem of country change, it is the responsibility of the new administration to create a new urban pattern by protecting the city. For this reason, the patterns of cities are the most important data, preserving the identity of the city and transferring it to future generations (Seçkin Gündoğan, 2020).

Urban identity constitutes the phenomena that distinguish a city from another city with its unique values (Lynch, 1960). Rapid consumptions, irresponsible planning of coastal areas, violation of pedestrian rights, use of green and open areas in the construction of residential and commercial buildings (Keleş 1987), transformation of the city without giving importance to natural and historical buildings, policy of ignoring new and rapid concretion without preserving the historical patterns damage the phenomena that constitute the urban identity. It is understood that the factors that make up the urban identity are historical factors, physical factors, social factors and cultural factors (Karaaslan, 2010). In this study, historical factors were taken into account, other factors are outside the limitations of the study.

No city can be evaluated separately from its history. We can read the building information of the city from the past to the present by evaluating the historical pattern that makes up the city. From space, the buildings that created the city do not carry the first information about the city. The existence (preservation) of historical buildings constitutes the most effective heritage of the city identity. Elements such as inns, baths, covered bazaars, mosques, castles, etc. are also important parts of our historical and cultural heritage in the city. It is expected that the historical buildings that constitute the cultural heritage will be preserved. Ensuring the sustainability of historical buildings by preserving them as heritage is the most effective step in the approach of conserving the urban identity.

The whole city consists of identity patterns. The protection of urban identity creates space to ensure the sustainability of the pattern of the city. The concept of sustainability is an approach included in the Brundtland Report prepared by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 and later became standard in all interdisciplinary studies. Accordingly, the sustainability of urban identity is among the current topics researched in academic literature (thesis data system, 2023). With the research it is seen that urban revitalization projects are carried out in cities with urban identity problems.

City identity is a historical memory. It is an accumulation that describes the starting points of the city in the historical process and the changing levels of the urban pattern. Collective memory is important in the sustainability of traditional settlements. The formation of collective memory on an urban scale starts from the building scale. The identities of cities are shaped by the city's texture, structures, roads and squares, as well as the local historical process. Architecture is a tool for this formation to occur (Halbwachs, 2018; Parmaksız, 2019; Kalfaoğlu Hatipoğlu and Koç Aytekin, 2020). For this to happen, interdisciplinary studies are required to protect the existing identities of our cities or to regain their lost identities (Seçkin Gündoğan, 2020). It is expected that the studies are to be carried out nationally and internationally and be evaluated and approached in the understanding of world heritage.

The city of Gümülcine, the name of Komotini city of Greece during the Ottoman period, is the study area, where the Turkish and Greek people of Western Thrace under the rule of Greece today, live together. This city has experienced Ottoman, Bulgarian and Greek rule and has hosted different identities. However, it is in the patterns of a city that was under Ottoman rule for many years and lived under the rule of the Western Thrace Turkish Republic for 58 days that is our focus. The Investigating



the traces of historical buildings that reflect the city's identity, particularly from the Ottoman period, is of great importance in Komotini, which has been ruled by three different regimes. With the wide and deep literature research conducted for this purpose, it is understood that there are no traces of the historical patterns when many historical buildings, expected to be found in the urban patterns, are evaluated with the on-site investigation method. With the study, it is aimed to create a basis for future studies by emphasizing how the historical pattern changes with the breaking points. Recommendations have been developed to protect the lost heritage.

2. Methodology:

Traces of the buildings that existed during the Ottoman period in the historical layers of the city of Komotini were examined on an urban scale. The Ottoman period, which left an important mark on the city, was discussed. The review method was done in two steps. First, the related literature about public buildings of the city of Komotini between the years 1371 and 1912 were analyzed. Public buildings that had the strongest identity elements in the past were discussed. The aim is to search for traces of historical buildings in the urban patterns in order to ensure the continuity of the city and to establish a link between the past and the future. For this purpose, after analyzing the archives, an in-depth local and foreign document analysis as a qualitative method about the city was conducted. And then, field research methods included mapping, on-site observation and photographing sample buildings. In this step, visual and verbal sources were evaluated. The study was created as a result of analysis of various research observations made about the city over time. The period was examined on the basis of urban and architectural scale and the historical buildings carried to the present day in the separated regions were analyzed and examined one by one. The lost buildings were identified, and the change of the new urban patterns were analyzed (Table 1).

Stages of the Study						
1. related literature research	2. investigations					
 Ottoman archives (from 1371 to 1912) document studies 	 mapping analysis of site on-site investigation photography and observation study of buildings 					

Table 1.	Methodology of study
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3. Study Area: Komotini\GREECE

The city of Komotini is located in the administrative region of eastern Macedonia and Thrace, Greece, in the center of the Rhodope province, 98 km from the border with Turkey (Figure 1). In 2011, the population of Komotini was 50,990. It is estimated a residential center with a population of 63,015 in 2024, (https://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/komotini-population, accessed Feb. 11, 2024). Since its establishment, Komotini has been a settlement inhabited by Turkish, Greek and Bulgarian peoples. It remained under uninterrupted Ottoman rule from 1371 to 1912. In Komotini, which passed to Greek domination, 85% of the population living in Komotini is 57.5% (Serdar, 2014). When this rate is calculated taking into account the population in 2011, it shows that the Turkish population of Komotini is 29,325. It is estimated that will be 36.23 in 2024.





Figure 1. Locations of Komotini (Google Earth Pro, accessed Feb. 11, 2024)

3.1 Urban Pattern

Komotini City has different layers because it has been under different administrations throughout history. Komotini began to reflect the traces of the modern city and Balkan nationalism between 1867 and 1974. Apart from the city center, where the Ottoman urban pattern is seen as dominant, a grid pattern has developed especially in new residential areas. The city has expanded to the northwest (Figures 1, 2).

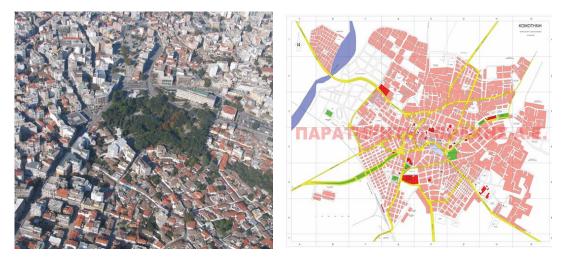
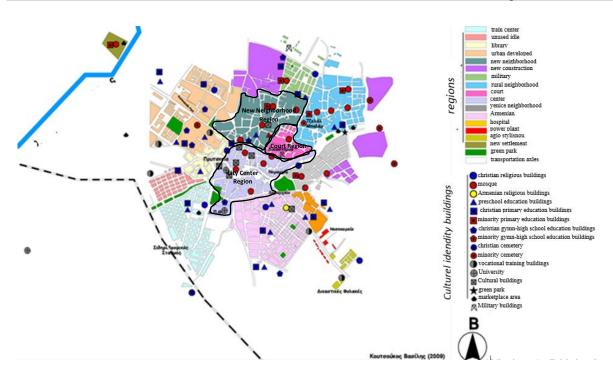


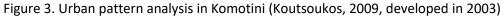
Figure 2. General View of Komotini (Κωνσταντίνου, 2014) 2. Komotini Urban Pattern (Komotini sightseeing map, https://ontheworldmap.com , accessed Nov. 15,2023)

The urban pattern of Komotini is analyzed by separating it into regions. In the urban pattern, there are train center, unused idle, library, urban developed, yeni mahalle (new neighborhood), new construction, military, rural neighborhood, court, center, yenice neighborhood, Armenian, hospital, power plant, agio stylisnou, new settlement and green park areas. Within the scope of the limitations of the study, the regions where Ottoman historical buildings are located at city center, court and yeni mahalle (new neighborhood) regions were examined and researched. These three regions constitute the core of the city (Figure 3).



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3.1.1. City Center Region

Since its foundation, the city of Komotini has been a settlement where Turkish, Bulgarian and Greek people live. Today, we see this diversity in the central region, which forms the core of the settlement. When we look at the city's public buildings from the Ottoman period, there is a clock tower and six mosques in the city center (Figure 4). The buildings that will be analyzed that express Ottoman period are the clock tower, the Old Mosque, Evrenos Bey Imaret and the New Mosque.



Figure 4: Pattern of the city center region- clock tower, the Old Mosque, Evrenos Bey Imaret and the New Mosque.



Clock tower, 1885

The clock tower, which is located in the Komotini bazaar behind the New Mosque, next to the tomb of Fatma Hanım, the wife of Vizier Hasan Pasha, was completed on October 10, 1885. It was built by Sultan Abdulhamid II. The tower has a 4x4m square plan and a height of 25m, narrowing upwards. This structure was repaired several times by the city municipality during the Greek period. The dome on the wooden pillars at the top of the tower was removed and moved away from the Ottoman architectural style. Also covered with a flat concrete roof on concrete poles, the concrete poles were surrounded by iron railings. It last saw a good repair in 1997-98 (Figure 5) (Yapar, 2007).



Figure 5. Old-new appearance (e-komotin gr; Windows.net, accessed Nov. 3, 2023) illustrative expression

Old Mosque, 1609

The Old Mosque is called old because it is located in the Cami-i Atik Neighborhood, which existed years before the Old Mosque. However, the New Mosque was built about 25 years before the Old Mosque. During the reign of Abdulhamid II. (1853-54), the mosque was expanded and got its current appearance. Over time, it was destroyed by the Bulgarians, its minaret was demolished up to the minaret balcony, it was turned into a bell tower, and the mosque was turned into a church. When it came under the control of the Allied forces under the responsibility of France, the mosque was returned to the Turks upon the application of the notables of the Turkish minority. This time the present minaret was raised on the same pedestal with two balconies, and the interior decorations of the mosque were renovated with ceramics brought from Kütahya in 2002 (Ünal, 2012) (Figure 6).





Figure 6. Interior and exterior views of the Old Mosque (https://www.abttf.org/, https://www.elizabethyolda.com , https://www.hallespektrum.de , accessed Feb. 12, 2024)

Gazi Evrenos Bey Imaret (1365-1385)

Located behind the Old Mosque, the imaret was built by Gazi Evrenos Bey between 1365-1385 after the conquest of Komotini, as a charity for distributing food to the poor. It was constructed as a building with a guesthouse, a school and a mosque, and this building, which is one of the early examples of Ottoman Turkish architecture, falls into the category of T-planned mosques. However, it has a plan and order that has no other examples. It consists of three different units: The main room in the middle is 10.74 m length and 7.44 m wide and is covered with a dome. The intersection between domes and square rooms was formed through a kind of pendants formed by triangles called Turkish triangles. This type of intersection is completely unique to Turkish architecture and is not found anywhere else (Kılıç, 2010; https://trakyanet.com- accessed Nov. 11, 2023).

The imaret, which has survived to the present day, was once used as a power station by the Electricity Administration of the city, and today it is used as the "Christian Museum" church.





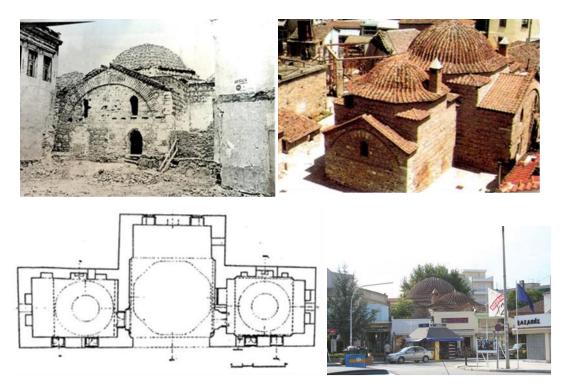


Figure 7. Gazi Evrenos Bey Imaret's old and new visuals and plan (https://www.osmanli-eserleri.com, avos association archive, -accessed Nov. 13, 2023)

New Mosque (1585)

Mosque The New Mosque was built during the reign of Murat III, by Defterdar Ahmet Pasha, 1585c. In 1530, there was only one mosque and 16 masjids in the city (167 Numaralı Muhâsebe-i Vilâyet-i Rum-Ili Defteri (937/1530), 2003). The center of the city is shaped around the Old Mosque and Evrenos Bey Imaret. With the completion of the new mosque structure, a second center was formed in the city. The New Mosque, which is 250 m east of the Old Mosque, was built by Abdulhamid II. It is located next to the Clock Tower built in 1884-1885 and in the middle of the present-day city center. The mosque, actually a complex, contains a madrasah, a school and a library (Parlak, 2015). The trade of the city developed with the new mosque complex because it is seen that the construction of commercial shops belonging to the mosque foundation had been carried out around it. The shops in this small area continue to exist today (Figure 8, image 1). The well-preserved old building is a small but richly decorated mosque. Inside this small mosque, there are unique examples of Eastern ornamental art that are not even found in ancient Ottoman capitals and Asian cities (Machiel, 1990). These include a colorful marble altar and pulpit, a women's section, calligraphy samples and various colored plantpatterned tiles covering both sides of the altar. The tiles of this mosque are the only example of wellpreserved Turkish tile decoration outside the borders of present-day Turkey. The three-compartment ceiling of the women's section is the best example of excellent inlaid wood in geometric form. This decoration is combined with another decoration with plant patterns, skillfully painted on silk glued to the wood. These three small ceilings are among the last intact examples of classical Ottoman ornamental art outside Turkey (Yapar, 2007) (Figure 8).



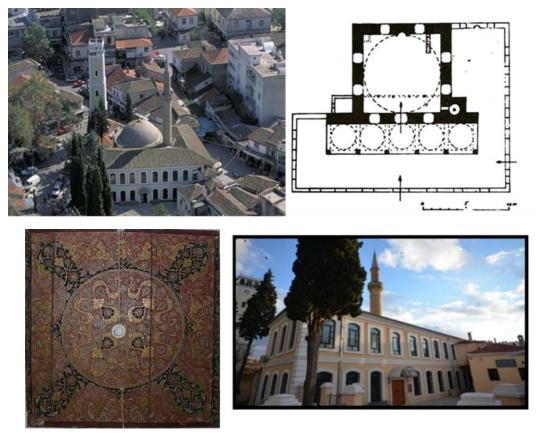


Figure 8. Exterior and interior yard images and plan of the Old Mosque (Parlak, 2015; Yapar, 2007; https://www.batitrakya.org/foto-galeri-accessed Nov. 13, 2023)

3.1.2. Court Region

The court district is the business center of the city where offices are predominantly located. When we look at the city's public buildings from the Ottoman period, the only building remaining is the court building (Figure 9).

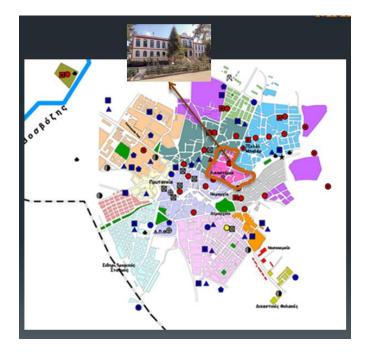


Figure 9. Location of the government residence in the court region- Government Building





Government Building, (1872) /Courthouse 2006-present

The building, which served as the Government House in the center of the district where the Turks were located in Komotini, which was under the Ottoman administration from 1371 to 1912, was built in 1872. After a while, a prison was built next to it. It is understood that there were 2,381 households and 12,393 inhabitants in the district of Edirne Province Yearbook dated 1319 (1901-1902) (Edirne Province Yearbook (1319) -1902, 28. Def'a.). From these figures, it is understood that the share of Turkish people in the city at that time was 82% (Karpat, 1985). In this dense city, a government mansion was built in 1872. On June 26, 1904, the groundbreaking ceremony of the gendarmerie and police departments to be built next to the prison adjacent to the Komotini Government Office was held (BOA., DH.MKT., 865/9). The government residence has three floors and 32 rooms. There are crescent and star reliefs on the windows of the building. However, only one of them has survived to the present day. In 1913, the Provisional Republic of Western Thrace was established in this building. After the building passed to the Greek administration, the inscription on the main entrance gate was removed and replaced with the phrase "Dikastiko Megaro Komotinis (Komotini Courthouse)". The building, which served as the Courthouse of Komotini until 2006, was emptied when the Courthouse was moved to a new building. Today it is waiting to be restored (Tsolakis, ibid., p. 107; avos association, 2023) (Figure 10).

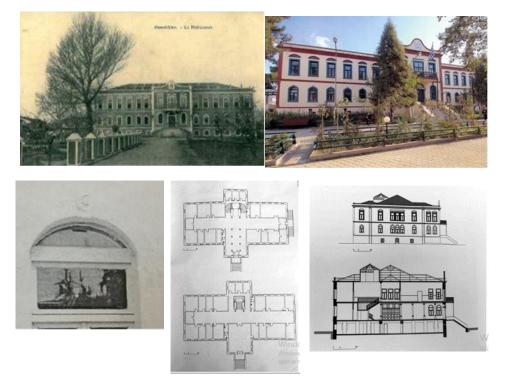


Figure 10. Images, plans and sections of Komotini Government House (Tsolakis, 2008; Konuk N., 2017)

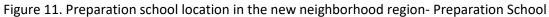
3.1.3. New Neighborhood Region

The new neighborhood region is one of the areas where Turkish and Greek people reside. In this region, there is Komotini İdadiye Minority Primary School as a public building dating back to the Ottoman period (Figure 11).



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High school (1300 / 1882) / Primary School (1885 / present) - Komotini İdadiye Minority Primary School

Starting in 1885, Komotini has been one of the six sanjaks (districts) that make up Edirne Province (Mahir, 2018). It is seen that modern education was started throughout the country in 1882. After being provided with the support of the people of Komotini, Komotini Preparation School started its activities in the 1889/1890 academic year. With the construction of this building, the Ottoman Empire endeavored to build modern educational institutions. It was built as a high school by Osman Beyefendi in 1300 / 1882, upon the orders of Sultan Abdulhamid II and with the efforts of Kadri Pasha. With the modern education structure, Arabic, algebra, geography, Persian, French, geometry, calculus, calligraphy, material science, writing, agriculture and medicine, painting, history, Turkish, divinity and morality and accounting courses were taught (Demirel, 2014) (Figure 12). The building has been serving as "Komotini İdadiye Minority Primary School" since 1885.



Figure 12. Images of the Preparation school in Komotini (Demirel, 2014; avos association archive, - accessed Nov. 13, 2023)

Results of the Research

Evliya Çelebi stated that there were about 400 houses, five mosques, eleven masjids, two imarets, two baths, five madrasas, seven schools and seventeen inns in Komotini in the 17th century. He praised the foundations of Evrenos Bey and Ahmed Pasha (Evliya Çelebi). Ahmed Pasha built a domed mosque





(New Mosque), double bath, madrasa and imaret in Komotini. The New Mosque is the only religious building in Greece with 16th century tiles. The mosque is still standing; the imaret has disappeared. Only the remains of the walls of the bath are present.

In the Yearbook of Edirne Province dated 1310-1892, it is recorded that there were ten mosques, fifteen masjids, two Greek churches, an Armenian church and a synagogue in the center of Komotini.

In the literature, research was conducted by dividing the city of Komotini, which was determined as the sample area in the study, into regions. These regions form the center of the city and have been known since history by their given names. The sources of Evliya Celebi and Edirne Province were examined qualitatively. Today, while there are six religious buildings in the city center, it is understood that there is no primary-secondary school structure nor cemetery structure. In the new neighborhood region, while there were three religious buildings, one primary school and one cemetery, it was determined that there was no secondary school structure. While it was determined that there were four religious buildings, two primary schools, one secondary school and two cemeteries in the Kır neighborhood region, it was determined that there was no cultural heritage in the court area, and there was only one court structure belonging to the old Ottoman period. When the military zone is examined, it is seen that there was only one religious structure, one primary school and cemetery structures. While there are three religious buildings in Yenice neighborhood, there is one primary school and one cemetery structure. In this direction, the old Ottoman city of Komotini was determined by historical data and on-site analyses with eighteen religious buildings, five primary schools, one secondary school, an administrative structure and a cemetery (Table 2).

		HISTORICAL CULTURAL HERITAGE STRUCTURES						
		Religious Structure	Primary Education Structure	Secondary Education Structure	Governance structure	Cemetery		
REGIONS	City Center	6	0	0	0	0		
	New Neighborhood	3	1	0	0	1		
	Rural Neighborhood	4	2	1	0	2		
RE(Court District	0	0	0	1	0		
	Military Area	1	1	0	0	1		
	Yenice Neighborhood	3	1	0	0	1		
	TOTAL	17	5	1	1	5		

Table 2. Historical heritage buildings today -Komotini

As a result of field studies, it is understood that many of our historical cultural structures have been lost. It is expected that the traces of historical cultural heritage buildings will be preserved by ensuring the sustainability of the urban pattern.

CONCLUSION

The protection of cultural heritage on an international and national scale conveys not only the traces of the period it was in, but also the traces of its transfer to its current state. In this sense, it is expected that the cultural heritage structures that constitute the patterns of the cities will be preserved. Cultural heritage buildings contain traces of their own period. By analyzing a historical building, it is possible to read about its period and current situation, its change and transformation in the historical process of the city, and its historical breakpoints. It is understood that the functions of the public buildings





examined in the central area of the city and in the new neighborhood area have not changed, and the buildings have been preserved. However, in parallel with this, it can be seen that the court building with its current function in the court district has not been preserved and does not continue to function.

In the study, the Greek city of Komotini is a qualified and multi-layered Ottoman city whose foundation dates back to 380-385, during the Roman period. It is seen that the demographic pattern of the city of Komotini changed when it was left to Greece together with western Thrace in accordance with the Lausanne Treaty signed after the Turkish War of Independence. It was determined that the traces of the buildings belonging to the Ottoman period be erased, ignored. Therefore, their continuity in the urban pattern was not ensured. The recommendations to be made in order not to lose the historical buildings that have an important place in urban memory are as follows:

1. The legal process of historical buildings should be followed.

2. Commissions should be established to be included on the world heritage list.

3. Studies should be initiated to ensure the sustainability of the urban pattern by preserving it.

Historical buildings are our most important heritage.

Taking into account the unique identity of the city, the sustainability of the social, ecological and economic phenomena of the urban pattern should be ensured, because the important step in preserving urban memory is the sustainability of historical buildings that make up the urban pattern.

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Etik Standart ile Uyumluluk

Çıkar Çatışması: [TR] Yazar / yazarlar, kendileri ve / veya diğer üçüncü kişi ve kurumlarla çıkar çatışmasının olmadığını beyan eder.

[EN] There is no conflict of interest between the authors or any third party individuals or institutions.

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