



Transformation and Continuity of Sacred Places: The Case of Galata (Istanbul)¹

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Abstract

In historical city centers that are constantly inhabited for centuries, it is a predictable phenomenon that sacred places of different periods often share the same location. This is the case not only for the Historical Peninsula of Istanbul but also Galata, which is the former capital's another ancient district opposite the Golden Horn. Accordingly, Arap Mosque is perhaps the most renowned example to this issue that it shares the same location with two former churches from the Byzantine and Genoese periods. While similar origins of other monuments in Galata like Yeni Mosque have also been discussed by scholars, those cases lacked elaboration from a more comprehensive urban perspective. Following a historical research methodology for specific urban aims, it was seen that spatial connections between the shrines of Galata from its Byzantine, Genoese and Ottoman periods are even stronger on the same plots, which better display a spatial continuity within a historical urban layout for centuries. Moreover, it can be seen that even if a sacred place had a new function, some certain traces still reveal its origins, which stress the multilayered ancient settlement.

Keywords: *Sacred place, Spatial continuity, Urban morphology, Urban transformation, Urban history.*

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Kutsal Mekanların Dönüşümü ve Devamlılığı: Galata (İstanbul) Örneği

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Öz

Yüzyıllardan beri iskan gören tarihi kent merkezlerinde, farklı dönemlere ait kutsal mekanların konum olarak üst üste çakışması, beklenen bir olasılıktır. Bu durum eski başkent İstanbul'un yalnızca Tarihi Yarımada bölgesi için değil, Haliç'in karşısındaki antik bir mahallesi olan Galata için de geçerlidir. Bu bağlamda Arap Camii muhtemelen en bilinen örnek olup Bizans ve Ceneviz dönemlerinden iki eski kiliseyle aynı konumu paylaşmaktadır. Yine benzer bir kökene sahip Yeni Camii gibi Galata'daki birkaç anıt, araştırmacılar tarafından halihazırda tartışılmış olmasına karşın şehircilik biliminin perspektifinden detaylandırılmamıştır. Dolayısıyla, tarih araştırma metodolojisinin şehircilik ilgisindeki spesifik amaçlara yönelik uygulanmasıyla Bizans, Ceneviz ve Osmanlı dönemlerine ait Galata mabetleri arasındaki mekansal ilişkilerin aslında çok daha fazla olduğu görülmüştür. Bu örnekler, tarihi yerleşimde yüzyıllardır süregelen mekansal devamlılığı oldukça güçlü bir şekilde ortaya koymaktadır. Öte yandan, kutsal bir mekan zamanla başka bir fonksiyonel kimlik kazansa dahi bazı izlerin hala asıl kökeni işaret ettiği, dolayısıyla antik yerleşimin çok katmanlılığını yine vurguladığı belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kentsel morfoloji, Kentsel dönüşüm, Kent tarihi, Kutsal mekan, Mekansal devamlılık.

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Introduction

It can be said that in a settlement that has been inhabited since ancient times, its historical urban layout and monuments had a certain effect on later urban developments. In this context, historical topography of a city and its later transformations can be revealed through primary sources and urban studies. The nature of the architectural heritage in Turkey and specifically in Istanbul, being the former capital of the Byzantine Empire known as Constantinople already consists of multiple historical layers from different civilizations and cultures. It can thus be considered as a palimpsest. Correspondingly, it should come as no surprise that Galata as an ancient district of Istanbul has a rich built heritage.

Ancient Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, and Genoese inherited Galata from each other, though none of their rule was everlasting (Akyol, 1998, p.26-27). Ottomans followed them and left a trace on the urban layout until the early 20th century (Eyice, 1996). In the end, the layers of all these periods have become a part of the urban palimpsest of modern Galata (Akyol, 1998, p.24). Those urban layers did not remain unaltered through the centuries, nor did they completely disappear. Overlapping urban and architectural layers enrich the built environment, but the exact spatial relationship between them is an issue that needs to be addressed specifically.

In Istanbul, there are numerous former Byzantine churches that were converted into mosques following 1453, though some of them gave way to new public functions much later (Müller-Wiener, 2001). For instance, while Fatih Mosque was built on the plot of Holy Apostles after its demolition in the 15th century, the 6th century building of Hagia Sophia kept an active religious use for centuries, even after its conversion into a mosque. However, although the 5th century Theotokos Chalkoprateia was once repurposed as Acem Ağa Mosque, its plot now serves as a car park (Müller-Wiener, 2001). There are significant similarities between those three cases within the phenomenon of urban transformation and continuity.

Galata has been the subject of some well-known but limited historical mapping attempts up to the present. Due to the lack of a proper urban conception, the literature about Galata lacks sufficient perspective for the multi-layered built environment and certain spatial problems were repeatedly neglected despite the subject's academic popularity. Nevertheless, some studies focused on key sites of Galata, including Arap Mosque and Yeni Mosque that both of them have certain urban and architectural links with churches from

the Genoese period (Özgüleş, 2017; Palazzo, 2014). Similarly, the 16th century Rüstem Pasha Caravanserai as a public building actually replaced another church (Eyice, 1996). After some urban considerations, a similar hypothesis was also argued between the 14th century San Giovanni Battista and a 17th century Ottoman *han* building, around modern Karaköy Square (Sağlam, 2018, p.158-160). In this regard, Akyol (1998) discussed the cases of Arap Mosque, Yeni Mosque and Rüstem Pasha Caravanserai within the context of urban transformation and continuity, but without any major outcomes. Furthermore, despite the existence of urban traces from the long lost monuments of Galata, it has hitherto not been attempted to provide precise locations for them.

In literature, there is a spatial disconnection between monuments of Galata from different periods, particularly the shrines. Correspondingly, the urban heritage of Galata was often considered as a conglomeration separately bound together, instead of a palimpsest with overlapping layers. As later destructions gradually erased some parts of the palimpsest due to the growing city, an interruption occurred between the historical urban layers, and they started to be forgotten. Meanwhile, a certain group, namely sacred spaces actually kept a continuity on same plots in terms of function and ownership status.

Thus, a detailed research with a particular urban point of view, backed by primary sources appears as a necessity. For this reason, the present study attempts to handle the aforementioned problems in depth. The multilayered character of Galata needs an elaboration in order to display the rich urban identity of this historical settlement.

Methodology

A combined historical and urban research method was chosen due to the subjects' interdisciplinary nature. Therefore, the majority of the published primary sources were considered where relevant. Secondary sources were mostly consulted for a critical reading. This research is specifically focused on positional descriptions of Galata's former shrines, instead of other historical narratives.

Sanctuaries of Galata in Ancient Periods

Classical Antiquity

Being a suburb of Istanbul (formerly Byzantium / Constantinople) out of the Historical Peninsula, Galata is separated by the Golden Horn. This gulf and the Bosphorus provide safe harbors to Galata that Azapkapı, Karaköy and Tophane districts are positioned along the flat coastline. Heights of the conical topography correspond to Kuledibi and Şişhane neighborhoods towards the north, respectively. Galata hilltop overlooks surrounding regions due to its topographical advantage.

In the 2nd century CE, Dionysius of Byzantium linked the earliest records about the locality now called Galata to the legendary foundation of Byzantium by Greek settlers from Megara, which supposedly happened around the mid-7th century BC. Dionysius also mentions a temple around the heights of modern Cihangir, which was dedicated to Ptolemy II Philadelphus (r. 285-246 BC) after his aid to Byzantium's inhabitants (Dionysius, 2010, p.49-53).

Galata was formerly known as Sykai, after figs. In the "Geography" (7.6.2) of Strabo, it appears with a harbor under the "fig-tree" (Συκίη / Sykē) by the 1st century CE, opposite Byzantium (Strabo, 1924, p.280-281). The site was reportedly a mere fig grove by the 2nd century CE that the tomb of Hipposthenes was in the west of Sykai, who was a hero from Megara. The Temple of Schoiniklos, who was the chariot driver of Amphiarus the seer was the first place in the east of Sykai. Through this direction, it was followed by the regions of Auletes and Bolos, where the latter locality had the temples of Artemis and Aphrodite. Ostreodes and Metopon (with the Temple of Apollo) were mentioned as further localities until modern Tophane, respectively (Dionysius, 2010, p.50-53).

Byzantine Period

The exact status and progress of Sykai during Byzantium's transformation into an imperial capital by Constantine I are unclear. It is known that around the late 350s, the church of the Novatians, who were expelled from Constantinople by Constantius II was moved across, to Sykai, practically piece by piece and stood there for a couple of years until being returned to its initial plot in Constantinople, during the reign of Julian (Socrates, 1864, p.327-328). The *Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae* indicates by the mid-5th century that Sykai, being the 13th region of Constantinople had one church, but its name was not specified (Seeck, 1876, p.240).

Regarding the surroundings of Sykai during the Byzantine period, the district of Elaia (or Elaion) first appears in the 5th century, opposite the Golden Horn and around the hill beyond Sykai. It had the church and leprosarium of Saint Zotikos, who died around 340 (Mango, 2009). Pegai was a nearby district in the west of Sykai, falling around modern Kasimpaşa. It mainly thrived under Basil I during the late 9th century, with numerous churches and an imperial palace. Exartysis was the site of arming warships, corresponding to present Haliç Shipyards. Finally, the suburb of Argyropolis was in the east of Sykai, around modern Tophane. The Church of Hagios Adrianos was located there, which was built in the early 4th century by Metrophanes of Byzantium (Janin, 1950; Janin, 1969).

In Sykai proper, especially two churches come to the forefront by the Early Byzantine period. Firstly, it has been said that Patriarch Fravitta of Constantinople (r. 489-490) was initially a presbyter in Hagia Thekla in Sykai (Nicephorus I, 1829, p.775). The place of a naval battle during the revolt of Vitalian against Anastasius I in 515 reveals that Hagia Thekla was located next to the coast of Sykai (Malalas, 1986, p.227). In addition, while speaking about the law of succession in the 159th Novel, Justinian I mentions a house that remained inside a gateway on the walls of Sykai, which led to the Church of Hagia Thekla there (Justinian I, 1575, p.239). Secondly, Procopius of Caesarea mentions that Hagia Irene in Sykai was constructed by Justinian I with a magnificent scale in 552. This renowned church was present even by the 10th century, with regard to a Middle Byzantine liturgical compilation called Synaxarium (Janin, 1969, p.108).

The place of the Church of the Maccabees changes between Sykai and Elaia in sources, as it was positioned towards the inner parts of Argyropolis. It appears in several accounts from the 4th-7th centuries (Mango, 2009, p.162-169). According to the Synaxarium, the Church of Hagia Pelagia was positioned near the Monastery of Hagios Konon that was discussed below (Janin, 1969, p.395). In Sykai, the Church of Hagia Maura (or Hagioi Timotheos kai Maura) first appears in the 6th century. An account from the 8th century indicates that Constantine V destroyed it and honored Aphrodite there by offering sacrifices. Thus, it has been argued that Hagia Maura was actually positioned towards the east, around the former Bolos with the Temple of Aphrodite, as previously mentioned by Dionysius (Gyllius, 1562, p.84-85; Janin, 1969, p.329-330).

Monasteries "*trans vero in Sycas / πέραν εν Συκαις*" (opposite, in Sykai) were anonymously addressed by Archbishop Flavian before the Council of

Chalcedon in 451 (Price and Gaddis, 2005, p.203). Among them, especially the Monastery of Hagios Konon is known after some incidents between the 5th and 7th centuries. Its location appears as either Sykai or Pegai due to different narrations (Janin, 1969, p.283-284). During the Siege of Constantinople in 626, Hagios Konon had a strategic position for the Byzantine naval defense line against Slavic attacks from the inner parts of the Golden Horn. Hence, it has been argued that it was a westernmost coastal landmark near Sykai (Hurbanič, 2015). Several 6th century ecclesiastical registries and contemporary historians briefly list further, lesser known monasteries of Sykai but nothing was specified about their precise locations and fates (Janin, 1969).

Starting from the early 8th century, Sykai started to be called "Galata" after a castle, where the northern end of the chain that closed the Golden Horn was fastened (Theophanes, 1997, p.545). Galata's later periods until the arrival of the Genoese were relatively dark that almost nothing is known about its built environment at that time. Nevertheless, the Synaxarium briefly testifies some churches and monasteries of Galata by the 10th century, and Anthony of Novgorod mentions Hagia Irene as a great church with the relics of Saint Irene, in 1200 (Janin, 1969). Benjamin of Tudela mentions a community of 2500 Jews in Galata by the mid-12th century, who supposedly had synagogue(s) there, though not specified.

Transformation of Greek Orthodox Churches: Pera after 1267

Earlier Years: Foundation of a Colony

The Genoese had their first commercial quarter in Constantinople in the 12th century, around modern Eminönü Square. However, they lost it during the Fourth Crusade (1202-1204), where several Latin states had participated including the Venetians, being the archrivals of the Genoese. As an indirect result of the Treaty of Nymphaeum (1261), which was a Byzantine-Genoese alliance against the Latins, the Byzantines allowed the Genoese to settle in Galata in 1267, who established a new colony called "Pera" there. The afore-said treaty was reintroduced in 1275 and eventually enabled the colonists to have their own churches and necessary civil buildings in Pera (Balard, 1978).

Some archival records display that the harbor, loggia, and the Church of San Michele (*ecclesiam Sancti Michaelis de Peira*) were the landmarks of Pera by 1281-1284. This church was the main burial place of the colonists. It was also

used as a gathering space for administrative issues (Brătianu, 1927). In addition, "*ecclesie Sancte Elene*" was another important church of Pera that included a hospital (*hospitali Sancte Elene de Peira*) (Brătianu, 1927).

A chrysobull from May 1303 by Andronikos II Palaiologos is significant as it provides the limits of the colony. Some Greek Orthodox churches were precisely located as landmarks for the borderline. According to the version published by Belgrano, the border started 25 paces (≈ 43 m) before the landing stage "*Vetus Tarsana*" (Old Dockyard) in the west, next to the coast. From this point, the border continued northeast by keeping a distance of 3 paces (≈ 5 m) from the Church of Hagios Ioannis on the left hand side. It continued 90 paces (≈ 156 m) until reaching the vineyard of Perdikares. It then turned east, and keeping a distance of 4 paces (≈ 7 m) from that vineyard, it continued straight until reaching 24 paces (≈ 42 m) from Hagios Theodoros on the left hand side, and reached the vineyard of the Monastery of Lips, also known as "*Macropita*". Afterwards, it passed this vineyard with a route of 54 paces (≈ 94 m). Then, it passed the well of Hagia Irene (*templo sancte Erine*), which was used as a cemetery by the Genoese. After passing the vineyard of the former Military Logothete (*logothetēs tou stratiōtikou*) Kinnamos at a distance of 3 paces (≈ 5 m), it reached another vineyard, which he owned. This second vineyard was located in front of the gate of Hagios Georgios that was 28 paces (≈ 49 m) away. The distance between the Perdikares' vineyard and the second vineyard of Kinnamos was 217 paces (≈ 376 m). Later on, it turned south, where Hagioi Anargyroi remained on the left hand side. Its corner was 10 paces (≈ 17 m) away from the borderline. Then, without any given metric data, it turned east, where the aforementioned church remained on the left hand side again, and the border reached a distance of 14 paces (≈ 24 m) before the vineyard house of Kinnamos. Following that, it turned south once again, where Hagios Nikolaos remained 6 paces (≈ 10 m) away on the left hand side. Afterwards, the border turned east at a point 8 paces (≈ 14 m) away from this church, which remained on the left hand side one more time, and then the border continued 30 paces (≈ 52 m) towards this direction. Finally, it turned south and reached the shore at a right angle, 70 paces (≈ 121 m) before Galata Castle (*Castrum Galathe*). The distance between the Kinnamos' vineyard and the shore was 75 paces (≈ 130 m). The distance between the start and the endpoint was 339 paces (≈ 588 m) along the waterfront (Fig. 1) (Belgrano, 1877, p.103-104).

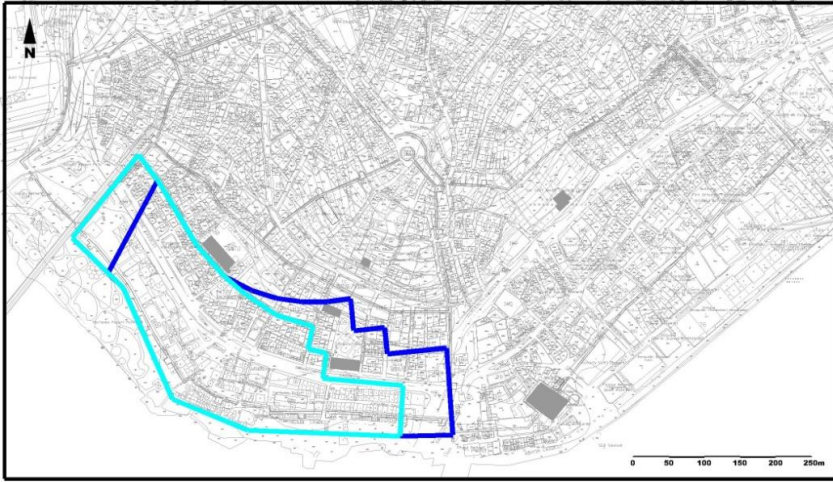


Figure 2. Experiments for the edict of May 1303 (Source: Sağlam)

The Franciscan convent of Galata with the churches of Sant'Anna and San Francesco from the Genoese rule was replaced by Yeni Mosque in 1697. There is a bazaar (Hırdavatçılar Çarşısı) since 1950s, as the mosque was also demolished in 1930s (Özgüleş, 2017). The research of Matteucci (1967) included several plans from 1650s about the Franciscan convent, but their urban value was completely overlooked, also by later studies. Those plans clearly display the particular, inverted L-shaped plot, where the monastery and then the mosque previously stood. In fact, present bazaar preserves this shape even today (Fig. 3). Thus, it appears that Hagioi Anargyroi and Hagios Nikolaos were precisely replaced by Sant'Anna and San Francesco; likewise the Hagia Irene - San Domenico transformation. This finding confirms the exact eastern border by May 1303 (Fig. 4).

Additionally, the edict of May 1303 clearly follows the characteristic grid of Galata while delimiting the colony. This layout still exists that Gaitan D'Ostoya (1858) and Rose & Aznavour (1860) maps display it much better, prior to later destructions (Fig. 5).

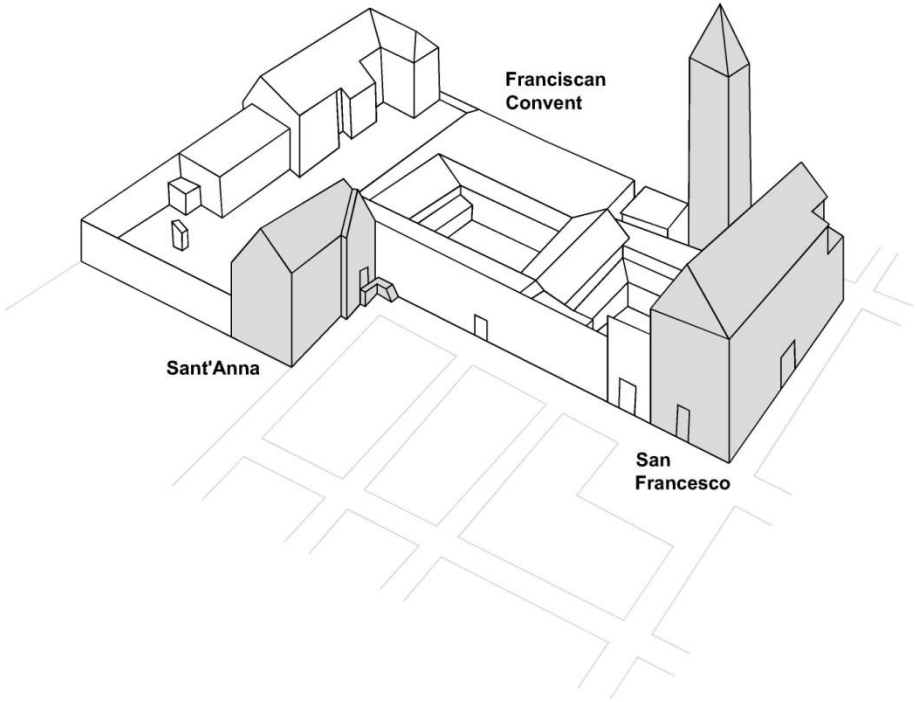


Figure 3. Layout of the Franciscan convent, after an *Archivio Storico "De Propaganda Fide"* document dated 1639 and published by Matteucci (1967) (Source: Sağlam)

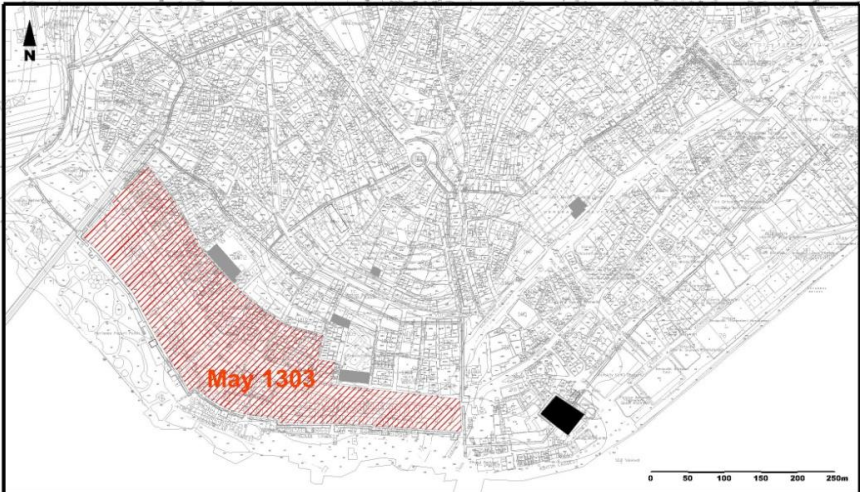


Figure 4. Final experiment for the edict of May 1303 (Source: Sağlam)

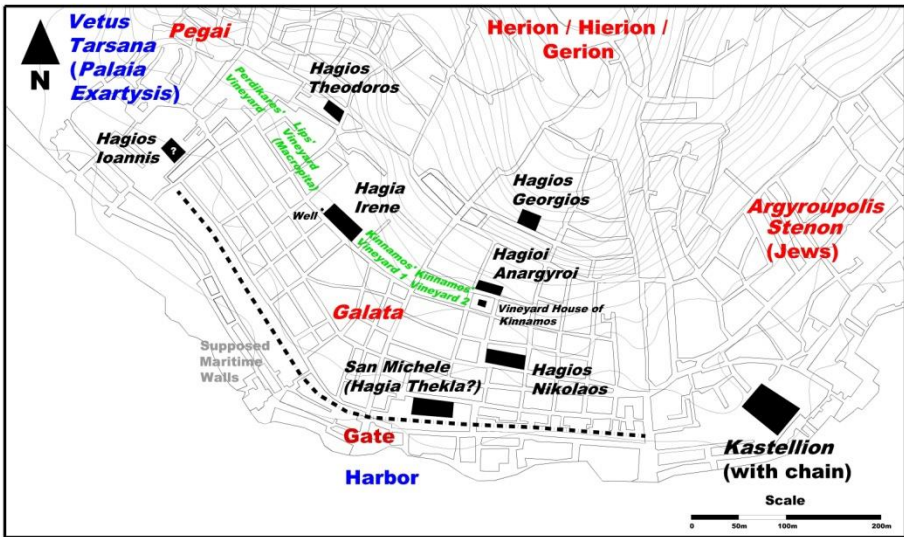


Figure 5. Layout of Galata by May 1303 (Source: Sağlam)

An Alternative Reading: Hagia Irene in the Late 13th Century

"*Ecclesie Sancte Elene*" was the second most important church after San Michele by 1281-1284. It had a walled enclosure and a hospital. The Genoese neighborhood reached next to this complex (Brătianu, 1927). A testament from 1297 also mentions "*ecclesie sancte Elene*" in Pera (Belgrano, 1877, p.933). After a superficial consideration of the documents published by Brătianu (1927), Balard (1978) mentioned it as Saint Helena proper. As it does not appear in any later sources at all, it can be questioned that "*Sancte Elene*" was actually a misspelled, Latin version of Hagia Irene, which appears as "*sancte Erine*" in the edict of May 1303. This female saint and attribution (Holy Peace) were not popular in the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, the colonists perchance considered Hagia Irene as the renowned Saint Helena that slightly variable name transfers between civilizations are common. It was used for burials by May 1303, as the edict mentioned. The Dominican convent had replaced Hagia Irene (*sancte Erine / Elene*) during 1320s century that its later centuries were discussed by Palazzo (1946) and Eyice (1991) in terms of history and architecture.

A New Concession and Three Surrounded Churches

A second chrysobull dated March 1304 significantly extended the first Genoese quarter, but scholars like Mamboury (1951) and Eyice (1969) were unable to clarify this issue despite some attempts. Due to an excessive moat,

that edict determined the shape of the colony as a rectangle. The quarter now included three anonymous churches but the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate would keep the ownership. The colonists were also allowed to erect strong civil buildings (Belgrano, 1877, p.105-110).

The aforesaid rectangular shape apparently executed towards the north, therefore those three churches were actually the previously mentioned Hagia Irene, Hagioi Anargyroi and Hagios Nikolaos. The territorial problem caused by the extensive moat that was dug by the Genoese around 1303-1304 was solved with a new concession. The edicts of May 1303 and March 1304 intended to keep the ownership of three neighboring Byzantine churches but failed, as they were gradually replaced by Roman Catholic churches under the Genoese rule (Fig. 6).

The edict of March 1304 also caused the fortification of Pera through regularly arranged "tower houses" along the quarter, as quoted by George Pachymeres by 1306 (1835, p.489-495), because the Genoese colonists actually abused the right of strong civil buildings.

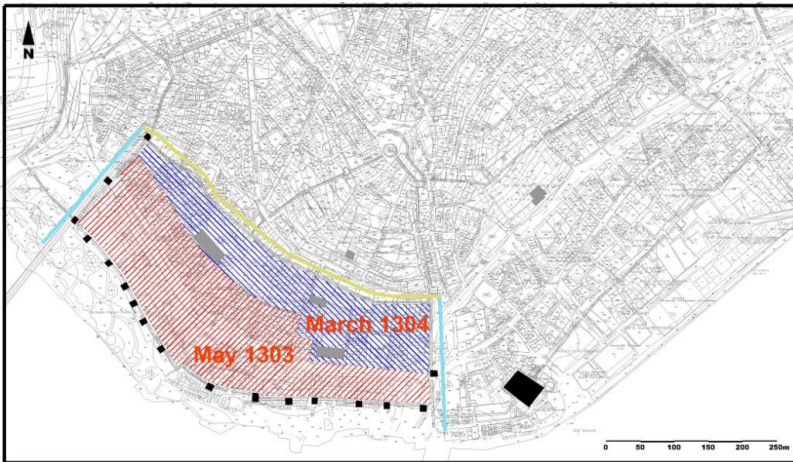


Figure 6. Experiment for the edict of March 1304 (Source: Sağlam)

Probable Origins of the First Genoese Church in Pera

Post-1453 Ottoman archival sources indicate that the abandoned San Michele was first used as an imperial storehouse and then demolished in the mid-16th for Rüstem Pasha Caravanserai, as Petrus Gyllius recalls (İnalçık, 1998). Yet, the earlier history of San Michele had remained unknown. Its pivotal position with a massive plot next to the Golden Horn and in the middle

of the ancient Sykai, which then formed the first Genoese quarter is significant. When considered the transformation and continuity of Hagia Irene (to San Domenico), Hagioi Anargyroi (to Sant'Anna) and Hagios Nikolaos (to San Francesco) in the central Galata, it is highly likely that San Michele actually replaced an earlier shrine on the same plot, following the arrival of the Genoese in 1267. It would be a more practical option like those three cases, instead of creating a new, huge plot in the center of a preexisting settlement. This church was perchance the previously mentioned Hagia Thekla; a possibility most recently discussed in detail and promoted by Çınaryılmaz and Ar (2020) through historic records and material evidence.

Although the Early Byzantine built environment of Galata is mostly unclear, there were certainly maritime walls with gates along its coastline. Sykai was a fortified settlement already in the early 6th century, which was recalled by contemporary sources like *Chronicon Paschale* and John Malalas (Hurbanič, 2015, p.14-15). It was also seen that Galata's grid urban layout dates back prior the Genoese rule, therefore maritime gates can be supposed in the coastal ends of the major axes of that grid layout along the central Sykai. These assumptions well match with the plot of present Rüstem Pasha Caravanserai, where San Michele once located; and also with the defined position of Hagia Thekla, as a coastal church in Sykai proper and inside the city walls with a gateway. Hagia Thekla does not appear in later sources at all.

In addition, among the earlier churches of Sykai with roughly known positions, Hagia Pelagia stood in the west (near Hagios Konon), Hagia Maura stood in the east (perchance replaced the Temple of Aphrodite), and the one of the Maccabees stood in the inland. Thus, Hagia Thekla remains as the only candidate in order to be supposed next to the walled Sykai coast proper. It also appears as the earliest church of Sykai, within the context of Patriarch Fravitta by the late 5th century. Therefore, it can also be questioned that the single, anonymous church of Sykai inside the mid-5th century *Notitia* was in fact Hagia Thekla, not the 6th century Hagia Irene, as superficially supposed by Berger (1997, p.373) after ambiguous, later legends from secondary sources that dated its origins allegedly to the 2nd century. The church in the mid-5th century *Notitia* must had a central position in Sykai, likewise San Michele (later Caravanserai). Though the famous "*münakkaş kenise*" (decorated church) in the *vakfiye* of Mehmed II (1938, p.202) was commonly attributed to San Francesco, archival records reveal that it actually referred to San Michele (Çınaryılmaz and Ar, 2020, p.22).

Positional Continuities of Further Shrines

Hagios Georgios in the edict of May 1303 remained opposite the northern border of Pera (Belgrano, 1877, p.103-104). Five Genoese registries dated 1390-1392 are about "*ecclesia sancti Georgii*" in Pera (Belgrano, 1877). This church appeared in the same place in Ottoman tax records from 1455 and 1519 (İnalçık, 1998). Its ownership had changed several times between Catholic religious orders until a final purchase by the Austrian Lazarists in 1882, who established present St. Georgs-Kolleg. While it was fully reconstructed after the fire of 1660, its present building is a 19th century reconstruction (Marmara, 2006, p.40-43).

Niewöhner (2011) argues that St. Benoît was originally a Byzantine church from the late 13th or early 14th centuries with a cross-in-square plan, which was dedicated to Mary. Such a church (as Theotokos) allegedly existed in Sykai by the 6th and 7th centuries but this source is uncertain. According to a commemoration slab, it was occupied by the Benedictines in 1427 and renamed as San Benedetto or Santa Maria della Cisterna / Misericordia, though Greeks continued to call as Panagia Chrysopege (Covel, 1905, p.52-58). Present building is largely from the 17th and 18th centuries but some authentic architectural parts have survived. Its ownership was changed between several religious orders until 1783, when the Lazarists took possession (Niewöhner, 2011).

The church and hospital of Sant'Antonio first appears in a Genoese archival record dated 25 December 1390 (Belgrano, 1877, p.153). By the 17th century, the complex of "*Andon*" with a holy spring was reportedly located just inside Kurşunlu Mağaza Gate (Leaded Magazine, former Galata Castle). It was converted into a mosque by Sultan Ibrahim (r. 1640-1648), which is Kemankeş Karamustafapaşa Mosque today (Atabinen, 1949, p.4-5; Kömürçiyen, 1988, p.35).

An Ottoman record dated 1519 includes the first mention of San Sebastiano as "*San Bastiyan*" (İnalçık, 1998, p.312). There has always been an uncertainty concerning the precise location and origins of San Sebastiano, which resulted with its symbolic, baseless appearance somewhere near San Francesco on mappings, such as the one of Balard (1978). However, its exact place under the Franciscan possession was shown on a sketch with notes dated 1653, which was published by Matteucci (1967) without interpretation. That plot was the one of Bereketzade Medresesi Mosque today (Fig. 7). It was originally built as a theology school in 1705-1706, which later became a mosque

(Eyice, 1996). Hence, San Sebastiano probably shared the same fate with the nearby Franciscan convent, which was expropriated after a late 17th century fire.

An alternative reading can be proposed for the origins of San Sebastiano, which was supposedly built during the Genoese rule. The Ottoman tax survey of 1455 indicates that the quarter of *Fabya* with Latin and Jewish inhabitants had a church called "*San Fabyan*" (San Fabiano), and the Jewish poorhouse (*cümerâ-yi Yahudiyân*) (İnalçık, 2012). When considered the study of İnalçık (1998) for precisely identified quarters with their demographics by 1455, somewhere towards the north of modern Karaköy Square can be supposed for *Fabya* quarter, because the Jews of Galata mostly lived there. Thus, the exact location of San Sebastiano that was explained above and the supposed place of *Fabya* quarter with the Church of San Fabiano roughly correspond.

Curiously enough, San Fabiano does not appear after 1489 and San Sebastiano does not appear before 1519 in Ottoman documents (İnalçık, 1998). In this respect, a chronological continuity appears for these churches around the same locality. Moreover, Saints Fabian and Sebastian are frequently associated to each other within the Roman Catholic tradition that both of them had the same feast day on 20 January. Hence, it can be argued that San Fabiano and San Sebastiano in the archival sources indicated the same building. This argument would confirm pre-1453 origins of San Sebastiano, but the reason behind this name variation between 1489-1519 remains unknown.

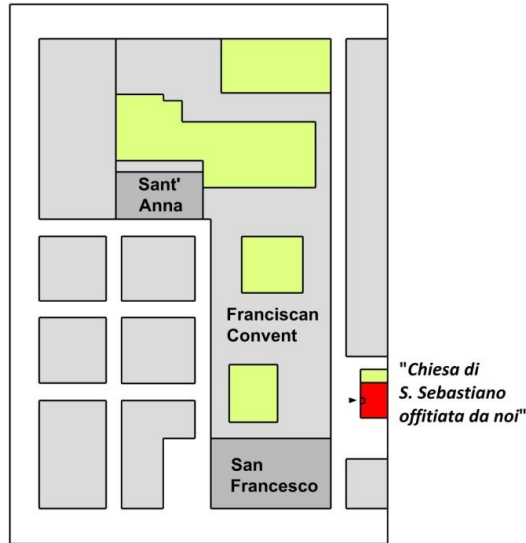


Figure 7. Location of San Sebastiano, after an *Archivio Storico "De Propaganda Fide"* document dated 1653 and published by Matteucci (1967) (Source: Sağlam)

Arap Mosque was not the only mosque established through converting a church following 1453. Another one was Manastır Mescidi, literally the "Monastery Mosque". It was founded with an elementary school for orphans by Molla Gürâni (c. 1410-1488), who was Shaykh al-Islâm between 1480-1488. It has been said that the mosque was previously a church, as its name also testifies (Ayvansarayî, 1865, p.34; Yıldız, 1988, p.77). It was later disappeared without leaving any trace but its location was reportedly around Arap Mosque, more precisely in Abdüssalah Street (Eyice, 1996, p.308; Öz, 1965, p.45). This place roughly corresponds to the former Byzantine church of Hagios Theodoros in the edict of May 1303.

By 1455, the Greek churches of Galata appear in the eastern part until Tophane. The Genoese were concentrated in the first concession zone and its immediate surroundings (İnalçık, 1998). As a result, it is strongly probable that Manastır Mosque was actually converted from a Roman Catholic church following 1453 that its position was formerly occupied by Hagios Theodoros. Nearby examples like San Domenico, Sant'Anna, San Francesco and San Sebastiano support this hypothesis. When considered the vineyards that surrounded Hagios Theodoros by May 1303, a minor church of the colony called San Costantino can be proposed for that location for the 14th-15th centuries,

because a notary record from 11 December 1447 that was published by Roccatagliata (1982) mentions a vineyard near the Church of San Costantino in Pera.

Another earlier mosque of Galata from the period of Mehmed II was Hacı A'ver (Hacı Âmâ / Yekçeşm Hacı) Mosque. It was located right inside Azap Gate with its own quarter, which was present by 1516-1517 (Ayverdi, 1958, p.259). It was the only mosque there, which disappeared in the early 19th century. Its position corresponds to another Byzantine church mentioned in the edict of May 1303, called Hagios Ioannis. It was most probably occupied by the Genoese during the 14th-15th centuries.

The church and hospital of San Giovanni Battista first appears on a slab dated 1372 (Covel, 1905, p.60). Some Genoese expense and donation registries from 1390-1391 and 1416 also mention this complex (Belgrano, 1877, p.153, 164, 971). The testimony of Covel (1905, p.61) by the 17th century locates San Giovanni Battista next to the coastal walls with towers. Moreover, Ottoman registries from the 15th century indicate that the *zâviye* (convent) of "*San Zani*" remained somewhere between the small church of Santa Maria near San Francesco in the west and the Greek church of Panagia Kasteliutisa next to the former castle in the east, therefore somewhere around modern Karaköy Square (İnalçık, 1998, p.370, 376; İnalçık, 2012, p.290-293). As the Genoese were not allowed to construct new buildings out of their quarter by the mid-14th century, the aforementioned sources altogether point the eastern end of their first concession zone, being modern Balıkpazarı. According to an Ottoman registry dated 28 February 1663, a huge commercial complex was built above the plot of the burnt "*Büyük Frenk Kilisesi*" (Large Catholic Church) with a belfry in Balıkpazarı (Akkoyun, 2019, p.379). Correspondingly, a large, state-owned plot with a single block of stock exchange called Komisyon Hanı / Consolide Han existed in Balıkpazarı by late 19th and early 20th centuries, which appears as the most suitable place to include the former complex of San Giovanni Battista, burnt in 1660. That *han* was demolished in 1913 for widening Kemeraltı Street, where Eski Borsa Hanı (Old Stock Exchange Han) was built on the diminished plot. It was also demolished in 1956 for modern Karaköy Square.

A minor church from the Genoese period was Santa Chiara. It was built around the mid-15th century, probably near the namesake gate (*Porta Santa Chiara*) in Mumhane. Nothing is known about its fate, as it was disappeared after the fire of 1660 (Belgrano, 1877, p.272-273; Marmara, 2006, p.32).

In addition, the Ottoman tax survey of 1455 published by İnalçık (2012) lists further shrines of Galata, which confirms their presence since the Genoese period, as the Greek Orthodox churches of Hagios Ioannis, Hagios Nikolaos and Christos were present by 1455. After several church lists, Karaca (2008) was able to track them down only until the late 16th century. The first two churches are still standing but both of them had full reconstructions in the 19th century (Karaca, 2008). Sotiros Christos was demolished in 1958 during public works. "*Aya Horhoro*" (Surp Krikor Lusavoriç) and "*kenîsâ-i Yahûdiyân*" (church of Jews) were further shrines mentioned by 1455 (İnalçık, 2012). The Armenian church was first built in 1360 as Surp Sarkis but rebuilt in 1391 / 1436 (Kömürçüyan, 1988; Tuğlacı, 1991). The synagogue was most probably present Zülfaris (Kal Kadoş), being the oldest known synagogue in Galata and was dated before 1671 (Türker, 2000, p.62). Both of them were also rebuilt in modern times but kept their initial positions. Similarly, Ss. Pietro e Paolo was founded in 1414 as a private chapel by Giannotto da Bisticcia, a noble resident of Pera, but it had several reconstructions between the 17th-19th centuries due to fires (Palazzo and Raineri, 1943). According to the Ottoman survey of 1455, the quarter with Hagios Georgios (today Sankt Georg) also had "*a church in the garden*" that belonged to a private residence (İnalçık, 2012). Ss. Pietro e Paolo was not mentioned inside that survey by name, but it can be argued that the aforesaid anonymous statement perchance defined this church, as it is close to Sankt Georg. Moreover, two 17th century letters indicate that the huge plot of Ss. Pietro e Paolo formerly included also the Dominican nuns' convent (Loenertz, 1935, p.340). It was Santa Caterina that several archival records dated 1390 and 1455 locate it in the vicinity of "*San Domingo*" (today Arap Mosque) and also San Giorgio / Sankt Georg (Belgrano, 1877 p.153-155; İnalçık, 2012, p.228).

As is seen, many major shrines of Galata kept a positional continuity through centuries but their buildings and functions did not remain the same, due to reconstructions and/or conversions. Nevertheless, public use somehow remained on their plots (Fig. 8).

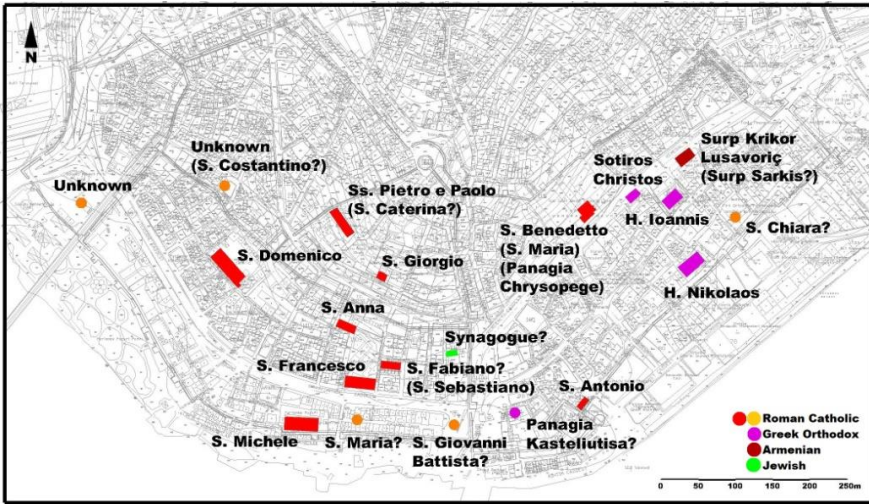


Figure 8. Shrines of Galata by 1455 (Source: Sağlam)

Conclusion

Though no city was founded incidentally, each has its own story and urban characteristics. This situation shows no difference for Istanbul, as its built environment has multiple layers from different periods. Outcomes of this research display the importance of revealing the rich urban character of a historical settlement, through a careful application of primary sources onto the topography with proper urban practices. The need for an interdisciplinary approach as a combined methodology also emerges for such discoveries.

Istanbul's multilayered built heritage is literally a palimpsest, which needs to be thoroughly examined. Galata, as one of its oldest suburbs has significant examples that are helpful to perceive former layers of the urban palimpsest, which set a clearer spatial transition and continuity in between. The outcomes better superpose the Byzantine, Genoese and Ottoman periods of the same sacred spaces within Galata's built environment, as the nature of such an urban palimpsest requires.

On the other hand, although traces of the aforesaid historical periods are still perceivable, it appears that they do not stratify altogether. When later urban developments were executed, the predecessor layer often became the expense and erased by the successor one. Therefore, no monument has remained physically intact but kept a positional and functional continuity, which is religious use.

Layers of a historical city often overlap and sometimes also replace each other. For instance, San Domenico, Sant'Anna and San Francesco from the Genoese period were constructed on the plots of former Byzantine churches, namely Hagia Irene, Hagioi Anargyroi and Hagios Nikolaos, respectively. This situation was also supposed for San Michele, as the former Hagia Thekla. The aforesaid San Domenico and the Franciscan convent with two churches were then replaced by the Ottomans' Arap Mosque and Yeni Mosque, respectively. Similarly, Bereketzade Medresesi Mosque was built on the plot of San Sebastiano, perchance also known as San Fabiano. A similar positional correspondence between two lesser known mosques (Manastır and Hacı A'ver) and churches (Theodoros and Ioannis) was also questioned, but those cases keep uncertainty.

In addition, St. Benoît was supposedly a Byzantine church by origin, which was then occupied by the Catholics. It was also seen that further Latin, Greek and Jewish shrines of Galata kept their initial positions since the Genoese period but they were repeatedly reconstructed after some devastating 17th-19th century fires (Fig. 9).

Finally, even if a religious function had ended, public usage usually continued, as a caravanserai has replaced San Michele, a bazaar has replaced Yeni Mosque, and a *han* replaced San Giovanni Battista. Thus, according to all the mentioned outcomes that point the urban palimpsest phenomenon, it was seen that Galata kept its initial urban layout to some certain extent, through its major shrines. Theoretically speaking, those outcomes would easily be expected after similar examples in the literature, but the discussed case studies with more precise spatial discoveries cement the palimpsest phenomenon from a proper urban studies perspective.

Table 1. Summary of main outcomes (parentheses indicate first appearance).

Transformation (Possible)			
H. Theodoros (b. 1303)	S. Costantino (b. 1447)	Manastır M. (1480s)	
H. Ioannis (b. 1303)	Unknown (14 th -15 th c.)	H. A'ver M. (1480s)	
S. Giovanni Battista (b. 1372)	Unknown <i>han</i> (1663)	Karaköy Square (1956)	
Transformation and/or Later Reconstruction			
H. Thekla (mid-5 th c.)	S. Michele (1270s)	Caravanserai (1540s)	
H. Irene (552)	S. Domenico (1320s)	Arap M. (1480s)	
Anargyroi (b. 1303)	S. Anna (14 th -15 th c.)	Yeni M. (1690s)	Bazaar (1950s)
H. Nikolaos (b. 1303)	S. Francesco (13 th c.)	Yeni M. (1690s)	Bazaar (1950s)
S. Fabiano / S. Sebastiano (b. 1455)		Bereketzade Medresesi M. (1700s)	
S. Antonio (b. 1390)		Kemankeş Karamustafapaşa M. (1640s)	
Panagia Chrysopege (13 th -14 th c.)		S. Maria / S. Benoît (1427)	

S. Caterina (b. 1389) / Ss. Pietro e Paolo (1414)

H. Georgios / Sankt Georg (b. 1303)

Zülfaris / Kal Kadoş (b. 1455)

H. Nikolaos (b. 1455)

H. Ioannis (b. 1455)

Christos (b. 1455)

S. Krikor Lusavoriç / S. Sarkis (1360)

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