ARCHITECTURAL REVOLUTION ON THE OTTOMAN FRONTIER

Greece and Albania in the Age of Ali Pasha

Emily Neumeier

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS
UNIVERSITY PARK, PENNSYLVANIA

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Introduction

By the summer of 1820, the situation was looking rather grim for Ali Pasha. Thousands of soldiers, representing the full might of the Ottoman sultan, were descending upon his territory to force the surrender of all his titles and properties. Ali Pasha was a longtime governor on the western edge of the Ottoman Empire, controlling a large swath of land that today comprises most of northern Greece and southern Albania (fig. 1). During a tenure that spanned more than thirty years, he had ushered the region into relative prosperity, evidenced by several large-scale urban construction projects that the governor himself had sponsored. Ali Pasha's administrative capital in Ioannina thrived as an intellectual center and as a cosmopolitan hub for merchants hailing from Venice to Vienna. Foreign consuls from Britain, France, and Austria encountered a diverse, multiconfessional court that included Sufi shaykhs, Orthodox clergy, polyglot translators and scribes from the Ionian Islands, luminaries of the Greek Enlightenment movement, and those who would go on to play a prominent role in the Greek War of Independence. The governor's numerous architectural interventions shaped Ioannina as it stands today—the city's striking profile of a citadel jutting out onto the surrounding lake being the result of several building campaigns launched by Ali Pasha in the first years of the nineteenth century (fig. 2).

How did it all go wrong? The governor's considerable military strength and vast personal wealth, not to mention his frequent practice of meeting independently with European diplomats, eventually made him a liability in the eyes of the Ottoman authorities in Istanbul. Sultan Mahmud II accused the governor of treason and issued orders for his deposition.[1] Ali Pasha refused to resign and, hoping to negotiate some kind of resolution, sought refuge in his fortified palace complex within the Ioannina citadel. The British consul William Meyer was on hand to observe the final days of the beleaguered governor. As troops made their way to the city's bastions, Meyer reported in a dispatch to London that Ali Pasha, despite his family's desperate appeals to flee, "expressed the determination to meet his fate in the capital of that country, which has been the theatre of his fortunes and his triumphs."[2] After a protracted siege, news reached the Ottoman Porte in Istanbul in early 1822 that the sultan's agents had finally managed to capture and behead the self-styled Lion of Ioannina.[3]

The saga of Ali Pasha's destruction unfolded in tandem with the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence, which was spreading like wildfire throughout the region. For both of these events, Ottoman troops were mobilized to shut down bold experiments in local



FIGURE 1
The Ottoman Empire circa 1812, with the territory governed by Ali Pasha and his sons highlighted. Map by Matthew J. Jacobson.

self-definition. While one of these experiments famously succeeded, with the Hellenic Republic of Greece recognized as a sovereign state in 1830, the other was quashed in a decisive manner by the imperial center. In this study, I examine how the architecture that Ali Pasha commissioned was a key element in the governor's own improvisations in regional identity formation: an ambitious building program that was so revolutionary, it ultimately got him killed. Although Ali Pasha's aspirations to a semi-independent dynastic state ended with his death, during his lifetime as an Ottoman administrator he spent several decades using the built environment to leave his mark on the world around him—constructing a "theatre of his fortunes and his triumphs."

This book is a spatial history of an Ottoman frontier zone. In the early nineteenth century, some of the most consequential innovations in Ottoman architecture were taking place not in the capital of Istanbul but in the farthest reaches of imperial territory. A number of provincial power brokers, rising to prominence during an unstable period of political crises, sparked an explosion of building activity throughout the Eastern Mediterranean. I investigate this wider phenomenon through the case study of Ali Pasha (fig. 3), who epitomized the trend by emerging as one of the most prolific patrons of architecture in the history of the empire. Born in what is now Albania to a family of local notables, Ali Pasha embarked on a precipitous climb to authority in his youth.



FIGURE 2
Louis Dupré, *The Palace and Fortress of Ioannina, View from the Lake*. From Dupré, *Voyage à Athenes et à Constantinople* (Paris: Dondey-Dupré, 1825), plate 9. American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Gennadius Library.

His path eventually crossed with those of contemporaries like Napoleon and Lord Byron, who took great interest in this individual situated at the geographic intersection between Western Europe and the Ottoman realms. Ali Pasha came to rule a vast domain (fig. 4), which he and his family transformed with infrastructure projects and architectural complexes, including palaces, fortifications, mosques, dervish lodges, and even Orthodox churches. Such commissions were not a mere reflection of but a catalyst for a shift in the sociopolitical order, part of an ongoing process of challenging the standards of patronage established by the imperial court and relocating administrative authority from center to province. The present volume represents the first in-depth study of Ottoman architecture during what has often been described as the age of revolution, the pivotal moment at the turn of the eighteenth century when there was no obvious blueprint for power, written from the perspective of one of the most notorious figures of the time.[4]

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AS THEATER

By taking up an examination of a single patron's architectural program, I adopt what the art historian Ellen Kenney describes as a "prosopographical" approach, recognizing that a "patron's biography and building activity are intricately interwoven."[5] Yet this book is not a biography of Ali Pasha per se, or even a series of in-depth character studies of individual monuments, but rather an account of how an entire





FIGURE 3 (*opposite*)
Spiridon Ventouras, *Portrait of Ali Pasha*, 1818. Oil on canvas, 71 × 58 cm. The Thanassis and Marina Martinos Collection.

FIGURE 4
The territory governed by Ali Pasha and his sons circa 1812, with the major cities and Ottoman provincial districts indicated. Map by Matthew J. Jacobson.



FIGURE 5
Edward Lear, *View of Tepelena from the North*, 1848. Ink, pencil, and watercolor on paper, 32.2 × 51 cm. MS Typ 55.26, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

built environment was shaped during the tenure of one provincial official's administration. Ali Pasha's buildings are notable not for their singularity but for their ubiquity. The governor ordered the construction of massive city walls and fortified palace complexes not only in his capital in Ioannina but in all the big towns that came under his rule, from the shores of Preveza to the heights of Tepelena (fig. 5). In these cities, spanning a distance of more than 150 kilometers, the governor commissioned major projects like congregational mosques in a coherent style and design—creating a recognizable "brand" for Ali Pasha's era. This homogenizing effect was partly due to the teams of building specialists who were constantly moving throughout the region from one construction site to another. Ali Pasha also invested heavily in infrastructure networks, including roads, way stations, bridges, aqueducts, and customs houses—what I term interstitial architecture—that knitted together the vast topography falling under his jurisdiction. This volume therefore aims to deal with monuments not as stand-alone set pieces but within their broader geographic context, thinking through how the governor's spatial strategies comprised the full manipulation of a territory.

There are many reasons why this story of patronage on the periphery has been left largely unwritten. First and foremost, quite a few of the buildings commissioned by Ali Pasha have almost entirely disappeared. In the immediate aftermath of the governor's execution, several of his constructions were either destroyed or damaged. For example, the Istanbul officials who were appointed to take over the administration of this region opted to leave the charred husk of Ali Pasha's fortified palace at Litharitsa in Ioannina to sit and molder, the remains



FIGURE 6
Dominique Papety, *Litharitsa, Fortress of Ali Pasha* (in ruins), ca. 1846–47. Watercolor, gouache, and pencil on paper, 17.3 × 28.5 cm. Bequest of François Sabatier. Louvre Museum, RF 1773.67. Photo: Michel Urtado. © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, New York.

visible for decades after his execution (fig. 6). Such pointed acts of ruination on the part of the Ottoman central authorities reveal how the buildings themselves—tectonic mementos of one local ruler's ambition—were perceived as an ongoing threat to the imperial order. Evidently, it was not sufficient to eliminate the person; his constructions had to be neutralized as well. My attempt here to reconstruct the built environment in its fullest scope avoids the common pitfall in architectural history that favors the study of surviving monuments. This approach reverses the subsequent campaigns of erasure that were designed to obliterate Ali Pasha's unique political project. While this book is about the governor's rise to power, the narrative of Ali Pasha's architecture is also by necessity linked with his equally dramatic fall.

Ali Pasha's architectural legacy has also been complicated by the emergence of the modern states of Greece and Albania, whose government agencies in the twentieth century tended to overlook and, in some cases, neglect outright the monuments from the preceding Ottoman era. The relative lack of interest in preserving and studying Ottoman material in the twentieth century stood in stark contrast to the wealth of academic literature and restoration efforts devoted to ancient sites, which proved to be more effective vehicles for the construction of national identity.[6] The story of Ali Pasha, a controversial figure who was born in Albania and died in Greece, tends to fall through the disciplinary cracks of Balkan studies, a field that is often framed according to contemporary national geographies.[7] By examining this provincial power holder through the lens of architecture and, more broadly, a built environment that transcends modern political borders, this volume offers a view of a zone

that was remarkably syncretic during a time when nationalist discourses were only beginning to form. In this way, the case study of Ali Pasha also contributes to broader initiatives to examine the Ottoman heritage of this region, which have begun to emerge in recent decades with the fall of communism in Albania and the growing interest in Greece's multicultural past.[8]

The fact that Ali Pasha's buildings were deemed unserviceable or even downright threatening to the ruling authorities in Ottoman Istanbul and subsequently in the modern nations of Greece and Albania raises the question of architecture as a stage for the performance of political power. Through his architectural patronage, Ali Pasha built up the surrounding region as a series of "theaters" in which he himself enacted his authority and tested what was possible in realizing his own political aspirations.[9] William Meyer's assessment of the governor's last stand as taking place within the "theatre of his fortunes and his triumphs" explicitly ties a physical geographic space to Ali Pasha's personal achievements and status. The consul's description captures succinctly how the built environment in Ottoman lands had at that point become less a symbol of empire than a locus for innovative self-representation.

The concept of architecture as theater offers a productive framework for interpreting Ali Pasha's corpus of monuments in several respects. First, scholars of performance studies have observed theater's potential to upend the status quo.[10] In a similar fashion, Ali Pasha's buildings are situated in the liminal space of an Ottoman frontier zone, where the customs of architectural patronage were being questioned and redefined. The metaphor of theater is also useful in that stage performance provides a space where one can envision new or alternative realities.[11] Theater is typically less about the scientific representation of the world than it is engaged with creating a realm of illusion in which the importance of actors and their actions is magnified by being placed within an extraordinary setting.[12] Ali Pasha's buildings, such as the splendid reception halls of his numerous palaces, likewise work to convince multiple audiences—from the heads of local villages to foreign diplomats—of the governor's grandeur and influence. This conspicuous fashioning of Ali Pasha's public persona through architecture points to a moment of social mobility and upheaval in the established order of Ottoman ruling hierarchies, when someone who began his career as a small-time mountain brigand could become one of the wealthiest and most powerful people in the empire. In Ali Pasha's theater of fortune and triumph, the spectator is asked to imagine not how the world is but how it *could* be.

The political drama of Ali Pasha's final conflict with the Ottoman sultan was so compelling that the story of the siege of Ioannina was being translated to the stages of London and Paris mere months after the wayward governor's death.[13] In these performances, the buildings that Ali Pasha commissioned were transformed into scenography, a literal realization of the governor's territory as a theater. Meanwhile, within the Ottoman context, Ali Pasha's own cultural productions also mine the theme of the land itself as a backdrop for the performance of political ascendancy. After more than a decade of rule, the governor commissioned a folk song in Greek verse to celebrate his achievements as a capable and just leader. This ballad—composed by Haji Sehreti, a Muslim secretary in Ali Pasha's court—is commonly known as the *Alipasiad*, a naming convention

recalling the heroic songs of ancient Greek literature such as the *Iliad*.[14] It is also on the scale of epic poetry, being composed of around 6,500 lines of rhyming couplets (the *Iliad* is approximately 15,500 lines, for comparison). The existence of multiple manuscript copies with a good deal of variation in the text suggests that this poem was transmitted orally, with different performers embellishing the song with their own verses over time.[15] The final lines of the poem reflect on the nature of Ali Pasha's rule:

> From the four corners he gave them order.
> And his law was heard throughout the land,
> In the West and in the East they converse about it.
> In the West and in the East, they speak about this [man],
> When they recognize his name all over they tremble.
> He bestowed just rule to the corrupt Albania,
> Thereafter he ventured from Tepelena,
> And, in his own post settled in Ioannina.
> Ten provinces are now found under his command.[16]

In this concluding summa, Haji Sehreti describes the scope of Ali Pasha's fame in spatial terms, stressing how his renown has seemingly permeated every nook and cranny of the landscape, from the winding mountain defiles of Epirus in the west to the plains of Thessaly in the east. The final word in this passage—"command" (*ορισμόν*, *orismon*)—is particularly notable, because the term in Greek originates from the verb *orizo*, which means to determine, define, set down, or inscribe. It is the same verb that gives English the word "horizon," in the sense that the horizon is the line between earth and sky that determines the farthest boundary of space perceivable by the human eye. Ali Pasha's command thus depends on the concept of a geographic expanse defined in terms of both imperial administrative boundaries (the "ten provinces" within the governor's jurisdiction) and the farthest limits (the "four corners") of what the poem's audience could perceive as their commonly shared homeland.

While a cultural monument like the *Alipasiad* remains unique (I know of no other Ottoman governor who commissioned epic verse in the style of Homer), it is indicative of a much wider transformation in power relations throughout the imperial borderlands. For it was during the long eighteenth century that the Ottoman Empire experienced profound changes in provincial administration and became a series of defined theaters in which regional identity was being staged on the ground.

LOCAL RULERS IN THE AGE OF REVOLUTION

Ali Pasha can be counted among a group of provincial notables who held sway over large territories of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the eighteenth century—typically referred to by historians as the *â'yân*.[17] Tellingly, it proves something of a challenge to establish an all-encompassing definition for this class of local rulers, mostly owing to an inherent diversity of backgrounds, leadership and organizational styles, the specific type of administrative positions held, and their relationships with the imperial center. Yet it can be generally observed that, in the eighteenth century, the choicest offices and revenues in provincial administration, which had traditionally been awarded to those who had trained and risen through the ranks at the sultan's court in Istanbul, became

available to local notables already based out in the provinces. In this way, individuals beyond the Istanbul elite were incorporated into the upper echelons of the Ottoman administrative apparatus.

The rise of a new group of provincial administrators and the decentralization of government appointments went hand in hand with two factors: the establishment in 1695 of tax-farming grants (*mâlikâne*) that could be awarded for life rather than for just a few years, and the growth of local economies based on the management of increasingly frequent military incursions.[18] Thus, as wars against foreign powers drained the Ottoman central treasury, the government granted more autonomy to local notables who proved effective at quickly marshalling soldiers and supplies and moving them from one region to another. The emergence of the *ayan* class of provincial power holders was a gradual process, and it was only in the last decades of the eighteenth century that a clear hierarchy formed, distinguishing larger and smaller ruling families. At the turn of the century, precisely when Ali Pasha was coming into his own in today's Greece and Albania, he and half a dozen other families spread throughout the empire were managing networks of lesser notables from their regional bases of power.

By spotlighting the architectural production of one local ruler against the background of broader developments in Ottoman political and economic history, this book bridges multiple disciplines. I am particularly engaged with the rich scholarship on provincial notables that has shifted the focus in Ottoman studies from imperial center to periphery. In the 1960s, Albert Hourani proposed a new examination of what he described as the "politics of notables."[19] In subsequent decades, historians have analyzed the socioeconomic bases for the influence of the *ayan*, especially the extent to which access to foreign trade, tax-farming rights, and ability to acquire and form a large number of *çiftlik* (farming villages) contributed to the appearance and endurance of this group in the eighteenth century.[20] As a result, these provincial power holders have become the key to understand the workings of—and potential challenges to—the Ottoman state at the regional level.[21] In her volume *Empire of Difference*, Karen Barkey gives pride of place to this class of local notables by tracking how Ottoman administration in the eighteenth century came to function as a system of constant brokerage and negotiation between imperial authorities and peripheries.[22] In another recent monograph, Ali Yaycıoğlu also characterizes the state at this time as a "horizontal and participatory empire, in which central and provincial actors combined to rule the empire together," yet he emphasizes that the new "social and political order . . . did not bring long-term stability."[23] In the field of history, the "age of revolution" has typically been defined by the French Revolution, which resulted in the overthrow of the reigning monarchy and a complete restructuring of the country's government.[24] The age of revolution in the Ottoman sphere was more a matter of the imperial court's attempts to navigate constant political uncertainty. This uncertainty not only took the form of riots and rebellions but also involved the slow and steady chiseling away of the sultan's ruling authority in the provinces—and the *ayan* played an important role in both respects.

These endeavors in the field of Ottoman history to characterize the *ayan* and their place in state administration call for an investigation of the material presence of these figures. How was empire negotiated and produced through new approaches to the organization of space



FIGURE 7
The Çapanoğlu Mosque in Yozgat, the initial construction of which was completed in 1779. Photo by author.

and the built environment? Recognizing architecture as a type of historical document in and of itself is a methodology that offers a nuanced view of this class of notables on the rise in the Ottoman provinces.

ARCHITECTURAL PATRONAGE AT THE EDGE OF EMPIRE

While the present volume on Ali Pasha's architecture focuses on monuments constructed in Greece and Albania, in many ways this project began in Turkey, in a town called Yozgat. Situated in the central plains of Anatolia, Yozgat is relatively remote, a far cry from Turkey's mega-urban sprawls of Istanbul and Ankara. It is for this reason that I was particularly struck during my first visit by the large Ottoman-era mosque situated in the heart of the municipal center (fig. 7). Elegant and weighty in its design, this building would not have been out of place in the imperial capital, and thus seemed rather outsized for the town. The time that I spent in Yozgat would ultimately lead to the central research questions raised in this book about the shifting dynamics of architectural patronage on the edge of empire. How can we explain the appearance of this massive foundation in what had presumably been one of the more distant corners of the Ottoman provinces?

The central congregational mosque in Yozgat was built by the Çapanoğlu family, an *ayan* household of local rulers who were contemporaries of Ali Pasha. The first phase of construction, which comprised the central domed prayer space, was initiated by Çapanoğlu Mustafa Bey in 1779.[25] More than a decade later, in 1794, his brother and successor as

provincial governor, Süleyman Bey, expanded the mosque with a new façade and covered porch that almost doubled the holding capacity of the building. This foundation served as the focal point of a wider effort on the part of the Çapanoğlu family to transform what had been a small village into the district capital of the Anatolian plateau in a matter of years. The two phases of the mosque's construction, clearly distinguished by different-colored stones, could be considered a visual metaphor for how these patrons steadily accrued power and sought to establish themselves as a dynasty of local notables.[26] There is a saying in modern Turkish: "Bu işin altında bir Çapanoğlu var," which can be loosely translated as "[Be careful, because] there is [probably] a Çapanoğlu behind this." It is most often used to caution someone when dealing with a sticky situation lest they provoke the ire of an influential figure who could be implicated in the matter. This popular expression preserves the memory of how, in a relatively short amount of time, the Çapanoğlu family came to have their hands in seemingly every affair. When I first asked myself how such a large congregational mosque came to be built in Yozgat, the answer was ultimately straightforward—there was a Çapanoğlu behind it.

Throughout the long duration of the Ottoman Empire, there were always government officials and local notables who were active in urban life and commissioning buildings in the provinces. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, however, high-ranking administrators would be sent from Istanbul to a particular district, perhaps set up a public foundation (*vaḳıf*) in the course of their service, and then in a few years' time move on to their next position in another location. Local families also commissioned buildings, but they typically possessed the means to fund only one or two foundations.[27] By the eighteenth century, the financial and political capital concentrated in the hands of some *ayan* families enabled them to oversee the construction of numerous architectural projects and public works over a much longer period, in a few cases across several decades. This book contributes to a budding area of scholarship that recognizes the significance of these developments in provincial building projects and examines what could be described as "*ayan* architecture."[28] Ayda Arel has observed how building activity in the eighteenth-century Ottoman provinces could flourish during this period of political unrest and within a new system of accruing financial capital, all through a case study of the fortified "feudal" estates of the Cihanoğlu, a family of landowners active in what is today southwest Turkey.[29] Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu expanded this line of inquiry with an introductory survey of the architectural production of a handful of *ayan* groups throughout Anatolia, including the Çapanoğlu and Cihanoğlu families.[30] Her comparative approach and reading of the buildings themselves as historical documents—especially because this material can be much more difficult to trace in Ottoman government archives than sultanic foundations—has deeply informed the present study.

The precise nature of Ali Pasha's architectural patronage comes into sharper focus when considered alongside the building efforts of his fellow *ayan* rulers. In this way, the governor, who is often treated in secondary literature as an isolated figure who is only vaguely connected to the Ottoman context, can be more squarely situated within the political and cultural environment in which he operated. In other words, to understand the architecture of Ioannina, one must also go to

Yozgat. In addition to the Çapanoğlu family, we can find other regional governors based in Anatolia who were undertaking impressive building projects. In 1784, İshak Pasha, who was a member of the influential Çıldıroğlu clan, constructed a large combination palace and mosque complex in Doğubayazıt, located today on the border between Turkey, Iran, and Armenia (fig. 8).[31] His successors continued to add to and maintain the site, constructed in a distinctively regional style that is characterized by elaborate stone carving in high relief reminiscent of local Seljuk and Armenian religious architecture. The entire structure is dramatically perched on a cliff overlooking abundant plains and an important trade route along the Silk Road, a site that conveys the Çıldıroğlu family's command over these economic resources. Moving south to the Arab provinces, several members of the 'Azm family initiated a building boom in Damascus that endured for the better part of the eighteenth century, investing in large real estate clusters that brought together marketplaces, schools, and bathhouses.[32] One prominent member of this family, As'ad Pasha, placed a large palace complex immediately adjacent to a massive domed *khan* (caravanserai) that he also built. The mansion stands as an extravagant example of residential architecture in the region, with a number of reception areas surrounding a large paved courtyard that are decorated with *ablaq* masonry of alternating courses of white and black stone.[33] Meanwhile, in Egypt, Mehmed Ali Pasha claimed the Cairo Citadel in the 1820s and '30s with a sprawling palace built in a neoclassical style and a Friday mosque complex that looks to be straight out of Istanbul.[34] The governor also established a large garden palace and industrial complexes on the outskirts of his capital and in the Nile Delta beyond.[35] In the heart of old Cairo, Mehmed Ali Pasha inserted himself along one of the main thoroughfares by contributing a *sabil-kuttab*, a type of public foundation unique to the city that combines a fountain with a religious school. While the governor's fountain from 1820 thus participates in a specific local building tradition, the façade and interior have been executed in an Ottoman



FIGURE 8
View of the mosque and mausoleum within the İshak Pasha palace at Doğubayazıt. Photo by author.



FIGURE 9
The *sabil-kuttab* of Mehmed Ali Pasha in Cairo. Photo by author.

baroque fashion with sinuous vegetal designs and classicizing capitals (fig. 9). Finally, turning to one of Ali Pasha's neighbors in the Balkans, the rebellious local ruler Pasvantoğlu Osman Pasha constructed a tekke (dervish lodge) along with a mosque and library complex in Vidin, on today's border between Bulgaria and Romania.[36] The foundation inscription in Ottoman Turkish above the library's door records the foundation as 1802–3 (1217 H), a few years after Pasvantoğlu's capital had been unsuccessfully besieged by imperial authorities.[37] Revealingly, this text makes no mention of the sultan and instead dedicates the complex to the memory of Pasvantoğlu's father, who had been executed by the Ottoman state for conspiracy to revolt.[38]

Even this cursory review of the architecture of this new class of provincial notables reveals that the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries witnessed a dramatic transformation of imperial space. It may seem counterintuitive that there was a proliferation of architectural patronage in the Ottoman Empire during an age of revolution, as times of instability do not usually lend themselves to the mass mobilization of funds, labor, and materials necessary to construct buildings. Yet the fact that Ali Pasha and his fellow *ayan* managed to do just that calls into question the paradigm of the Ottoman lands as the "sick man of Europe"—money may not have been flowing into the coffers of the imperial capital, but that does not mean it was not being put to use elsewhere. Decentralization does not necessarily equal decline.

The field of Ottoman architecture has traditionally been defined by Istanbul, particularly the large sultanic mosque complexes dotting the Golden Horn, whose slender minarets



FIGURE 10
The Rumi Darwaza, the gate to the first forecourt of the Great Imambara complex in Lucknow. Photo by author.

empires was giving way to a series of more local, circumscribed theaters of influence.

Throughout this book, I thus employ comparisons to other examples of "frontier" architecture, to provide a broader frame of reference for Ali Pasha's architectural interventions. The horizontal nature of the Ottoman Empire, especially at the end of the eighteenth century, meant that provincial power holders, operating with immense amounts of newfound wealth and political authority, were looking askance at their contemporaries and were engaged in a competition to carve out their own territories.[53] Among the *ayan* class, Ali Pasha stands out as a patron of architecture in multiple respects. He was certainly one of the most prolific, in terms of the breadth of the geographic area he covered and the sheer volume of projects he oversaw. Through his own funding and organization efforts, the governor built everything from military fortifications and palace complexes to Friday mosques and roadside dervish lodges. He was able to undertake such an extensive building program because he was so effective at amassing resources and remained in power for a very long time, more than three decades. Such a comprehensive approach to architecture in many ways anticipated the modernization reforms that would sweep through the Ottoman Empire in the middle of the nineteenth century. Ali Pasha was able to maintain a very fine balance of keeping the Porte's wrath at bay with regular contributions of funds and soldiers, while at the same time taking advantage of his position on the border of the empire to set up an expansive infrastructure that could support his ambitions of semiautonomous rule, seemingly leaving no corner of his realm untouched.

ALI PASHA AND HIS REALM

Ali Pasha was born around 1750 in a village just outside the city of Tepelena, in what is today Albania.[54] Both his father and his grandfather had served as the administrators of the local *ṣancaḳ* (provincial district), but Ali's father died when he was still a young man.[55] Nevertheless, he managed to forge a path for himself in the military service of Kurt Ahmed Pasha, the governor of the neighboring district of Berat. Ali ultimately butted heads with his patron but during this time built his own network of contacts and raised sufficient funds to start recruiting mercenaries himself. In 1784, he successfully lobbied the Porte to award him the titles of both *mîr-i mîrân* (governor-general, a military distinction) and *mutaṣarrıf* (administrative governor) of the Delvine district, following in the path of his forebears with the latter position.[56] Meanwhile, in correspondence from his own chancery and in local inscriptions, Ali Pasha is typically styled as the "vizier," an Ottoman title indicating high political rank that is conferred on some provincial governors.

In short order, Ali Pasha expanded his zone of influence by acquiring the titles to several other adjacent administrative districts, including the governorship of Trikala (Ott. Tırhala, 1786) and Ioannina (Ott. Yanya, 1788), as well as the position of "Commander of the Mountain Passes" (*derbendler başbuğu*) in 1788.[57] This last title was of particular importance, as it allowed Ali Pasha's own men to monitor all the key mountain passes throughout the wider province (*eyâlet*) of Rumelia, i.e., most of the southern Balkans.[58] Besides managing the collection of taxes throughout an extensive geographic area and ensuring that these revenues were sent on time to the sultan's treasury, Ali Pasha also proved himself to be indispensable to the Porte by maintaining troops that could be summoned and sent forth at a moment's notice.[59] Based in his capital of Ioannina, Ali Pasha not only gained positions for himself but was also constantly shuffling his family members around to adjacent territories, including the districts of Eğriboz and Karlı-ili for his son Muhtar Pasha in 1799; the province of the Morea (Ott. Mora, 1807) and then the Trikala district (1812) for his eldest son, Veli Pasha; and the district of Berat for Muhtar and his other younger son Salih Pasha in 1811 (see fig. 4).[60] Thus, as the traveler Henry Holland surmised, Ali Pasha's "dominion has been derived, not from any transient effort of revolution, but from a slow and persevering system of aggrandizement, and a policy compounded of caution and enterprise, which has given pretense to usurpation and permanence to conquest."[61] To put it another way, the "four corners" of Ali Pasha's realm celebrated in the *Alipasiad* did not take shape overnight but were years in the making.

This book examines the extent to which Ali Pasha's architectural efforts functioned to establish his own prestige within the landscape by reifying a local identity shared by the communities under his rule. But how did this local identity manifest in the provinces that were under the vizier's governorship? The most logical starting point in defining the geographic contours of the "local" would be the various administrative districts to which Ali Pasha and his sons laid claim. Determining the exact boundaries of any given territory in the Ottoman Empire before the mid-nineteenth century, however, remains a surprisingly difficult task.[62] At the time, the state's concept of administrative space did not entail drawing lines on a map.[63] Rather than rely on a cartographic system, Ottoman officials defined empire through textual inventory. The Ottoman

government archives in Istanbul are overflowing with list upon list: registers that identify a particular provincial district by its central capital city and name the numerous surrounding villages (*karye*) that could determine the extent of the geographic unit. When these villages are plotted on a map, the resulting cloud of place markers often shows a degree of overlap between administrative districts, making it difficult to delineate clear boundaries and revealing a system of provincial geography that was relatively fluid and flexible. For this reason I have opted to omit firm border lines in the maps that represent the administrative districts that fell within Ali Pasha's territory in figures 1 and 4.

What we can say is that Ali Pasha and his sons eventually governed an area that comprised what had once been the ancient regions of Epirus, Acarnania, and Thessaly, with the Ottoman districts falling along similar topographic boundaries: the Ionian Sea to the west, the Tomorr and Morava mountains to the north, the Vermio and Olympus mountains to the east, and the Gulf of Corinth to the south. This area (and, really, the Balkans in general) can be characterized as a system of plains and mountain ranges. Access from one region to the next was restricted to a handful of choke points through the mountains, hence the significance of Ali Pasha's winning the title of commander of the passes.

Divided from the rest of the mainland by the Pindus Mountains, Ali Pasha's core homeland of Epirus (what is now northwestern Greece and southern Albania) maintained a long tradition of regionalism and even insularity well before the early nineteenth century.[64] Ali Pasha was distinctive, however, in that he consolidated several microregions and tribes of diverse languages, ethnicities, and creeds under a coherent political order. He was the archetype of the Balkan strongman, savvy in clan politics and commanding both the fear and the respect of the local populace by administrating with a firm hand.[65] Although this general characterization of authoritarian rule has been legitimately critiqued by scholars as an Orientalist stereotype, the fact remains that Ali Pasha himself trafficked in this kind of language and considered his unification of Epirus one of his great achievements as governor.[66] During an audience with the traveler Thomas Hughes, Ali Pasha boasted that he had fearlessly traversed this region "when a thousand muskets were aimed against his life; but that now we should find perfect security and tranquility diffused over the whole district."[67] The *Alipasiad* picks up on this theme of the governor and his sons as the heralds of a Pax Epirotica. The poet Haji Sehreti writes:

> I tell of the wondrous deeds of all the noted warriors,
> Who performed these [acts] brilliantly [in the service] of these viziers.
> With my pen I tell of the things they have done,
> Giving the Albanians and Rumelians order.[68]

The *Alipasiad* itself—an epic folk song composed in the Epirote Greek dialect by a Muslim in Ali Pasha's court—already demonstrates the complex layers of local identity in the region. Meanwhile, this specific passage highlights how the vizier framed his claim to legitimacy by co-opting the wider concept of "order" (*νιζάμι*, *nizami*), a familiar construct used by the Ottoman sultans to make their own claims to power, perhaps most notably in the contemporaneous Nizam-i Cedid (New Order) reforms

instituted by Sultan Selim III beginning in the late eighteenth century.[69] In this poem, however, the sultan is bypassed completely in favor of extolling the deeds of Ali Pasha.

Bringing the people of Epirus together under a single banner was a long and frequently violent process. Ali Pasha's most significant coup in this respect was the conquest in 1802 of Souli, an impregnable mountain community that had refused to recognize his authority as governor. Another significant move toward territorial expansion was Ali Pasha's victory in a long internecine dispute with İbrahim Pasha, the neighboring governor of Berat, resulting in the Porte's removal of İbrahim from his position in 1812 and the ceding of the district to Ali Pasha. The *Alipasiad* notes the ability of the governor "To usher in the age of Ali Pasha in all the towns, / Where they desire to make conflict with this [man]."[70]

In the face of all these challenges, how did the vizier consolidate power throughout the region, ushering in "the age of Ali Pasha," and what was the role of architecture in this process? While the first three chapters of this book detail Ali Pasha's innovations in the building typologies that tend to form the core of Ottoman architectural patronage (i.e., the palatial, the military, and the religious), the final chapter addresses the theme of public texts as sites of political tension and even violence. Chapter 1 begins with an examination of the vizier's palaces, which were the very heart of Ali Pasha's peripatetic court. A series of urban residential complexes served as stages for the performance of the governor's political power before local, state, and foreign audiences through elaborate ceremonies and by offering a commanding view of the wider landscape (see fig. 2). These residences were also built to impress as repositories for Ali Pasha's personal wealth, with treasuries of gifts and luxury items on display. In addition to the palaces themselves, the vizier also invested in a system of roads and way stations to support his retinue's movements from one residence to another. Such mobility had not been possible for earlier administrators, who were typically assigned to one province—and only one official residence—at a time. Ali Pasha thus redefined the governor's palace, transforming it from a single, stand-alone set piece into a node within a wider spatial network that was continuously being activated to legitimate his claims to authority.

This survey of the governor's urban interventions is followed, in chapter 2, with an investigation of a line of military installations along the Ionian Sea, raising the question "Who has the right to build a fortress?" In this region, the macropolitics of the Napoleonic Wars were telescoped into microlevel tussles among international actors over key disputed zones that were often a matter of only a few square kilometers. In the course of a decade, from 1805 to 1815, Ali Pasha commissioned the construction or extensive renovation of eleven coastal fortifications, which involved a tremendous investment of both finances and labor (fig. 11). These building projects—and the governor's frequent clashes with both Istanbul and European neighbors over their construction—counter the assumption that the Ottoman capital was spearheading such projects in order to maintain the border. Rather, Ali Pasha's maritime fortifications can be understood as a strategy meant to intimidate neighboring populations who proved resistant to his own ambitions of territorial expansion. I thus reassess the criteria that scholars typically use to evaluate military architecture, considering how the governor's fortifications were primarily designed as long-range antagonistic spectacles—the look



FIGURE 11
View of Ali Pasha's fortress on the Vrino channel in Butrint, looking west, with the island of Corfu in the background. Photo by author.

and placement of an installation within a wider terrain being just as important as its short-range defensive capabilities.

Turning from matters of international diplomacy to internal affairs, chapter 3 considers how Ali Pasha took a pragmatic approach in addressing the multiconfessional communities living under his rule by establishing an astonishingly wide array of religious complexes. First, he paired his official residences with Islamic pious foundations, especially Friday mosques, whose minarets mark each of the major urban centers in his domain (see fig. 5). Ali Pasha and his sons also sponsored Sufi dervish lodges on the outskirts of these towns and in the surrounding hinterlands, a once pervasive typology of roadside architecture that has now almost completely disappeared in Greece and Albania. But the governor did not build only for his own faith tradition. Archival documentation and fieldwork reveal that Ali Pasha and his Christian wife, Vasiliki, were directly responsible for commissioning multiple church foundations. Even though these structures were in relatively remote locations, the significance of these gestures should not be understated, as the construction of a Christian monument by a Muslim official is unprecedented in the history of Ottoman architecture.

The fourth and final chapter concerns the vizier's efforts to inscribe his personal brand of politics into the local topography through the medium of architectural epigraphy. By the early nineteenth century, firm standards governed the creation of public texts in the Ottoman Empire, and Ali Pasha defied these norms at every turn. Most significantly, I document how the governor commissioned multiple

epigraphic inscriptions in Greek verse, a format echoing local folk song, that all emphasize both Ali Pasha's local roots and his commitment to being just (even if at times ruthless) in his administration. These inscriptions were accompanied by heraldic insignia that are engaged with a regional visual tradition of the Venetian lion. In one example from the city walls of Ioannina, the heterodox epigraphic program was removed by the central Ottoman authorities shortly after Ali Pasha's death, a clear act of *damnatio memoriae*. This competition over public texts and thus collective memory reveals how the drama between imperial center and periphery could be played out within the built environments of the Ottoman provinces.

To recover the world that Ali Pasha built, this volume brings together a wide range of sources that have thus far received only scant attention. This includes the material record itself, which I examined during numerous site visits in both Greece and Albania. While I make use of technical ground plans to analyze the construction techniques of the architects and engineers in the governor's service, I also frequently deploy historical traveler views and photographs from my own movements through these spaces during fieldwork in order to capture how this architecture was staged in the environment, often against dramatic natural backdrops and with clear attention to the long-distance visibility of these sites. As noted above, the survival rate of Ali Pasha's buildings is variable, and in order to reconstruct these sites, I triangulate my fieldwork with an abundance of archival material, whose far-flung nature—from Istanbul to London—reflects the impressively wide scope of Ali Pasha's audiences and influence. It is my hope that this book will prove relevant to modernists dealing with case studies where there is a paucity of extant architecture. This is an issue that many assume to be consigned to the fields of ancient art and archaeology, yet there are many examples of built environments from the more recent past that have been lost to natural disasters or political upheaval.

Because the governor was a significant figure in the Ottoman Empire, I delve into the State Ottoman Archives in Istanbul as well as the archives of the Directorate General of Pious Foundations in Ankara to capture the view from the imperial center.[71] In addition to housing the collection of orders tracking Ali Pasha's actions and movements (*haṭṭ-i hümâyûn*), these archives contain a score of valuable registers that record the movable and immovable property of the governor, along with his pious endowments (*vakıf*). By examining such registers, I have been able to identify and glean socioeconomic information about a number of Ali Pasha's public foundations, this data sometimes being the sole remaining trace of a particular monument in the material or archival record.

In addition to employing documentation generated by the Ottoman state, this book makes use of an extraordinary local resource for Ali Pasha's governance in Epirus, which is the vizier's own chancery. This collection of more than fifteen hundred documents resides today at the Gennadius Library in Athens.[72] Most of these memoranda, registers, and petitions that reflect the day-to-day life of the court are written in Greek, albeit with an abundance of Ottoman Turkish, Albanian, and Arabic vocabulary, a reflection of the eclecticism of the local dialect before the standardization of Greek after the revolution. Happily, a digital humanities project has been launched at Stanford University to map information found in

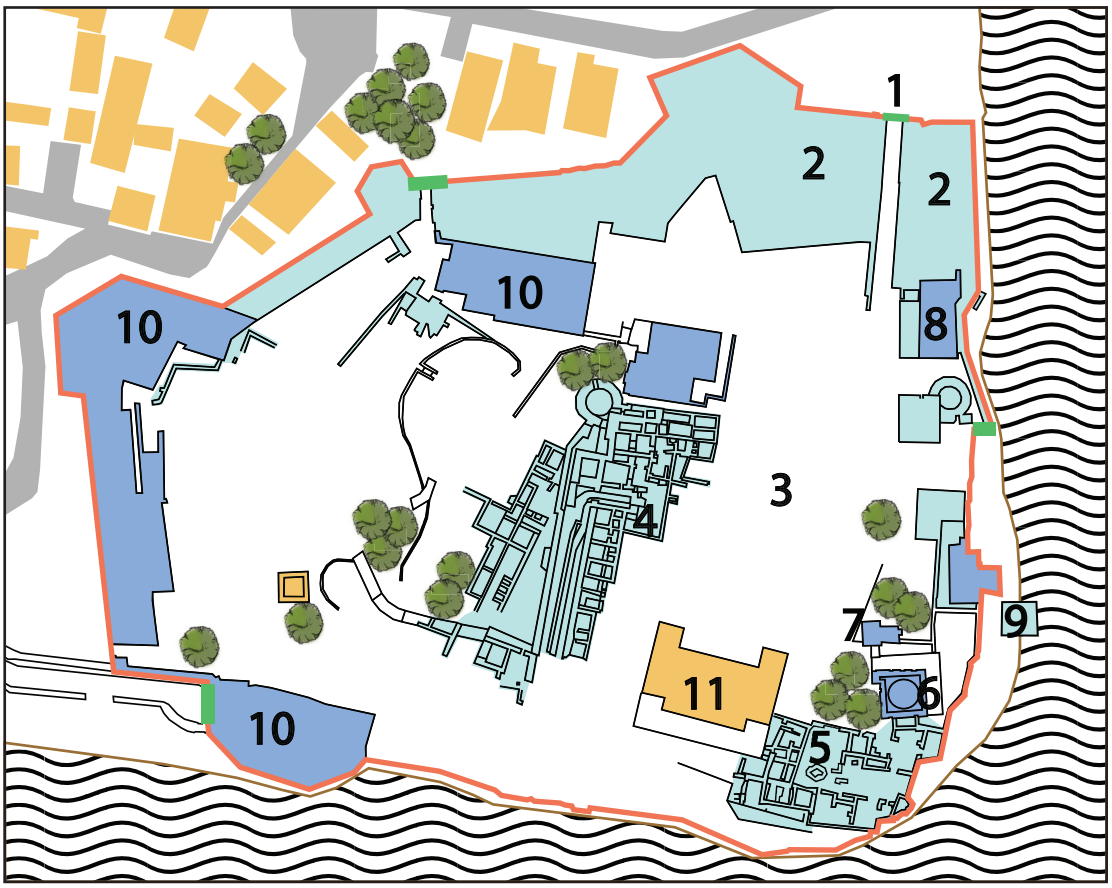
this archive using a variety of data visualization tools.[73] The preliminary findings of this project complement my own arguments about the importance of the *ayan* class securing the support of local communities by revealing a complex and dynamic network of patron-client relationships maintained by Ali Pasha and his sons across Epirus. In addition to this archival collection, which provides a more ground-level view of the vizier's architectural patronage, I present epigraphic inscriptions, Greek folk songs, and contemporary literary works to round out the local reception of Ali Pasha's building endeavors.[74]

As a complement to these state and local sources, this book makes use of the diplomatic reports and travel accounts of both French and British agents who were stationed in Ali Pasha's court.[75] While travel narratives were composed after the fact, sometimes several years after a particular journey, consuls fired off missives monthly or even weekly as events unfolded in Epirus. The diplomatic record also offers a great deal of information about military constructions and infrastructure projects, as this intelligence was considered highly sensitive at the time and would not have been included in travel accounts, which were intended for a general reading public. The preponderance of European accounts of this region is a reflection of Ali Pasha's relatively relaxed policy on allowing foreign visitors to travel throughout his territory. It is largely for this reason that Epirus attracted an increased flow of Western European travelers, especially after the Napoleonic Wars had effectively closed the Italian peninsula to those hoping to go on their "grand tour." The details offered in the accounts of these visitors—such as the geographic location of a mosque or a description of a palace's decoration—enable us to reconstruct these architectural and urban spaces as they stood at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

By bringing together a multiplicity of sources, this study draws one of the most detailed portraits of an Ottoman borderland to date. These documents make it abundantly clear that Ali Pasha was, after all, just one person, and that the buildings constructed during his rule are the result of a multitude of architects, masons, craftspeople, day laborers, financiers, and common taxpayers who all played a part in making this world a reality. Throughout this book, we will meet this cast of characters: from Master Petros, a Christian from Albania who was Ali Pasha's chief architect, to Guillaume de Vaudoncourt, a French colonel dragooned into overseeing the construction of one of the governor's coastal fortifications. Nevertheless, Ali Pasha takes center stage throughout this study, primarily because his approach to architecture was so evidently an opportunistic endeavor of self-aggrandizement, which in many instances was out of step, if not in outright conflict, with the conventions of patronage established by those who had come up through the Ottoman court. In examining this one provincial governor's building activity, the land itself emerges as a symbolic space in which the dynamics between center and periphery were played out. This was political upheaval through architecture—and it was by and large improvised. With the significant financial and material investment involved in the construction of buildings, it is usually taken for granted that architectural patronage is programmatic, the result of a grand vision or plan. Yet Ali Pasha never composed any kind of manifesto on architecture—indeed, that is the point. In an iterative fashion, building by building, the governor kept pushing the limits of what was possible, experimenting within

the inherited system of empire, yet all the while laying the literal groundwork for a quasi-autonomous or even potentially independent state that was extinguished in its nascent stages.[76] Situated as he is on the eve of the Greek War of Independence and Ottoman government reform, Ali Pasha plays a crucial role in our understanding of the modern era. Multiple aspects of the vizier's patronage, including his dedication to infrastructure, openness to foreign visitors and building specialists, accommodation of non-Muslim communities, and interest in cultivating a sense of local identity in Epirus, foreshadow the modernization and nationalization movements that would emerge throughout the rest of the nineteenth century and in many ways carry on into the present. While Ali Pasha's legacy was actively silenced by various stakeholders in the aftermath of his death in 1822, the stubborn material fact of his architectural projects can still be traced in the physical and archival record. These ghostlike fragments haunt the land of Epirus—a persistent presence that speaks to the enduring impact of a local actor like Ali Pasha during a time of revolution.

FIGURE 14
Ali Pasha's palace complex in the southeastern citadel of Ioannina. Plan by Matthew J. Jacobson. (1) northern gate; (2) guardhouse and barracks; (3) courtyard; (4) reception area of the palace; (5) private quarters of the palace; (6) Fethiye Mosque; (7) mausoleum; (8) kitchens; (9) lake pavilion; (10) military garrison and defensive works; (11) modern Byzantine Museum.



Adriatic sphere, especially when compared with the several examples of monumental gateways of Venetian fortifications. Yet the combination of portal and belvedere also recalls the main entrance of the great showpiece of Ottoman palatial architecture, the Topkapı Palace in Istanbul; it can be deduced from archival and visual records that the portal facing the Hagia Sophia once included a belvedere with grilled windows looking out onto the square. Gülru Necipoğlu has argued that this belvedere participated in a wider architectural rhetoric that attested to the sultan's omniscience, reminding the populace of the sovereign's perpetual gaze over the city.[32] In a similar fashion, the main portal of the Ioannina citadel could be interpreted as part of a distinctively Ottoman conception of palatial design, whereby the purpose of the central entrance is not only to impress the viewer as a staging area but also to convey the sense that the visitor or inhabitant is under constant surveillance. This evaluation is supported by the fact that the entrance is defended by a dense concentration of guardhouses and barracks (see fig. 14, no. 2), along with cannon embrasures in the outer bastion to the immediate west, which directly bear down on any visitor approaching the gate. In other words, pomp and grandeur are balanced with a healthy dose of intimidation.



FIGURE 16
Henry Edmund Allen, *The Serai and Tomb of Ali Pasha, Ioannina* (in the courtyard of the southeastern citadel, looking north), 1833. Pencil on paper, 35.2 × 53.7 cm. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London, SD.18.



FIGURE 17
Ernest Hébrard, photograph of the main gate to the walled quarter of Preveza, ca. 1920. Courtesy of Actia Nicopolis Foundation, Preveza, Greece.

Upon passing through this main portal, visitors found themselves in a wide, open courtyard (see fig. 14, no. 3, and fig. 16) that constituted the heart of the residential complex. On the western side of this enclosure was the public reception area of Ali Pasha's palace (fig. 14, no. 4), accessed from a projecting staircase on the northern side of the structure. Both traveler accounts and historical drawings of the palace confirm that these central apartments were an elaborate version of the *ḳonak* house ubiquitous in the Eastern Mediterranean. That is, Ali Pasha's palace consisted of a two-story structure, the ground floor sturdily constructed of masonry and reserved for storage and other service functions, while the living and reception rooms were on the upper story, built with a lighter wattle-and-daub technique and covered with painted plaster (see the building to the left in fig. 16).

The public apartments seem to have been connected by a covered gallery to the more private quarters of the palace, commonly referred to in Ottoman palaces as the harem (see fig. 14,



FIGURE 19
The southern entrance to the Tepelena citadel. Photo by author.

visitors approached the palace complex from the northwest, now a municipal park. Here, an initial gateway led into an open courtyard where guards and petitioners gathered, while a second gateway opened onto a flight of stairs that brought visitors up to a large reception chamber that provided a magnificent panorama of the area. As can also be seen in the Barbié du Bocage map, Ali Pasha's sons Veli and Muhtar Pasha eventually completed their own residences in the middle of the city at the foot of the Litharitsa complex (see fig. 13, nos. 3 and 4).[36] Muhtar Pasha's palace was obliterated by Ottoman authorities in the late nineteenth century to make way for modern military barracks and a clock tower, and nothing survives of Veli Pasha's residence except the kitchens and the adjacent mosque and *medrese* (theological school) that Ottoman records show he endowed in 1804.[37]

In addition to the palaces at Ioannina, Ali Pasha constructed a large urban residential complex in his hometown of Tepelena, in what is today southern Albania. The governor again commissioned the master architect Petros for the task, and work was completed by 1804.[38] This palace was likewise situated within the walls of the citadel, the construction of which also seems to have been initiated by Ali Pasha around the same time.[39] The whole complex overlooks the Vjosa (Gr. Aoos) River (see fig. 5), and was described by William Leake as "one of the most romantic and delightful country-houses that can be imagined."[40] As in Ioannina, none of the buildings from the palace survive, although they were still standing in ruin at the beginning of the twentieth century.[41] Because the citadel of Tepelena is not a protected heritage area and continues to function as a residential neighborhood, tracing the archaeological remains of these structures is difficult. Nevertheless, primarily from the descriptions of Lord Byron and his traveling companion John Hobhouse, we know that the complex resembled the main palace in Ioannina.[42] The collection of buildings was situated around a wide, open courtyard and included a large two-story residence with public reception areas and private living quarters, along with a

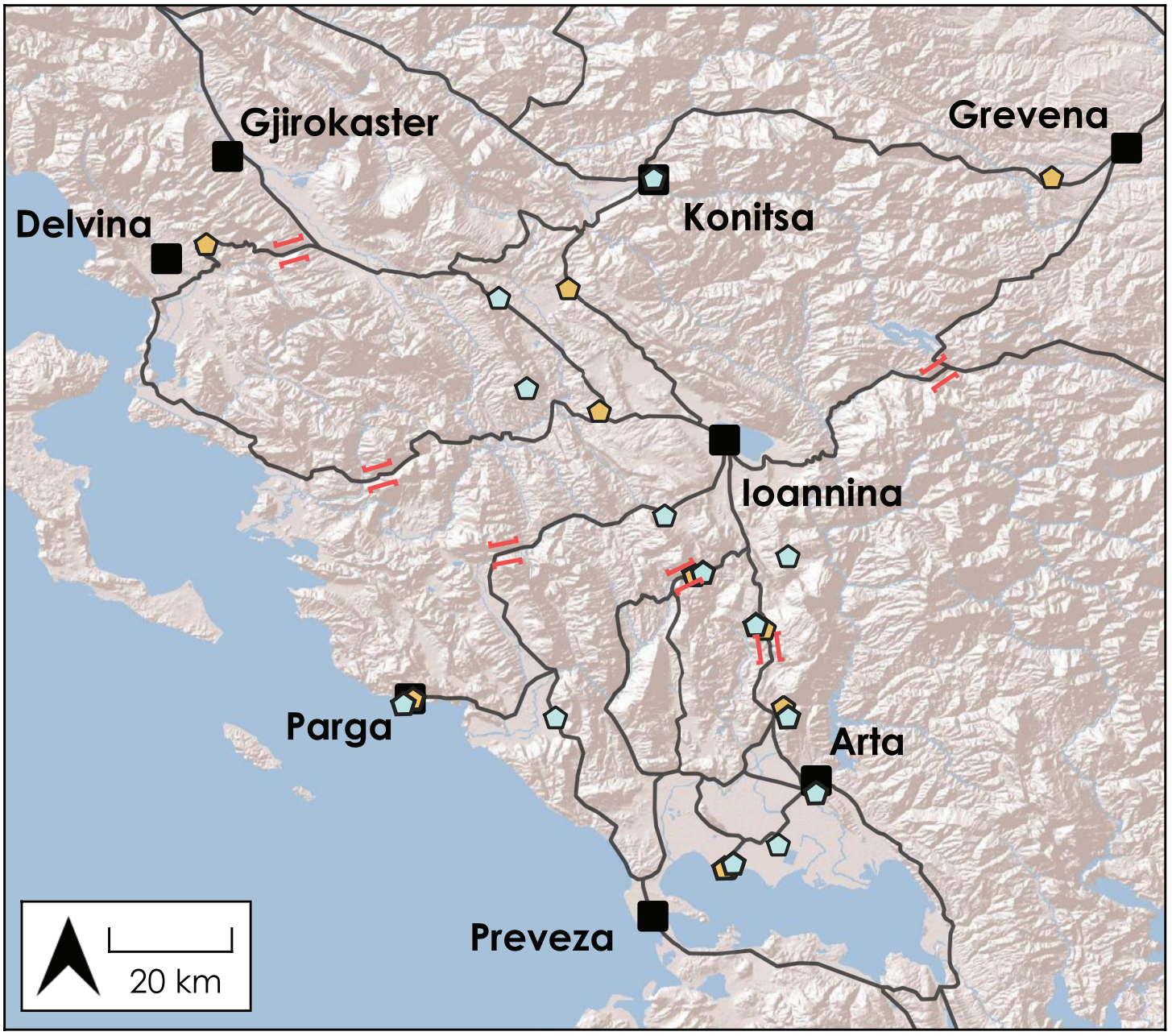


FIGURE 25
The *hans* (*yellow*) and residences (*blue*) in the *çiftliks* of Ali Pasha and his sons in the provincial districts of Yanya and Delvine. Visualization of data drawn from an Ottoman property register (BOA, Istanbul, MAD. d. 9767). The major mountain passes (*derbend*) in the region are also indicated in red. Map by Matthew J. Jacobson.



FIGURE 26
William Haygarth, *Presentation to Ali Pacha at Joannina* [Ioannina], 1810. Ink on paper, 24.5 × 42 cm. From scrapbook in Gennadius Collection, p. 2. American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Gennadius Library.

FIGURE 27
Interior of the Zekate House in Gjirokaster, ca. 1811–12. Photo by author.

buildings" of Greece aligns with the neoclassical movement (often referred to as the Greek Revival) in Britain, which advocated both sobriety and minimal color in architecture, emphatically turning away from the more boisterous Palladianism and continental baroque styles.[88] In Hughes's eyes, Ali Pasha's palaces—hodgepodge, asymmetrical structures decked out in bright floral painting and lively baroque flourishes—were bound to fall short. The loaded narrative of democracy versus despotism is difficult to escape when discussing Ali Pasha's palatial architecture. This is especially the case because almost all the textual descriptions that we have of these structures come from Western European visitors steeped in an intellectual tradition that considered taste to be a matter of moral character. How, then, to approach these "gaudy" interiors, the piles of weapons and carpets, the murals of harsh justice being served?



Understanding Ali Pasha's architecture through the lens of theater reframes these



FIGURE 51
Postcard showing the Mosque of Mehmed Ali Pasha on the Cairo Citadel, contrasted with Mamluk-era tombs and minarets in the foreground, early twentieth century. Courtesy of Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University.

the introduction, in the case of the Çapanoğlu clan in central Anatolia, the construction of a Friday mosque in 1779 at the clan's ruling seat in Yozgat was part of a larger urban development project, transforming what had been a family village into a town of consequence practically overnight (see fig. 7).[11] In the subsequent decades, members of the Çapanoğlu retinue such as the *vekîlharc* (chief steward, majordomo) and *başçavuş* (local Janissary leader) continued this urbanization initiative by commissioning their own, smaller mosques in close proximity to the central dynastic foundation.[12] Another notable example of religious architecture among the provincial adminstrators can be seen at the Citadel of Cairo, with construction of the Friday mosque of Mehmed Ali Pasha initially begun in 1828 (fig. 51).[13] In stark visual contrast to the earlier Mamluk funerary complexes that had come to define Cairo's urban landscape, Mehmed Ali Pasha's mosque adopts an architectural vocabulary that recalls Ottoman Istanbul, especially in its cascading domes and pencil minarets. In this case, however, citing the sultan's architecture did not necessarily translate into political fealty. As the architectural historian Mohammad al-Asad observes, "Ironically, it was the governor who most aggressively sought Egypt's independence from Istanbul who also provided Cairo with its most Ottomanized structure."[14] In 1831, just as construction for his mosque got under way, Mehmed Ali Pasha directed his son to invade Syria, an action that launched an almost decade-long war with the Porte and concluded with his family's being granted autonomous rule over Egypt.

Against this backdrop, Ali Pasha laid claim to several Friday mosques in most of the major cities within his territory. Ali Pasha's son Veli



FIGURE 55
Edward Lear, *View of the Citadel of Tepelena* (from the northwest), 1848. Ink, pencil, and watercolor on paper, 26.2 × 47.1 cm. MS Typ 55.26, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

for the city of Tepelena was also located within the citadel.[30] The traveler John Hobhouse reported that he heard the call for prayer from the minaret "of the mosck attached to the palace."[31] Although we do not have a firm date for the construction of this building, there is a *terminus ante quem* of January 1805, when Leake visited the mosque complex, writing, "Adjoining to a mosque which he built near his palace some years since, is a garden, which was then laid out for him by a Frenchman. On the wall which bounds it toward the river three guns are mounted, and two small kiosks are built."[32] Leake's comments suggest that the mosque came slightly later than the palace grounds, placing its construction around 1803 or 1804, only a few years after Ali Pasha's development of his residential complex in the Ioannina citadel.

Ali Pasha's mosque in Tepelena no longer survives, but its general features can be surmised from a detailed drawing by the traveler Edward Lear (fig. 55). We can also conclude from this drawing that by the mid-nineteenth century, while Ali Pasha's palace had been largely reduced to a pile of rubble, the mosque was left intact in the aftermath of the pasha's demise.[33] The mosque itself consisted of a single dome sitting on an octagonal drum, transitioning to a square base. The structure was surrounded by an elevated colonnaded porch at least on the northwestern and northeastern sides, maintaining a vista toward the river and what had been the palace courtyard. Presumably, the main entrance would have been on the northwestern side, which is most prominent in the drawing, the interior mihrab placed at the opposite qibla wall facing southeast. A single minaret was originally tucked behind the porch. According to a note penciled by Lear directly onto his sketch, the entire structure was "very nicely finished—all white stone."

Looking across Ali Pasha's wide territory, the building in Tepelena greatly resembles in



FIGURE 70
Detail of the foundation inscription embedded in the exterior wall of the apse at the Church of Kosmas Aitolos. Photo by author.

Fourka in the parish of Agios Vellas."[100] The term "chamber" (δώμα, *doma*) of Kosmas may be a reference to the saint's tomb next to the church.

These inscriptions clarify the circumstances of the building's patronage and construction, with Ali Pasha identified as the primary benefactor of the foundation, acting in cooperation with the local religious leaders, such as the metropolitan and the abbot of the monastery, and lay notables from the village. This picture of the commissioning process is even further clarified by several orders issued by Ali Pasha regarding the church, which have been preserved and reproduced in their entirety in the nineteenth-century memoir of Anthimos Alexoudis, successor to Iosaf as the metropolitan of Berat.[101] These memoranda offer a rare glimpse into the archival record that accompanied the construction of these monuments.

The first order, dated September 12, 1813, addresses the Christians of Berat, specifically the people of Myzeqe and Grabova, two villages located in the vicinity of the church.[102] In this memorandum, Ali Pasha notifies these communities that he has appointed a representative to construct the monastery of Father Kosmas and commands them to offer whatever financial assistance the metropolitan asks of them, stating that he himself has also given money to the cause ("εβοήθησα και εγώ [με] άσπρα"). With characteristic flair, Ali Pasha continues with a warning: "anyone who does not assist me in my request will be in my debt and will later be required to pay double the amount." According to this document, Ali Pasha initiated this building project, providing some of his own funds for the church, but he also expected the local Christian communities to



FIGURE 72
Foundation inscription of the Church of Agios Nikolaos in Vasiliki, a village north of Trikala. Photo by author.

to the naos, states, "The holy church of Agios Nikolaos was rebuilt from the foundations with the financial support of the local inhabitants and assistance by Vasiliki, wife of the voyvoda, and her brothers" (fig. 72).[107]

While the memory of Ali Pasha's patronage of the Church of Agios Kosmas has faded in the secondary literature and at the site itself, the role that Vasiliki played in the construction of the Church of Agios Nikolaos is prominently celebrated those who live in the village today. A modern bust of the patron adorns the courtyard of the church and bears an inscription that describes Vasiliki as "a great benefactress of the place and commissioner of this church."[108] When brought together, the portrait of church patronage by a Muslim husband and Christian wife across a considerable geographic expanse—one church in modern-day Albania, the other in Greece—revises our current view of church building and restoration in the Ottoman Empire.

TOWARD A MULTICONFESSIONAL HISTORY OF OTTOMAN ARCHITECTURE

It is critically important that we compare the architectural projects of various confessional groups living side by side because there has to date been such a stark separation in the examination of Muslim and Christian monuments within the wider historiography on Ottoman architecture. It is rare to see scholarly studies on the built environment that consider both mosques and churches, even if they are

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