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On the Architecture of the Konaks in Serbia (1804–1830s)

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On the Architecture of the *Konaks* in Serbia (1804–1830s)*

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To my mother Selena

The First National Uprising of the Serbs against the Ottoman Turks in the Belgrade *pašalik* (Smederevo Sandjak, also known as the Morava administrative division of the Ottoman Empire) in 1804 was the major event in the political history of the Balkans.¹ Led by Đorđe Petrović—Karadžić (Black George) (1762–1817), the Uprising (1804–13) was the first autonomous attempt of the subjugated to set themselves free from Ottoman rule. Initially local in scope and aims, the Uprising ultimately enabled the development of modern Serbia as well as the national development of other countries in the Balkans. Judging by the scope and quality of the building activities

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¹ For the condensed overview in English of the historical evidence on the Serbian Uprisings of 1804–30, see: Stevan K. Pavlowitch, “The Awakening of Nationalities, 1804–1830,” in *A History of the Balkans, 1804–1945* (London: Longman Publishing Group, 1999); Sima M. Ćirković, *The Serbs* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), 176–96.

of the Serbs, it would be unfair to state that the year 1804 simultaneously marked the beginning of a new Serbian cultural history as the Serbs eventually achieved internal self-government and established state and educational institutions only after 1830 under Prince (*Knjaz*) Miloš Obrenović (1780–1860).² It is true, however, that around 1800 some historical events announced important architectural changes in Serbia. The most important of these events were: 1) in 1793 the Ottoman Sublime Porte in Belgrade issued a decree permitting building and rebuilding of churches, and 2) in 1794 Sultan Selim III (r. 1789–1807) issued a *firman*, an imperial edict, which explicitly granted the building of new churches in the Belgrade *pašalik* for the first time after the Ottoman conquest of Serbia in 1459.³ Suffering centuries of cultural isolation under the Ottoman rule (1459–1830) with several episodes of the Austro-Habsburg reign (1688–91, 1718–39, 1788–91), in the early nineteenth century the insurgent Serbs included in their negotiations a provision for building and re-building of the monasteries and churches.⁴ Semi-educated Serbs rebuilt or built a significant number of churches and monasteries in this short period despite the difficulties in obtaining necessary material and qualified workers.⁵

Another building activity, that of residential architecture, existed simultaneously with the building of churches. Western travelers frequently described residential architecture in Serbia as “poor” and “miserable.”⁶ Until the Second Serbian Uprising in 1815 building activities both by the Serbs and the Ottomans were generally insignificant and the local inhabitants continued to build their houses in the vernacular manner using half-timbered construction.⁷ A

² In 1830 the Ottoman Sublime Porte issued the *hatt-i sherif* decree, which granted the Serbs internal self-government. Ćirković, *The Serbs*, 191.

³ The denial for implementation of these privileges, already granted, was one of the immediate reasons for the 1804 Uprising. Milorad Kolarić, “Gradjevine i gradjevinari Srbije od 1790 do 1839,” in *Zbornik muzeja prvog srpskog ustanka* 1 (Belgrade: Muzej grada, 1959), 5–28, esp. 7–8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 8–9.

⁵ Monasteries Rača, Voljavča, Klisura, Moravci at Rudnik, Studenica, Krivaja, Krčmar, Rajinovac, and Ćelije near Valjevo, as well as churches in villages Brezovac and Vrbovac were built or rebuilt before 1804. Following 1804, monasteries Vujan (Obrovin), Manasija, Ravanica, Godovik, Nikolje, Metamorphosis on Kablar, and churches in villages Gorčiči, Vrtiglave, Nočaj were also built or rebuilt. See also: Kolarić, “Gradjevine i gradjevinari,” 7–9.

⁶ Divna Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd kao orijentalna varoš pod Turcima 1521–1867* [summary in English] (Belgrade: Muzej grada, 1977), 134–35.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 133–34; Slobodan M. Nenadović, “Seoska kuća u Srbiji” in *Ilustrovani rečnik izraza u narodnoj arhitekturi* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 2002), 145–78; B. Kojić, *Stara gradska i seoska arhitektura u Srbiji* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1949), 45–86; Fred Aalen, “Vernacular Architecture,

number of older, larger, and more luxurious houses originally owned by the Ottoman Turks frequently exchanged occupants between higher officials of the First Uprising and the Ottoman regime.⁸ Despite obvious cultural and social differences in the standards of living of Christians and Muslims, even after Serbia gained its semi-independence in 1830, Serbs continued to live in the so-called “Balkan-style” houses, also known as “Oriental,” “Turko-Oriental,” “Turkish,” or “Ottoman” houses because they are associated with Ottoman times and “non-Western” architecture.⁹ The more prosperous Serbs often chose to live in *konaks*, large palatial houses, which the Ottoman Turks originally used for both residential and official purposes.¹⁰

Serbian leaders encouraged building and rebuilding of churches in recognizable historical architectural styles as well as constructing public architec-

Balkan Peninsula,” in N. W. Alcock et al. “Vernacular architecture,” in *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.jproxy.lib.ecu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T088875pg4> (accessed July 5, 2009).

⁸ Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd*, 170.

⁹ By the nineteenth century the so-called “Oriental” domestic architecture was widespread in western Anatolia and in the Balkans, including southern and central Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, northern Greece and Epirus, and modern day Albania. Because these territories belonged to the Ottoman Empire these houses are also known as “Ottoman,” “Turkish,” and “Turko-Oriental.” Yet, “Turko-Oriental” houses built in timber abundant in the Balkans differ significantly from “Turko-Oriental” houses in Egypt built in mud-brick. Hence, some scholars recognize the “Balkan house” as a special type of “Oriental house.” The terminology is not uniform and poses numerous questions. For various approaches, which depend on the academic training of scholars who study domestic architecture in the Balkans, see: Maurice Cerasi, “The Formation of Ottoman House Types: A Comparative Study in Interaction with Neighboring Cultures,” in *Muqarnas* 15 (1998), 116–56; Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd*, (1977); Nadja Folić-Kurtović, “Serbia and Architecture after 1459,” in Zaga Gavrilović et al. “Serbia,” in *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.jproxy.lib.ecu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T077654> (accessed July 5, 2009), Aalen, “Vernacular Architecture,”; Kojić, *Stara arhitektura*, 35–86; Nenadović, “Gradska kuća orijentalnog stila,” in *Ilustrovani rečnik*, 274–300; Jovan Krnić, “O arhitekturi stare kuće (tip i poreklo) i urbanom sklopu grada Peći,” *Saopštenja* 13 (1981): 77–104; Dobroslav St. Pavlović, “Yougoslavie,” in *Architecture traditionnelle des pays balkaniques* ([Athens]: Melissa, 1993); Ahmet Turhan Altiner and Cüneyt Budak, *The Konak Book, A Study of the Traditional Turkish Urban Dwelling in Its Late Period*, (İstanbul: Tepe Construction Industries Inc., 1997); Godfrey Goodwin, *A History of Ottoman Architecture* (Baltimore: Thames and Hudson, 1971), 428–45; Carel Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House: Collective Visions of Home* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 21–56.

¹⁰ On the basic definition of the *konak* as large house, palatial or official residence in the former Ottoman Empire and the use of the term in Western accounts from 1675 onwards: *Oxford English Dictionary—OED Online* http://dictionary.oed.com.jproxy.lib.ecu.edu/cgi/entry/50127826?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=konak&first=1&max_to_show=10 (accessed June 26, 2009). On the main architectural features see *Dictionary of Islamic Architecture*, ed. Andrew Petersen (London: Routledge, 1996), s.v. “Konak.”

ture in contemporary European styles. In the 1830s, after not being able to obtain qualified architects, Prince Miloš appointed civil engineers—Slovak Franz Janke and Franz Baron Kordon from Austria, as well as architect Franz Dobi from Pančevo—to serve as state architects for big public projects done in the Neo-Classical style.¹¹ These builders also erected a number of private residences in the Neo-Classical style, exemplified by the residence of Cvetko Rajović in Belgrade designed by Franz Janke in 1837, today the Pedagogical Museum of Serbia. Residential architecture built in Western European historical styles existed in Serbia prior to the nineteenth-century Uprisings as well. For example, Nikola Doksat de Mores built the oldest surviving house in Belgrade on the Cara Dušana Street in the baroque style (1724–27) during the urban reconstruction of Belgrade under Austro-Habsburg rule.¹² The local inhabitants, regardless of their religion and ethnicity, however, considered not “Western” but “Oriental” type of housing—and above all *konaks*—more desirable dwellings. Even Serbian political leaders and the strongest opponents of Ottoman rule, Karađorđe and Prince Miloš, as well as members of their extended families, lived in *konaks*. This phenomenon was not triggered by any public decree or law.

In this paper the architecture of *konaks* in Serbia between 1804 and the 1830s is examined in order to understand better this seemingly inexplicable paradox of the early nineteenth-century residential architecture within “Western,” “Oriental,” and “local” trends. General notions about *konaks* and the surviving architectural evidence are briefly addressed and then juxtaposed with the architectural features of known Ottoman and Serbian *konaks*. When applicable, known features of urban residential architecture in Serbia before the Ottoman conquest are also discussed.

Nineteenth-century religious architecture built in various combinations of historical medieval and baroque styles is often associated with Christian identity.¹³ However, residential architecture is surprisingly similar for both

¹¹ Franz Janke and Franz Baron Kordon served as state architects, and from 1839, they worked at the newly established Building Department of the Ministry of the Internal Affairs in Belgrade. The *Djumurkana* (Custom-house) built by Janke was the first public building in Belgrade in the Neo-Classical style. Divna Đurić-Zamolo, *Graditelji Beograda 1815–1914* [summary in English] (Belgrade: Muzej grada, 1981), 81, 114–16.

¹² M. Popović, “Kuća u ulici Cara Dušana 10” *Nasledje*, 1 (1997). By the end of the nineteenth century the governor’s palace was identified with the ruins of the palace known as “Pirinčana” (literary the “Rice-store”). Another urban residence on Gračanička street (no. 30) was also associated with Austro-Habsburg architecture in Belgrade. Cf. V. Čubrilović, ed., *Istorija Beograda*, 2 (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1974), 327.

¹³ Miodrag Jovanović, *Srpsko crkveno graditeljstvo i slikarstvo novijeg doba* (Belgrade-Kragujevac, 1987), 7–105. However, most of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century churches that

Christians and Muslims.¹⁴ The major differences in housing were in size and decoration, which depended on the economic wealth of the owners. The large *konaks* were reserved for the most affluent. Only a few of the *konaks* have survived in the Balkans, including modern Turkey and Istanbul, the heart of the former Ottoman Empire.¹⁵ Today most of the luxurious urban *konaks* can be studied from old photographs. The *konak* is typically a multi-storey house characterized by cantilevered upper stories, balconies or projecting windows (Figs. B-1A, B-6–12, B-14 in the graphic insert following p. 200 of this issue). Generally, the ground floor is built of stone or rubble while the upper stories are built in timber-frame with wattle and daub interstices plastered over and often color-washed. The house is crowned with a pitched roof tiled in sun-dried roof tiles, which are known as *čerpik* (Serbian equivalent *čerpič*). The roof is pierced by pronounced whitewashed prismatic or cylindrical chimneys with decorative chimney toppers often made of glazed ceramics.

The ground floor was often adjusted to the street and the topography of the building lot. The stone walls of the ground floor are frequently windowless or only with ventilation slits on the street side. Privacy was the priority and a high wall usually surrounded the entire site. In urban neighborhoods that were not overly dense, as in central Serbia, street walls often extended into street-sided garden walls, defining the urban plot and giving it privacy. Usually gates were cut into enclosing walls, giving access to the courtyard and gardens, and then to the house. The area around the house and especially towards the street was occasionally paved in polished stone, known as *taşlik*. In densely populated urban areas at the threshold of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as for example in Peć, the first floor, or the *tahtani*, was often accessed directly from the gate in the wall facing the street.¹⁶ The upper floors, or the *fevkani*, built in a wooden framework are often physically adjusted for light, views, and ventilation, and could be positioned at a different

have been studied are those built of permanent materials—stone and brick. A significant number of churches were done in more affordable timber construction. These wooden churches could be associated with medieval wooden churches if we had enough material evidence. Hence, it is difficult to suggest to what extent the architectural styles of these religious wooden buildings were distinctive and associable with Christian religious identity. On wooden churches in Serbia, see D. St. Pavlović, “Crkve brvnare u Srbiji,” *Saopštenja* 5 (1962): 149–54.

¹⁴ See, for example, the houses of the Kasapoli and Protić families in Peć, both with the typical symmetrical plan of the urban house in the Balkans. Both have the cruciform central hall that provides access to individual, multi-purpose rooms on the corners of the house. Krunić, *O arhitekturi stare kuće*, 77–104, figs. 32 and 34.

¹⁵ Bertram, *Imagining*, 15–20; Altiner and Budak, *The Konak Book*; Goodwin, *Ottoman Architecture*, 428–45.

¹⁶ Krunić, *O arhitekturi stare kuće*, 77–104. See esp. figs. 28 and 29.

angle than the ground floor. The exterior walls are enlivened by the protruding windows, rooms, or entire floor if the house is small, known as *çikma* or *divanhane*.

The traditional Ottoman *konak* presumably derives from ancient Near Eastern models of symmetrical residential architecture, the so-called four-*iwān* (also transcribed as *eywān*) palatial architecture, and is exemplified by the Ottoman Çinili ("Tiled") Kiosk at Istanbul, Turkey, built for Sultan Mehmed II in 1473 (Fig. B-2).¹⁷ The four-*iwān konak* consists of a central hall enclosed by four barrel vaulted halls, the so-called *iwāns*. The crossing of the *iwāns* is often covered with a central wooden dome or two-dimensional representation of a dome made of carved wood or painted, known as *djul-tavan*—the rose ceiling. The *iwāns* are enclosed by four self-sufficient, multi-functional living rooms, the so-called *bayts* in Arabic or *odas* and *akis* in Turkish. Despite variations of the plan and its symmetrical or asymmetrical solutions, often due to the shape of the plot, the basic principle of the central hall as a communal area is essential for the *konaks*.

The vertical organization of the *konaks* reveals that the main living quarters were on the upper floor while the ground floor was reserved for storage and, occasionally, for dining. Looking at the horizontal organization of the house, two distinct parts are evident—*haremlik*, reserved for the private domain and family life, open only to relatives and never to male guests; and *selamlık*, the men's quarters, reserved for reception of the owner's guests, social life, and occasionally for conducting administrative business (Figs. B-1A, B-6, B-14). Most rooms had a small *gusülhane* (closet for washing) and a tiny fireplace, only for heating and brewing coffee. Large-size ceramic heaters were often inbuilt between the two rooms. The intricately carved wooden furnishing is typical of the *konaks*. Cabinets, *dolaps*, were installed along the windowless walls of the rooms, and cushioned benches, *sedir*, were built along the windowed walls. The laundry room, kitchen, bathhouse, and toilets were either in separate buildings in the garden, or integrated into the plan on the ground level.

The *konak* is distinguished from other types of houses both in terms of its functional organization and articulation of space. Larger in size in comparison to other "Oriental" houses, usually with ten to forty rooms, *konaks* often simultaneously housed the family and functioned as a local community center.

¹⁷ On the main architectural features of *konaks* and their relation to Çinili Kiosk at Istanbul, see Goodwin, *Ottoman Architecture*, 433 and *Dictionary of Islamic Architecture*, s.v. "Konak." On the Near Eastern, "Persian" influences on Çinili Kiosk at Istanbul as well as on the complexities related to the connection of the fifteenth-century Çinili Kiosk and nineteenth-century *konaks*, see Cerasi, "Formation of Ottoman House," 116–56.

The size of a *konak* often expressed the wealth and power of the owner. In late Ottoman society, in the various countries under Ottoman rule, local governors and regional landlords usually lived in notable *konaks*.¹⁸ However, very often these provincial *konaks* actually developed from rural *hayat* houses (hence the terms “hajat,” “ajat,” and “vajat” in the Serbian vernacular language),¹⁹ characterized by a spacious covered and often arcaded porch or veranda (*hayat*) on the upper floor that opened inward to the rooms with a separate door for each room (Fig. B-1B).²⁰ The projecting wooden porch served as a corridor and a communal space of the house. Examples of Ottoman *konaks* in Serbia survive in old towns like the *selamlik* of the Paša's *konak* in Vranje, Radul Beg's *konak* in Zaječar, Muselin's *konak* in Valjevo, Tahir Beg's *konak* in Peć, and several other *konaks* in Niš, Kragujevac, Leskovac, Novi Pazar, Priština, Gnjilane, and Prizren.²¹ The architectural features of the *konaks* built by and for the Serbs after 1804 and, in particular, of those built by Karađorđe Petrović and his successor Miloš Obrenović between the 1810s and 1830s, are strikingly similar to the surviving Ottoman *konaks*.

Several years after the First Uprising, Karađorđe supported numerous building projects. Some of them were quite extensive as Karađorđe became a patron of the monasteries in Manasija and Ravanica as well as of the church in Poreč.²² In 1810 Karađorđe undertook his most complex project—the building of a fortified town in Topola, a small settlement between Belgrade and Kragujevac, in the immediate vicinity of his native village Viševac (Fig. B-3).²³ By 1813 Topola marked the first Serbian attempt at urban revival in the essentially rural Šumadija (literally, “the land of forests”). The entire

¹⁸ Cerasi, “Formation of Ottoman House,” 116–56.

¹⁹ Nenadović, *Ilustrovani rečnik*, 11, 17, 83.

²⁰ General book on the *hayat*, see Doğan Kuban, *The Turkish Hayat House* (Istanbul: Eren, 1995).

²¹ Kojić, *Stara arhitektura*, 49–60; Milka Čanak, “Radul-begov konak u Zaječaru” (Belgrade: 1957), 225–30; Ivan M. Zdravković, “Jedan predlog za restauraciju i adaptaciju Radul-begovog konaka u Zaječaru” (Belgrade, 1961); Stevan Veljković, “Radul-Begov Konak” in *Iz starog Zaječara* (Zaječar: Narodni muzej, Kulturno prosvetna zajednica, 2002), 158–68; *Muselimov konak: vodič i katalog muzejske postavke Valjevska nahija i Valjevci u Prvom i Drugom srpskom ustanku* (Valjevo: Narodni muzej, 1995); <http://www.vranje.org.rs/spomenici.php>, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vranje_Museum.jpg (accessed July 5, 2009); field notes J. Bogdanović.

²² Kolarić, “Gradjevine i gradjevinari,” 9.

²³ Mile Nedeljković, *Topola ville de Karađorđe, Oplenac* (Topola: Centar za kulturu “Dušan Petrović Šane,” 1989); S. Šakota, D. Pavlović, and D. Panić, *Topola i Oplenac* (Belgrade: Halpern and Halpern, 1963).

complex of the so-called town of Karađorđe is a peculiar combination of military and residential architecture. The fortified town had impressive three-storey defensive towers. Separate houses for the family and guests within the fortified enclosure with defensive towers point to the reality of living at times of insecurity during the first half of the nineteenth century. The *konak* of Avzi-Paša in Bardovci, near Skopje, in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, built in the 1820s–30s was similarly enclosed by high walls and defensive stone towers (Fig. B-14).²⁴ Within the town walls Karađorđe, however, built the church, school, and three *konaks*.²⁵ One of the *konaks* was Karađorđe's rural wooden house originally built in the middle of the fortress and later given to his companions for use. Of the two newly built *konaks*, the one abutting the north wall was reserved for guests. The other *konak*, along the south wall between the two towers and connected to the church, accommodated Karađorđe's family. The seat of all of the institutions of the emerging Serbian state was also within Karađorđe's *konak*. Therefore, it was this third *konak* that corresponded to the typical urban *konak* of the Ottoman Turks, with its dual function as a residence and a community center.

Karađorđe's *konak*, in architectural terms essentially of the *hayat*-type, initially had three relatively big multi-functional rooms open towards the large porch on the upper floor (Fig. B-4). A room for storage of horse gear and two wine cellars were dug into the slope of the terrain at ground level.²⁶ In contrast to the majority of other dwellings of that time in Serbia, which were built of wood, Karađorđe's *konak* had stone foundation walls. The prominent and well-defined porch traditionally oriented inward, facing the courtyard, additionally reveals the house's potential significance as a mansion functioning both as the residence of the leader and as a communal center. Hence, it seems that the function of the house, not its architecture, was the decisive reason for naming Karađorđe's residence *konak* instead of *hayat*. Shortly after the completion of construction, the Ottoman Turks set the town on fire.²⁷ Presumably, only the walls made of stone survived. Karađorđe's son Aleksandar restored the town in the 1840s.²⁸ Some administrative, military, commercial and residential buildings were added at that time. Today only

²⁴ Branislav Kojić, "Konaci i čiflik Avzi-paše u Bardovcu kod Skoplja" [summary in French], *Zbornik zaštite spomenika kulture* 4–5 (1953–54), 224–43.

²⁵ S. Šakota et al., *Topola i Oplenac*, 12, 16–18.

²⁶ It is worth noting that traditional Ottoman *konaks* would not have wine storage due to religious prohibitions to drinking alcohol. Moreover, Ottoman houses usually did not have underground storage. Cerasi, "Formation of Ottoman House," 116–56.

²⁷ S. Šakota et al., *Topola i Oplenac*, 8–9, 18–20.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

parts of the wall, the church dedicated to the Holy Mother of God, and parts of Karađorđe's *konak*, now the museum of the First Uprising, are preserved.

Itinerant building workshops, their training as well as available building materials in the wider region are probably crucial for our understanding of the architectural features of these newly built *konaks* in the early nineteenth-century. The master builder of Karađorđe's *konak* was a certain Cena, Vlachos from Biskupa, in the province of Ram, Smederevsko-Braničevski region of Serbia, while the wooden-construction building workshop was from Osat, in northeastern, heavily forested, Bosnia.²⁹ The fortification walls and the church in Topola were built by different local workshops with some ability to work with brick and stone and again coming from different areas—Belgrade, Kragujevac, Valjevo, and Smederevo. The master builder of the fortress was one Andreja, whom Karađorđe also called Arsenije.

The building workshops from Ohrid and Osat rebuilt the church and monastic cells in the monastery of Voljavča in 1765.³⁰ The monastic cells built in the vernacular style housed the first sessions of the First Serbian government in 1805 (Fig. B-5). Restored today, the building is known as the *konak* of Voljavča and exemplifies not only how the term *konak* started to signify any large building for the accommodation of a significant number of people, but also how in the nineteenth century the *konak* became a synonym for monastic cells and multipurpose non-religious buildings within a monastic context.³¹

Around 1804 more than 30 *konaks* were inhabited in Belgrade.³² Karađorđe himself and the officials of the First Uprising lived in some of them. Nothing remains of the Belgrade *konaks* in which Karađorđe resided. Karađorđe spent some time in the former *konak* of Mula Jusuf, one of the *dahis*.³³ The house, now lost, was supposedly at the corner of the present-day Knez Mihajlova and Kralja Petra streets. Religious differences of the occupants of the *konak* did not preclude their use of the same type of house.

²⁹ Kolarić, "Gradjevine i gradjevinari," 5–28.

³⁰ Kojić, *Stara arhitektura*, 64; Kolarić, "Gradjevine i gradjevinari," 7–8.

³¹ In her study on monastic architecture, Svetlana Popović, *Krst u Krugu: Arhitektura manastira u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji* (Belgrade: Prosveta and Republički zavod za zaštitu spomenika, 1994), 120, analyzes written historical sources and shows that the term *konak* was introduced into the monastic context in Serbia only in the nineteenth century, and especially after the 1830s.

³² Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd*, 145–49; Kolarić, "Gradjevine i gradjevinari," 5–28.

³³ The *dahi* is a rebel Turkish dignitary and oppressor of the common people known as *raya*. On Karađorđe's *konak* in Belgrade, see Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd*, 147.

In 1808, Dositej Obradović, the supervisor of all Serbian schools under Karađorđe, bought an older Belgrade *konak* from a Turkish family.³⁴ He lived there until 1810, when it was given over to the Theological seminary. Later, a Turkish family lived in it again. The house was destroyed sometime between 1869 and 1871, when the first regulation plan, made after Western European models, was introduced in Belgrade.

Dositej Obradović bought yet another *konak* in Belgrade from a wealthy Turkish family. It was a detached house with a large orchard enclosed by a high wall (Fig. B-6). The *konak*, known as Dositej's lyceum, served as a high school until 1813, when the Ottoman Turks expropriated it.³⁵ It was later bought by a certain Kutula, and finally by a merchant, Andreja Dada, whose family lived in it for a long time. Today, this house on the corner of Gospodar-Jevremova and Višnjićeva streets, is the museum of Vuk Karadžić and Dositej Obradović. Built shortly after 1739, the house is the oldest preserved "Oriental" house in Belgrade and also one of the oldest preserved *konaks* in the Balkans.

The Dositej dwelling is a typical two-storey urban *konak*, with a clear distinction between the *selamlik* and the *haremlik*. The ground level, though heavily restored, was articulated in a manner typical of wealthier urban *konaks*. Utilities, storage space, and a small shop were behind a large flat wall pierced by small windows. The kitchen was in a separate building in the courtyard. The two entrances on the ground level, originally from the inner courtyard, led to the interior staircases, and ultimately to the *haremlik* and *selamlik* sections of the house on a slightly cantilevered upper floor. The larger *haremlik* is a typical symmetrical four-*iwan* structure, while the *selamlik* is asymmetrical. With two separate entrances, the *haremlik* and the *selamlik* were designed as semi-detached houses with the joint inner wall, which linked them by doorways on both levels, as was typical of the larger urban *konaks* throughout the Ottoman Empire. *Haremlik* and *selamlik* also had two separate *divanhane*s—large rooms for formal receptions, which were necessary elements of any urban *konak*. The centrally placed *divanhane* of the *haremlik* was oval in shape looking toward the inner garden. The *selamlik*, often known as the "male" quarters, was located at the corner of the two streets. Its prismatic protruding *divanhane*, centrally placed on the street façade, architecturally emphasized structural, functional, and social dichotomies of the house.

The most prosperous Serbs continued to live in *konaks* bought from Turkish families, or to build their own houses in the same style. The *konaks*

³⁴ Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd*, 142–43.

³⁵ Đurić-Zamolo, 142–43.

built for Prince Miloš Obrenović, as well as those built for the members of his extended family, prosperous merchants, and higher officials of his government throughout Serbia, further reveal a variety of solutions for *konaks* within urban, rural, and monastic contexts. The majority of builders of these *konaks* came from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Stari Vlah, or from the areas around Ohrid and Skopje.³⁶

The *konak* of Jevrem Obrenović, the brother of Prince Miloš, built in Šabac in the 1820s and destroyed in 1906, exemplifies how the physical appearance of *konaks* was strongly related to the training of the builders. Unusual for the region and its climate, instead of being covered by sun-dried roof tiles, the *konak* had a very tall and steep shingled roof reminiscent of the mountainous forested regions, thus confirming the Bosnian provenance of its builders (Fig. B-7).³⁷ Like Karađorđe in Topola, Prince Miloš established a fortified *konak* complex in Kragujevac, the first capital of self-governed nineteenth-century Serbia. The two *konaks* built for Princess Ljubica and Prince Miloš were destroyed in 1884 and 1941 respectively, but the *konak* built for the court between 1819 and 1824 survives.³⁸ The *konak* is known as Amidža's *konak* (Fig. B-8), because Prince Miloš called his court steward Sima Milosavljević Paštrmac "Amidža," the Turkish word for "uncle."

Vasa's restored *konak* in Kraljevo, constructed in 1831 by Vasa Popović, a prominent insurgent from the Second Uprising and cousin of Princess Ljubica, is a free-standing two-storey spacious *konak* with a stone ground floor and wooden upper floor and veranda.³⁹ The relatively modest *konak* in Brestovačka Banja near Bor in Timočka krajina in eastern Serbia tentatively dated ca. 1835 functioned as a pleasure house and spa resort for Prince Miloš, his wife Princess Ljubica, their sons Milan and Mihailo, and Prince Miloš's brother Jevrem.⁴⁰ The *konak* in Brestovačka Banja was also a place for state negotiations with the Ottoman government in the Vidin *pašalik* in modern Bulgaria as well as for government business with local leaders in the bordering territories of Serbia. This symmetrical, five-room *konak* has two entrances, for practical and security reasons. One entrance leads towards the *odžaklija* (via Turkish *ocak* for hearth), a central room with built-in fireplace for heating and preparing simple food. In Sokobanja, another spa in Timočka

³⁶ Kojić, *Stara arhitektura*, 59–63; Kolarić, "Gradjevine i gradjevinari," 5–28.

³⁷ Kojić, *Stara arhitektura*, 59–63.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Field notes J. Bogdanović.

⁴⁰ Tomislav Pajić and Dragan Ničić, *Brestovačka Banja u vreme kneza Miloša* (Bor: Muzej rudarstva i metalurgije, 1981), n.p.; <http://www2.bor030.net/okolina/421-brestovaka-banja> (accessed July 5, 2009); field notes J. Bogdanović.

krajina, Prince Miloš established a two-storey *konak*, which was also originally his residence and administrative center.⁴¹ Old photographs show the now-lost *konak* built in the 1830s under Prince Miloš in the monastery of Dečani, as a conservative, *hayat*-type building.⁴²

The brother of Prince Miloš, Jovan Obrenović, who took over the governmental responsibilities in central Serbia after Vasa Popović's death, had his *konak* in Čačak (Fig. B-9).⁴³ Contemporary texts suggest that in 1835 Jovan built his *konak* from the very foundations as a "replica" of Miloš's *konak* in Požarevac. Jovan's *konak* is the preserved *selamlık* of the *konak* most likely of some Ottoman dignitary, however.⁴⁴ The *konak* was not very spacious or exuberantly decorated. However, the *konak* preserved its original tall ceramic masonry heaters. Moreover, the façade was originally whitewashed and decorated. Between the two windows on the main façade and on the axis of the main entrance symmetrical to the pronounced *çikma*, is painted the only originally preserved coat of arms of the Obrenović' dynasty. The coat of arms from Jovan's *konak* confirms not only the shared aesthetic, symbolic, and proprietary concerns of the founders of the *konaks*, but also crucial societal changes in Serbia from 1804 to the 1830s under new leaders.

In Belgrade a number of *konaks* got their final three-dimensional form relative to the urban topography and shape of their lots. These *konaks* often had commercial space, shops, and inns on the ground floor facing the street, and residential area and sometimes rental space on the upper floor. Therefore, these *konaks* essentially became high-priced real-estate investments in the city. These houses include the so-called Ičko house built for Petar Ičko, a wealthy merchant from Belgrade (destroyed in 1938), the Manak house, a three-storey multipurpose building with a restaurant and private residence built for Manak Mihailović in ca. 1830s, the Bajalović house, "?" inn⁴⁵ from 1823, "Kičevo" inn, "Kod zlatnog bora" inn, "Radnička kasina" inn, "Zeleni

⁴¹ http://soko-banja.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=28&Itemid=149 (accessed July 27, 2009); field notes J. Bogdanović.

⁴² Vladimir R. Petković and Djurdje Bošković, *Dečani* (Belgrade, 1941).

⁴³ Ivan M. Zdravković, "Restauracija i adaptacija Gospodar-Jovanovog konaka u Čačku" [summary in French], *Zbornik zaštite spomenika kulture* 10 (Belgrade, 1959), 243–52.

⁴⁴ The foundations of the *haremlık* and the archeological evidence for the bridge that connected the *haremlık* with the *selamlık* were recovered. Zdravković, "Restauracija," 243–52 (fig. 1), and 245.

⁴⁵ The question mark is the name of the said inn.

venac” inn, the Kanar house, the Ninić house, three houses on Jewish street, and three houses on Skadarska street.⁴⁶

In 1818, Prince Miloš bought an old Ottoman *konak*, known as Gospodarski *konak*, on the corner of Kralja Petra and Kneza Sime Markovića streets.⁴⁷ This wooden house was in poor condition, resulting in its destruction in 1847. A drawing is the only surviving documentation of its architecture (Fig. B-10). The basic resemblance of Gospodarski *konak* to other concurrent *konaks*, however, is apparent.

Around 1830, Prince Miloš himself built two other *konaks* for his family—the so-called “*konak* of Princess Ljubica” (Figs. B-11, B-12) named after his wife and built between 1829 and 1831 in the vicinity of the destroyed Gospodarski *konak*; and the so-called “*konak* of Prince Miloš” built between 1831 and 1834 in an area known as Topčider, far removed from the old city walls.⁴⁸ Prince Miloš was highly involved in the creation of these *konaks*, spending a lot of time on the building sites.

The two *konaks*, now museums, represent exceptional urban residential projects of the period, comparable perhaps only to the contemporaneous Avza-Paša *konak* in Bardovci near Skopje, not only in terms of their size but also in terms of their architecture.⁴⁹ The now-lost *konak* of Avzi-Paša was built for one of the wealthiest Ottoman landowners and contained two separate buildings of *selamlık* and *haremlık*, both exuberantly decorated with carved wooden furniture, marble fountains, painted landscapes and city vistas on the walls, and wooden *djul-tavans* (Figs. B-12, B-14).⁵⁰ Yet Bardovci is approximately 350 kilometers (180 miles) from Belgrade and furthermore, at the time Prince Miloš built *konaks* in liberated Serbian territory, Bardovci was still in the territory of the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, the basic architectural features of the *konaks* of Miloš Obrenović in Belgrade and the one in Bardovci were remarkably similar. Trained in today’s recognizable idiom of “Oriental” architecture, the building workshops once again may have

⁴⁶ Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd*, 141–57; Kojić, *Stara arhitektura*, 66–83; Gordana Gordić, “Arhitektonsko nasleđe grada Beograda I. Katalog arhitektonskih objekata na području Beograda 1690–1914,” *Communications*, 6 (Belgrade: Saopštenja, Republički zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture SR Srbije, 1966), with appropriate illustrations.

⁴⁷ Ljubomir Durković-Jakšić, “Gospodarski konak u Beogradu” [summary in French], *Godišnjak muzeja grada Beograda* 4 (1957): 339–44.

⁴⁸ Z. Marinković, *Konak kneginje Ljubice* (Belgrade, n.d.); Divna Đurić-Zamolo, “Stari konak u Beogradu” [summary in English “Old Residence in Belgrade”], *Godišnjak grada Beograda* 38 (1991): 113–26; Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd*, 145–55.

⁴⁹ Western newspapers reported on the *konak* of Prince Miloš: cf. *Spectator*, 17 July 1926, 88/2 “The delicate ‘konak’ or palace of Prince Milosh Obrenovitch.”

⁵⁰ Kojić, *Konaci*, 224–43.

been the main reason for the continuous building of the *konak*-type architecture of different varieties. Both Belgrade *konaks* were built by the same architect, popularly known as the first Serbian “architect” or rather supreme master-builder (*zidarski ustabaša*, *majstorbaša*),⁵¹ Hadji-Nikola Živković, born in present-day northern Greece.⁵² Nikola Đorđević, Janja Mihailović, Bogdan, and Stojiljko were the most prominent master-builders (*neimari*, *dundjeri*).⁵³

The two Belgrade *konaks* appear as typical examples of traditional architecture in the region. Both *konaks* were freestanding buildings located within large courtyards. The two-storey *konaks* have prominent *divanhane*s visually linked to the outdoors—opening onto interior gardens and beyond via open vistas toward the Sava River in the case of Princess Ljubica’s *konak* and toward the Topčider park in the case of Prince Miloš’s *konak*. The old photograph of the *konak* of Princess Ljubica reveals a high wall with a monumental entrance gate that once enclosed the building.⁵⁴ Moreover, a Turkish bath (*hamam*) was later added on the west side of the *konak* and was connected to Princess Ljubica’s room (Fig. B-11), a practice known from the most prosperous Ottoman houses.

The *konaks* of Miloš Obrenović in Belgrade, though still in the “Oriental” idiom, however, exemplify subtle innovations in early nineteenth-century residential architecture in Serbia.⁵⁵ Following the example of Princess Ljubica’s *konak*, some Western architectural influences are noticeable. Instead of being built of stone on the lower level and half-timbered construction in the upper storeys, the *konak* is a masonry construction, built of brick.⁵⁶ The protruding, oblong, drop-shaped *čikma*, “small *divanhane*,” resembling the one from the house of Jevrem Obrenović, frames the main entrance to the *konak* (Figs. B-7, B-11). However, rounded frames for windows on the upper floor and additional decorative elements of the façade, including the vertical pilasters that frame the façades, announce aesthetic principles of contemporary classicizing European architecture.

⁵¹ The terms *zidarski ustabaša* and *majstorbaša* are often used in official building contracts and charters during the first decades of the nineteenth century for the supreme masons and master builders. Nenadović, *Ilustrovani rečnik*, 407–08.

⁵² Đurić-Zamolo, *Graditelji*, 42–43.

⁵³ *Istorija Beograda 2* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1974), 328.

⁵⁴ For the old photo showing the enclosing walls with the entrance gate, see Kojić, *Stara arhitektura*, 73.

⁵⁵ Gordana Gordić, “Znamenite gradjevine Beograda XIX veka,” *Nasledje* 1 (1997): 25–27; Kolarić, *Gradjevine i gradjevinari*, 5–28, esp. 18–21.

⁵⁶ Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd*, 154–55.

The main *divanhane* of Princess Ljubica's *konak* was oblong in shape, while the *divanhane* of Prince Miloš's *konak* was rectangular in plan, in a sense following the architectural, formal distinction between the *divanhane* in the *haremlik* and *selamlık* of the Dositejev lyceum, respectively (Figs. B-6, B-11, B-12). Despite our knowledge that Princess Ljubica and Prince Miloš predominantly lived in the *konaks* that bear their names, the gender distinction between the two houses as female and male, respectively, is not strictly applicable. Both houses served simultaneously as private residences and for official business, negating the widely accepted distinction between the *selamlık* and *haremlik* as the male and female houses. The two *konaks* support the explanation of the *selamlık* and *haremlik* in socio-cultural but not in religious terms, since in both Christian and Ottoman societies the *selamlık* and *haremlik* existed only in houses of the most prosperous families, and almost never in the homes of the poor.⁵⁷ Princess Ljubica's *konak* was the separate "female" house, but was not physically connected with Miloš's *konak*, "male" house, built in the opposite part of Belgrade. Because Ljubica's *konak* was not architecturally connected to Miloš's *konak* as in the traditional *selamlık* and *haremlik* houses and because Princess Ljubica herself conducted official business in her house, it also symbolized an unnoticed early modernity and female emancipation in Serbia.

Both Ljubica's and Miloš's *konaks* were internally decorated in the "Oriental" fashion, generally without furniture, with an abundance of wardrobes and low benches along the walls.⁵⁸ The floors were carpeted and the ceilings were wooden *djul-tavans*. The *divanhane* from the *konak* of Princess Ljubica, though restored, is today one of the best-preserved *divanhane* in the Balkans and beyond (Fig. B-13). The central communal space on the upper floor of Ljubica's *konak* opens into a raised *divanhane* framed by a low parapet and undulating, decoratively profiled wooden arcade. Surviving texts reveal that table and chairs, some kind of library furniture, and beds did exist in the *konaks* built by Prince Miloš. This furniture was most probably used in the rooms intended for entertainment of foreign guests. Anecdotes exemplify the differences in interior design and furnishing of what people recognize as typical "Western" and "Oriental" houses, presumably a result of different standards of living. In entertaining a visiting Russian envoy, Baron Liven, Princess Ljubica ordered two chairs to be brought into the room, because in his close-fitting pantaloons with straps the Baron could not sit on a low

⁵⁷ Altiner and Budak, *Konak Book*, n.p.; Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd*, 133.

⁵⁸ Gordić, *Znamenite*, 25–27; Kolarić, *Gradjevine i gradjevinari*, 5–28, esp. 18–21; Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd*, 133, 144; Nada Ranosović, "Nameštaj u konaku kneginje Ljubice" [summary in French], *Godišnjak grada Beograda* 7 (1960): 171–74.

bench.⁵⁹ In his *konak* in Kragujevac built in 1824 Prince Miloš often received his guests in a room furnished in the “European” style and decorated with wall painting.⁶⁰ Similarly, in the *konak* of Prince Miloš’s brother Jevrem in Šabac only one room of many along the L-shaped porch was known as “paradna nameštena soba,” i.e., “the reception room with furniture.”⁶¹ Simultaneously, the inclusion of non-typical interior design and furniture for *konaks* reveals “foreign,” “Western” influences on the interior architecture of the *konaks* built in the 1830s.

Once again, this paradox in the architecture of the *konaks* within “Western,” “Oriental,” and “local” trends could be related not only to the current standards of living but also to other practical reasons, which were not necessarily financial, as Prince Miloš and other prominent individuals at the time gained significant wealth through trade. Most likely the main reason was the scarcity of western-trained builders and architects familiar with structural solutions of buildings made of permanent, hard materials such as brick and stone, who knew technically more advanced solutions for the foundation system, and who employed molded cornices, pillars, pilasters, molded window frames, and gabled pediments on the exteriors of the buildings. Needless to say, the first industrial facilities for brickwork in Serbia were established during Prince Miloš’ reign.⁶²

Only in the second half of the nineteenth century did Westernizing architectural trends become evident in residential architecture.⁶³ However, the cultural renewal which followed the emergence of Serbia as a semi-independent state in 1804 and more explicitly after 1830 is crucial for our better understanding of the developments in Serbian architecture. Though eagerly embracing “modernization,” both leaders of the Serbian Uprisings chose to live in environmentally sound *konaks*, which accommodated their

⁵⁹ Ranosović, “Nameštaj,” 171–74, esp. 171.

⁶⁰ Ranosović, “Nameštaj,” 171–74; Kojić, *Stara arhitektura*, 56, 62–63.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ćirković, *Serbs*, 193.

⁶³ Although, the first Serbian-born architect to work in Belgrade was Konstantin Radošević who came to Belgrade in 1842 it was not until the 1870s that trained architects were available in Serbia. After the 1870s the first generation of Serbian-born architects returned from their studies abroad to establish their own practice. Only this new generation of builders, trained in the contemporary European idiom of historicizing architecture, built in search of a national statement and following Western European architectural developments. Branko Vujović, *Beograd u prošlosti i sadašnjosti* (Belgrade: Draganić, Biblioteka Nasleđe, 1994). On the development of architecture in the second half of the nineteenth century, see Aleksandar Kadijević, *Jedan vek traženja nacionalnog stila u srpskoj arhitekturi (sredina XIX–XX veka)* (Belgrade: 2007 [1997]).

needs and fit their means. The choice of architectural styles in which the houses were built was presumably more related to the taste of the new elite in Serbia than to the idea of modernization, often in scholarship paradoxically associated with historicizing Western-European architectural trends, which were essentially imaginative reinterpretations of past architectural traditions not less than “Oriental” styles associated with the Ottoman past.⁶⁴

The essentially rural environment in Šumadija, where the Serbian uprisings started, was a backwater for both the Ottoman and Austro-Habsburg Empires. In the nineteenth century, traditional Serbian towns such as Skopje, Prizren, Kotor, Mostar, or Tuzla had not been within sovereign Serbian territories for a prolonged period.⁶⁵ This significant urban discontinuity marked architectural developments in early nineteenth-century Serbia. The *konak* was associated with urban residence; and the immediate models were older Ottoman *konaks*, regardless of whether in architectural terms some of these “*konaks*” might have actually been their *hayat*, rural variants. Only after the period of 1804–30s Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Čačak, Šabac, Belgrade, Zaječar, and other towns underwent noticeable urban revival. However, these first three decades of the nineteenth century were marked historically by the very complex revival and preservation of identities. The building and rebuilding of churches preserved primarily religious and partially cultural and national identities. Residential architecture of the period, and especially that of representative *konaks* built as large, prominent houses of local authorities, wealthy merchants, and prosperous individuals, was embedded with aesthetic, symbolic, and proprietary concerns as well.

Then again, the religious differences of the occupants had only limited impact on the design of *konaks*. A deliberate choice of the wealthiest mem-

⁶⁴ It is worth noting that Stojan Simić, one of the most prominent individuals of the time and president of the Government Council, built his *konak* in Belgrade in 1840. The building later served as a residence for Alexandar Karadžević, Mihailo, Milan, and Alexandar Obrenović, and was destroyed in 1903. Nothing is known about the architect of this palace. Old photographs and textual accounts reveal, however, that “Old *Konak*,” as the contemporaries called the building, was a symmetrical building with façades refurbished in the Romanticism style after the 1850s. The Old *Konak* had a hall, king’s study, main hall, dining hall, but also billiards room and “Oriental” room. In 1896 English journalist Vivien described some rooms being decorated in “European” styles and carpeted in “Oriental” rugs. He also described “Persian” room and a sleeping room which contained a piece of Japanese furniture. Divna Đurić-Zamolo, “Stari konak u Beogradu” [summary in English], *Godišnjak grada Beograda* 38 (1991): 113–26. Prince Miloš built one of his residences in the so-called “Finansijski” park, the first park in Belgrade done in the English style in 1836. The residence, now lost, was done in the “European,” the Neo-Classical style but had a separate “Turkish” hamam. I thank Ljubomir Milanović for calling my attention to these examples of Belgrade residential architecture.

⁶⁵ For urban architecture in old Serbian towns, briefly, see Kojić, *Stara arhitektura*, 35–36.

bers of the First and Second Uprisings to live in *konaks*, often known as traditional “Turkish” houses and associated with Muslim dignitaries, therefore, requires a more subtle approach to issues such as “foreign and native,” “appropriation,” and “identity.” The preference for living in *konaks* may be related to their spatial organization, which facilitated a comfortable life, an extended family, and was an established style of family life of the local people, who tended to live in single-family houses. The Christian Orthodox and the Muslim population rarely intermarried. Only occasionally can slight differences in the interior decoration reveal subtle differences in the *konaks* and the religious identity of their inhabitants. For example, the *konaks* of the Katić and Hristić families in Prizren and Pirot, respectively, had within their wood-carved interior furnishing a special niche for icons, known as *ikonluk*, which contained the oil lamp and the icon of a patron saint, thus indicating that the occupants were Christians.⁶⁶ In Muslim houses, instead of the *ikonluk*, there was an *abdesluk* or *avdesana* for performing the *abdest*, a ritual that included prayers and handling and reading the Qur’an, as well as ritual cleansing with water.⁶⁷

Whether the Ottoman *konak* may also have been related to the understudied residential architecture in the Byzantine Empire that developed within the territories later absorbed by the Ottoman Empire, and in general to urban houses in the Balkans preceding the Ottoman conquest has not yet been examined sufficiently.⁶⁸ Despite the scarcity of material evidence, the archeological remains of the Metropolitan’s residence in Belgrade built in the late fifteenth century nevertheless reveal important features of monumental residential architecture in Serbia before the Ottoman conquest of Belgrade in 1521.⁶⁹ The Metropolitan’s palace was at least a two-floor L-shaped building,

⁶⁶ Nenadović, *Ilustrovani rečnik*, 284. On the Hristić house and its *ikonluk*, see www.topirot.com/TOP/09-KISpomenici/Muzej.htm (accessed July 5, 2009).

⁶⁷ Nenadović, *Ilustrovani rečnik*, 285.

⁶⁸ Knowledge of houses in the Byzantine Empire is based on limited archaeological evidence and textual references. Urban houses were one- and multi-storey buildings. The ground floor was reserved for storage and workshops. The upper floors contained living quarters, though the actual layout often remains unknown. The wealthier houses provided separate quarters for women. Svetlana Mojsilović-Popović, Apostolos Karpozilos, and Alexandar Kazhdan, *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. A. Kazhdan et al., vol. 2 (New York, 1991), s.v. “Houses.” Attempts to compare Ottoman and Byzantine houses often leave open-ended conclusions, though essentially pointing to problematic definitions of residential architecture in the Balkans as “national” architecture: Goodwin, *Ottoman Architecture*, 446–50; Kojić, *Stara arhitektura*, 87–101; Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd*, 131–35; Cerasi, *Formation of Ottoman House*, 116–56.

⁶⁹ Marko Popović and Vesna Bikić, *Kompleks srednjovekovne mitropolije u Beogradu* (Belgrade, 2004), 217–27. On medieval residential architecture in Serbia, see Marko Popović,

with the ground floor built of stone and masonry upper floor with a covered porch connecting the central hall with the grand hall, approximately 70 m² (ca. 700 ft²), and living quarters (Fig. B-15). Services were in the basement and on the first floor. The house had a built water fountain as well as a large masonry heater accessed from the atrium and which heated the grand hall and one of the rooms on the upper floor.⁷⁰ In its shape and spatial organization the palace closely resembles surveyed asymmetrical *konaks*. Stylistic features of the preserved remains of the masonry and architectural sculpture, however, point to “Westernized,” late Gothic secular architecture, which was also used by the Serbian medieval rulers for their palace in Budim, now modern Hungary.⁷¹ The contradiction between the *konak* as presumably an example of “Balkan-Oriental” architecture, and in the case of the Metropolitan’s residence in Belgrade, also “Balkan-medieval” architecture but with “Westernized” stylistic features deepens problematic constructs of “Oriental” and “medieval” as presumably everything opposing “Western” and “modern.”⁷²

The architecture of the *konaks* as large residences responded to the standards of life of the local population in Serbia. After prolonged urban discontinuity and isolation from main Western European cultural trends, available builders and building workshops were crucial for the materialization of urban residences in Serbia from 1804 to the 1830s. The majority of the workers in these building workshops were trained predominantly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Stari Vlah, and areas around Ohrid and Skopje, which were still within the Ottoman Empire at the time when the Serbs achieved their semi-independence in Šumadija and Timočka krajina in the 1830s. Because these builders worked in specific, recognizably non-Western European building idioms, they defined the architecture for different *konaks* in urban, rural, and monastic contexts in frequently contested territories of Serbia, at the threshold between the politically defined “West” and “East.”⁷³ The architecture of the *konaks* in Serbia, however, resulted from fluid, dynamic, and

“Urbana rezidencija—kuća u gradu,” in *Privatni život u srpskim zemljama srednjeg veka*, eds. Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić and Danica Popović (Belgrade: Klio, 2004), 47–51.

⁷⁰ On ceramic masonry heaters in both medieval and nineteenth-century urban, rural, and monastic dwellings in Serbia, see Ranko Findrik, “Zemljana peč i zagrevanje u staroj gradskoj i seoskoj kući” [summary in French], *Saopštenja* 25 (1993): 171–95.

⁷¹ Jovanka Kalić, “Palata srpskih despota u Budimu,” *Zograf* 6 (1975): 51–58.

⁷² For further discussion, see, for example: John M. Ganim, *Medievalism and Orientalism: Three Essays on Literature, Architecture and Cultural Identity* (New York, 2005).

⁷³ On the important implications of “Orientalism” as an imaginative construct of “otherness” and everything that is “non-Western,” in colonial studies often constructed by nationalisms where “otherness” is also presumably inferior and subordinate, see Edward Said’s seminal *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978).

occasionally cyclical reinventions of specific architectural solutions, which show how the “past” often transformed the “present,” the “conquered” often transformed the “conqueror.” This survey of early nineteenth-century *konaks* in Serbia once again alerts us to elusive divisions between one and another’s identity and their expressive content in architecture.

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