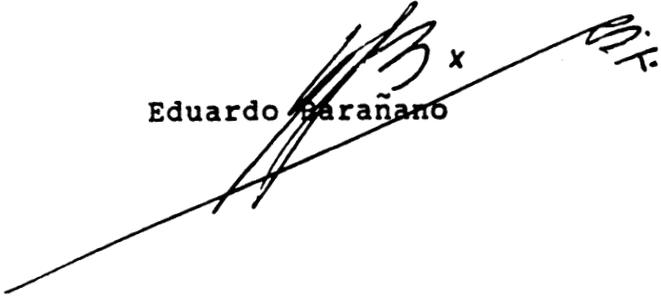


Historic Preservation in Istanbul, Turkey

Notes of the 19th Conference of the
International Fellows of The Johns
Hopkins University jointly organized
with the Middle East Technical Uni-
versity of Turkey, June 17-23, 1989

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Eduardo Barañano

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M.RIFAT AKBULUT

Authorized by M.Rifat Akbulut. II-20-90

HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY

On June 17-23 last year I attended the 19th International Fellows Conference of The Johns Hopkins University organized jointly with the Middle East Technical University in Turkey. The beautiful city of Istanbul made such an impression on me that I am sharing my impressions with those of us involved in historic preservation.

The conference brought together about ninety senior scholars from different parts of the world who had been invited in previous years to conduct special research on problems related to their expertise in urban and regional planning. We met to interchange ideas on subjects related to historical preservation; land use laws for land acquisition and squatters rights, housing shortage in Istanbul, infrastructure problems, and the process of rapid urbanization.

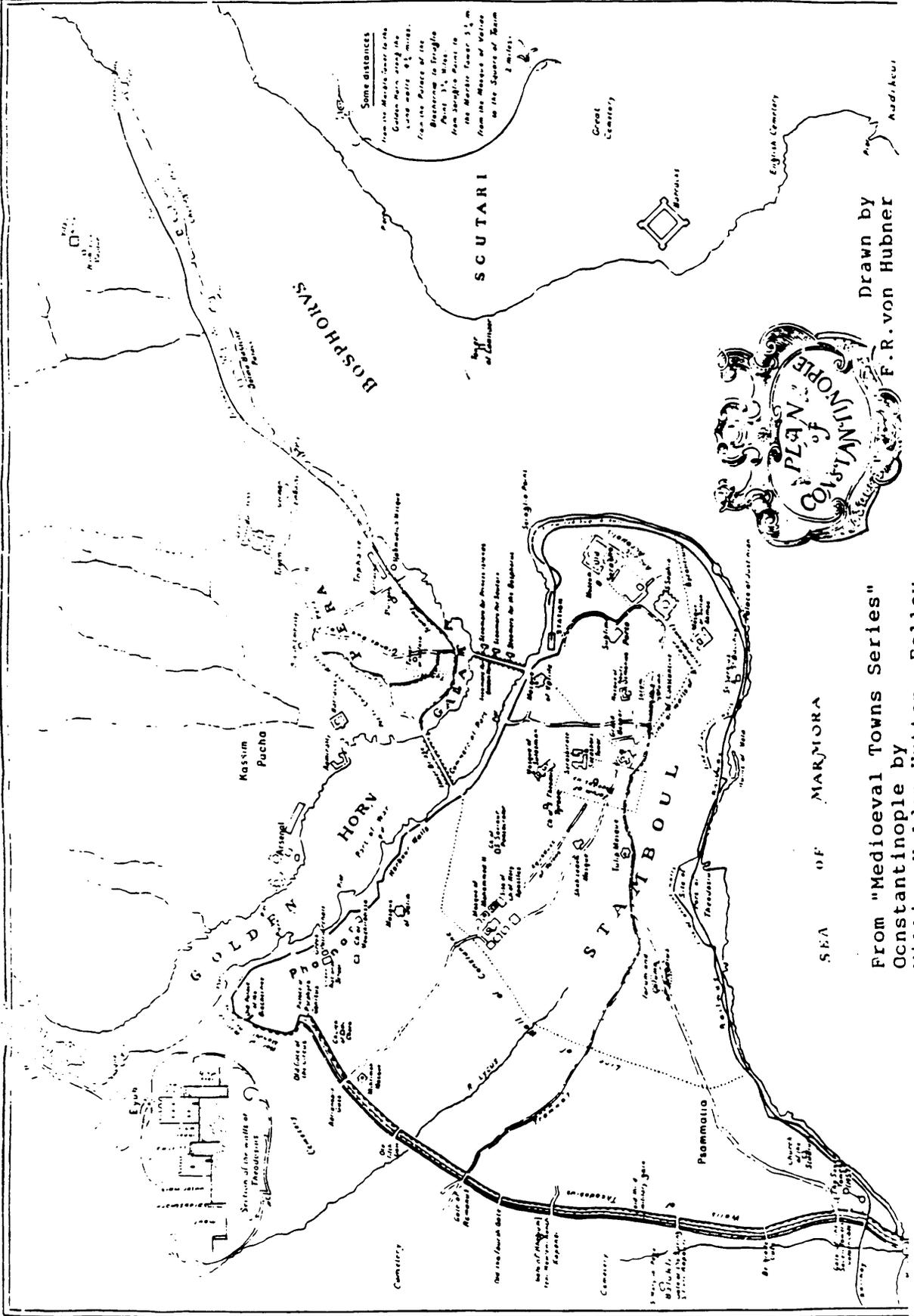
At the conference we cruised along the beautiful shoreline of Istanbul, the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus Strait and the Marmara Sea. We visited new housing and urban development projects recently completed to the North of metropolitan Istanbul. The city of Istanbul is a grand sight. The city covers a 17 square mile triangular peninsula located at the confluence of the Bosphorus Strait and the Marmara Sea. The Bosphorus Strait is 30 miles long and, with the Marmara Sea, separate Europe from Asia. The south-north base of this triangular peninsula is about three miles long. The vertex of the triangle is located about five miles to the east of the base line. To the north Istanbul overlooks a short channel that resembles a steer's horn from which it took its name: the Golden Horn. Exhibit # 1 illustrates the entire Istanbul Peninsula.

Istanbul has a dramatic history of over ten centuries. Since its foundation from Emperor Constantine in the IVth Century the city grew from a small fortified settlement located at the easternmost end of the Golden Horn to a metropolitan region that greatly surpasses these natural boundaries.

The seven hills of this large peninsula are filled with beautiful palaces, churches, agoras, acropolis, hippodromes and viaducts, built by the Romans, the Byzantines and the Ottomans, as shown in Exhibit 2 "A general view of the city."

From the IVth to the XVth centuries Istanbul was the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, a place of world government, a court-city, the heart of the refined Byzantine civilization.

Istanbul has always been a symbol-city, a city of international trade, rather than an agricultural or industrial center like so many other cities in Roman times. The city has always depended for its sustenance from the agricultural production of the fertile lands of Turkey in Asia.



Some distances
 from the Marble Column to the
 Golden-Horn wall 8 1/2 miles.
 from the Palace of the
 Blachernae to the Golden-Horn
 from St. Sophia to the
 from the Marble Column 3 1/2 m
 from the Mosque of Sultan
 in the Square of Sultan
 2 miles.



Drawn by
 F. R. von Hubner

From "Medioeval Towns Series"
 Constantinople by
 William Holden Hutton, Fellow
 of St. John Baptist College,
 Oxford, M. Dent & Co.
 Aldine House, London 1900.

Authorization requested.
 II-20-90

In the XIVth century Istanbul became the glory of the Byzantines. It almost exceeded its rival Rome in size and in the magnificence of its architecture and its frescoes, its fortifications, ramparts and bastions and monumental gates. Istanbul resisted the attacks of its powerful enemies from Asia and Europe with the formidable walls that I admired during my visit. The first protective wall (about two miles in length) was built by Emperor Constantine, encircling the first small settlement. Emperor Theodosius built another wall. The second wall is a three miles long and fifty feet high double wall that further protected the city with a fifty feet wide moat. Throughout the centuries, new fortifications and bastions were built along the coasts of the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus Strait and the Marmara Sea, totalling twelve miles in length.

But in the XVth century Istanbul was invaded by powerful armies from the East and the new Ottoman civilization replaced the old Byzantine one. The invaders left a firm imprint with their architecture and culture; Istanbul's churches were converted into mosques and slender minarets were built around the original churches. Later on, most of these mosques were converted into museums that amazed us during our visit.

CONSTANTINOPOLITANÆ VRBIS EFFIGIES AD VIVUM EXPRESSA, QVAM TVRCE STAMPOLDA



- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Spangl. Der Türk. Sultan Palast. | 2. S. Sophia. | 3. Aufgeseh. Thron im Topk. | 4. Der Sultan Mahomet's 4. Gärten. | 5. Die 12. Anstalten oder Verhörsämter. | 6. Bekamts Duffel Hofplatz. | 7. Die 12. Anstalten des Cons. | 8. Stadt von Constantin Polak. |
| 9. S. Mary. Cumbler. | 10. Hypodromus. | 11. Sultan Busseths Hofplatz. | 12. Sultan Mahomet's Hofplatz. | 13. Sultan Mahomet's Hofplatz. | 14. Sultan Mahomet's Hofplatz. | 15. Sultan Mahomet's Hofplatz. | 16. Sultan Mahomet's Hofplatz. |
| 17. S. Sophia. | 18. S. Sophia. | 19. S. Sophia. | 20. S. Sophia. | 21. S. Sophia. | 22. S. Sophia. | 23. S. Sophia. | 24. S. Sophia. |

Edwin A. Grosvenor, Volume I
 Robert Brothers, Boston, 1895
 University Press. John Wilson & Son
 Cambridge, Massachusetts

CONSTANTINOPLÉ FROM GALATA IN 1635
 Authorization requested. II-20-90

Historic Preservation in Istanbul.

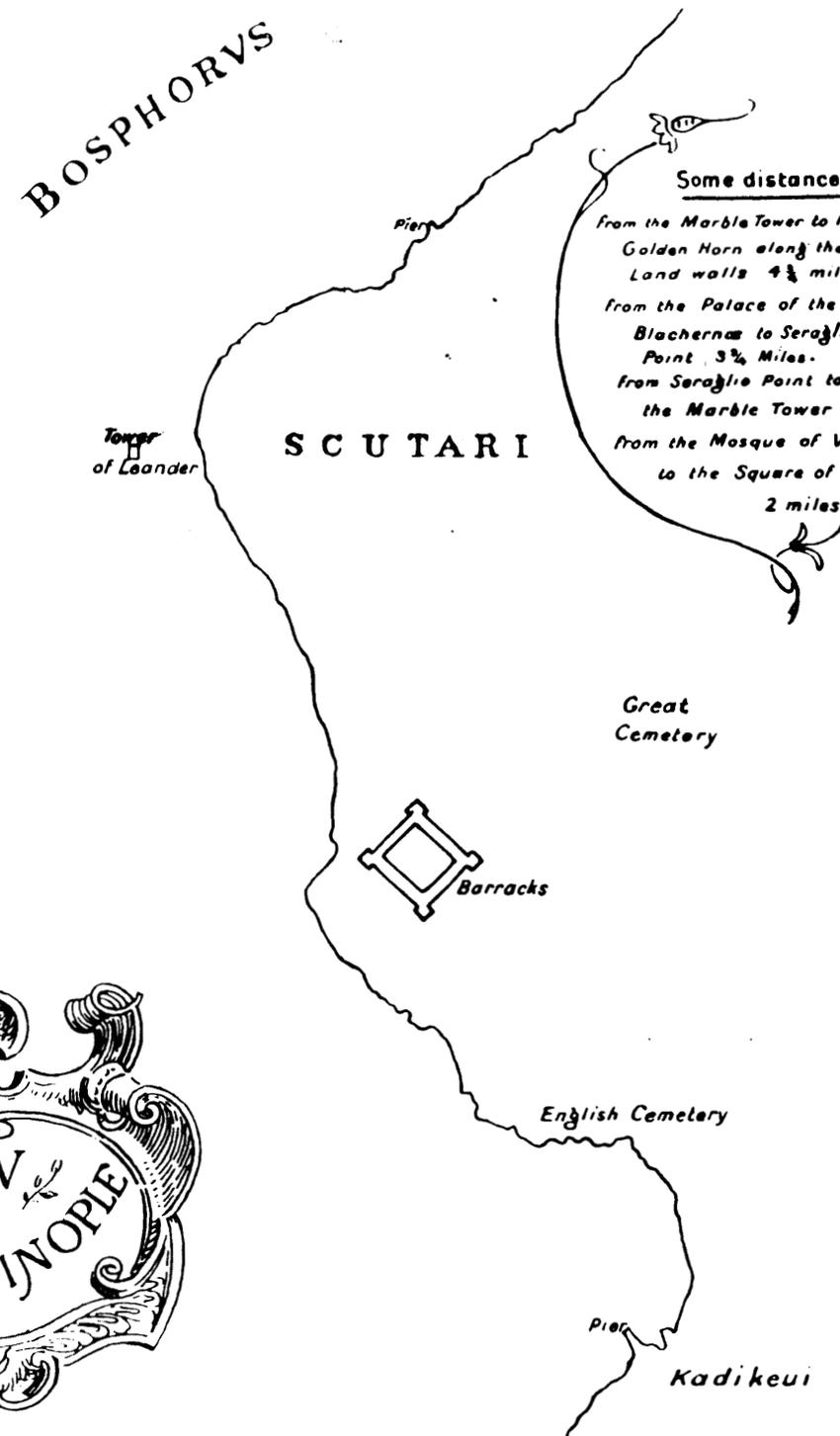
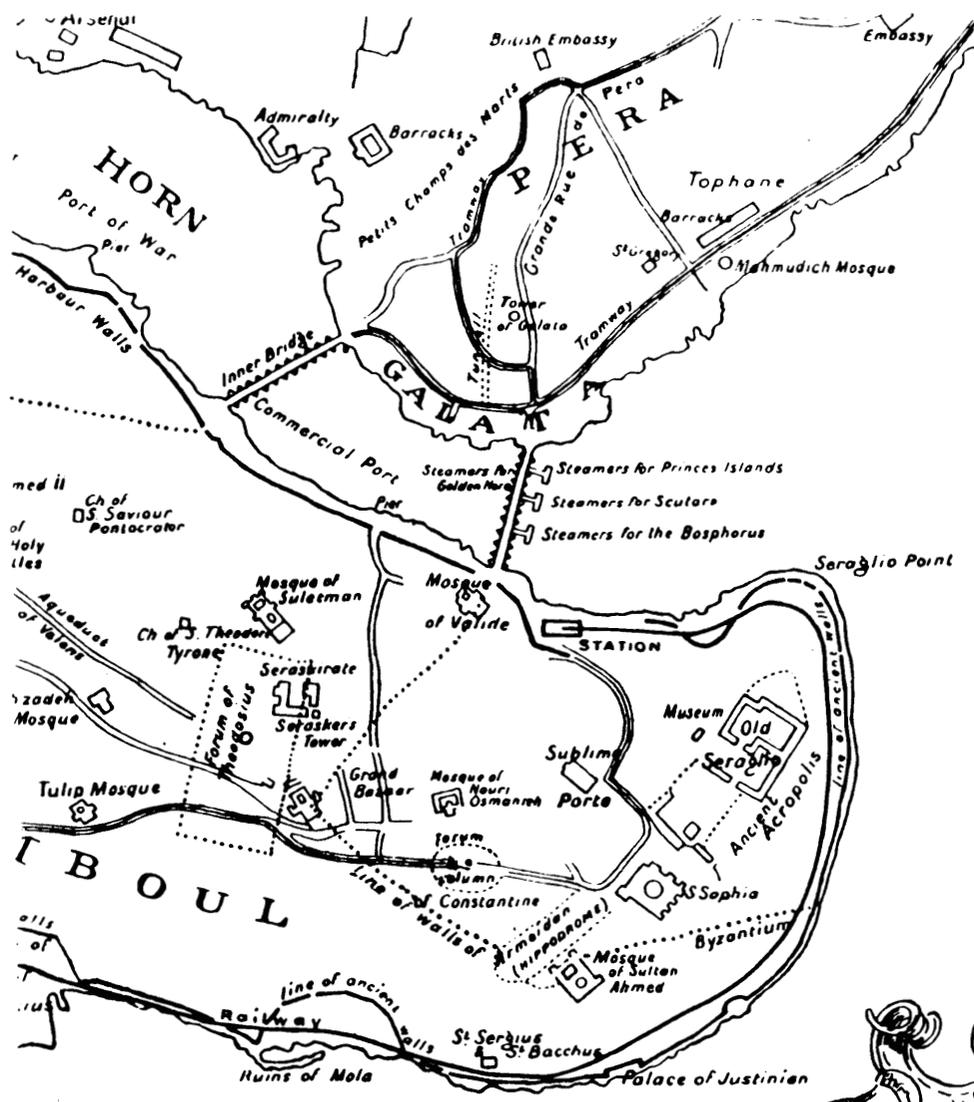
At the conference we discussed how historical preservation helps to strengthen national values and how this can be achieved in a complex, dynamic and illustrious city like Istanbul. Dr. George Piccinato introduced the main theme of the Conference, "Preserving Istanbul as a World Treasure" emphasizing the specific measures of historic preservation and their impact on future urban development patterns.

Dr. Raci Bademli, from METU discussed the attempts to reshape the historical core of Istanbul, particularly its Golden Horn area.

The Government and the private sector have joined to control urban congestion around the important mosques in Istanbul, a phenomenon that has been almost impossible to eliminate until very recently. The measures to control the growth of these areas consist in the establishment of special historic districts where severe regulations restrict the uses of the land and the type of architecture. Other forms of control include financial incentives to those who would undertake renovations of areas around the main mosques and other historic monuments in Istanbul.

We admired the successful replanning and the clearance of sporadic and irregular urban areas near the beautiful mosques of Hagia Sophie and the Blue Mosque, which are enhanced with open spaces as part of new overall designs. In the past most of the mosques in Istanbul were impossible to fully enjoy because of uncontrolled constructions attached to them obstructing the views. Now we can enjoy the open views of these unique pieces of architecture by viewing them as part of well designed architectural spaces with small plazas, courts and public parks. These open spaces surround not only the revered mosques but also other remnants of Roman times, such as the two original pylons marking the end of the chariot races in the Hippodrome and the public gardens of the Topkapi Palace located at the tip of the promontory overlooking the Bosphorus. Exhibit # 3 illustrates this view of Istanbul. Exhibit 4 shows the Hippodrome area and the Blue Mosque.

We studied the program for preservation and reconstruction of the imposing fortifications and bastions along the coasts of the Bosphorus and the Marmara Sea. The Turkish Government has established programs to eliminate inadequate structures attached to the fortifications around Istanbul. Our colleagues took us in a bus-tour on a five-mile long avenue parallel to the formidable Theodosian walls. This new highway was built over the old moat parallel to the Theodosian fortifications and has been preserved in its entirety. The glory of Roman times in Istanbul is gradually back to the fore through these efforts of preservation and reconstruction all over the large peninsula of Istanbul.



OF MARMORA

A problem that has besieged the Government and planning officials has been the problem of squatters who entered Istanbul from eastern Turkey during the last decades. These migrants settled wherever they could. As in other cases in large metropolitan areas, the immigrants settled in instant towns or squatters settlements, in this case, mostly around some of the mosques. The problems that they created are awesome: enormous urban congestion, health problems, dismal economic conditions and inadequate transportation facilities. Special urban programs to solve this situation have been carried out. The programs include identifying the areas in the Master Plan for Greater Istanbul where immediate action is needed for applying urban controls of future urban growth and the gradually moving this migrant population to pre-selected areas directly and through indirect means. The Government is constructing apartment buildings for these newly arrived residents near the new industrial areas. These newly designed areas contain, in addition to the apartment blocks, shopping units, parks, schools and other community facilities. Their architecture is simple and efforts are being made to improve the design and architectural styles.

The Master Plan for Greater Istanbul identified and assigned new areas to the north of the Golden Horn for future industrial uses. Exhibit # 5 illustrates these locations. These new industrial buildings will gradually replace the old industrial structures that grew to the South of the peninsula along the coast of the Marmara Sea during the last decades. The unplanned industrial areas had become disorderly, unsightly and isolated from other parts of metropolitan Istanbul. Their relocation is now almost complete and we can see the more harmonious relation between these new industrial areas and the new housing blocks recently completed in its immediate surroundings. At the same time we observed the aesthetic effects of the clearing of these old industrial sectors that had grown along the Marmara Sea, reviving the outstanding coast line of historic Istanbul. In this particular case historic preservation has been a bonus to the vigorous industrial replanning in the peninsula.

Related examples of Historic Preservation.

The conference included presentation of cases of historical preservation and regional planning in other countries with the purpose of comparing historic preservation actions in other parts of the world and those applied in Istanbul. Programs and projects in Spain, Puerto Rico and Indonesia were discussed at the conference.



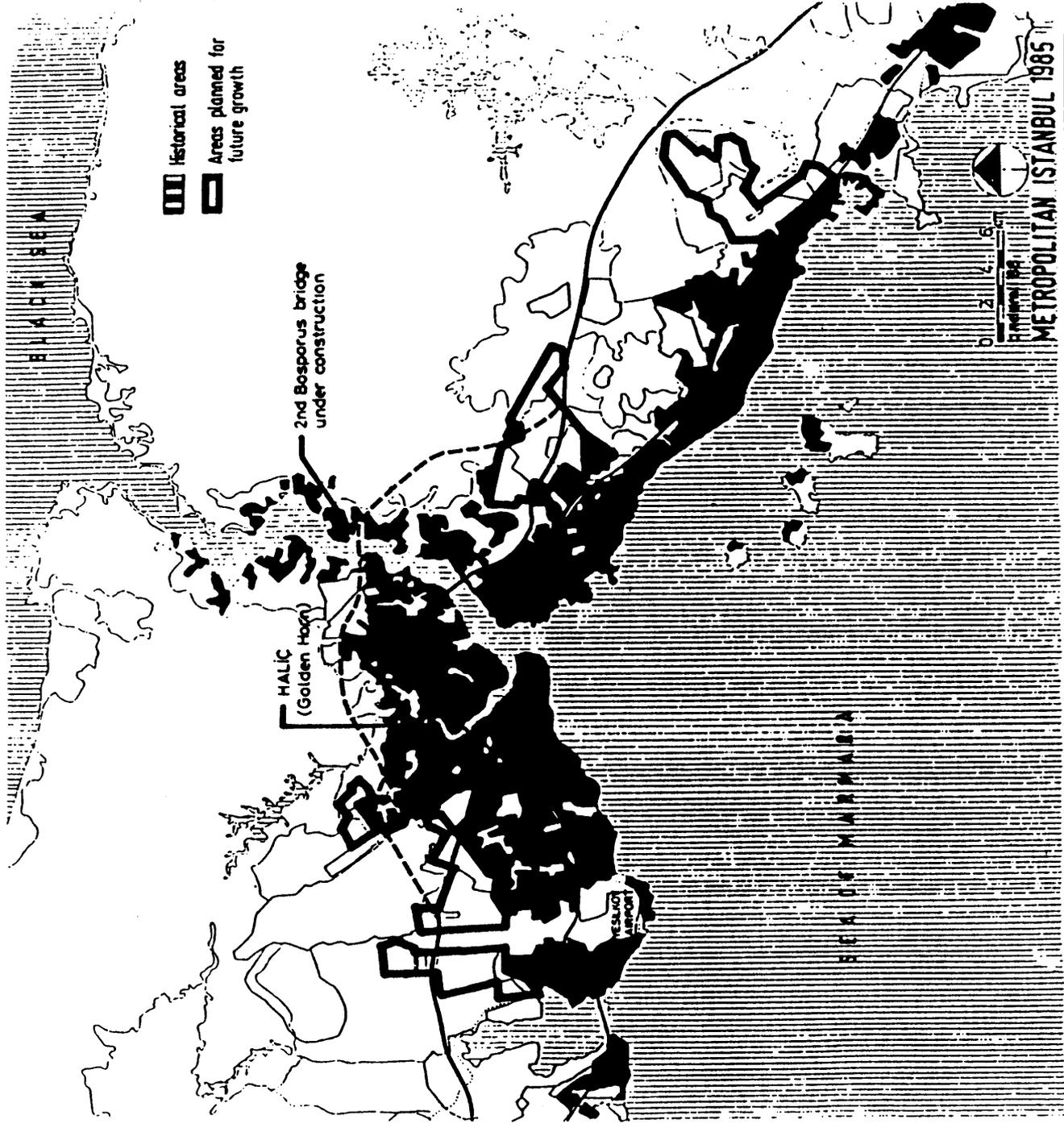
Amador Ferrer, representing the Metropolitan Corporation of Barcelona, Spain, presented the program for preservation and renovation of the historic center of Barcelona. Ferrer explained the government's principles for the historic preservation of old Barcelona through the replanning of the port area and the integration of the old historic center of Barcelona with the newly planned port area. New street patterns link the two areas without destroying the medieval character of the old city. The newly designed port area along the Mediterranean coast has marinas, shopping centers, tourist complexes and parks along the newly designed boulevard linking the entire coastline and opening it to the view of visitors and residents alike. Historical monuments are preserved in the historical part and along the wide port belt. The plan shows a delicate balance between careful design and preservation of the historic character of the area.

I presented a case-study on the preservation of the old city of San Juan, Puerto Rico and the planning of the San Juan Metropolitan Area. I emphasized the policies of the Puerto Rican and the United States governments, preserving the two mile long fortifications and ramparts that protected the island from attacks by the English, the French and the Dutch, who tried to control the rich trade in gold and silver from Mexico and Peru sent by the Spanish Crown to Sevilla, Spain, in the XVI century. The fifty foot high stone walls that survived the famous storms and hurricanes of the Atlantic and the Caribbean Sea are today in a perfect state of preservation. The old housing and shops that were attached to these walls during the depression of the 1930's were finally eliminated. Exhibit # 6 shows an air view of "El Morro", the central fortifications of Old San Juan.

Other preservation efforts resulted in newly renovated monasteries, churches and plazas in the Old City of San Juan within the fortified walls. Exhibit # 7 illustrates the preservation of El Arsenal, a historic building in Old San Juan. Other regional elements of the plan created a new web of highways and parkways linking the many newly planned communities,

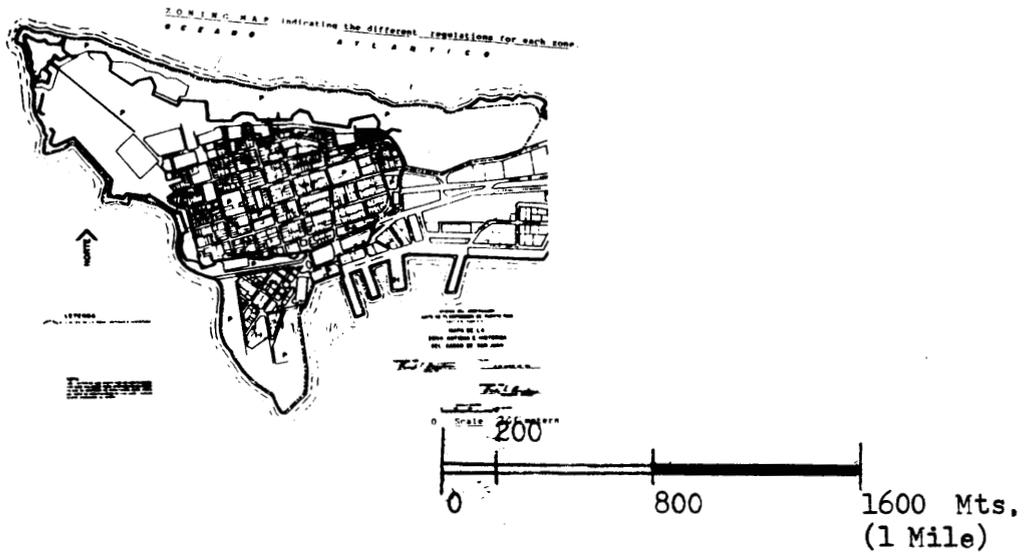
The entire region is linked by modern highways and parkways that easily reach the Old City of San Juan.

For me it was a revelation to see how similar were the respective planning strategies for these two cases, the small city of Old San Juan, Puerto Rico and the enormous Istanbul peninsula. These planning strategies are historic preservation, bold planning, and control of architecture styles and urban development. I loved to have detected these similarities in spite of the difference in size and in the impact of many centuries in both urban developments.



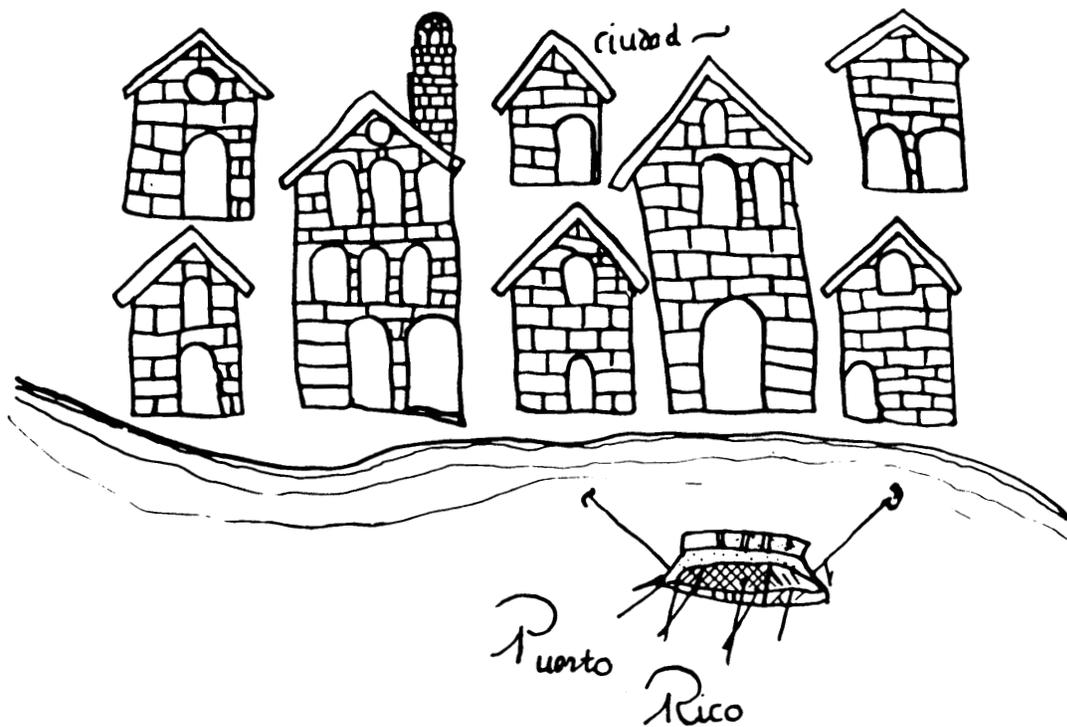
From "Istanbul in Historical perspective"
 by Dr. Raci Bademli, M.E.T.U.
 Middle East Technical University
 Turkey

Authorized by
 M.Rifat Akbulut
 METU. IX- 89



The fortified city of
Old San Juan, Puerto Rico.
1550
Zoning Plan, 1951.
Luis Muñoz Marín, Governor

(Zoning Regulations
Available upon request).



"A street in colonial San Juan" 1550 *

Copy of original in the General Archives
of the Indies, Spain.

(From the Ramirez de Arellano Collection
Museum of Anthropology and History
University of Puerto Rico, 1956).

* "A City is People" Eduardo Barañano
Aldus Printers, N.Y.

I am fascinated by one constant element in the planning teams in both places: Istanbul, from its origins in the IVth century and Old San Juan, the fortified city in the XVIth century; the reverence for history and work of man. Both planning groups were devoted to protect in the foreseeable future the rich heritage of their civilization.

Istanbul's message is strong and clear: Istanbul is dedicated to protect its national heritage; to preserve the Byzantine churches and mosques, and to create museums for the enjoyment of visitors and the pride of its people. Patient efforts of preservation, replanning and renovation of Istanbul's historic areas are revealing new architectural masterpieces in all their glory.

Istanbul is now more than ever a jewel city, the gateway to the Orient.

Two images remain clearly in my mind about Istanbul: first, Istanbul during the day with its silhouette of two hundred mosques overlooking the waters of the Bosphorus and the Marmara Sea; second, at night its illuminated minarets that mark the sacred spaces of the mosques, pointing their silver needles to the sky as stern sentinels guarding its glorious past.

One of my mentors, Thomas Sharp, a renowned British town planner, wrote in his book, Exeter Phoenix, words that are also applicable to Istanbul:

"The good plan is that which will fulfill the struggle of the place to be itself, which satisfied what a long time ago used to be called the "Genius of the Place".

As no other city that I have visited, Istanbul possesses the "genius of the place". Istanbul, is, indeed, a relic of the past but at the same time it is, definitely, a city of the future !

"Exeter Phoenix, a Plan for Rebuilding"
by Thomas Sharp. Published by the
Architectural Press, London, 1946.

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<u>Exhibits</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Title</u>
	Front cover	"Istanbul in Historical Perspective" Credit to M.Rifat Akbulu, METU
1	1	"Plan of Constantinople", drawn by F.R. Von Hubeer from "Medieval Towns Series" W.H.Hutton, m.Dent & Co. Aldine House, London 1900 *
2	1	"Constantinople from Galata in 1635 Edwin A.Grovenor, Volume I, University Press - John Wilson 7 Son, Cambridge, Massachusetts *
3	3	Slide "The Blue Mosque and the Golden Horn". Keskin - Color & Kodak
4	3	Slide "The Hippodrome and the Blue Mosque" Keskin Color-Kodak
5	4	Map of Greater Istanbul indicating historical zones. Dr.Raci Bademil, METU
6	5	Slide "Air view of San Juan, Puerto Rico. Fortifications - # 12.*
7	5	Photo El Arsenal, Old San Juan, Puerto Rico, Author: Harry Burns.

* Authorization requested by letter 07-21-89
** Authorization included