

## THE OTTOMAN COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS IN ISTANBUL: A STUDY ACCORDING TO WRITINGS AND PAINTINGS OF TRAVELERS

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### Abstract

The commercial buildings in the capital of Ottoman Empire have a great importance, as it played an important role in the social and commercial life in the Ottoman period. This paper aims to shed the light upon this great importance through the writings and paintings of the Travellers, who visited or passed through the Ottoman lands. This paper reveals also the different styles of these commercial buildings in Ottoman period; such as Khans, *Arastas*, and *Bedestens*. A lot of these buildings were mentioned in the writings and paintings of the Travellers; such as, the French Traveller "Guillaume Grelot", who painted and noted the Egyptian Bazaar, which was joined in the New Mosque "*Yeni Cami*" complex in Istanbul 1680 A.D as an example for the *Arasta* that contains a central corridor surrounded by shops on its sides.

Most of the old writings of the Historian and the Turkish Traveller Evliye Çelebi in the 17<sup>th</sup> century spoke about the covered Bazaar and its core as an example for the *Bedesten*, that consisted of halls covered by domes and used to keep precious products, which was built in the reign of sultan Mohammed II "Conqueror", who constructed the interior *Bedesten* in (1461). Khans in Istanbul were mentioned also in the writings of the foreign Travelers, who visited the city, especially, the great Khan of Mother "*Büyük Valide han*", that was constructed by *Mahpeyker Kösem valide* Sultan before (1651). It was mentioned and described by many Travellers; such as, the English John Cam Hobhouse between 1809 -1810, the British Richard Burgess in 1834, and the American scholar Rhoads Murphey.

The study ends with the results which reveal the importance of these buildings in the commercial, political, and social life in the Ottoman Empire. Also, it reveals the fame of these buildings because of the importance of its founders of Sultans and their mothers, in addition, the study indicates to the variety of these buildings and its association with Islamic *Waqf* system that flourished in Ottoman period and guaranteed the continuity of its works after the death of the founders.

**Keywords:** Arasta, Bedestan, Buildings, Commercial, Istanbul, khan, Traveler