YILLIK

Annual of Istanbul Studies

2023

5

İSTANBUL
RESEARCH
INSTITUTE

YILLIK: Annual of Istanbul Studies 5 (2023): 9–21. https://doi.org/10.53979/yillik.2023.2

Capitalistic Urbanization in Late Ottoman Istanbul: Armenian Agencies

Ümit Fırat Açıkgöz

Few periods in the imperial history of Istanbul saw as spectacular a building boom as the long nineteenth century. A host of building typologies, some totally new others age-old, dotted Istanbul's urban landscape at a pace and an intensity rarely, if ever, seen in the city's Ottoman and Byzantine history. Their scales transgressed the classical restrictions and codes of decorum formulated in the sixteenth century. Their styles expressed diverse and conflicting identities and political aspirations. Palatial complexes and mosques; embassies, banks, and department stores; railway stations, high schools, and churches; apartment buildings and ferry stations; and various infrastructural projects marked the advent of the modern era in Istanbul with vibrancy, dynamism, and hope as well as crises, contradictions, and inequalities.

Studies on the late Ottoman urban history of Istanbul have burgeoned in the past three decades. These studies have significantly expanded our knowledge on the dynamics of Istanbul's urban modernization, demonstrating the ways in which the buildings and infrastructures crisscrossing the Ottoman capital embodied larger imperial and global transformations of the nineteenth century. We have learnt a lot about the municipal institutions, legal regulations, European inspirations and local domestications, grand plans, post-fire regulations, monumental buildings, stylistic issues, and communal and imperial agendas.[1] The more we learn about late Ottoman Istanbul, however, the more pressing becomes the need to address some fundamental methodological issues and to explore some crucial but still largely uncharted territories.

One important issue involves the domination of state-based narratives of urban modernization. This signifies a tendency to take the urban transformations of Istanbul in the long nineteenth century as an index of Ottoman reform, privileging the monumental over the non-monumental, legal regulations as texts over historicizing their application on the ground, and the transformations carried out by municipal institutions over those that were beyond their control or jurisdiction. Since the early 2000s, a number of scholars have pointed out that the late Ottoman urban history was much more complex than these state-based narratives have suggested. They have demonstrated the role of communal actors, architects, foreign countries, and wealthy merchants and bankers in reshaping the imperial capital's urban and architectural landscape.[2] The recent environmental turn

As the co-editors of this special dossier, Yaşar Tolga Cora and I would like to express our gratitude to a number of individuals and institutions. We had the opportunity to discuss the first drafts of the dossier's articles in a workshop participated by several scholars from different backgrounds. We thank the workshop participants for their comments and criticisms; Debjani Bhattacharya for giving a keynote speech; and ANAMED and Istanbul Research Institute for co-hosting this workshop in July 2022. We also thank Emily C. Arauz for her meticulous copy editing. Finally, we would like to extend our thanks to K. Mehmet Kentel, who supported this project in various ways since we approached him in 2021 with the proposal to publish a special dossier in *YILLIK*.

Ümit Fırat Açıkgöz
American University of Beirut
ua00@aub.edu.lb

ORCID: 0000-0002-8181-9653

1 The following is a small sample of studies that have explored these issues. More examples will come below in relevant sections of this piece. Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986); Steven Rosenthal, *The Politics of Dependency: Urban Reform in Istanbul* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980); Ahmet Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary: Reconfiguring the Architectural Past in a Modernizing Empire* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015); İlhan Tekeli, *İstanbul'un Planlanmasının ve Gelişmesinin Öyküsü* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2013); A. Hilal Uğurlu, "Perform Your Prayers in Mosques! Changing Spatial and Political Relations in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Istanbul," *The Friday Mosque in the City: Liminality, Ritual, and Politics*, ed. A. Hilal Uğurlu and Suzan Yalman (Bristol: Intellect, 2020), 221–249.

2 Paolo Girardelli, "Architecture, Identity and Liminality: On the Use and Meaning of Catholic Spaces in Late Ottoman Istanbul," *Muqarnas* 22 (2005): 233–264; Nora Şeni, "The Camondos and Their Imprint on 19th-Century Istanbul,"

in historiography also influenced the study of late Ottoman Istanbul, offering exciting prospects for this specific subfield and the larger late Ottoman urban history.[3] More directly relevant to the present dossier are the limited number of studies bringing the Ottoman integration into global capitalism to the forefront of their analysis, rather than presenting it as part of a list of items loosely termed "historical background." Lorans Tanatar Baruh's studies on property investment in the Taksim-Sirkeci axis are particularly notable in this regard.[4] She demonstrated the crucial role of local bourgeoisie and notables in transforming Istanbul's architectural and urban landscape as they sought profit through property speculation, championing the nascent process of land commodification in the core areas of the imperial capital.

This special dossier draws on the formidable accumulation of scholarship on late Ottoman Istanbul in recent decades, and, at the same time, focuses on some fundamental issues that have so far remained on the margins of the literature, if not outside of it. The three research articles in this dossier display several common patterns of late Ottoman urbanization in Istanbul, while demonstrating the peculiar, place-specific dynamics that shaped the trajectory of each case. Their authors explore how the pressure of population growth led to diverse individual and collective attempts at urbanization on the margins of Istanbul, intertwined with the larger dynamics of land commodification, capital, communalism, and legal reform. The contribution of this dossier to the study of Istanbul's late Ottoman urban history is fourfold. First, the dossier shifts the focus from the core areas of the city to its then-peripheries, from the transformation of the existing built fabric to the urbanization of agricultural and barren lands. The authors show that late Ottoman urban modernization manifested itself in complex and contingent ways in Kadıköy, Büyükdere, Gümüşsuyu, and Zeytinburnu, resonating with the familiar cases of Pera and intra mural Istanbul but also diverting from them in their own, peculiar ways. Some of these neighborhoods and future districts become a subject of investigation in their late Ottoman context for the first time in this dossier.

Significant as it is that the authors of this dossier examine the locales we know little about, their articles have much more to offer. The second main contribution of the dossier lies in the remarkable diversity of actors from different walks of life that figure in each case: landowners, property investors, and a wealthy bourgeois family as well as shopkeepers, low-level bureaucrats, priests, housewives, and masons, among others. On some occasions, these local residents promoted their own, individual interests; in others, they entered into legal conflicts with one another; in still others, they formed alliances to advance collective or communal agendas. Their negotiations with the legal and institutional contexts of Ottoman modernization, as well as with one another, shaped the urban and social fabrics of late Ottoman Istanbul in fundamental ways. Although some scholars have offered a relatively more bottom-up analysis of urban modernization in late Ottoman Istanbul, the diversity of the actors and the detailed historical analysis of their agency in this dossier offer fresh insights.[5] Through close examination of journals, memoirs, and Ottoman archives, the authors of the dossier present a complex and textured picture of urban modernization in the imperial capital, which raises more questions for future research than clear-cut answers.

Third, the capitalistic framework permeates the three articles of this dossier, despite the different locations, dynamics, and actors each of them brings to the forefront of their analysis. The gradual integration of Ottoman economy into global capitalism from the mid-nineteenth century onwards is a staple of many histories of the late empire, social and rural as well as political and economic.[6] In histories of Ottoman urban modernization, capitalism

International Journal of Middle East Studies 26, no. 4 (1994): 663–675.

3 K. Mehmet Kentel, "Assembling 'Cosmopolitan' Pera: An Infrastructural History of Late Ottoman Istanbul" (PhD diss., University of Washington, 2018).

4 Lorans İzabel Baruh, "The Transformation of the 'Modern' Axis of Nineteenth-Century Istanbul: Property, Investments and Elites from Taksim Square to Sirkeci Station" (PhD diss., Boğaziçi University, 2009).

5 Ibid.; Ayşe Özil, "Skyscrapers of the Past and Their Shadows: A Social History of Urbanity in Late Ottoman Istanbul," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 21, no. 1–2 (2015): 75–94.

6 For a classic study on this, see Şevket Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism 1820–1913: Trade, Investment and Production* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

figures as a background in the accumulation of massive resources in major cities, which translated into monumental architecture and urban projects. We know little, however, about the manifestations of capitalism in the form of non-monumental architecture and small-scale infrastructure, championed by less prominent, often anonymous actors away from the core areas of Istanbul. Our lack of knowledge becomes even more notable considering the fact that the physical fabric of late Ottoman Istanbul was more a product of these small-scale initiatives than the more monumental and comprehensive ones. The articles in the dossier address this fundamental gap in scholarship. They explore the transformation of the rural land into urban property; the elimination of mixed land use as the real estate market pressure devoured the gardens and small agricultural fields within urban areas; the role of small investors and landowners in these processes that enriched some and dispossessed others; legal conflicts between diverse individual, communal, and official actors over land, urban infrastructure, and architecture; in short, a complex history that led gradually to the expansion of Istanbul's urban area beyond its core. Land commodification and real estate speculation, two interrelated phenomena that emerged in the nineteenth century, constitute key threads connecting the three articles of the dossier together. The authors take real estate not simply as a physical entity but also as a "social product," a site of contestation where complex constellations of global, imperial, and local dynamics crystallized, and where the residents of Istanbul played a prominent, city-shaping role that we have not learnt much about so far.[7]

Finally, Armenian residents of Istanbul take the center stage in all three articles of the dossier.[8] Unlike the present urban histories of late Ottoman Istanbul, in which Armenian actors consist almost exclusively of imperial architects (i.e., Balyans), leading merchants and bankers, or the ecclesiastical institutions, the protagonists of this dossier include minor masons, landowners, anonymous neighborhood residents, participants in housing cooperatives, real estate speculators, small contractors, and priests, in addition to a leading bourgeois family.[9] While some Armenians that figure in this dossier seek to advance communal or collective interests, most of them are individuals navigating through the changing legal and economic dynamics in the age of reform and capitalism, some struggling to retain former rights and privileges over land and property, others capitalizing on the prospects of wealth through land and property speculation. The leading actors of the three urban histories in this dossier are mostly Armenian residents of Istanbul; their individual and communal initiatives, demands, and networks; the alliances, conflicts, and negotiations between them and people and institutions representing the other ethnoreligious groups as well as the state itself.

Armenians that figure in this dossier did not constitute an insular group advancing communal and individual interests in conflict with or at the expense of the other confessional groups. On the contrary, the dossier clearly demonstrates that mutual interests over urban land, real estate, and urban infrastructure brought together people from different confessions. The reader will see many such alliances as well as vignettes where, for example, Armenian residents secured their personal and communal interests through their connections with strong Muslim bureaucrats. It is crucial to keep in mind that ethnoreligious affiliation was an important but by no means the only component of these people's identity. First, in the case of Armenians, ethnicity and confession did not necessarily overlap as there were many Catholic and Protestant Armenians, in addition to the larger group of Apostolic Armenians. Second, and more importantly, in addition to being an Armenian, the people that figure in this dossier were also landowners, shopkeepers, women, priests, masons, and residents of a specific neighborhood. The alliances that Ottomans, Armenians or otherwise, formed

---

7 Alexia M. Yates, *Selling Paris: Property and Commercial Culture in the Fin-de-siècle Capital* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 10.

8 And as such it responds to the call of Lerna Ekmekcioglu in the pages of this journal two years ago. See Ekmekcioglu, "Of Dark Pasts and Pipe Dreams: The Turkish University," *YILLIK: Annual of Istanbul Studies* 3 (2021): 185–193.

9 Paolo Girardelli, "Religious Imprints along the Grand Rue: Armenians and Latins in Late Ottoman Istanbul," *Christian Art under Muslim Rule*, ed. Maximilian Hartmuth (Leiden: Netherlands Institute for the Near East, 2016), 117–136; Alyson Wharton, *The Architects of Ottoman Constantinople: The Balyan Family and the History of Ottoman Architecture* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015); Büke Uras, *The Balyans: Ottoman Architecture and Balyan Archive* (Istanbul: Korpus, 2022); Hasan Kuruyazıcı, *Armenian Architects of Istanbul* (Istanbul: Hrant Dink Vakfı Yayınları, 2016).

with people from different confessions over mutual interests were not at all new in the nineteenth century, as many excellent studies on early modern Istanbul or elsewhere in the empire have demonstrated.[10] The long nineteenth century only marked the intensification of such alliances, the increasing mobility of people within the empire and Istanbul itself, changing economic and professional dynamics in the age of reform and capitalism, and, what is most directly relevant to this dossier, the prospects of wealth, power, and comfort generated by urban modernization, land commodification, and infrastructural projects. Nevertheless, confessional affiliation remained an important marker of identity in the long nineteenth century, and a factor in the individual and collective efforts toward urban modernization. From different methodological and historiographical viewpoints, scholars have taken different confessional groups such as Orthodox Greeks or Catholics as agents in their own right of late Ottoman urban history of Istanbul.[11] This dossier's emphasis on Armenian actors echoes this historiographical trajectory, hoping to see in the future similar studies on real estate, land commodification, and urban modernization in late Ottoman Istanbul championed by actors from other ethnoreligious groups, classes, and identities.

Real Estate and Urban Modernization

Most architectural and urban historians would sometimes reflect helplessly on how little we know about the overwhelming number of buildings and most parts of cities in virtually any place at any time. Despite the recent decades' radical, and at times a little too brutal, exposure of the discipline's shortcomings, and of its biases in favor of the monumental, the canonical, and the European at the expense of the small scale, the vernacular, and the non-European, the present historiography retains, to a notable extent, its conventional tendencies. Several interventions in the field have indeed expanded our knowledge on the vernacular, informal, and global architecture and urbanism; yet canonical buildings, comprehensive urban plans, prominent architects, and wealthy patrons still dominate the master narratives of the scholarship in most periods and areas. One such subfield is the urban history of the long nineteenth century, globally as well as in the Ottoman Empire, specifically in Istanbul. The much larger bulk of cities and buildings of the long nineteenth century, however, consisting mostly of residential spaces and small-scale infrastructural projects in urban centers and their peripheries, has largely remained a marginal issue in scholarship.

In recent years, a growing number of urban historians pointed out this fundamental gap in scholarship, and offered real estate and housing speculation as a fresh analytical lens through which to address it.[12] These historians have criticized the state-centered approaches to urban modernization, in colonial and metropolitan contexts alike, and emphasized the potent role of capital to transform cities in the long nineteenth century and beyond.[13] They effectively demonstrated that developers and speculators, some producing one or two houses per year others in thousands, were the leading protagonists of the first global drama of urban modernization in this period. While some historians went so far as claiming speculative

10 See, for example, Karen Leal, "Communal Matters," in *A Companion to Early Modern Istanbul*, ed. Çiğdem Kafescioğlu and Shirine Hamadeh (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 365–393; Leal, "The Balat District of Istanbul: Multiethnicity on the Golden Horn," *The Architecture and Memory of the Minority Quarter in the Muslim Mediterranean City*, ed. Susan Miller and Mauro Bertagnin (Cambridge: Harvard Graduate School of Design, 2010), 175–210.

11 Girardelli, "Architecture, Identity and Liminality"; Girardelli, " Religious Imprints"; Namık Günay Erkal and Firuzan Melike Sümertaş, " 'Of a Piece with Their Habitations': Phanariots and Their Houses on the Phanar Waterfront," *YILLIK: Annual of Istanbul Studies* 4 (2022): 7–44; Ayşe Özil, "Greek Orthodox Communities and the Formation of an Urban Landscape in Late Ottoman Istanbul," in *The Economies of Urban Diversity: Ruhr Area and Istanbul*, edited by Darja Reuschke, Monika Salzbrunn, and Korinna Schönhärl (New York: Palgrave, 2013), 145–163; Özil, "Whose Property Is It? The State, Non-Muslim Communities, and the Question of Property Ownership from the Late Ottoman Empire through the Turkish Nation State," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 6, no. 1 (2019): 211–235.

12 William C. Baer estimates that small builders, who did not keep records, were responsible for the majority of housing project virtually anywhere in Europe from the medieval period through the modern era. This amounts to as much as 50 percent of all houses built in Victorian London. William C. Baer, "Is Speculative Building Underappreciated in Urban History?," *Urban History* 34, no. 2 (August 2007): 303. Alexia M. Yates argues that, even when corporations aggressively claimed large portions of the real estate business, small-scale operators still remained a major player. Yates, *Selling Paris*, 64.

13 Alexia Yates, *Real Estate and Global Urban History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021); Debjani Bhattacharyya, "Speculation," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 40, no. 1 (May 2020): 51–56.

building has shaped cities across history, from ancient Rome to seventeenth-century London and beyond,[14] others published more specialized monographs on the long nineteenth century and the interwar period, analyzing real estate and housing speculation as a specific outcome of land commodification, taxation, finance, and credit in the age of global capitalism.[15]

The question of land had long been at the core of economic theories and models of development, at least since the physiocrats of the eighteenth century that saw the actual source of wealth in agricultural land, but it was in the nineteenth century that states aggressively mobilized land, urban as well as rural, in the service of modernization. A series of legal regulations in different parts of the world sought to eliminate multiple and overlapping claims over the use and ownership of land, in order to promote, instead, the model of single property ownership, hoping, as a result, to increase productivity and tax revenues.[16] This led to the transformation of land into a commodity circulating in the market; generating an ever-widening gap between the use and exchange values of land; and dramatic fluctuations of land value in different contexts. The commodification of land offered prospects of massive profits, especially in urban contexts under the pressure of population increase due to industrialization, war, and rural impoverishment, attracting wealthy investors, small landowners, masons, and even middle classes to invest in land and housing speculation. During the long nineteenth century, urban land and housing became not only and simply a means of lucrative investment but it also came to lie at the very core of the capitalist economies, propping up the financial institutions and credit systems.[17]

The institutionalization of land commodification took long and painful processes with reversals, crises, and contestations. The different constellations of factors such as the dynamics of premodern land-regimes and the scale of capital accumulation led to different trajectories across the world, which makes it virtually impossible to offer a linear, all-encompassing narrative of global land commodification. Nevertheless, the remarkable parallelisms in such remote contexts as England, the Ottoman Empire, and India encourage one to keep the global nature of this crucial phenomenon at our disposal.[18] Legal regulations that sought to eliminate multiple claims over land were one such global feature of land commodification. Another involves the technologies and methods such as mapping, cadastral surveys, and subdivision or parceling of land. With different degrees of success, states endeavored to harness these tools in the service of private property ownership and of the larger goal of turning land into commodity. In urban settings, subdivision or parceling of land was particularly important for the integration of agricultural or waste lands into cities from England and France to the Ottoman Empire and British India.[19] Parceling and subdivision of land come up in all the three articles of this dossier as a fundamental component of Istanbul's late Ottoman modernization.[20]

Another shared feature of land commodification is the piecemeal and disparate ways in which it unfolded. In addition, the actors of parceling, real estate speculation, and speculative building are vastly diverse and numerous, as opposed to those in charge of monumental

---

14 Baer, "Speculative Building."

15 Debjani Bhattacharyya, "Interwar Housing Speculation and Rent Profiteering in Colonial Calcutta," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 36, no. 3 (December 2016): 465–482; Desmond Fitz-Gibbon, *Marketable Values: Inventing the Property Market in Modern Britain* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2018); Tomoko Shiroyama, "The Shanghai Real Estate Market and Capital Investment, 1860–1936," in *The Treaty Port Economy in Modern China: Empirical Studies of Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, ed. Billy K. L. So and Ramon H. Myers, 47–74 (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 2011); Debjani Bhattacharyya, *Empire and Ecology in the Bengal Delta* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

16 Yates, *Real Estate*, 48.

17 David Harvey, "Money, Credit, and Finance," chap. 5 in *Paris, Capital of Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2003); Shiroyama, "The Shanghai Real Estate Market."

18 Fitz-Gibbon, *Marketable Values*; Bhattacharyya, "Speculation"; Baruh, "Transformation of the 'Modern'."

19 Pierre Pinon, "The Parceled City: Istanbul in the Nineteenth Century" in *Rethinking XIXth Century City*, edited by Attilio Petruccioli, Seminar Proceedings, series no. 1, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1998), 45–64; Fitz-Gibbon, *Marketable Values*, 8; Yates, *Real Estate*, 40.

20 Balzac's *The Peasants* contains a memorable phrase regarding the subdivision of land, capturing the fundamentals of this global mechanism of land commodification: "If you put [lands] between the jaws of the bourgeois, the bourgeois will spit them out at you reduced in size and increased in price." Honoré de Balzac, *The Peasants*, trans. by Georges B. Ives (Philadelphia: George Barrie & Son, 1899), 313. Harvey quotes the same phrase with a different translation: "Once let the bourgeois chew up the land, they will spit it out in much smaller and dearer bits." Harvey, *Paris*, 30.

architectural projects and comprehensive urban interventions. This poses a formidable methodological challenge for urban historians, for the records of such a multitude of projects and transactions are not easy to reach, partly explaining the rather belated arrival of real estate-related research in the field. Nonetheless, the limited number of studies on real estate speculation have proven that it is not impossible to assess the role of small actors in the real estate market. In addition to large real estate companies that produced massive amounts of housing, these studies have shown, there were also various ways in which small-scale builders could capitalize on the business prospects of the real estate market.[21] The diversity of the actors in the real estate market was not limited to the differences between the builders and investors in terms of the number and scale of the units. It has also to do with the involvement of indigenous actors in colonial and imperial contexts, those that have not much figured in scholarship so far, such as the Marwari landlords in colonial Calcutta, Chinese actors of the real estate market in the foreign settlements of Shanghai, or Muslim real estate speculators in Istanbul in addition to the more familiar role of British, foreign, and Ottoman non-Muslim players in these three cases, respectively.[22] It is important to remember that the agency in the real estate market involved the consumers as well. While commercial and residential investments in prime urban locations have dominated much of scholarship so far, recent studies have shown that low-cost housing constituted a larger bulk of investments in most cases.[23] Succinctly, the city-shaping advent of real estate speculation lied at the intersection of many key dynamics of the global long nineteenth century, from migration and labor to industrialization and urban expansion, engulfing virtually every urban resident regardless of class and other markers of identity, subjecting them to the vagaries of the market, and making housing a burning issue of modern life.

Thus, real estate was the city-shaping factor in the long nineteenth century. In addition to the sheer number of buildings produced through the pressure and dynamics of the real estate market, property owners, masons, real estate companies, and urban residents at large played a crucial role in the implementation of modern infrastructure. This was especially the case in the peripheries of cities, the hotspots of urban expansion often pioneered by private initiatives as opposed to the existing, central quarters whose modernization involved more state intervention. In some cases, the large-scale housing projects on formerly agricultural or wasteland contained such basic infrastructure as the opening of streets and the implementation of sewers planned, funded, and carried out by the investing bodies, while the role of the state and municipal authorities was limited to the examination of projects and granting them approval. In others, small-scale, piecemeal urban growth in peripheries generated infrastructural needs over time, which residents of a neighborhood demanded, paid for, and often implemented themselves.[24] The infrastructural dimension is a reminder that the real estate market involved more planning than assumed; and that real estate was more than a monster "to be tamed by progressive technocrats."[25]

All these dynamics show that urban modernization in the long nineteenth century was not simply about the programs unleashed by ambitious statesmen and visionary bureaucrats, who harnessed the technocratic, financial, and administrative powers of the state to transform cities according to the requirements of the modern age. It was rather the economic and social dynamics of global capitalism, which fueled the urban transformations and expansions across the world. David Harvey's vigorous analysis of Paris during the Second Empire, the paradigmatic case of modern urbanism, demonstrates this clearly: it was the massive surplus of labor and capital that made Haussmannization possible in the

21 Baer argues that, even during times of sudden demand for housing, when large corporations dominate the market thanks to their ability to mobilize resources quickly and efficiently, there still remains ample room for the small builders to operate. The latter fills the "niche markets," such as "the odd parcel for a small dwelling left over in a larger building project, the inner-city private redevelopment or even the major house repair that was still too small for any but the smaller builder to deal with efficiently." Baer, "Speculative Building," 312. See also Harvey, *Paris*, 131; Yates, *Real Estate*, 40.
22 Bhattacharyya, "Interwar Housing Speculation"; Shiroyama, "Shanghai Real Estate Market"; Debin Ma, "The Rise of Modern Shanghai: 1900–1936; An Institutional Perspective," in So and Myers, *Treaty Port Economy*, 33–46.
23 Rio's favelas, which began as informal real estate investments by prominent families, and low-cost housing for Chinese residents of Shanghai, a city dominated by foreign settelers' economic power, are two prominent examples. Yates, *Real Estate*, 54; Shiroyama, "Shanghai Real Estate Market," 51–53.
24 Yates, *Selling Paris*, 45, 99.
25 Yates, *Real Estate*, 11.

first place, much more decisively than the personal visions and ambitions of Napoleon III and Baron Haussmann.[26] In this sense, the relationship between real estate and urban modernization presents a chicken-egg situation: as land became a commodity, various actors channeled capital into real estate; wealth derived from real estate again returned to the market in the form of further real estate projects, which has as much to do with urban infrastructure as it has buildings per se. Capitalistic urban modernization, which involved a large number of actors, institutions, and interests, is one of perpetual negotiations, alliances, and contestations: between and among the colonizer and the colonized; major investors and modest builders; landowners and dispossessed working classes; municipalities and real estate companies; bureaucrats and capitalists; legal regulations and their implementation.

Late Ottoman Istanbul is part of this global framework, while its own peculiar context factored in the advent of land commodification, real estate market, and urban modernization. In conjunction with the commercial, financial, and demographic manifestations of global capitalism in the imperial capital, the dynamics of Ottoman reform permeate all three articles of this dossier. The larger drama of Ottoman modernization in the long nineteenth century is too complex, convoluted, and multifarious to treat in this introduction even in brief.[27] But some remarks about the fundamental changes in the land and property regimes are essential to put this dossier in perspective. For the entwinement of these changes with the actions of various local actors and institutions fueled the urban modernization of Istanbul, especially in the peripheries of the imperial capital. In other words, various vignettes of individual and collective projects, demands, and contestations that constitute the backbone of the three articles of the dossier unfolded within the framework of land and property reform, whose birth pains the participation, resistance, and negotiations of a wide spectrum of actors and institutions at once exacerbated and subsided.

Raising tax revenues was a fundamental prerequisite for Ottoman reform and its main components such as the bureaucratic and military reorganization of the state and the infrastructural projects across the empire. Land reform constituted a core issue in the search for enriching the state coffers so as to finance the larger modernization program. This is an extremely complex history, which involves various land types that survived into the nineteenth century, vast differences from one region to another, and numerous stakeholders that resisted reforms threatening their traditional power base. In a nutshell, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the Ottoman state endeavored to eliminate multiple and overlapping claims of ownership and usufruct rights over land by individuals and waqfs; to reduce the tax obligation to a single owner; and, as a result, to increase the productivity of land, hence tax revenues. The 1858 Land Code was a landmark attempt to form a universal legal basis for taxation, but the code did not at all change the entire land and property regime overnight. Huri İslamoğlu has shown that, although the code provided a crucial legal framework around which various stakeholders negotiated land reform with the state, its implementation took decades with mixed success across the empire.[28] The demands and resistances of the stakeholders led to the repeated reformulations of the code's procedures and regulations.[29] Cadastral surveys, granting of title deeds, and the taxation reform in general were all negotiated on a case-by-case basis, resonating with the negotiations that informed the urbanization of Istanbul's margins as some vignettes in the articles of this dossier show.

---

26 "The surpluses of capital and labor power, so crushingly evident in 1848, were to be absorbed through a program of massive long-term investment in the built environment that focused on the amelioration of space relations." Harvey, *Paris*, 104.

27 For an overview of late Ottoman history, see Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700–1922*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). For a classic study on bureaucratic reform, see Carter V. Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789–1922* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980). For a more focused study, see Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1909* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1998).

28 Huri İslamoğlu, "Property as a Contested Domain: A Reevaluation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858," in *New Perspectives on Property and Land in the Middle East*, ed. Roger Owen (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 3–61. See also İslamoğlu, "Towards a Political Economy of Legal and Administrative Constitutions of Individual Property," in *Constituting Modernity: Private Property in the East and the West*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004), 3–34; İslamoğlu, "Politics of Administering Property: Law and Statistics in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire," in İslamoğlu, *Constituting Modernity*, 276–319.

29 Alp Yücel Kaya, "XIX Yüzyıl Doğu Akdeniz Liman Şehirlerinde Kadastro Siyaseti Genel Çıkarların İnşasında ya da Yıkımında Özel Çıkarların Rekabeti," in *Akdeniz Tarihi, Siyaseti ve Kültürü Sempozyumu* (Izmir: Verbal, 2014), 17–38.

The present literature on the Ottoman reform in land and property regimes is largely based on research on rural areas, while the urban settings have attracted less attention.[30] In urban areas, the bulk of land belonged to the waqf institution; more so in Istanbul than any other city in the empire. By the nineteenth century, most land and property in Istanbul were part of a great multitude of endowments founded over the centuries by patrons of different ranks and power. This included agricultural land surrounding the city, where most cases of urban expansion in this dossier took place. Although not included in the Land Code of 1858, the waqf became subject to reform during the decades that followed.[31] Various forms of urbanization in the margins of Istanbul took place mostly in waqf land, where multiple claims towards rights and ownership complicated virtually every project, residential as well as infrastructural. The alienation of waqf property and its integration into the real estate market began in bits and pieces during the nineteenth century. Turn of the century press, for example, featured lists of waqf land put on sale in Istanbul.[32] Investors of various scales integrated this land into the real estate market, subdividing and trading it in lots, and turning vegetable gardens, grain fields, or barren lands into buildings and urban infrastructure, commodities whose exchange value offered prospects of lucrative business. The various examples in this dossier represent some of the earliest incarnations of the alienation of waqf land as private property, a legal, political, and financial challenge of massive proportions that haunted the late Ottoman Empire and early republican Turkey alike, as well as the Muslim world at large from French North Africa and British India to post-Ottoman Syria and Lebanon.[33]

Capitalistic Urbanization on the Margins of Istanbul

The term "urban modernization" recurrently comes up in this dossier. It signifies various, loosely connected architectural, infrastructural, legal, and institutional projects seeking to create the spaces of modernity, which refers to, among other things: an orderly urban fabric; a network of large streets; efficient sewage, water, and, later, electricity networks; and gradual elimination of wood as a construction material in favor of masonry. In the context of late Ottoman Istanbul, these projects did not cater to an overarching program orchestrated by the state. Rather, they consisted of piecemeal interventions of vastly different scales, conceived and carried out by diverse actors, and shaped by complex, multilayered negotiations at multiple levels: between landowners, investors, state offices, legal regulations, communal institutions, local residents, and others. Unlike the rebuilding of fire-stricken neighborhoods, on which the present scholarship is largely based, urbanization on the margins of Istanbul occurred through less state intervention and more private and collective enterprises. Careful planning and effective legal tools were quintessential for a fair redistribution of individual plots in post-fire regularization of dense urban areas, which only the state institutions could deliver and manage the contestations of property owners.[34] But it was largely private actors, both individually and collectively, who took the lead in the urban expansion of late Ottoman Istanbul towards its peripheries. They pooled and subdivided the land, traded it in parcels, negotiated with the state to bring modern infrastructures into nascent settlements and connect them with the rest of the city, and organized to endow their neighborhoods and quarters with educational, religious, commercial, and social institutions.

In the first article of this dossier, Sarine Agopian discusses both a post-fire reorganization of an existing urban area and the expansion of the same area towards the agricultural

30 The following study is one of the few exceptions: Alp Yücel Kaya and Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, "Tahrir'den Kadastro'ya: 1874 İstanbul Emlak Tahriri ve Vergisi 'Kadastro tabir olunur tahrir-i emlak'," *Tarih ve Toplum, Yeni Yaklaşımlar* 9, no. 249 (Fall 2009): 7–56.

31 For a comprehensive account of the waqf institution's transformations, see Nazif Öztürk, *Türk Yenileme Tarihi Çerçevesinde Vakıf Müessesi* (Ankara: Türk Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1995).

32 Baruh, "Transformation of the 'Modern'," 138.

33 Nada Mumtaz, *God's Property: Islam, Charity, and the Modern State* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2021); David S. Powers, "Orientalism, Colonialism, and Legal History: The Attack on Muslim Family Endowments in Algeria and India," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31, no. 3 (1989): 535–571; Yitzhak Reiter, *Islamic Endowments in Jerusalem under British Mandate* (London: F. Cass., 1996).

34 Eda Güçlü, "Urban Tanzîmât, Morality, and Property in Nineteenth-Century Istanbul" (PhD diss. Central European University, 2018).

land on its margins. Scholars have so far argued that the Aksaray Fire of 1856 marked the beginning of the regularization of urban fabric following urban fires in Istanbul, instead of the reproduction of the previous street patterns as had been the case for centuries.[35] Agopian shows, however, that the implementation of a grid pattern in the core area of Kadıköy following the 1855 Fire was contemporaneous with, if not earlier than, the Aksaray example. Her discussion goes well beyond the post-fire reorganization of Kadıköy's core located on the gentle slopes of a hill rising from the waterfront. A marginal outpost for centuries separated by sea from intra mural Istanbul, Kadıköy flourished from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Agopian demonstrates that the making of modern Kadıköy as a major quarter, and eventually the center of a district, was a product of efforts by various individuals and groups, who integrated agricultural land within or surrounding the area into the real estate market. These actors pooled, subdivided, and traded land, built houses on it, worked collectively to overcome myriad bureaucratic and legal challenges, and gradually created a pleasant and fashionable district attracting various people from intra mural Istanbul and beyond who settled there both seasonally and permanently. They came from different confessional and class backgrounds, often forming alliances as they entered into legal conflicts within and across their immediate affiliations, religious and ethnic as well as professional and neighborhood. A few of them, such as the Lorandos, a Levantine family, were wealthy property owners and real estate speculators, but most were investors, bureaucrats, merchants, shopkeepers, and landowners of diverse origins and means.[36] Although it was not an Armenian-dominated quarter, Agopian shows, Kadıköy included a considerable number of Armenian residents who partook actively in the modernization and expansion of the area. More importantly, the Armenianness of Agopian's study emanates from her main source, the truly fascinating memoirs of Hovhannes Kalfa Stepanian, a mason and a native resident of Kadıköy. Stepanian's memoirs are not simply about personal recollections of the author's own life but they have to do with recording and archiving invaluable information on the physical and social transformations of nineteenth-century Kadıköy. This includes lists of property owners and transactions over land and property; pooling, subdivision, and trading of agricultural land surrounding the core area of Kadıköy; factual details and personal observations regarding the urban social fabric of Kadıköy; and, most remarkable of all, hand-drawn maps of the quarter before and after the 1855 Fire. Stepanian's memories become the subject of an academic study for the first time in this dossier, providing fresh insights into the urban historiography of late Ottoman Istanbul in general, and into the modern history of Kadıköy in particular.

We associate housing cooperatives with the post-Ottoman period, but Yaşar Tolga Cora's article in this dossier unearths a remarkable example from late Ottoman Istanbul. Founded in 1886 by a group of Armenian entrepreneurs, Arewelyan Dndesagan Miutiwn / Cemiyet-i Tasarrufiyye-i Şarkiyye (Oriental Savings Association, hereafter OSA) aimed to acquire large plots of agricultural land located to the west of intra mural Istanbul, in roughly what is today Zeytinburnu, and to build a brand-new neighborhood, where the members of the association would inhabit. Drawing on the associations' own publications, notably its monthly journal, *Dndes*, and various documents from the Ottoman archives, Cora tracks the saga of the OSA, its quick rise to fame as a lucrative investment attracting ever more people into its roster, and its gradual decline and fall largely due to the suspicions and wrath of the Ottoman state's security apparatus due to its nature as an Armenian-led enterprise. He shows how, even before the legal procedures for the official acquisition of land were concluded, the value of the company's shares increased spectacularly with the participation of many people in expectation of living in a modern suburban setting and/or of financial gains. The OSA represents the ultimate example of land commodification and real estate speculation in the late Ottoman context. The entire project relied on the alienation and privatization of waqf land through the capital raised by the contribution of individual shareholders. As the land's use changed from agricultural to residential, its value would dramatically increase, fueled by the project's growing popularity advertised through personal connections and *Dndes*. The shareholders would sell a part of their

35 Ibid., 4; Çelik, *Remaking of Istanbul*, 53.
36 For the Lorando family's real estate investments in Istanbul, see Baruh, "Transformation of the 'Modern'," 182–192.

individual plots to the newcomers attracted by the promise of a modern, suburban living away from the dense and underserviced intra mural Istanbul but connected to it through the railway line. Cora shows that the investment of the shareholders quickly paid off thanks to this model. He also demonstrates that, although pioneered by a small group of Armenian entrepreneurs, the OSA's roster included many members from other ethnoreligious and class backgrounds as well. This is a perfect example of how the allure of urban rent blurred such boundaries of identity, resonating with many such cases from India to China, and unlike the creation of Tel Aviv outside Jaffa by Ahuzat Bayit (Estate-Purchasing Society) as an exclusively Jewish settlement some two decades after the foundation of the OSA.[37] From assembling speculative capital for investment in land and property to the systematization of real estate business with companies, publications, and advertisement, the OSA represents the global moment of real estate as an institutionalized field. At the same time, as Cora discusses in his article, the legal and political dynamics of the late Ottoman context shaped the OSA's peculiar trajectory, leading eventually to its demise.

In the third article of the dossier, Aslıhan Günhan focuses on two monumental houses commissioned by a leading Armenian bourgeois family, the Azaryans. Located in the northern suburb of Büyükdere and in Gümüşsuyu on the margins of Pera, respectively, the Azaryan Mansion and the Azaryan Palas, a multi-unit apartment building, embodied the translation of the family's wealth from insurance business into real estate. The buildings were both an investment in areas with prospects of growth and statements of the family's Ottoman and cosmopolitan aspirations. Drawing on Ottoman archives, contemporary publications, memoirs, and oral history, Günhan demonstrates the role of negotiations between the architects, the patrons, and the state in shaping the buildings' design, style, height, and, in the case of Azaryan Palas overlooking the imperial palace, the view it offered. She shows how the Azaryans both capitalized on and contributed to the nascence of Büyükdere and Gümüşsuyu as modern quarters appealing to wealthy Ottomans and foreigners. In addition to bringing up the case of a Büyükdere resident subdividing her land and selling it in parcels, Günhan also shows an unusual case of subdivision for profit: after moving to their new residence in Gümüşsuyu, the Azaryans subdivided their mansion in Büyükdere into two units to maximize their rental revenue. In addition, they rented out different units of the Azaryan Palas in Gümüşsuyu, which shows the entwinement of prestige and profit, and of private house and real estate. Günhan's discussion of Azaryans' two Armenian architects from different backgrounds illustrates the transformation of the profession at the turn of the century: Andon, a traditional *kalfa*, who left little if any record behind except those suggesting the increasing precariousness of his position in late Ottoman Istanbul, and Leon Gurekian, a cosmopolitan architect with a professional degree from Italy, who enjoyed the patronage of state dignitaries and bourgeois families alike, and whose work and personal reflections are well-documented.

The projects from the margins of late Ottoman Istanbul discussed by the authors of this special dossier navigated the complex terrain between formal and informal urbanism; some catered to area-specific plans while others were singular, shaped by individuals that sought to build, rebuild, or trade their properties. State institutions pre-authorized some of these projects. In others, individuals struggled for a fait-accompli, an official recognition of their property-related actions. In all these cases, it was the landowners, investors, masons, and other private actors who took the lead. The larger dynamics of the real estate market prompted their actions, not a centrally conceived vision for urban modernization under state supervision. It is important to remember that real estate investment was not only about properties in middle- and upper-class settings, but low-level housing bordering on informality could also present business opportunities for actors of different means, as it did in the cases of Rio's favelas and working-class housing in Shanghai.[38] After all, the various degrees of informality in housing accelerate during times of population growth and

37 Mark LeVine, "Land, Law and the Planning of Empire: Jaffa and Tel Aviv During the Late Ottoman and Mandate Periods," in İslamoğlu *Constituting Modernity*, 110; Shiroyama, "Shanghai Real Estate Market"; Bhattacharyya, "Interwar Housing Speculation."

38 See note 23 above.

real estate boom, pushing lower classes to urban margins in search of housing, as well as presenting opportunities for housing schemes, individual or collective, for middle classes. Considering that, as Baruh shows, the largest building boom of the century in central Istanbul occurred after 1880, it is not surprising that the OSA was founded in 1886 or that Kadıköy's densification accelerated at the turn of the century. More concisely, the real estate market engulfed all inhabitants of a city, native residents and migrants alike, who sought appropriate ways to survive or make profits in an increasingly volatile housing situation.

Late Ottoman Istanbul offers many more cases of urban expansion, land commodification, and real estate speculation than this dossier explores. True, a considerable portion of the city remained virtually untouched well into the early republican period, but certain pockets within the city went through street network regularization and infrastructural modernization, while the pressure of population growth and real estate market led to the gradual urbanization of villages or agricultural land surrounding the imperial capital. How did all this actually happen? Through which processes and whose agency? What constellations of land, capital, legal regulations, individual or collective initiatives, and state intervention was each a product of? While we have some ideas about those people who flourished thanks to real estate speculation, we know little about those that were dispossessed through the capitalistic urbanization of nineteenth-century Istanbul.[39] This is a crucial point that the present dossier does not address in much detail. More research is essential to give voice to the dispossessed as much as possible, by identifying and individualizing them, instead of assuming that they were some unanimous farmers, squatters, or former holders of rights over land. The contributors to this special dossier hope later studies will strengthen the literature along these axes.

Historians are often reluctant, reasonably so, to make connections between the past and the present, especially when just in passing, at the end of a piece. But the dynamics and the themes that come up in this dossier resonate with twenty-first-century Istanbul so deeply that it is difficult to resist taking the risk of sounding sketchy. The cases of Kadıköy, Zeytinburnu, Büyükdere, and Gümüşsuyu in their late Ottoman context represent the beginnings of land commodification, real estate speculation, and urban expansion in late Ottoman Istanbul. Under market pressures of different degrees at different times, these intertwined phenomena flourished ever-more systematically and aggressively since then. Thousands of acres of forests, agricultural land, gardens, barren hills, riverbeds, and even chunks of sea have become residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, and infrastructural components of a global metropolis, currently home to more than fifteen million people. In legal and illegal (more appropriately put, legitimate and illegitimate) ways, innumerable individuals, companies, and political and bureaucratic factions, including a growing number of foreign actors since the early 1980s, made massive profits derived from the exchange value of land within and surrounding Istanbul. Ever more unleashed from the reins of state control in the past few decades, the housing market has subjected generations of lower classes into precarity. Home ownership in Istanbul has become a distant dream even for the salaried middle classes. Turkey's exhausted construction-based economy is currently turning its insatiable desire to extract wealth from land into a project likely to lead to catastrophic environmental and urban consequences, namely a theme-park version of the Bosporus in the form of an artificial channel, the infamous Kanal Istanbul Project. This would likely be the swan song of a long and complex drama of land commodification and capitalistic urbanization, whose nascence back in the long nineteenth century this dossier discusses.

---

39 Han points out that the demolition of Galata's walls and the urban modernization projects that targeted the walls' immediate vicinity led to the dislocation of productive classes, notably the rope-makers. Ayhan Han, "İstanbul ve Galata Hendeklerinde Kentsel Toprak Kullanımı," *Tarih Dergisi* 64 (2016): 27–71. From a similar perspective, Kentel points out that, while the demolition of Galata's walls resulted in the erasure of both Genoese and Ottoman pasts, only the former made it into the historiography of Pera, starting from the salvaging of inscriptions in Latin on the walls, while the centuries of Ottoman history attached to the walls and around them, with shops as well as houses, went into total oblivion. Kentel, "Assembling 'Cosmopolitan' Pera," 39–40.

Baer, William C. "Is Speculative Building Underappreciated in Urban History?" *Urban History* 34, no. 2 (August 2007): 296–316.

Baruh, Lorans İzabel. "The Transformation of the 'Modern' Axis of Nineteenth-Century Istanbul: Property, Investments and Elites from Taksim Square to Sirkeci Station." PhD diss., Boğaziçi University, 2009.

Bhattacharyya, Debjani. "Interwar Housing Speculation and Rent Profiteering in Colonial Calcutta." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 36, no. 3 (December 2016): 465–482.

———. *Empire and Ecology in the Bengal Delta*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

———. "Speculation." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 40, no. 1 (May 2020): 51–56.

Çelik, Zeynep. *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986.

Deringil, Selim. *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1909*. London: I. B. Tauris, 1998.

Ekmekcioglu, Lerna. "Of Dark Pasts and Pipe Dreams: The Turkish University." *YILLIK: Annual of Istanbul Studies* 3 (2021): 185–193.

Erkal, Namık Günay, and Sümertaş, Firuzan Melike. " 'Of a Piece with Their Habitations': Phanariots and Their Houses on the Phanar Waterfront." *YILLIK: Annual of Istanbul Studies* 4 (2022): 7–44.

Ersoy, Ahmet. *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary: Reconfiguring the Architectural Past in a Modernizing Empire*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015.

Findley, Carter V. *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789–1922*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.

Fitz-Gibbon, Desmond. *Marketable Values: Inventing the Property Market in Modern Britain*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2018.

Girardelli, Paolo. "Architecture, Identity and Liminality: On the Use and Meaning of Catholic Spaces in Late Ottoman Istanbul." *Muqarnas* 22 (2005): 233–264.

———. "Religious Imprints along the Grand Rue: Armenians and Latins in Late Ottoman Istanbul." In *Christian Art under Muslim Rule*, edited by Maximilian Hartmuth, 117–136. Leiden: Netherlands Institute for the Near East, 2016.

Güçlü, Eda. "Urban Tanzîmât, Morality, and Property in Nineteenth-Century Istanbul." PhD diss., Central European University, 2018.

Han, Ayhan. "İstanbul ve Galata Hendeklerinde Kentsel Toprak Kullanımı." *Tarih Dergisi* 64 (2016): 27–71.

Harvey, David. *Paris, Capital of Modernity*. London: Routledge, 2003.

İslamoğlu, Huri, ed. *Constituting Modernity: Private Property in the East and the West*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2004.

———. "Property as a Contested Domain: A Reevaluation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858." In *New Perspectives on Property and Land in the Middle East*, edited by Roger Owen, 3–61. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Kaya, Alp Yücel. "XIX Yüzyıl Doğu Akdeniz Liman Şehirlerinde Kadastro Siyaseti Genel Çıkarların İnşasında ya da Yıkımında Özel Çıkarların Rekabeti." In *Akdeniz Tarihi, Siyaseti ve Kültürü Sempozyumu*, 17–38. Izmir: Verbal, 2014.

Kaya, Alp Yücel, and Terzibaşoğlu, Yücel. "Tahrir'den Kadastro'ya: 1874 İstanbul Emlak Tahriri ve Vergisi 'Kadastro tabir olunur tahrir-i emlak.' " *Tarih ve Toplum, Yeni Yaklaşımlar* 9, no. 249 (Fall 2009): 7–56.

Kentel, K. Mehmet. "Assembling 'Cosmopolitan' Pera: An Infrastructural History of Late Ottoman Istanbul." PhD diss., University of Washington, 2018.

Kuruyazıcı, Hasan. *Armenian Architects of Istanbul*. Istanbul: Hrant Dink Vakfı Yayınları, 2016.

Leal, Karen. "Communal Matters." In *A Companion to Early Modern Istanbul*, edited by Çiğdem Kafescioğlu and Shirine Hamadeh, 365–393. Leiden: Brill, 2022.

———. "The Balat District of Istanbul: Multiethnicity on the Golden Horn." In *The Architecture and Memory of the Minority Quarter in the Muslim Mediterranean City*, edited by Susan Miller and Mauro Bertagnin, 175–210. Cambridge: Harvard Graduate School of Design, 2010.

LeVine, Mark. "Land, Law and the Planning of Empire: Jaffa and Tel Aviv during the Late Ottoman and Mandate Periods." In İslamoğlu, *Constituting Modernity*, 100–146.

Ma, Debin. "The Rise of Modern Shanghai: 1900–1936; An Institutional Perspective." In So and Myers, *Treaty Port Economy*, 33–46.

Mumtaz, Nada. *God's Property: Islam, Charity, and the Modern State*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2021.

Özil, Ayşe. "Greek Orthodox Communities and the Formation of an Urban Landscape in Late Ottoman Istanbul." In *The Economies of Urban Diversity: Ruhr Area and Istanbul*, edited by Darja Reuschke, Monika Salzbrunn, and Korinna Schönhärl, 145–163. New York: Palgrave, 2013.

———. "Skyscrapers of the Past and Their Shadows: A Social History of Urbanity in Late Ottoman Istanbul." *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 21, no. 1–2 (2015): 75–94.

———. "Whose Property Is It? The State, Non-Muslim Communities, and the Question of Property Ownership from the Late Ottoman Empire through the Turkish Nation State." *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 6, no. 1 (2019): 211–235.

Öztürk, Nazif. *Türk Yenileme Tarihi Çerçevesinde Vakıf Müessesi*. Ankara: Türk Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1995.

Pamuk, Şevket. *The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism 1820–1913: Trade, Investment and Production*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Pinon, Pierre. "The Parceled City: Istanbul in the Nineteenth Century." In *Rethinking XIXth Century City*, edited by Attilio Petruccioli, 45–64. Seminar Proceedings, series no. 1, vol. 2. Cambridge: Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1998.

Powers, David S. "Orientalism, Colonialism, and Legal History: The Attack on Muslim Family Endowments in Algeria and India." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31, no. 3 (1989): 535–571.

Quataert, Donald. *The Ottoman Empire, 1700–1922*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Reiter, Yitzhak. *Islamic Endowments in Jerusalem under British Mandate*. London: F. Cass., 1996.

Rosenthal, Steven. *The Politics of Dependency: Urban Reform in Istanbul*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980.

Shiroyama, Tomoko. "The Shanghai Real Estate Market and Capital Investment, 1860–1936." In So and Myers, *Treaty Port Economy*, 47–74.

So, Billy K. L., and Ramon H. Myers, eds. *The Treaty Port Economy in Modern China: Empirical Studies of Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Berkeley: University of California, Institute of East Asian Studies, 2011.

Şeni, Nora. "The Camondos and Their Imprint on 19th-Century Istanbul." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 26, no. 4 (1994): 663–675.

Tekeli, İlhan. *İstanbul'un Planlanmasının ve Gelişmesinin Öyküsü*. Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2013.

Uğurlu, A. Hilal. "Perform Your Prayers in Mosques! Changing Spatial and Political Relations in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Istanbul." In *The Friday Mosque in the City: Liminality, Ritual, and Politics*. Edited by A. Hilal Uğurlu and Suzan Yalman, 221–249. Bristol: Intellect, 2020.

Uras, Büke. *The Balyans: Ottoman Architecture and Balyan Archive*. Istanbul: Korpus, 2022.

Wharton, Alyson. *The Architects of Ottoman Constantinople: The Balyan Family and the History of Ottoman Architecture*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2015.

Yates, Alexia M. *Selling Paris: Property and Commercial Culture in the Fin-de-siècle Capital*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015.

———. *Real Estate and Global Urban History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.