

TRANSACTIONS

Palais de Suède

From Ottoman Constantinople to Modern Istanbul

FREDERICK WHITLING



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to Modern Istanbul*

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SWEDISH RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN ISTANBUL
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Acknowledgements

The rising City in Confusion fair;
Magnificently form'd irregular
Where Woods and Palaces at once surprise
Gardens, on Gardens, Domes on Domes arise
And endless Beauties tire the wandering Eyes,
So soothes my Wishes, or so charms my Mind,
As this Retreat, secure from Human kind.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, "Constantinople" ("Written January 1718
in the [British] Chiosk [*sic*] at Pera overlooking Constantinople").

This book was first commissioned by the Consulate General of Sweden in Istanbul in 2020, on the initiative of Consul General Peter Ericson, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the present *Palais de Suède* in Istanbul. I express my gratitude to Consul General Ericson and to Mike Bode, counsellor for cultural affairs. I should also wish to warmly thank the staff of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, in particular Director Olof Heilo and Deputy Director Anders Ackfeldt.

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Frederick Whitling

A Few Words from the Palace

The Swedish Palace in Istanbul – the Palais de Suède – is known in the Swedish foreign service as one of the finest official Swedish residences in the world. It is located on the oldest Swedish government property abroad and is the first-ever Swedish embassy designed and built for its purpose.

For a few years, me and my wife Stina Stoor have the privilege of calling the Swedish Palace “home”. Our time here coincides with a milestone for the Palace, its 150th anniversary, which seemed like the perfect occasion for a new book.

There are earlier works about the palace, notably *A Swedish Palace in Istanbul* by Ambassador Sture Theolin, and *Svenska palatset i Konstantinopel* by the architectural historian Bengt O.H. Johansson. The former tells the history of the palace and of Swedish-Turkish relations since the Viking age, the latter describes the story behind the purchase of the property including the original building, destroyed by fire in 1818, and the process that finally led to the erection of the current palace in 1869–1870.

Both books give valuable insights, but they also have limitations. Ambassador Theolin’s book was published more than twenty years ago and is out of print. The same goes for dr Johansson’s book, which was published in Swedish in 1968, and only very briefly mentions the period after 1877.

I am very pleased that the historian Frederick Whitling took on the challenge to write the new history of the Swedish Palace, and it gives me great joy to see the project completed. Dr Whitling’s scholarly and enjoyable narrative brings this fascinating history up to date, based on the unique insights he gained through his meticulous research and archival studies.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to our neighbours on the property, the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul and all its staff, for the excellent cooperation between our two independent but intertwined entities, on this and many other projects.

Peter Ericson, Consul General of Sweden in Istanbul

Sweden's Oldest Possession

The Palais de Suède in Istanbul, one of the more unassuming former foreign embassies in erstwhile Constantinople, originally hosted the legation (embassy) of the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway. The present Swedish palace was the first legation building erected on Swedish state property abroad, constructed in 1869–1870. It was raised on the site of its precursor which had fallen victim in 1818 to one of the many fires that ravaged the Pera neighbourhood.

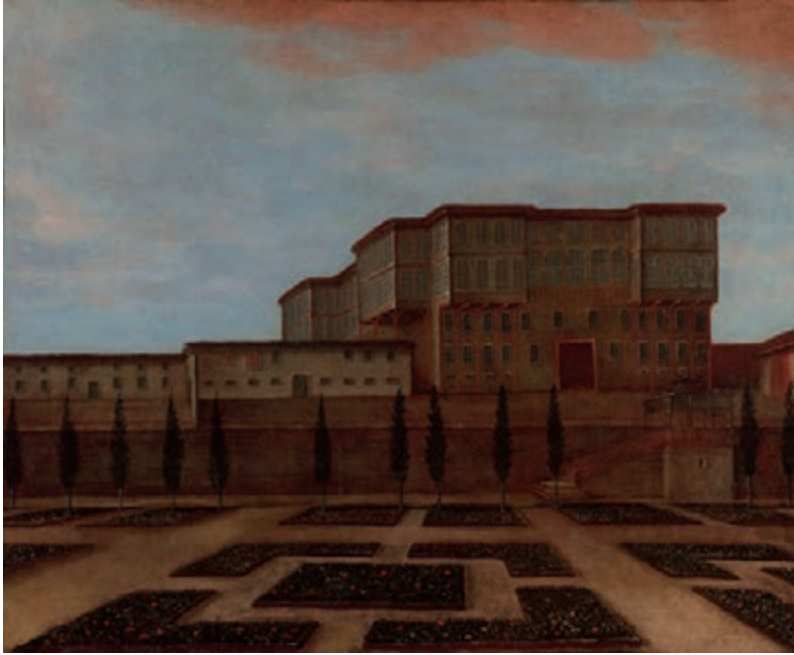
“Pera”, Greek for across or beyond, relates to its position across the Golden Horn from the old city, “Stamboul”, which had in turn sprung from the site of ancient Byzantium. In the fourth century AD, Constantine the Great transformed this settlement into his new Roman capital which became known as the queen of cities, or, simply but poignantly put in Viking-age parlance, the “Great City” (*Miklagård*).

The so-called Pera vineyards – Pera – was the “Frankish” (foreign) district of old in the Ottoman capital, preferred by most European visitors and residents. An early fifteenth century account conflated the Pera neighbourhood with that of Galata, with its famous hallmark Medieval Genoese tower: “The Genoese call their town ‘Pera’, but the Greeks name it ‘Galata’.” European envoys had first settled close to the docks in Galata, then, from the sixteenth century onwards, in the leafy suburbs of Pera, modern Beyoğlu – derived either from the Venetian *bailo* (“bearer”, ambassador) or Turkish *bey yolu* (the master’s road, the “oğlu”-ending may also point to the master’s son), or both.

The foreign envoys were exempt from legal obligations and taxation, and helped make the neighbourhood a multicultural part-Western “diplomatic reserve”, as it was described in the early nineteenth century, with a multitude of animated meetings, balls and banquets. By the nineteenth century, Pera had become a “Little Europe” of sorts, referred to by some as a suburb of Paris.

The legations at Pera have been styled metropolitan “winter palaces” by Patricia Daunt, writer and wife of the former British ambassador, in

juxtaposition to the summer palaces on the European shore of the Bosphorus – in the villages of Büyükdere and Tarabya, historically styled *Thérapia* – reflecting the seasonal move for the staff of the legations who were fortunate enough to have both a winter and a summer property. Although a summer residence in Tarabya was seemingly rented by the Swedish legation in the late eighteenth century, the Swedes were to settle for the winter version, although the Palais de Suède was perhaps slightly ironically later used as a summer residence for the ambassadors at Ankara in the mid-twentieth century.



*Jean Baptiste Vanmour (workshop of), an embassy building in Pera, c. 1720–1744.
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.*

The early purchase of the land on which the Palais de Suède was built, in 1757 – a later indirect consequence of the prolonged presence of the warrior-king Karl (Charles) XII in the Ottoman Empire (1709–1714) – makes the premises the oldest Swedish state-owned property abroad. This attractive plot of land right at the beginning of the main urban artery of İstiklal Caddesi (Independence Avenue), formerly the *Grande Rue de Péra*, laid out along the spine of the initially vine-clad hills, is a repository of stories, of what has been and events that might have occurred.

The Palais de Suède and the early northern presence in the former Ottoman capital has been portrayed a number of times over the last two hundred and fifty years, notably by the Swedish architectural historian Bengt O.H.

Johansson (1968) and Consul General Sture Theolin (2000). Neither work takes much into account the modern twentieth and twenty-first-century history of the property. This book addresses also the vicissitudes of the past century. It focuses more specifically on the present palace building itself, on its genesis and on specific events and people – men and women – that have passed through its doors, although it also briefly deals with the earlier palace and with other buildings on the Swedish property in Istanbul.

Earlier historical accounts of the Palais de Suède property have often taken on the purchase itself and the ownership of the estate, as the funds used had been accumulated for religious reasons in an Evangelical church fund in order to establish a Protestant congregation in Constantinople. This Protestant mission targeted also its Catholic counterpart, and aimed to compete with the protection offered by the French ambassador to Catholic subjects in the Ottoman Empire.

The name of the city changed from Constantinople to Istanbul after the First World War, in the late 1920s (the official conversion was made by the Turkish post office in 1930). As a result of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, what was left of the old Ottoman Empire became modern Turkey. The capital of the new republic was declared to be Ankara (originally Angora) on the Anatolian plateau, the headquarters of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) and the venue of the Grand National Assembly since 1920. The foreign embassies moved to the new capital, if somewhat belatedly, sometimes somewhat reluctantly, and the former legation buildings in Constantinople now found other uses, in the Swedish case eventually as the seat of a consulate general, a function that has been maintained to this day, sharing the premises with the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, established in 1962.

The Palais de Suède offers a rich array of individual instances in the historical development of foreign representation in the former Ottoman capital and the global crossroad city of today. Its history is also rich in glimpses of the wide range of people who have passed through its doors. This book traces the story of the Swedish property in Istanbul, and illustrates some of these developments and individuals that have interacted with it. It is not a history of the Swedish (and Swedish-Norwegian) diplomatic service per se, neither is it specifically a history of Constantinople, Istanbul, the end of the Ottoman Empire, the birth of the Turkish Republic or Swedish presence in Turkey today. Yet its focus on the Palais de Suède allows it to address all of these themes.

Certain aspects of the history of the Swedish property in Istanbul and of people associated with it since the purchase of the in the mid-eighteenth century, are easier to identify than others, which calls for a comment on presences and absences in the historical narrative. The source material available in the production of this book limits the prospects of gender- and

class-related perspectives. The foreign service, and indeed much of Western society, has, perhaps needless to say, historically been dominated by men, certainly in the eighteenth, nineteenth and most of the twentieth century. Wives and children, if mentioned at all in the historical record, have often been mentioned as precisely that, only occasionally even named.

Many Swedish envoys, ministers, ambassadors and consuls, in Constantinople/Istanbul and elsewhere, have furthermore been noblemen (rather than -women), frequently associated with the socioeconomic elite. Until the early twentieth century at least, high-ranking diplomats were indeed frequently aristocrats, and were as such expected to access private assets in order to furnish and uphold the country's representation abroad.

Two of a total of seventy Swedish envoys and ambassadors to Turkey since the early eighteenth century have been female (both since 2000). The corresponding number of the approximately twenty Swedish consuls and consuls general in Istanbul since the 1940s equals solely one. In some cases, the spouses of the (male) envoys occasionally seem to have had a prominent role in the life of the legation and social connections, although their own accounts are often lacking in publicly available material. Three such examples would be Catharina Anna Grandon de Hochepped, in the years before the French Revolution (chapter one), Elisabeth (Bessie) Ehrenhoff, in the 1870s and 1880s, when the present Palais de Suède was new (chapter three), and Maude Anckarsvärd, in the first decades of the twentieth century (chapter five). Maude Anckarsvärd's account of *belle époque* life in Constantinople and the 1908 Young Turk Revolution (chapter four) is preserved in a private collection, and is about to be published in the series *Memoria* of the (German) *Orient-Institut Istanbul*.

Possible supplementary material might be found in or between the lines of literary accounts or in private archival collections, although that in fact would amount to an additional possible research project in itself. Many such nuances are consequently outside the scope of this book, which relies to a considerable extent on research conducted in available archival collections. It also to some degree draws on earlier work on the subject.

“Turkey’s Oldest Friend”

Russia desires to possess, not to liberate Greece; and is contented to see the Turks, its natural enemies, and the Greeks, its intended slaves, enfeeble each other until one or both fall into its net. The wise and generous policy of England would have consisted in establishing the independence of Greece, and in maintaining it against both Russia and the Turk; but when was the oppressor generous or just?

Percy Bysshe Shelley, preface to *Hellas*. A Lyrical Drama (1821)

It was always Russia. The empire in the east became one of Sweden’s fiercest foes during its military expansion period around the Baltic Sea in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. The confrontations came to a head with Karl (Charles) XII, the warrior-king who took on Tsar Peter’s Russian army; initially victorious, later to lose. After the near-total Swedish defeat at Poltava in Ukraine in 1709, the only refuge was south: together with the Ukrainian leader Ivan Mazepa, the king and his entourage took refuge in the Ottoman Empire, hoping for support against the tsar, the shared neighbour and common enemy. In the end, King Karl was to spend four years at Bender, in present-day Moldova.

Russia entered the diplomatic stage with Peter I (the “Great”). Upon the demise of the tsar in 1725, Russia had established twelve embassies abroad. Ottoman Turkey had thus far resisted establishing embassies of its own, but had increasingly from the sixteenth century onwards begun to welcome foreign envoys. Foreign representation in Constantinople increased in the early eighteenth century, after a series of military defeats and Ottoman concessions of territory in eastern Europe.

The first foreign envoys to the Ottoman Empire were the eleventh century bailo messengers of the Republic of Venice: in this regard, the Venetians were historically in a class of their own (although the Medieval Republic of Genoa was also represented in Galata). Constantinople was placed more firmly on the diplomatic map in the same year as Christopher Columbus “discovered” America, in 1492, when the first Russian emissary arrived. The French followed suit, in 1535 – seeking an alliance against the Holy Roman

Emperor Charles V – as did the British (in 1578) and the Dutch (in 1612), with other European powers following their lead.



Jean Baptiste Vanmour, view of Constantinople from the Palais de Hollande, Pera, c. 1720–1737. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

The survival of the Ottoman Empire increasingly depended on support from Western powers. The tide began to turn with the Treaty of Karlowitz (in modern Serbia) in 1699, when land was ceded for the first time after a long period of Ottoman territorial expansion. Seventy-five years later, the Black Sea was transformed from an “Ottoman lake” to a partially Russian sphere of influence.

The initial initiative for a Swedish envoy to Turkey was taken by the Ottomans, which reflected a need for allies against Russia not only from a Swedish perspective. The purchase of the Constantinople property on which the present Palais de Suède is located was arranged in the mid-eighteenth century, linked to and predated by the Swedish great power ambitions that ground to a halt with the death of Karl XII in Norway in 1718. The building can, at least indirectly, be seen as a legacy of Sweden falling in with the big fish of the day: chiefly Russia, France and the United Kingdom.

The earliest diplomatic contacts between Sweden and the Ottoman Empire date back to the early days of Swedish military expansion in the late sixteenth century. Some form of contact with the Ottoman Empire appears to have been sought by King Gustav I (Vasa) in 1545. His son, Johan (John) III, sought a defence treaty and support for his son Sigismund’s claims to the Polish throne from Sultan Murad III in 1587.

With the subsequent military expansion under the reigns of Gustav II Adolf, styled the "Lion of the North", and Karl (Charles) X Gustav in the seventeenth century, Sweden attempted to gain Ottoman support against Russia, portrayed as the common eastern enemy. Yet despite the efforts of the nobleman and privy councillor Bengt Bengtsson Oxenstierna (called Resare-Bengt), who travelled in the "Orient" from 1613 until 1620, and who spent the winter of 1616–1617 courting the sultan, Ahmed I, Gustav II Adolf did not receive the backing that he hoped for against the Austrian emperor in the ongoing Christian civil war from Ahmed's successor Murad IV.

No such luck either for the Extraordinary Envoys Claes Brorsson Rålamb and Gotthard Wellingk, who travelled to Constantinople in 1657–1658 on behalf of Karl X Gustav, independently of each other (they also did not get along very well), to seek support from Sultan Mehmed IV in an alliance against Russia. The sultan was otherwise engaged in a war against the Republic of Venice. Rålamb published an account of his mission – which secured the passage to the Black Sea of Swedish merchant ships – and commissioned paintings of the sultan's court procession through the Ottoman capital, most of which are now exhibited at *Nordiska museet* in Stockholm. Rålamb's diaries were published three hundred years later, in the 1960s.

Yet a Swedish-Turkey alliance, directed against Russia, and against the (Catholic) Habsburg monarchy, would eventually follow, twenty years after the demise of Karl XII. In his seminal late-eighteenth century work *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, the enlightenment writer Edward Gibbon compared the ambitions of the Swedish warrior-king with the Roman emperor Caracalla's hero-cult of Alexander the Great: "We can easily conceive, that after the battle of Narva [in 1700], and the conquest of Poland, Charles the Twelfth (though he still wanted the more elegant accomplishments of the son of Philip) might boast of having rivalled his valour and magnanimity." The presence of the Swedish king as an enlightenment reference is made visible also by Voltaire's early biography of Karl XII (1731).



*Jacques-Philippe Bouchardon, bust of Karl XII, 1747 (copy).
Embassy of Sweden in Ankara.*

In Varnitza, outside Bender, King Karl had a Swedish colony-settlement constructed dubbed “Karlopolis” (Karlstad). A few months after having arrived at Bender in 1709, the Pomeranian Martin von Neugebauer was made a commercial attaché of sorts, and was sent to Constantinople with Count Stanisław Poniatowski, father of the last king of Poland – the country through which Karl was hoping to attack Tsar Peter again.

Like other ambassadors and envoys plenipotentiary, the Swedish envoys likely called at the “ambassador house” (Elçihani), near the column of Constantine, and were received by Ahmed III, sultan during the flourishing “Tulip period” (*Lâle Devri*, 1718–1730). An unofficial, temporary Swedish legation was thus established in Constantinople.

A house was probably rented in Pera, the preferred neighbourhood of European envoys in Constantinople, as well as a summer cottage on the Asian side of the Bosphorus. While in the capital in 1709, the envoy von Neugebauer dedicated himself to freeing Christian Evangelical slaves in Ottoman captivity, an endeavour continued by his successor, the military diplomat Thomas Funck in 1711. This would set a standard for the future Swedish legation. The priest Sven Agrell, who accompanied Karl XII and died in 1713, also preached at this rudimentary early Constantinople outfit (a part of Agrell’s diary has survived).

Three “oriental expeditions” were organised under the aegis of Karl XII: the first (1710–1711) comprised three military officers – Hans Gyllenskepp, Konrad Sparre and Cornelius Loos, who were trained in drawing and specialists in military fortifications, and are partly known today for two detailed panoramas of Constantinople. The second Swedish expedition, initiated in 1711, focused on Islam and featured the book-collector, orientalist and Chaplain Michael Eneman. The third also had a religious framework: Henrik Benzelius, later archbishop, left what is now northern Greece for the Holy Land and the Middle East in 1714, returning to Sweden four years later, having assembled a considerable manuscript collection.

After four years at Bender, with sojourns at the castle of Timurtasch near the temporary imperial headquarters at Edirne, and in Demotika, in present-day Greece, the Swedish king had indubitably outstayed his welcome arrangement, which was delicate at best in the first place. The extended Ottoman layover ended with a well-known forced ousting attempt in 1713, the so-called “skirmish” (*kalabalık*) at Bender. The determined and strong-willed king, who was bent on revenge against Tsar Peter and was dubbed “Ironhead Charles” by the Turks – *Demirbaş Şarl*, implying that like a piece of bulky furniture he would not be budged – was thus strongly urged to leave Ottoman territory, which he eventually did, in 1714.



The Skirmish at Bender, 1713 (print, 1894). Library of Congress.

In the wake of the death of Karl XII four years later, the Swedish government faced the issue of having to settle the considerable debts of the late king to the sultan. The first Ottoman embassies to Sweden were sent in order to remind the Swedish government of the tally accrued at Bender, amounting to the

equivalent of several hundred million Swedish crowns today, which resulted in a written assurance that the debts would indeed be cleared in time.

Yet the mediation of the Swedish debts dragged on. In the late 1720s, King Fredrik (Frederick) I of Sweden sent Count Axel Reenstierna as envoy to the *Sublime Porte*, the imperial palace gate, serving as symbol of the central government of the Ottoman Empire – hereafter referred to as the Porte. Reenstierna however died on the way south before reaching Constantinople. The first two envoys that made it to the imperial capital, Carl Fredrik von Höpken and Edvard Carlsson (later dubbed Carleson), were both connected with the National Board of Trade (*Kommerskollegium* – von Höpken's father was its president, Carlsson was corresponding commissary). They left Sweden for the Mediterranean in 1732, and proceeded to Turkey the following year. An attempt on von Höpken's and Carlsson's part to return to Sweden was intercepted and averted in Venice, and von Höpken and Carlsson returned to Constantinople in the spring of 1734.

In April that year, the two Swedish envoys wrote to the prime minister (chancellor), Count Arvid Horn. In their missive, sent via Vienna, von Höpken and Carlsson reported that the French ambassador to the Porte had, "in two private audiences", "ensured the grand vizier that Sweden would not be disinclined to [...] attack Russia, if some beneficial notions were made". The French ambassador was however informed that "until a Swedish minister arrives one cannot know Sweden's view and cannot make any proposals." The two Swedish envoys, who were not yet officially appointed, conveyed the "great astonishment that no minister has [yet] arrived from Sweden, which [should] have occurred a long time ago but considering present conditions by necessity should now occur".

Von Höpken and Carlsson were indeed appointed Swedish *chargés d'affaires* in december 1734, in view of an increased awareness of the likelihood that Russian movements in the Balkans and around the Black Sea would likely affect strategic interests also in the Baltic, closer to home. Upon arrival in Constantinople, the two envoys moved into a rented house in Pera assigned to them by the Porte. The neighbourhood was described some decades later as commensurate with the *Grande Rue*, which was however still narrow enough for two carriages to be unable to meet without using the pavements.

The Porte was in favour of increasing trade outside British and French spheres of influence, and the two Swedish diplomats eventually managed to organise a deal regarding Sweden's financial debt, twenty years after the death of Karl XII. In the process, the grand vizier (the Ottoman equivalent of prime minister) encouraged Sweden to accredit a permanent minister (ambassador) to the Porte. In 1738, von Höpken and Carlsson were there-

upon both promoted to envoys, or co-ministers, a fairly unusual arrangement then as now.

Part of the Swedish debt was indeed paid, and the rest was transformed into an ordered warship which presently sank at Cádiz and was replaced by two other ships. One of these was from the Swedish Levant Company (*Svenska Levantiska Compagniet*, 1738), a trading monopoly founded a few years after the Swedish East India Company (*Svenska Ostindiska Compagniet*, 1731): such formal trade arrangements were required in order to enter Ottoman ports. The baron-major Malcolm Sinclair, who was given the task of transporting the valuable promissory notes to Sweden, was assassinated while traveling north, in present Poland (Silesia); the notes were however left anonymously at a postal office in Hamburg, and therefore enabled a settlement of the Swedish debts once and for all.

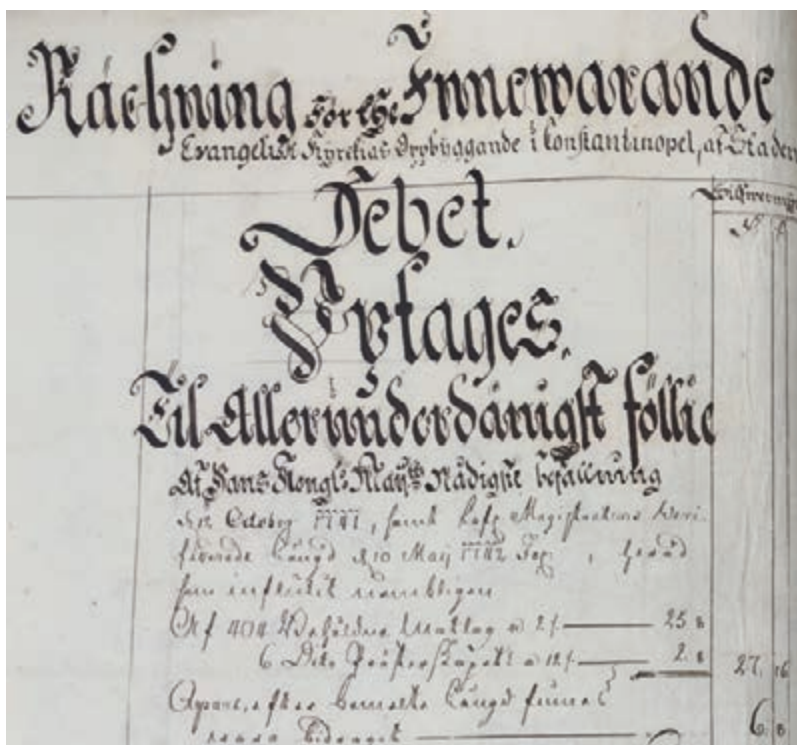
In 1737, during yet another in a succession of Russo-Turkish wars – little more than half a century after the siege of Vienna –, a Swedish-Turkish trade treaty was agreed on, which established a Swedish community, or “nation” (*millet*) – independent courts of law for Muslim, Christian and Jewish confessional communities – with religious freedom, judiciary powers in the hands of the Swedish envoys, rather than of the Ottoman authorities, and permission to produce its own wine.

The trade treaty was followed by a defense alliance between Sweden and the Ottoman Empire directed at Russia, signed on Christmas Eve 1739. This was the first bilateral political and military alliance that the Ottoman Empire entered with a Christian state – the same year as the treaty of Belgrade, which heralded a long period of peace on the Ottoman-European frontier. The ensuing bilateral relationship, well aligned with Swedish interests, resulted in a special status for Sweden from an Ottoman perspective, embodied in the honorary epithet “Turkey’s oldest friend”.

In 1735, when preparing the Swedish-Turkish treaty, and as an expression of the stipulated religious freedom as defenders of the Protestant faith, von Höpken and Carlsson had encouraged the sending of a Swedish cleric to Constantinople, which resulted in the arrival of the legation chaplain Magnus Troilius from Uppsala in 1737. Troilius objected to the fact that Catholics were freeing only Catholic prisoners, despite also having received Protestant subsidies. Protestant prisoners in Ottoman captivity had for some time been a bone of contention in international relations with the Ottoman Empire, partly as a result of an increase in North African piracy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with tensions that led to armed conflicts until the nineteenth century and, eventually, to an American fleet being stationed in the Mediterranean.

The *Corpus Evangelicorum* – the Protestant States General in the German Holy Roman Empire – had gathered funds during the 1720s and 1730s to

help free Ottoman Protestant prisoners, partly by the propagandistic use of sculptures in Protestant churches. A similar Evangelical church fund was organised in the 1740s in Sweden, at the time one of the main Protestant powers. It served the dual purpose of establishing a Protestant church building in Constantinople – the “capital of the infidels”, as a newspaper article had it almost two centuries later – and achieving “the liberation of Evangelical slaves from Turkish captivity”, also in order to avoid Protestant slaves converting to Catholicism in order to benefit from European aid.



*Compilation of collected church funds (in this case from Kristianstad), 1742.
Riksarkivet, Acta Ecclesiastica Serie II:43, 137.*

The Swedish parliament of 1740–1741 authorised an extraordinary church tax, with contributions from Sweden – which then comprised present-day Finland and included Stralsund and a part of Pomerania in present-day Germany – as well as from the dioceses of Frankfurt and Worms, complemented with monies from Sunday church offerings. A considerable part of the accrued sum appears to have emanated from Härnösand in northern Sweden. Over the coming years, the Evangelical church fund accumulated a value corresponding to approximately five million Swedish crowns in present-day monetary value.

Sweden's limited military influence and its disastrous war against Russia in 1742–1743 led to a waning Ottoman interest in Sweden as ally and Prussia (and later united Germany) assuming much of the previous Swedish stance vis-à-vis Russia, although a declaration of Ottoman support for Sweden against Russia was obtained in 1749. The 1739 defense alliance had however given Sweden *carte blanche* to purchase a prominent property in Pera if funds could be raised.

When a congregation for the new church in Constantinople was assembled, contacts were established with a number of German Protestants in the city. To von Höpken and Carlsson, the proposed church could potentially be combined with the purchase of a building for the Swedish legation, which would kill two birds with one stone: "by which we with much ease would be able to acquire a house for the Swedish minister as well as an attractive church".

The two Swedish envoys collected Turkish printed works and rented a house opposite the present Swedish premises, probably from the Ghika family (see below); the house was described a few decades later by the orientalist Jacob Jonas Björnståhl as rented by the Russian minister in Constantinople. The land on the opposite side of the Grande Rue de Péra (İstiklal Caddesi) from the Palais de Suède later functioned as an imperial Russian consulate (and embassy (legation) for about a decade), before the present embassy building further along the street was completed (in 1845). This was built on land purchased in the mid-eighteenth century, allegedly on a shipload of earth from Russia in order that the embassy of Catherine the Great would be erected on "Russian soil".



Portrait medallion depicting Jacob Jonas Björnståhl. Swedish Institute at Athens. Photograph: Frederick Whiting.

Next to the Swedish property was the dwelling of the officer-adventurer Count Claude Alexandre de Bonneval (later styled Humbaracı Ahmet Paşa, lending his name to Kumbaracı street on the other side of the Swedish property), who died in 1747 and was buried in the adjacent cemetery – mentioned also by Björnståhl. The cemetery is preserved today at the present Galata Mevlevi House Museum. A few years later, the botanist explorer Fredrik Hasselquist, one of Carl Linnaeus' disciples, reached Turkey en route to the Holy Land. He passed away in Smyrna (İzmir) in 1752.

The same year, the Swedish envoy Gustaf Celsing the younger – the oldest son of the eponymous Gustaf Celsing, later secretary of state, who had accompanied Karl XII at Bender – reported that he had been approached by Protestants in Wallachia (in present-day Romania) for financial support, and the prospect of otherwise having “to witness them being beguiled by the Catholic monks here [in Constantinople]” or, in his opinion even worse, “to see them turn to Mohammedan creed [Islam] in despair”. The transfer to Constantinople of the Swedish Evangelical church fund, amounting to a total of 23 000 Turkish piastres, had been achieved by 1753. The funds were temporarily managed by the German-Swedish tradesman Cornelius Asmund Palm, manager of the Swedish Levant Company in Smyrna.



Gustaf Celsing, c. 1770. National Museum of Romanian History, Bucharest. Wikimedia Commons.

Gustaf Celsing, whose career in the “Orient” had been prepared with several years of language studies before travelling to the Ottoman Empire in the mid-1740s, had his eyes set on the property – the timbered house and formal garden – of the British merchant John (“Jean”) Lisle, treasurer of the Levant Company (1736–1739) and seemingly of the English community in Constantinople, who had seemingly erected the building a few years earlier.

The first known owner of the property was the so-called Phanariot prince Alexandre Ghika, first or senior dragoman (interpreter, a position that originated in religious qualms against the use of non-Muslim languages) of the Porte. The

dragoman was an essential middle-man function and diplomatic go-between in the Ottoman capital, interpreting and commenting on messages to and

from the authorities, transporting them to and from Pera, across the Golden Horn, and, in the process, assuredly contributing to Constantinople cosmopolitanism.

Alexandre Ghika was a descendant from a noble Greek Phanariot family – the supposed remaining population after the Turkish takeover of the city in the fifteenth century, most of whom settled close to the Orthodox Patriarchate in the Phanar (Fener) region in Stamboul, and many of which obtained important positions in Ottoman state administration. Ghika however fell out of favour with the sultan (Mahmud I) and was beheaded in his presence in 1740. His Pera property, part of which possibly covered an earlier discontinued Greek cemetery, was confiscated and auctioned, acquired by a certain Pierre Baron, who in turn sold it to John Lisle and his co-merchant brother. For a few years, it was owned by the British ambassador, Everard Fawkener, via his dragoman, until it was bought back by Lisle in 1747. According to one later (in this case unsubstantiated) account, the property belonged to the neighbouring dervishes.

Lisle however later needed to return to Britain to claim an inherited property (Moyle Court, in Hampshire), and was therefore prepared to let his Pera house go for half of what he had paid for it, possibly even for up to a third of its original value (approximately 60 000 piastres), in an attempt to cut his losses. Gustaf Celsing began negotiating a purchase of Lisle's property in 1754, with little hesitation about making use of the lion's share of the Evangelical church fund, which had been invested at interest, for this purpose. To Celsing, it was simply an opportunity too good to miss, and one worth waiting for. One might presume that there were also other interested parties.

Ten years after Lisle had departed for Britain, in 1757, the property was indeed sold on Lisle's behalf by his appointed dragoman to his colleague attached to the Swedish legation, Paul Jamjouglou (alternatively Camyoglu/Djamdijogklou), who subsequently delegated the purchase to Celsing. He in turn completed the purchase of the land and what was referred to as the Lisle house ("Leyelska huset") in May 1757 for the sum of 22 000 piastres. The remainder of the church fund was used for repairs and interior decoration. The deed was passed to Celsing in the court of Galata for the total sum of 25 000 piastres, less than half of Lisle's original expenses for the building itself.

The bargain purchase of the property was atoned for in religious terms by the installation of a chapel on the ground floor of the main building – Celsing appears to have thought that a church might have risked sending the wrong signal to the Ottoman authorities. The chapel also served the function of "protecting the documents of the legation and the personal belongings of the minister during the frequent fires", or as a rudimentary archive of sorts.

The importance of a fire proof storage facility was stressed also by Edvard Carlsson, by that time court chancellor in Sweden, and Celsing seems to have considered a separate church building with built-in fire proof archive facilities “for the minister’s pressing papers” and household objects in an initial phase.

For the dragoman Paul Jamjouglou, who had spent some time in Sweden in the early and late 1740s (seemingly 1741–1742, 1746–1747 and 1747–1749), with the intention to “one day be of service to the Swedish nation”, the position of *translator linguarum orientalium* (translator of oriental languages) was considered a family business. This was often the case in the dragoman trade: his father, Jacques, was also employed at the Swedish legation, and his brother Pierre worked for the Hungarian legation and, in the late eighteenth century, also for the Swedes. The position entailed regular correspondence with the envoy, Gustaf Celsing. Jacques Jamjouglou for example reported on one of many fires in Pera, one that had “lasted until the morning” but had – “God preserve us” – spared the Swedish property.

The location at the top of the Grande Rue (which previously continued steeply downwards towards Galata, the street morphing into steps), symbolically closer to the sultan’s palace on the other side of the Golden Horn than the other foreign legations in Pera, fit the ceremonial precedence of Sweden in its capacity of “Turkey’s oldest friend”. The epithet that had been granted after the late 1730s trade treaty and defense alliance bestowed precedence in Ottoman diplomatic protocol on Sweden: a privilege jealously protected by Celsing and his successors, and a source of rivalry with other foreign legations in Constantinople, not least with Russia.

The rivalry covered the plot of land itself, as will become apparent. The narrow street (Müeyyet Sokak) next to the Russian consulate, the Narmanlı Han-building, was for example later named *Rue de Suède*. The writer Patricia Daunt offers an illustrative image of eighteenth century foreign diplomatic rivalry: “The Catholic Latins generally considered the Protestant northerners of no consequence. The Frenchman became apoplectic at the thought that an Englishman might be given precedence, and the Venetian threatened war when a Dutchman entered a door before him.” In such an environment, Sweden’s status as “oldest friend” was indeed rather a big deal.

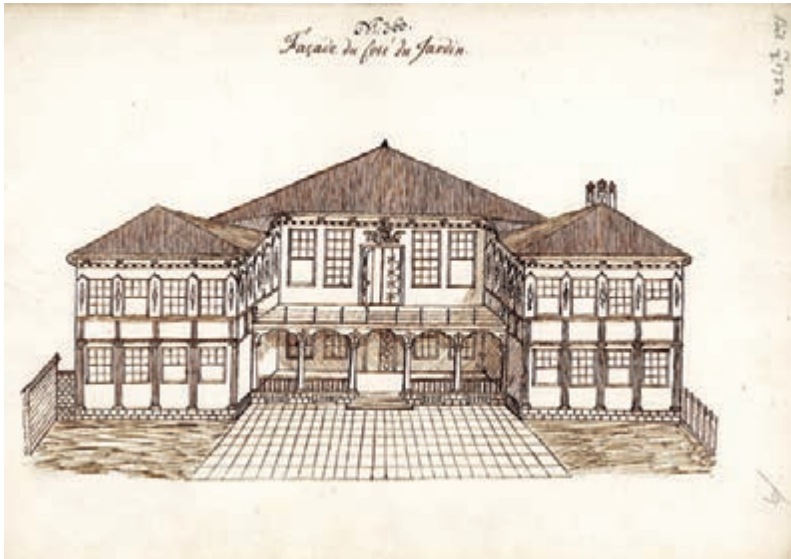
“The Best Situated in all Respects”. Keeping up Appearances of Swedish Sway

With Gustaf Celsing’s purchase of John Lisle’s property in 1757, the Swedish legation was housed in its own professed palace on a highly attractive plot of land with a grand view of the Bosphorus. Repairs and renovations were carried out on the palace building immediately after the purchase, in part carried out by the architect Dimitri or Demetrios Calpha, entitled *maitre architecte* (“calpha”, or “kalfa”, was synonymous with architect).

Less than a year after the purchase of the property, Celsing conveyed to Stockholm that the Swedish legation “can be considered one of the finest buildings here in Pera”. It was indeed one of the prime foreign legations in the area, certainly with one of the grandest views of the sultan’s seraglio, of the Bosphorus, and of the Sea of Marmara beyond.

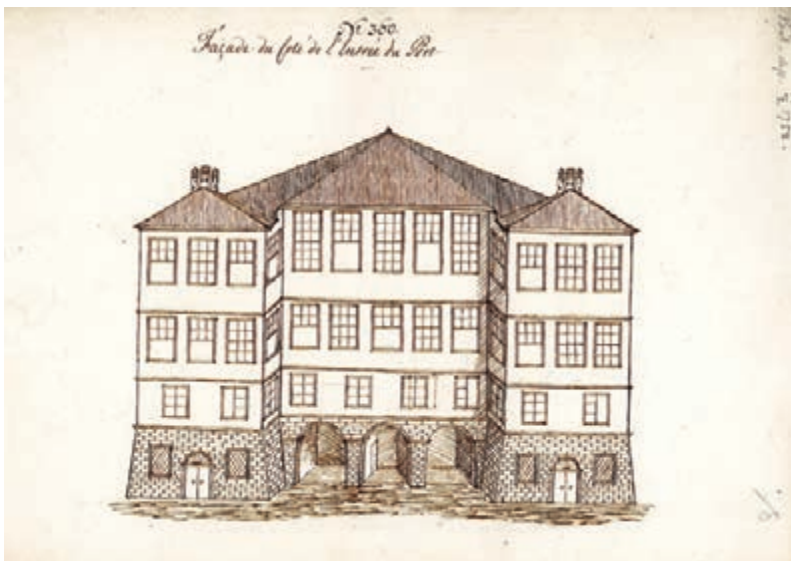
In 1758, a marble fountain in the garden, still preserved today, was dedicated to the Swedish Queen Lovisa Ulrika, who five years earlier, in 1753, had founded the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities (*Kungl. Vitterhetsakademien*). The first part of the relatively narrow and somewhat irregular Swedish property, the formal garden in front of the palace building, was more or less on the street level of the Grande Rue. The palace itself was and is placed where the plot of land quite dramatically begins to slope downward, as does the neighbourhood as a whole.

Due to the elevation of the sloping property, the basement (souterrain) level of the main building was – and still is – visible only in the rear of the building, with a more commanding façade on the Bosphorus side as a result. The site as a whole extends downhill for more than a hundred metres in total. Like many private houses and other legation buildings in Pera – with the exception of the French and Venetian palaces – the main building was wooden, following a square ground plan with six rooms on each floor.

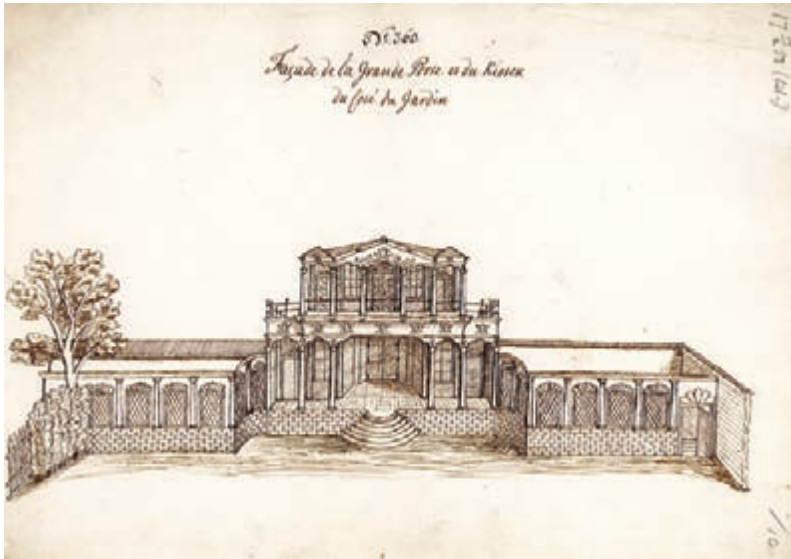


The former Palais de Suède, as it would have appeared from the Grande Rue ("Façade du Coté du Jardin"), with the Swedish royal coat of arms above the open balcony door on the first floor.

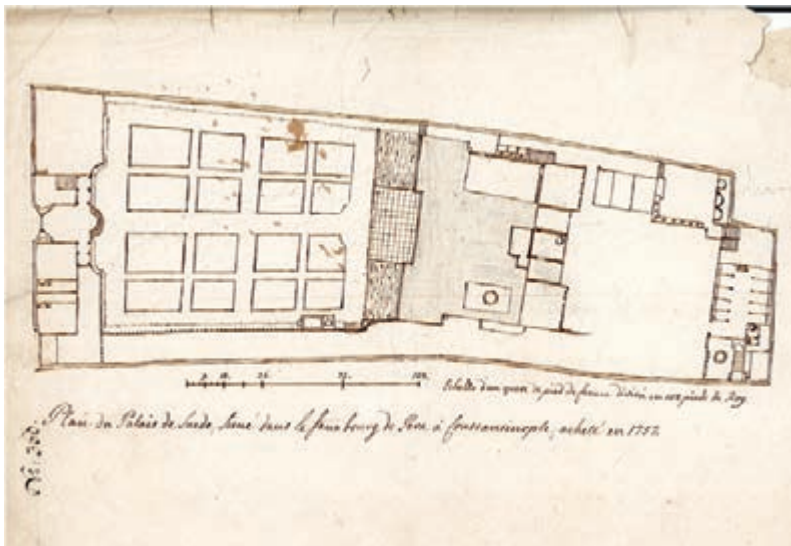
Attachment to dispatch (Gustaf Celsing, 14 February 1758). Riksarkivet, Turcica.



The façade facing the Bosphorus ("Façade du Coté de l'Entrée du Port") of the former Palais de Suède. Attachment to dispatch (Gustaf Celsing, 14 February 1758). Riksarkivet, Turcica.



The kiosk and the interior of the main gateway to the first Palais de Suède, along the Grande Rue de Péra ("Façade de la grande Porte et du Kiosck [sic] du Côté du Jardin"). Attachment to dispatch (Gustaf Celsing, 14 February 1758). Riksarkivet, Turcica.



Plan of the Palais de Suède property, with its French (Baroque) formal garden: "Plan du Palais de Suede [sic], situé dans le faubourg de Péra à Constantinople, acheté en 1757". Attachment to dispatch (Gustaf Celsing, 14 February 1758). Riksarkivet, Turcica.

The old palace building can be understood as an eighteenth-century house with a “Levantine”, Eastern Mediterranean plan, modelled on traditional Turkish domestic arrangements with each room as a separate unit – that is not communicating with each other – used as a combined living room, dining room and bedroom: a far cry from the formal European (French) fashion of the day, with rooms in strict sequence.

The main hall on the top floor of the old palace was considered the finest room in the house, with a balcony as a “Western” addition. Across the formal French baroque-style garden facing the Grande Rue, of which few traces remain, was an unassuming kiosk pavilion, flanked by symmetrical elongated wings along the street, from which the legation household – not least the women, who by and large were confined to an indoor existence – could observe street life in accordance with Ottoman custom. The kiosk functioned also as a *belvedere* focal viewpoint from the house.

As outlined in the introduction, the chapel in the main building, with a nave and two aisles – rather than investing in a Protestant church as such – was up and running by the end of 1757. The palace chapel made use of a pulpit and an altar from the dwelling formerly rented by the Swedish envoys, as witnessed by Georg Wilhelm af Sillén, legation secretary, who returned to Constantinople on Christmas Eve that year. In a later report, af Sillén drew attention to the fact that the only fireproof room in the building was one of its cellars.

Over the coming years, af Sillén became increasingly critical of Gustaf Celsing’s personal control over the legation, of expenditures for the house and its repairs – verified by the legation chancellor Antoine (Antonio?) Molinari – and questioned if the minister was indeed paying rent for his accommodation as agreed, and whether the avowedly attractive property could compensate for the religious mission that the funds were originally intended to cover, predicting “dire future grievances for the government and the state”. The building was furthermore not considered big enough for the legation staff, although rental expenses were saved by having them share the available space.

Celsing objected: the chapel was disguised in order to save it from too much Turkish attention, and affirmed that he had paid for repairs to the palace by his own means. The property, purchased with the Evangelical church fund, was made the rent-free residence of the Swedish envoy, who was however to be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the building. Yet this arrangement soon became defunct and the state assumed such expenses.

An early illustrious Swedish visitor to the old Palais de Suède was the researcher, orientalist, philosopher and liberal champion Peter Forsskål, another of Carl Linnaeus’ disciples, contributing to redefining Sweden as a scientific rather than a military power. En route to Yemen, as part of a

Danish scientific expedition, Forsskål probably visited the Swedish legation in Constantinople in 1761 (he subsequently contracted malaria and passed away in Yemen in 1763).

The members of the Protestant congregation that would attend services in the palace chapel – mainly held in German (unless a Swedish ship had arrived in Constantinople, the crew of which would often take communion before departure) – amounted to around twenty at most. A collaboration with the Reformed Church at the Dutch legation was developed: when the chaplaincy was vacant in one location the other legation priest would step in. The entrance door to the old palace was made of oak with ironworks. The building also featured dovescotes as well as deep water cisterns in the garden, reportedly still in place today.

Celsing's palace premises also included stables, on one of two smaller plots of land that had been added before Celsing's purchase, considered part of a Muslim religious foundation (*waqf*) that could not be privately owned. In the early 1760s, the previous owner of the land on which the stables had been constructed attempted to regain in a trial, to no avail, accusing the Swedes of having demolished a building decorated with verses from the Quran in gilded letters, of defiling the land with a sewer drain, and of abusing the view from the palace "by constantly peering at the seraglio", at the Imperial Palace.



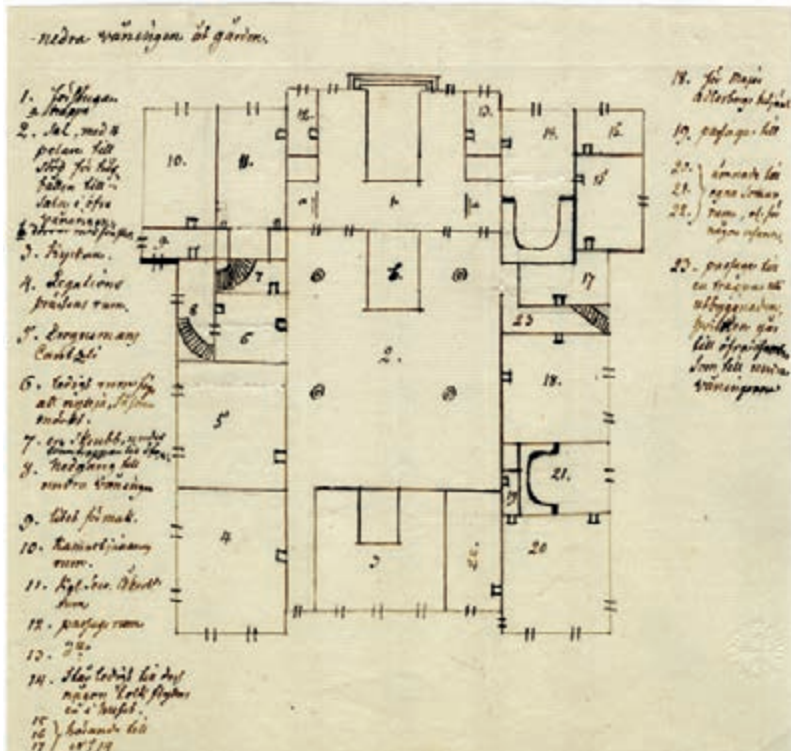
Antoine van der Steen, "View of Constantinople and the Seraglio from the Swedish Legation in Pera", c. 1770–1780. Van der Steen seemingly collaborated for several years with the Celsing brothers (mainly Ulric Celsing) in the old Palais de Suède. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

Gustaf Celsing had initially envisaged that the minister should pay rent for using the house, which would equal the revenue of the fund's investment in the property, a setup which would soon be abandoned. The Swedish state assumed official ownership of the property and the legation building in 1766, although the property formally belonged to the von Celsing family until 1872, when foreign governments were summoned to officially register their assets following a modified law that facilitated property ownership by

non-Ottoman Christian subjects. The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs then requested and received an official note from the family stating that the property rightfully belonged to the Swedish state.

In 1770, Gustaf Celsing, who was later ennobled after his return to Sweden, was succeeded as envoy to Constantinople by his younger brother, Ulric. A “national and church library” of sorts at the legation was envisaged in the 1770s, a notion that predated the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (1962) by almost two hundred years. Turkish language studies had been encouraged through scholarships at the universities of Lund and Uppsala since the 1740s. Gustav III, an avid promoter of the arts, became king of Sweden in 1771. The new monarch’s cultural interests included theatre, and it is a telling sign of the times that the large hall on the top floor of the main building of the Palais de Suède was occasionally used for theatre and opera productions and, plausibly, for casual concerts.

In 1785, the diplomat and orientalist Johan David Åkerblad – later employed by Minister Per Olof von Asp as secretary at the legation in Constantinople – reported that the painter, diplomat and archaeologist Louis



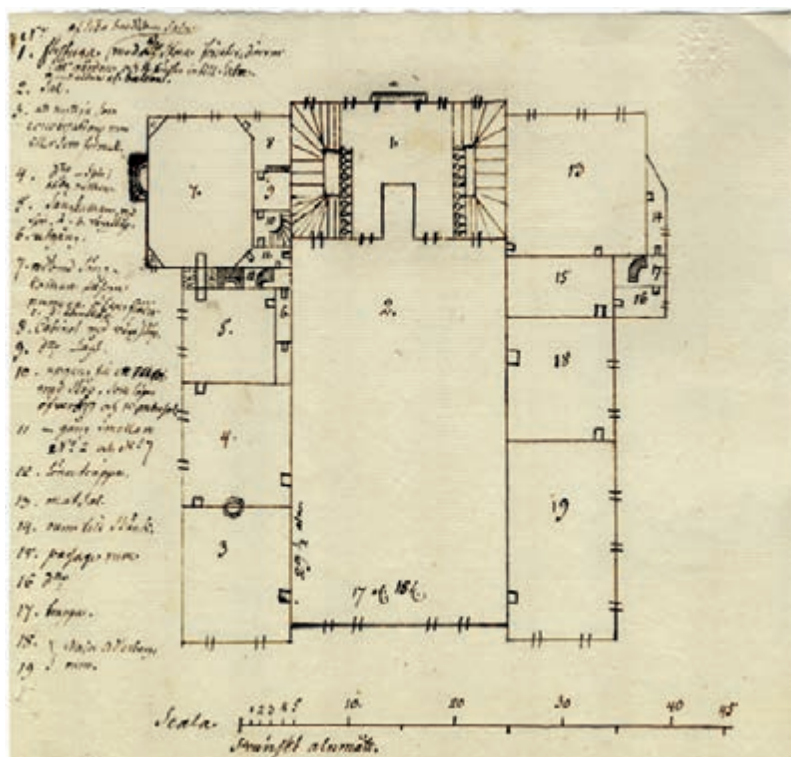
Plan of the Swedish legation in Constantinople, lower floor, by Per Olof von Asp, c. 1791, sent to Ulric Celsing. Riksarkivet, Beskickningsarkivet från Biby (a copy is preserved in the Asp collection at Uppsala University Library).

François Sebastien Fauvel, later stationed in Athens and sometimes called the "father of archeology in Greece", was "famed here in Pera for the fine decorations that he has made for the theatre in the Swedish palace."

Åkerblad's fellow Swedish orientalist Jacob Jonas Björnsthåhl spent almost three years in Constantinople (1776–1779), mainly at the Swedish legation, "il palazzo di Swezia", as he referred to it in a letter in 1776.

Two years later, in 1778, Björnsthåhl gave an appreciative account of the "merit" of the Palais de Suède "in terms of location, building and adornment": to him it was "the most beautiful here in Pera", with its "truly matchless" view, due to its placement "on the highest peak" in the city, with "a rather attractive garden, and a large kiosk or belvedere, built in the Turkish taste." The gate of the kiosk pavilion facing the street was capped by "the coat of arms of Sweden, Three Crowns, very nicely carved in white marble bas-relief."

Björnsthåhl also praised the "excellent cistern, beneath the palace itself" that "constantly" had "a cold and delectable water": "not a small benefit in this location". In short, "all the elements and all nature have contributed to



Plan of the Swedish legation in Constantinople, upper floor, by Per Olof von Asp, c. 1791, sent to Ulric Celsing. Riksarkivet, Beskickningsarkivet från Biby (a copy is preserved in the Asp collection at Uppsala University Library).

making the royal Swedish palace one of the most beautiful emplacements that can exist in the world.” It would indeed have been unrivalled, “if Pera was only far away, or if the country was ruled by other laws and inhabited by other people”.

At the same time, Jacob Jonas Björnsthåhl was critical of westerners (Europeans) that lived in Pera with little or no contact with the rest of the city, including diplomats that did not personally visit the *Porte* to grasp Ottoman politics and circumstances. He described the ground floor of the Palais de Suède, which also contained a humble library: the main hall was decorated with “columns and pilasters of the Ionic order”, a description confirmed by af Sillén – “four well-worked wooden pillars” – in a style described by Bengt Johansson as “contemporary Late European Baroque [with] European Rococo elements”.

Björnsthåhl was enthusiastic about the chapel in the heart of the Palais de Suède, its comparatively temperate Lutheran interior decoration, with red damask wallpaper, and the view that it offered: “It completely defies description, and can solely be painted, but by prominent painters alone.” He recounted how some “learned Turks” likened the Swedish chapel to a mosque, by virtue of its alignment with Mecca, and commented on the plot of land that was deemed part of a Muslim religious foundation, and taxed accordingly: “The Swedish minister thereby yearly contributes to the upkeep of the temples at Mecca and Medina.”

The first floor of the Palais de Suède featured a wood-panelled room, a *chambre boisée*, adorned with Venetian wall mirrors, opened only on festive occasions, such as the king’s birthday. The Rococo interior was likely similar to that of some preserved mid-eighteenth-century summer houses or waterside *yalis*, such as the Safvet Paşa Yalısı (1760) in the former village of Kanlıca, on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus, or the late-eighteenth-century Sadullah Paşa Yalısı in the Çengelköy neighbourhood, close to Üsküdar.

After three decades of the legation in Constantinople having been in the hands of the Celsing family, Gerhard von Heidenstam took the helm in 1779, with the explicit task to achieve a new defense alliance with the Ottoman Empire directed against Russia, as well as to obtain financial backing for Gustav III’s projected Eastern expansion and planned Russian war. Heidenstam successfully attained such a treaty in 1789, with Sweden presumably profiting anew from its status as “Turkey’s oldest friend”.

A rare instance of a female protagonist in this period was the aspiring actress Catharina Anna Grandon de Hochepied, born in Hungary and daughter of the Dutch Consul General in Smyrna, who married the Swedish Minister Gerhard von Heidenstam in 1783. Three years later, in 1786, the Palais de Suède theatre staged the first Italian opera or musical theatre performance in Ottoman Turkey – probably the first in the Muslim world – an

adaptation of the seventeenth century comedy *L'École des jaloux*, "The school of the jealous", by the actor and playwright Antoine Jacob, known as Montfleury, a contemporary and rival of Molière.

Gerhard von Heidenstam appears to have conducted the approximately thirty-piece orchestra himself, and Catharina Anna Grandon de Hochepeid performed several of the parts, possibly together with other (amateur) female members of the diplomatic corps. She may accordingly have been the first woman to have performed on stage in Turkey. According to a later account, more than three hundred people, foreign diplomats as well as Turkish notables, attended the event, which was itself a previously unknown enjoyment in Constantinople.

The mainly wooden architecture of the city, densely constructed, was plagued by fierce fires with alarming frequency, notably in 1787, 1808 and 1811. In the 1787 fire, the legation building was saved from destruction by sacrificing its stables and other smaller structures. The property was subsequently enlarged through a purchase by Minister von Heidenstam of an adjacent burned plot of land on which a new kitchen building was later built, a precursor to the present so-called Dragoman House that today accommodates the Swedish Research Institute.

In the opinion of former Envoy Ulric Celsing, the enlarged property made the Swedish palace "the best situated in all respects, and among the most comfortable and spacious." Part of the stately home Biby in Sweden, which had been purchased by Gustaf Celsing in 1782, was decorated in Ottoman splendour – the "Turkish room" (no longer preserved). The Celsing art collection may have been on display in the old Palais de Suède before being brought to Sweden.

Apart from the increased comfort, the representative role of the Swedish legation building was of much importance, despite voices being raised in 1791 to discontinue the legation as such. Grandeur reflected status, and the need for suitably imposing quarters also manifested the importance of relations with Ottoman Turkey as a potential ally in eighteenth century Swedish foreign policy, preventing Russian access to the oceans. The Swedish envoy thus needed to keep up the appearance of Swedish might in order to facilitate his negotiations with the Porte. A more monumental double staircase was added to the legation building, the façade of which was given a "classical", more European, makeover. Yet this addition, which resulted in a kind of double pediment, turned out not to be satisfactory in aesthetic terms.

The classicising cosmetic surgery in combination with an increasing need for repairs resulted in suggestions at the turn of the century (in 1799) to demolish the old building and to construct a new stone mansion on its foundations: the partly wooden first floor of the palace was seen as a particular liability. Two Swedish master builders (Malmén and Carlstrand) were men-

tioned, and the new legation premises would “exonerate the government and the state from all further expense in this regard once and for all”.

The kiosk pavilion however needed to be maintained as a place of refuge in case of plague or other pestilence in the palace proper. Instead, some repairs on the building and the perimeter wall were carried out in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The fires in 1808 and 1811 damaged the buildings on the Swedish property, for example the kiosk kitchen. Outbreaks of the plague were not uncommon in this period: the Swedish envoy for example reported approximately two thousand daily deaths during a period in 1812.

Under the pen name Peregrine Persic, the British diplomat and writer James Justinian Morier, born in Smyrna, refers to a fictional conversation in or around the year 1807 with an equally fictitious Swedish legation chaplain, the “rev. dr Fundgruben” – possibly based on the chaplain Gustaf Ernst Sprinchorn – in the “introductory epistle” to his novel *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan* (1824): “One beautiful moonlight night, reclining upon a sofa of the Swedish palace [...] looking out of those windows which command so magnificent and extensive a view of the city and harbour of Constantinople.”



Antoine Ignace Melling, “Vue de la ville de Scutari, prise à Pera” (from the terrace of a “private house” in the vicinity of the Palais de Suède), etching, c. 1809, in Antoine Ignace Melling, *Voyage pittoresque de Constantinople et des rives du Bosphore* (Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1819).

As a consequence of the new Swedish foreign policy promoted during Karl (Charles) XIII’s reign (1809–1818) by the adopted Crown Prince Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, King Karl XIV Johan (Charles XIV John) in 1818, Sweden turned its back on France and opted not to challenge Russia for the loss of Finland in 1809. Support was instead secured for the so-called “Policy of 1812”, Bernadotte’s new foreign policy, which resulted in Sweden entering

into a personal union with Norway in 1814. This arrangement would last until 1905. The legation in Constantinople thus became that of the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway; one of its few diplomatic missions during the tumultuous Napoleonic wars that disrupted European diplomatic relations. In 1809, Sweden's diplomatic missions were limited to London, Paris, Rome, Vienna, Moscow, Seville, Algiers, Constantinople and Rio de Janeiro.

The storied view from the Palais de Suède was captured by the Levantine artist, painter and architect Antoine Ignace (Anton Ignaz) Melling, who lived in Constantinople for nigh on two decades, first as a member of the Russian envoy's household, drawing pictures for a number of dignitaries, eventually becoming architect to Sultan Selim III and his sister, Hatice Sultan. Melling has been described by the novelist Orhan Pamuk as someone with the local gaze of an *Istanbullu* that painted the city like a Westerner.

Melling's "rich view" from the Swedish palace was described thus when it was published (in 1819): "This grand view has often been depicted; never maybe with the care and the expressive fidelity that one finds here. The artist took his position in the *hôtel de Suède*." Constantinople was presented "as seemingly swimming in the middle of an immense pool created by the shores of the two continents".

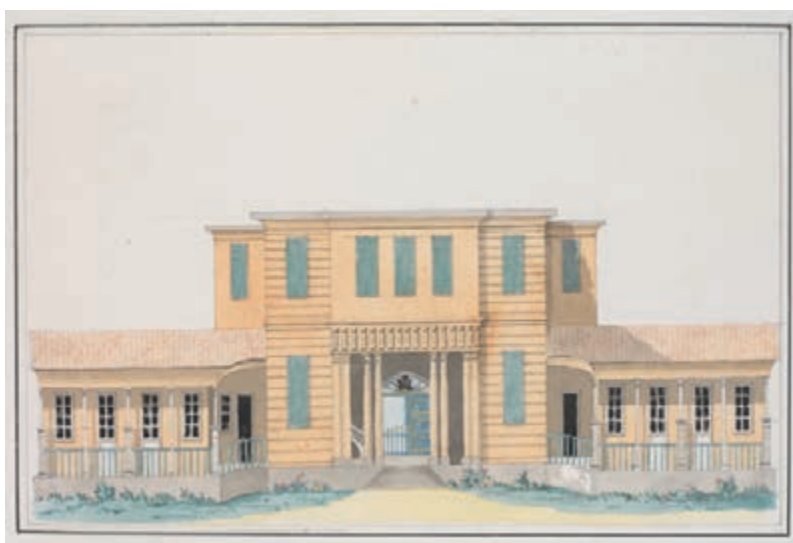


Antoine Ignace Melling, "Vue d'une partie de la ville de Constantinople, avec la pointe du Sérail, Prise du Faubourg de Péra; Résidence des Ministres Etrangers", from the Palais de Suède, with the firewall of the legation in the foreground, etching, in Antoine Ignace Melling, *Voyage pittoresque de Constantinople et des rives du Bosphore* (Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1819), no 9.

At Easter 1818, on Good Friday night, the old Palais de Suède burned to the ground in another fire in Pera, incidentally the same date (20 March) that the Odéon Theatre in Paris also succumbed to flames. The same year had witnessed "more than thirty-eight outbreaks in less than two months" in Constantinople, according to Minister Resident and Egyptologist Nils

Gustaf Palin, who had fled to the kiosk with his family and any belongings that they could gather at short notice in the fire that ended the first Palais de Suède. The unassuming kiosk would come to serve as their home and, for many years to come, as a temporary substitute legation building.

Palin lost most of his library and some of his collection of antiquities in the palace fire – although some of his collection was, it seems, safely stored in the fireproof storage in the cellar along with the completed manuscript of his memoirs. The kiosk by the Grande Rue had however come through more or less unscathed, as had the kitchen building (the later Dragoman House), the stables, wash house and other utility buildings. If indeed it was much consolation, Palin at least thought that the view from the kiosk “heals the spirits”, as he put it.



Carl Gustaf Löwenhielm, “Kiosque de Suède, à Péra”. Drawing, 1824, post-renovation and neo-classical additions. Uppsala universitetsbibliotek, skissbok 2, “Turquie No. 1”, 1824.

In the 1808 fire that had threatened the Swedish palace, Palin described “the peculiar manner of building of mixing tinder in the plaster”, resulting in an inherent flammability hazard. The Italian architect Peverata (whose first name remains elusive), who had worked for several other legations and later (1823) styled himself as “the architect of the *Palais de France* and of several other nations”, was given the task of delineating a new building, “well outlined and proportioned” and with limited “architectural ornaments”. The resulting plans, reflecting a post-Napoleonic Empire Neoclassicism, were however too similar in style to the old building for Palin’s taste, and met with limited approval in Sweden. Peverata, who had worked on repairs

of the French palace, and had restored the then Austrian (earlier Venetian, later Italian) palace in Constantinople in 1816–1817, likely had the Austrian building in mind when sketching a new Swedish palace, indeed possibly a little too much so for Palin's liking.

The architect Peverata was instead involved in repairing the Swedish kiosk pending a decision regarding a possible new main building. Palin had somewhat optimistically hoped that the Porte might contribute financially to the reconstruction of the Swedish palace, in order to avoid that the property might be bought by the neighbouring Russian legation and that a Russian palace might be built to rival that of the Ottoman Grand Vizier (head of government). Rumours to that effect appear to have circulated.



Carl Gustaf Löwenhielm, "Vue d'une fenêtre au Kiosque de Suède à Péra, sur le terrain du Palais de Russie brûlé." Drawing of the Russian property on the other side of the Grande Rue with the ruins of the house rented by von Höpken and Carleson, 1825. Uppsala universitetsbibliotek, skissbok 3, "Turquie No. 2", 1825–1826.

Nils Gustaf Palin, who was later murdered in Rome (in 1842), was discharged in 1823, and was succeeded as minister in Constantinople by Count Carl Gustaf Löwenhielm, a military officer who was also a practising artist, as was Carl Peter von Heidenstam, the former Minister Gerhard von Heidenstam's son, who produced a number of watercolours. Like for example Cornelius Loos more than a century earlier, an art education in some form was an essential component in a military career before the invention of photography.

Löwenhielm, minister in Constantinople and consul general in the Levant, had been given the task of attempting to reach an advantageous trade agreement with Turkey and free passage to the Black Sea for Swedish

naval vessels. He hoped to achieve this promptly and consequently did not expect to remain in Constantinople for very long; it took him three years to achieve, however, possibly assisted by a degree of bribery.



Leopold Fertbauer, Carl Gustaf Löwenhielm, 1856. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, NMGrh 3034.

The artist-diplomat Löwenhielm made more than 150 drawings and watercolours with Turkish motifs, most of which are preserved in the *Nationalmuseum* in Stockholm and at Uppsala University Library. Reproductions of some of Löwenhielm's work are currently on display in the Palais de Suède and at the Swedish Embassy in Ankara. Troubled by ill health, and in stark contrast to his artistic depictions of Constantinople and its surroundings,

Löwenhielm was sternly inappreciative of his term in the Ottoman capital: "It feels disheartening to have forfeited such a substantial part of one's best years without having preserved a single agreeable memory." Moreover, the few Ottoman subjects that he came into contact with – almost exclusively business-related – "all resemble[d] each other in their deep contempt of the infidels [the Christians] and in their extraordinary hatred of the Russians".

Rather than to rebuild the palace itself, Löwenhielm settled for further repairs and renovations of the kiosk. As a result, the pavilion was transformed into a hybrid structure: an Ottoman building with neoclassical additions and an embellished *Empire* style gateway to the Grande Rue. Löwenhielm emphasised that the repairs could not be expected to prolong the life of the kiosk by much more than twenty years – the building however ended up lasting longer than expected, as substitute legation quarters for several decades, until 1870.

In his memoirs, published a century later, Löwenhielm related how he had been "authorised to come up with a suggestion for building a new palace (the prevailing denomination for minister's residences in Pera)". On a plan of the property, Löwenhielm stressed that it would be "impossible to clear the ruins of the burned palace without great expense". Löwenhielm does not seem to have planned for a new Protestant chapel.

The last chaplain attached to the legation in this period, Jacob Berggren, had left Constantinople in the early 1820s "due to the Greek war of independence". In a published travel account, Berggren described the sorry state of the ruined Palais de Suède: "No one resided among the ruins of the former Swedish palace, except for some turtle doves that sat complaining in the cypresses of the little garden." Löwenhielm (and his successor Albrecht Ihre) hosted the medical doctor Johannes (Johan) Hedenborg, who was to spend four years in Constantinople as Löwenhielm's friend and personal physician, gathering material for his later published work on Turkish mores and customs.

Yet another fire ravaged Pera in 1826. The kiosk was saved, but the Russian consulate on the other side of the Grande Rue – later (post-1831) replaced by the present (Doric) neoclassical building, later known as the Narmanlı Han (see introduction) – was destroyed, in addition to numerous other buildings.

Having secured a trade and shipping treaty for the passage of Swedish-Norwegian ships through the Bosphorus in 1827, Löwenhielm departed for Austria and the post as envoy in Vienna the same year. He was succeeded in Constantinople by Chargé d'Affaires, formerly Legation secretary (later Foreign Minister) Albrecht Ihre. In a watercolour painting of the kiosk from the following year, Ihre's sister, Inga Albertina, depicted the building with two rooms on the top floor added by Löwenhielm, from which the then unhindered view of the Bosphorus (overlooking the ruins of the former

Swedish palace) was reportedly to have been fine indeed.

The fact that the old palace was not replaced for a long time, and that the legation was housed in improvised quarters in the timeworn kiosk, reflects the new Swedish foreign policy during the reign of King Karl XIV Johan and an ensuing change in strategy and attitude: Turkey was no longer regarded as a potential ally against Russia. In yet another fire in the summer of 1829, the stables, wash house, kitchen building (the Dragoman House) and the perimeter wall were damaged, with repairs once more conducted by Peverata. The wooden top floor of the kitchen building was rebuilt and the kiosk was renovated further. A list of repair expenses was drawn up by Ihre in January 1830.

Albrecht Ihre left Constantinople in 1831. Save for a six-month period in 1838 with Uno von Troil as minister before his death the same year – he was buried in Constantinople, as was his wife, Jacqueline Gyldenstolpe, who was previously married to Carl Gustaf Löwenhielm – the legation was led until 1858 by the former dragoman Antoine Testa as chargé d'affaires. Testa hailed from an originally Genoese family of “hereditary diplomats”, “Europeans who regarded a country as a career rather than a cause”, in the words of Sture Theolin.

Two alterations were made to the property during Antoine Testa’s more than quarter century as head of the legation (during which “the old traditions were not lost”, according to his later successor Oscar Magnus Björnstjerna): the parts that had been considered part of a Muslim foundation were transferred to the state-owned property in 1840, the same year in which Testa carried out a new Swedish-Norwegian trade treaty with the Ottoman Empire. Nine years later, a small house at the rear of the property was purchased which levelled the boundary-line with the neighbouring land.

Probably the worst of all Pera fires hit in 1831, producing a heat of a magnitude that supposedly melted even fireproof storage spaces, and allegedly destroyed more than a thousand houses in six hours. A total of up to eight



Albrecht Ihre, “The Swedish legation in Constantinople, 1829”, ichnography (horizontal section/ground plan), illustrating the overall slope of the property, with the burned palace in the middle. Attachment to dispatch (Albrecht Ihre, January 1830). Riksarkivet, Kabinetet/UD Huvudarkivet, E2D:238.

thousand buildings were annihilated, including most of the legation buildings in Pera, with the exception of the Venetian (Austrian) palace, today the Italian consulate general, which was saved by sudden change in the wind direction. The Swedish kiosk apparently also made it through. Testa, the Swedish-Norwegian chargé d'affaires, reported to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that the Ottoman Porte had authorised Europeans and Ottoman Christian subjects to temporarily rent apartments in other parts of the city in the aftermath of the cataclysmic conflagration.

The following year, a Russian attempt to swap two adjacent properties for the Swedish land was made, combined with a suggested payment of 100 000 piastres, with the objective of grouping the Russian offices together in the same spot. The proposal, made to the Swedish-Norwegian minister in St Petersburg, was however rejected by the government. The legation property and the storied view were not for sale, at least not at that time, and not to Russia.

Eight years later, in 1840, King Karl XIV Johan suggested an unorthodox measure in domestic politics, namely to trade the Swedish state-owned legation properties in Moscow and Constantinople for a Finnish land mass (then controlled by Russia) between Sweden and Norway in the far north. Russia offered a different piece of Finnish territory as an exchange, yet nothing came of this fancy, save for strong British strategic objections to any land swaps around the Arctic Ocean.

The Galata and Pera neighbourhoods increased in importance as the European, "Western" face of Constantinople from the 1840s onwards. However, many legation buildings in Pera were not rehabilitated until the 1850s, as a result of the ferocious fire in 1831. The question of rebuilding the Swedish palace was raised when the Norwegian Georg Christian Sibbern was appointed minister in Constantinople in 1858. Sibbern had recently spent eight years as Swedish-Norwegian chargé d'affaires and minister in Washington, D.C. Foreign Minister Ludvig Manderström informed the Ottoman Grand Vizier that "the king, my august sovereign" had selected Sibbern as envoy in Constantinople: "Among his qualities and zeal, [Sibbern] has obtained his majesty's full confidence"; this equalled a "renewed evidence of the sincere amity and attachment" between Sweden-Norway and Turkey.

Upon arrival, Sibbern immediately considered finding a local architect for a new palace edifice. Later the same year, Sibbern – who lived his whole life in the personal union between Sweden and Norway – was appointed prime minister of Norway (in Stockholm). Before his departure from Constantinople, Sibbern however administered extensive repairs of the existing legation buildings. He also drew attention to the need to replace the legation uniforms: "The livery and dress had been found in a state of utter ruin."

When Sibbern first laid eyes on “the sad remains of what is still referred to as the Palais de Suède” in the summer of 1858, the gloomy sight had “tightened his heart”. He made his way to the legation immediately upon arrival, and was “very impatient to see the property and its much-praised position and beautiful view of the Bosphorus”. What met him was the old kiosk and a “terrible disillusionment”. Sibbern forthwith raised the issue of a possible Ottoman envoy in Stockholm, an arrangement that would be realised almost twenty years later.

After examining the property for almost a week, Sibbern decided to rent accommodation elsewhere while the kiosk was being refurbished: “For a European, used to clean houses”, the “filth” of the legation in his view made it comparable to “a dwelling for the lowest classes”; certainly not fit for any appropriate national representation. Sibbern’s temporary landlord was the Swiss architect Gaspare Fossati, who had carried out restoration work in the Hagia Sophia, and had been involved in the construction of the new Russian, Dutch and Spanish legation palaces in Pera after the 1831 fire, as well as the Russian consulate (and Russian post office), together with his brother, Giuseppe. Gaspare Fossati made suggestions for embellishing and modernising the Swedish kiosk as well. Sibbern however rejected Fossati’s drafts: a new palace in lieu of the old building that had burned down forty years earlier would be preferable. Sibbern settled for repairs to the kiosk in the summer of 1858, including an expansion of its kitchen, so that the garden facilities could be abandoned, saving the staff having to “cover this distance in the open air”.

During his brief tenure as minister in 1858, as a reminder of the religious Protestant background to the purchase of the property a hundred years before, Sibbern also had a modest wooden chapel erected that still stands today, at the lower end of the garden, on the plot of land that had been procured by Antoine Testa. The chapel, which could accommodate approximately seventy people, was completed in February 1859. It features Gothic Revival style windows, at first with stained glass, as well as a sacristy and an hexagonal apse with a pulpit.



*Georg Sibbern with his wife Maria, née Soane.
Nasjonalbiblioteket, Oslo.*

The building combines elements of Ottoman timber construction with mid-nineteenth-century Scandinavian (Norwegian) church architecture. Unlike most of the surrounding neighbourhood, it has rather remarkably survived various later Pera fires, not least the one in 1870 that nearly finished off the new Palais de Suède before it had even been put to use. The chapel is no longer in active service – its last religious tenant moved out in 2015 – although the modest gilded cross on its roof remains.

The construction of the Palais de Suède chapel can be seen in light of the Crimean War. The building did not draw on state resources; instead it profited from the assets of a mid-eighteenth century fund intended for the benefit of Hungarian Protestants that had been donated by the Hungarian Baron Zay de Csömör (Gömor) in 1758 (with the Dragoman Pierre Jamjouglou as go-between). This fund also supported the Lutheran Church in Bucharest – situated in Ottoman Wallachia at the time of Gömor's donation – with the Swedish envoy in Constantinople as a guarantor: an obligation that Sibbern expected the state to maintain.

Putting the funds to some religious use at least, in the general Lutheran spirit of the donation, and possibly covering some of the expense himself, Sibbern justified building the modest new chapel with an expected increase in Swedish-Norwegian shipping and trade activity in Constantinople in the wake of the Crimean conflict, in other words an increase also in the number of Protestant merchant seamen.

In 1855, on the Asian side of the Bosphorus, the Haydarpaşa cemetery was established for fallen British military officials in the Crimean War, many of whom were treated in the first modern military hospital in the nearby Selimiye (Scutari) barracks, organised by Florence Nightingale. The cemetery was subsequently expanded to include also graves of Commonwealth soldiers who died during the two world wars, as well as civilian burials – including one of Sibbern's successors as Minister, Selim Ehrenhoff (d'Ehrenhoff, see chapters two and three), laid to rest next to his wife, Elisabeth (Bessie) Ehrenhoff.

In 1857, a year after the end of the Crimean War, the Ottoman authorities donated land to the United Kingdom, the United States, the Netherlands, Prussia, Sweden-Norway and Denmark for a Protestant cemetery at Feriköy, north of Pera, next to the Roman Catholic cemetery, with numerous monuments to the thousands of French and Italian (Piedmontese–Sardinian) fallen in the war.

In October 1858, the same month as the foundation stone of the Anglican Christ Church was laid (The Crimean Memorial, funded by collecting subscriptions in a procedure that partly echoed the Swedish eighteenth-century church fund, a stone's throw below the Swedish-Norwegian property), Georg Christian Sibbern met with his Protestant envoy colleagues at the

summer palace of the British Ambassador Henry Lytton Bulwer at Therapiá (Tarabya), in the Sarıyer district on the European shore of the Bosphorus. The envoys discussed the organisation of the Protestant cemetery and its partition in sections based on the citizenship of the deceased. Sweden-Norway was awarded a common section that reflected the united kingdoms; this section has subsequently been divided in two, ostensibly after the 1905 dissolution of the union. As a result of the new Palais de Suède chapel, the office of chaplain was reintroduced at the Swedish-Norwegian legation. Its first incumbent was the Norwegian Peter Blom.



The kiosk as seen from the garden of Palais de Suède, 1828. Watercolour by Inga Albertina Ihre. Generalkonsul Ihres samling, location unknown.

Pulgher's Palace. Begetting a Building

Georg Christian Sibbern was succeeded as envoy in Constantinople by the Copenhagen-born Norwegian Peter Collett, who however fell ill and died after only about a year in service, at the age of forty. Like Sibbern, Collett was not happy with the decrepit kiosk. He stressed that the local authorities were restricting any additions to buildings along the Grande Rue, aiming to widen the street. He suggested following the Dutch legation's example of selling the part of the property adjacent to it and to acquire funds in order to "finally" rebuild the Swedish palace.

Collett's funeral was reported in the press in August 1860. The service was held in the Palais de Suède chapel. Chaplain Peter Blom "delivered a lengthened address in the Norwegian language, which appeared sensibly to affect those of his compatriots who were present." A "numerous infantry guard of honour" flanked the first stretch of the Grande Rue, from the legation gate to the present *Hıdivyal Palas*. A funeral cortege was led by the British Ambassador Henry Bulwer and his French colleague, Charles de La Valette, followed by "one of the sultan's carriages" and "the whole diplomatic body, in full costume, and attended by their respective suites", displaying Swedish-Norwegian decorations. The convoy proceeded to the Feriköy cemetery. Upon arrival, the imperial guard of honour, which had marched at the head of the procession, lined up by the entrance "and presented arms as the body was carried in." A short prayer preceded the lowering of the coffin into the grave. According to the cemetery registry, Collett's remains were later removed and transported "to his fatherland".

Collett was succeeded by, in turn, Carl Wachtmeister and the later Foreign Minister Oscar Magnus Björnstjerna, who like Collett and Sibbern, lived his whole life within the framework of the Swedish-Norwegian union. Björnstjerna objected to the suggestion of selling part of the Pera property, as this might have risked a tall building being raised in front of the legation

with an intruding view of the garden. He instead suggested that a series of shops be built along the street to be rented out and, with the income generated, to cover a loan to construct a new palace building. He also proposed a purchase of two smaller additional plots of land in order to round off the property perimeter and to avoid possible future high-rise buildings next to the legation.

Like Sibbern and Collett before him, Björnstjerna was dissatisfied with the dilapidated state of the kiosk, and stressed the need for repair and maintenance funds. In 1861, he wrote to Foreign Minister Ludvig Manderström, emphasising, as had Sibbern, that the living arrangements were not suitable for a minister and representative of the two kingdoms, and that the time was nigh when the kiosk would no longer be at all liveable: “The rotten floor [boards] on the ground floor occasionally stink, the ceiling of one of the rooms on the first floor has started to cave in, and the walls are so brittle and rotten that door hinges come off. There is no comparison with the houses of other governments’ ministers and legations; their servants live in houses in much better condition [than the kiosk].” Björnstjerna therefore “warmly advised” that a “minister hotel that could at least be compared to those of other lesser powers and that could house the staff” be erected, possibly funded, if need be, by selling part of the property.

The Swedish authorities seemed to prefer a possible mortgage loan in Sweden on the property as a whole to cover the construction costs of a new palace in the garden, with the state acceding the instalments. Oscar Magnus Björnstjerna described the Swedish-Norwegian legation and his life as minister in Constantinople in a letter to his mother, Elisabeth von Stedingk, in 1862, one of more than forty such letters from the year 1862–1863. He compared the situation in the Ottoman capital with Paris and Stockholm: “The Swedish palace, as it is most undeservedly called, is miserable indeed. It is situated by the prime street in Pera, where the land is as expensive as on the boulevards in Paris. Disregarding this, Österlånggatan [in the old town] in Stockholm is much nicer and more attractive.”

Björnstjerna went on to describe how he had dinner every evening at “the premier hotel” nearby (possibly the *Hotel d’Angleterre*): “It costs about 10 francs, but this is much cheaper than keeping your own chef. Some other diplomats also eat there, so I have decorous company.” He also lamented the poor state of the legation garden, which he deemed an embarrassment, not least as it was habitually used by “Lady Bulwer and others” (Georgiana, Lady Bulwer, was married to the British Ambassador) in order to reach “the house of the English consul-general below”. Even worse: the “storied beautiful view from the garden over the Bosphorus” had “unfortunately partly vanished”. New buildings had indeed begun to rise in its way. Modernity was seeping through.

In 1864, graves and mortal remains of deceased non-Muslim foreigners were moved from the former *Grands Champs de Morts* cemetery (by the present Taksim Square and Gezi Park) to the Catholic and Protestant cemeteries at Feriköy. Some of the Swedish graves in transit were those of the nobleman and poet Samuel Olof Tilas, who passed away in Constantinople in 1772, at the age of 28, and the Swedish Minister Uno von Troil and his wife, Jacquette Gyldenstolpe.

Oscar Magnus Björnstjerna described the legation priest, Peter Blom, as “a rather decent and intelligent man, with a young wife”, and was keen to reclaim Sweden’s reputation as Protestant protector in Turkey by the continued support of Hungarian Protestants and the Lutheran Church in Bucharest (via the Prussian legation in Constantinople) and the upkeep of the Protestant cemetery at Feriköy, the printed 1868 regulations of which (in French and English) have been preserved in the legation archives.

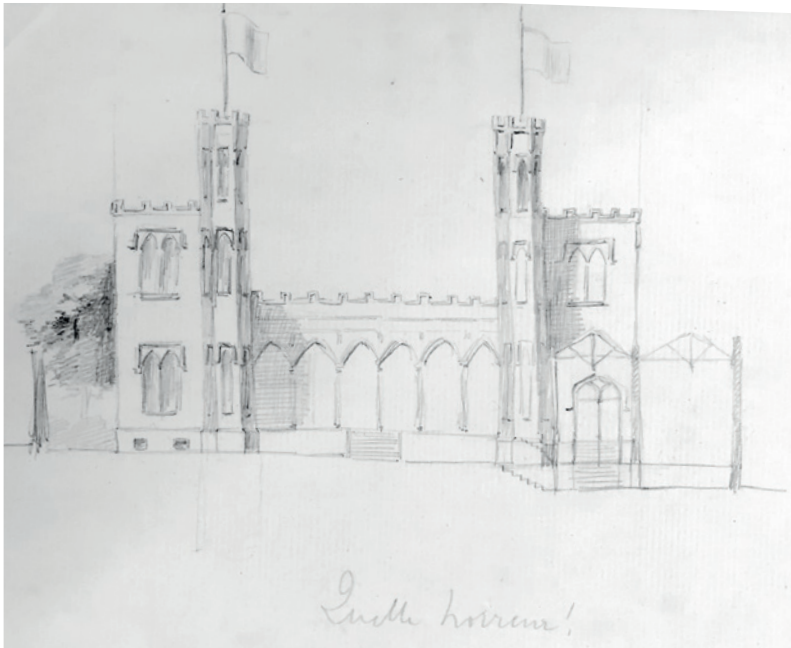
Despite Sibbern’s new chapel, religious activity at the Swedish-Norwegian legation was soon on the wane, and the position of legation priest became vacant – its last incumbent, Johan Linus Aspling, died in 1879 and was interred at Feriköy Protestant cemetery. The chaplain position was removed from the state budget five years later, and the chapel was instead used by a Greek Protestant congregation for a near century, until the 1960s.



*Hymn book of the Swedish parish in Constantinople.
Consulate General of Sweden, Istanbul.*

Björnstjerna's suggestion of renting out shops along the Grande Rue would be realised some years later. After almost half a century of living ruins, it seemed that the wheels were at long last in motion for a new, grand legation palace. Björnstjerna's endeavours may have contributed to the decision to proceed with planning a new building. He asked the French architect Marie-Auguste-Antoine Bourgeois, building inspector of the Tuileries and architect of the *Musée de l'Orangerie* in Paris (1848–1852), to come up with a proposal for a new minister residence and a row of shops. Bourgeois worked in Constantinople on imperial commission, and was responsible for designing the Ottoman Ministry of War, today Istanbul University (in 1864–1866).

Yet Björnstjerna was rather disappointed in the classicising results, and accordingly rejected several of Bourgeois' suggestions, some of which were stylistically similar to the Tophane pavilion, designed in 1852 by William James Smith, who also designed the new British embassy building, Pera House, the present consulate general, inaugurated in early 1856 with a grand ball that marked the end of the Crimean War.



Marie-Auguste-Antoine Bourgeois (or perhaps Oscar Magnus Björnstjerna?), proposal for a new minister house, 1862, with twin towers (and dito flagpoles, for the Swedish and Norwegian flags), with an anonymous addition: "Quelle horreur!" (a stylistic precursor to Bourgeois' gateway of what is now Istanbul University). Attachment to dispatch (Oscar Magnus Björnstjerna).

Riksarkivet, Beskickningsarkiv Konstantinopel, F1B:1.

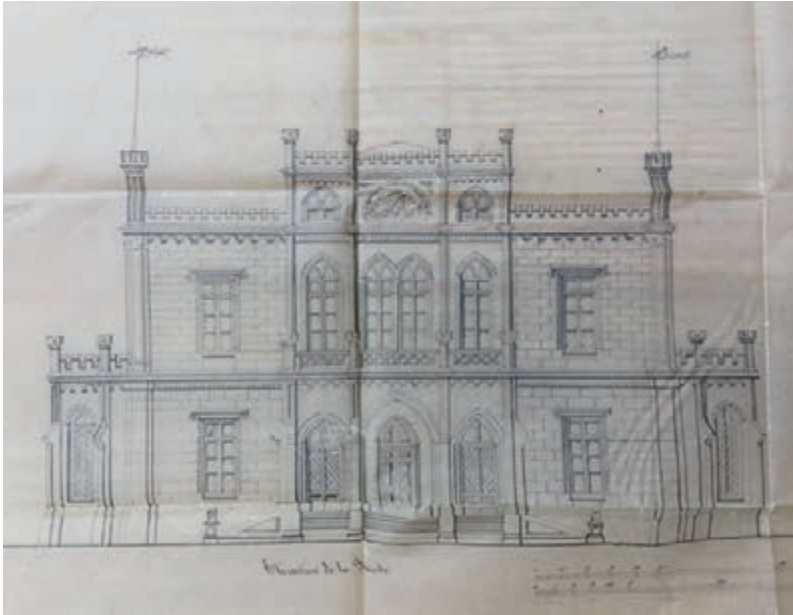
A native of Stockholm, Björnstjerna did not dig too deep for architectural references. His compatriot architect and artist Fredrik Wilhelm Scholander, for example, might be able to “produce more attractive and suitable [palace] plans in Sweden”. At the time, Scholander’s neo-renaissance *Teknologiska institutet* (later *Kungliga Tekniska högskolan* – the building is now known as *Gamla Tekniska Högskolan*) was being built on Drottninggatan in central Stockholm, an influential paragon for subsequent nineteenth century institution buildings in Sweden.

In December 1862, Björnstjerna submitted plans by Bourgeois for a new legation palace in Constantinople to Foreign Minister Ludvig Manderström, whilst asserting that “the steep fluctuations in monetary value” complicated accurate calculations. Björnstjerna was probably however more or less alone in considering a Swedish (or Norwegian) architect as a possible candidate. In practice, the only viable solution was to engage architects, engineers and workers locally. Björnstjerna had hard-set schemes regarding representative and other functions of the new house, with the upper floor as state apartments of sorts, “due to the unusually fine view that could be expected thence”, boasting a “dance hall with an inlaid parquet floor” and an “attractive white marble staircase lit from above”. Combined, this would form a “grand totality”.

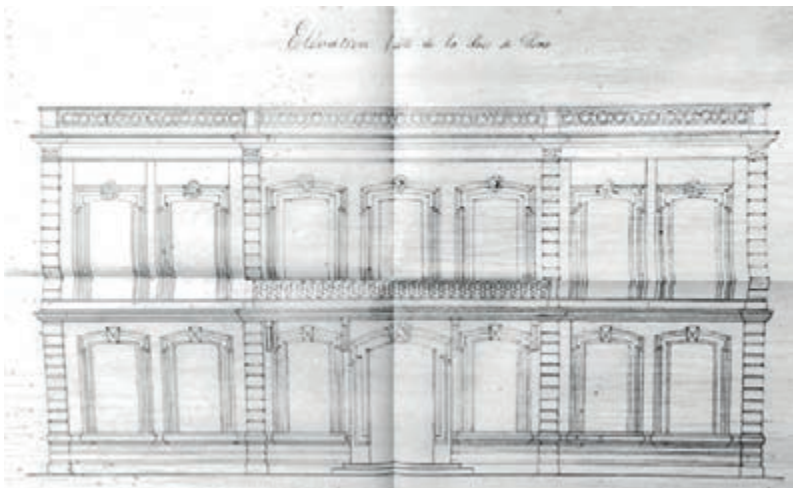
The sea view was assuredly the unique selling point of the Swedish-Norwegian property. It was put to full representational use in Bourgeois’ and Björnstjerna’s sketches, such as in balconies running along the entirety of the façade. The overall *raison d’être* of a new palace building was indeed to fittingly frame the minister’s representational duties, which for Björnstjerna included the placement of the building in relation to the gateway from the Grande Rue: it “should be axial in relation to the palace in order to be visible from the street”.

Oscar Magnus Björnstjerna also received proposals from other architects, for example one in “geatish” (gothic) style, and submitted his own drawing suggestions in addition. He repeatedly referred to the nearby *Palais de Hollande*, designed by Gaspard Fossati and erected about a decade earlier, as a model, discussing its pros and cons; he for example considered the Dutch palace staircase and banquet rooms “too cramped and too humble” (1863 plans and drawings of the Palais de Hollande are preserved in the Swedish national archives).

Björnstjerna continued to submit suggestions, for example to Foreign Minister Manderström in August 1863, and was to follow the development of the matter also from a distance, for example in correspondence with his successor Selim Ehrenhoff in 1870. Before leaving Constantinople, Björnstjerna prepared a government bill (in 1863) justifying the continued upkeep of the legation property in its valuable prime location.



Proposal for a new minister house in "geatish" (gothic) style, 1862 (possibly made by the Spanish architect C. Ortega?), Attachment to dispatch (Oscar Magnus Björnstjerna). Riksarkivet, Björnstjernska familjearkivet. O.M.F. Björnstjernas arkiv, E6911.



Marie-Auguste-Antoine Bourgeois (?), proposal for a new minister house: main façade, 1862. Riksarkivet, Björnstjernska familjearkivet. O.M.F. Björnstjernas arkiv, E6911.

The first hotel in Constantinople in a modern, Western sense was the *Hotel d'Angleterre*. It was opened in 1841, by James Missirie, who had been granted a charter by the sultan to establish a company for the first hotels in Constantinople. The *Angleterre* was followed by the Byzantium hotel or *Hôtel de Byzance* on the Grande Rue, and the Pera hotel in 1849, the *Hôtel de France* in 1851, and other European standard hotels from the 1850s onwards.

The renowned Pera Palace Hotel, designed by the architect Alexandre Vallaury – set up and owned by the *Wagon-Lits* company as part of a chain of luxury “palace” hotels – dates to 1892, as does the nearby *Grand Hôtel de Londres* (*Büyük Londra*). Unlike many other historical hotel establishments, such as the *Angleterre*, the Bristol Hotel (the seat of the present Pera Museum) and the *Tokatlyan* hotels, both Pera Palace and the *Londres* remain in operation today.

The Hotel d'Angleterre was located on Rue Tépé-Bachi (or “Tepebaşı”, the current Meşrutiyet Caddesi), close to the British legation, the present consulate general. In the mid-1860s, the hotel faced competition from the *Hotel Missirie*, named after its proprietor James Missirie, who also managed the *Angleterre*. Missirie's eponymous hotel – which might confusingly also have been called the *Angleterre* – was located a stone's throw down the Grande Rue from the Palais de Suède; the property in between notably belonged to the Testa family.



The Hôtel d'Angleterre, on Rue Tépé-Bachi, undated (c. 1860?). SALT Research, Istanbul.

In 1864, James Missirie approached Minister Björnstjerna, who was about to leave Constantinople to attend to the legation in Copenhagen, with an offer for the property of the Palais de Suède (written on Hotel d'Angleterre stationery). Representing a hotel syndicate in London, the Ottoman Hotel

Company, also referred to as the Pera Grand Hotel Company, Missirie saw much potential in the property and its storied view. The idea was simple: to erect the grandest hotel in Constantinople with the finest view of all on the Swedish-Norwegian property at the top of the Grande Rue.

A smaller plot of land was offered in return – possibly a direct swap with the Hotel d'Angleterre property – together with a substantial sum of money (the figure of 65 000 pounds was mentioned at first, as was 55 000 and 60 000 Turkish lira). The offer by and large well received, it was mediated by the Norwegian chargé d'affaires Oluf Stenersen (later minister in Constantinople and in Brussels, and envoy to the United States), with the assistance of the dragoman George (Georges?) Timoni – from an established dragoman family.

In the summer of 1865, Missirie was keen to receive a definite reply: “I shall feel very much obliged by your telegraphing to Stockholm for an answer to enable me to communicate without further delay to London.” Oluf Stenersen communicated with Foreign Minister Manderström, and was indeed authorised in a telegram to carry out the property exchange. The Missirie correspondence continued until the spring of 1866. Despite Swedish concessions in the contract negotiations, the deal was in the end not settled as Missirie and the hotel company failed to gain sufficient interest from investors. Missirie's hotel on the Grande Rue was eventually renamed the *Khedivial Palace Hotel*. This was later demolished and replaced by the present *Hüdivyal Palas* building, an adaptation of the earlier name.

Offers for the Swedish-Norwegian property were also made by the *Compagnie de l'Hôtel Impérial Ottoman* and The Constantinople and Alexandria Hotels Company. Yet the idea of a large-scale “grand” hotel in Constantinople turned out to be premature. The time might have been ripe for such a move a decade or two later, after the introduction of the railway in the Ottoman Empire in the 1870s: the reformist Sultan Abdulaziz was so keen on the novelty that he reportedly declared to be “willing to run the rails through my body if it means a railway will be constructed in my domain”, above all after the introduction of the Orient Express in 1883 (which initially ran via Varna and the Black Sea). Sirkeci station, the central station in Constantinople (Stamboul), opened in 1890. Sections of the Byzantine sea walls and some of the tiered gardens of the imperial Topkapı Palace were sacrificed in order to construct railway tracks around the seraglio.

The Palais de Suède property remained in high demand. In 1866, the new Swedish-Norwegian Envoy Carl Fredrik Palmstierna encountered another speculator who offered a house in Pera, a seaside villa – a summer house in the then village of Büyükdere on the Bosphorus – and a difference of 12 000 pounds sterling in obligations. Büyükdere, or “big vale”, was described in a Swedish 1870s travel account as “the giant among the mountains of the

[Bosphorus] strait" – in the Sariyer district in the northern metropolitan Istanbul of today – where the European envoys used to move during the hot, plague-ridden summer months, surrounded by their respective architectural, horticultural and decorative customs, accompanied by Pera's high society.

Some of the staff at the legation admittedly coveted such a summer escape location. It was however considered on the extravagant side and was not included in the negotiations that followed, the results of which presented terms that were deemed unacceptable by the authorities in Stockholm, despite reports from Carl Fredrik Palmstierna on the cold, damp and stench of the old kiosk. The old legation quarters would have to suffice for a few years yet (although references have been made to a possible post-1870 summer house of the legation in Büyükdere).

A more permanent and viable long-term solution for the legation premises was now only a matter of time. The demolition of the kiosk and a possible land purchase (likely along the Grande Rue) was briefly discussed in early 1869. Instead, the suggestion that Björnstjerna had made a few years earlier of erecting a series of shops along the street in order to help fund a new palace building was acted on the same year, and eight such shops were erected.

Oluf Stenersen, Palmstierna's successor, was appointed guardian of an estate that offered to lend funds for the erection of a new minister house over fifteen years at an interest rate of six percent, presumably more appealing than the equivalent bank loan rates. The instalments were to be covered by the shop rents which could later be used to offset repair costs and other expenses. Stenersen had arranged for plans for a new minister house and the row of shops along the street to be drawn up by the now relatively obscure Austro-Hungarian (Italian) architect Domenico Pulgher, born in Muggia – on the present Italian border with Slovenia, close to Trieste – and educated in Venice. Pulgher spent several years in Constantinople, and designed various buildings, including churches (he would later publish a volume on ancient Byzantine churches in the city).



*Oluf Stenersen, undated.
Photograph, Oslo Museum.*

Domenico Pulgher would have been well-versed in Italian-inspired Austrian neoclassicism, in Vienna and elsewhere, perhaps particularly in Triestine neoclassical palaces erected before, during and after the Napoleonic era – such as the rusticated *Palazzo Pitteri* (1780) and *Casa Fontana/Pitteri* (1808), the *Opera Teatro Lirico Giuseppe Verdi* (1801), the more restrained *Palazzo Eisner Civrani* (1804) and *Palazzo Costanzi* (c. 1817), *Palazzo Stratti* (1839), the *Hotel Metternich* (*Hotel de la Ville*, c. 1840) and *Palazzo del Tergesteo* (1842), with its distinctive rusticated ground floor and otherwise overall restrained generic neoclassical façade.

Pulgher was well acquainted with the architectural vocabulary of the existing foreign legation buildings in Pera, and may have drawn some inspiration from, for example, the aforementioned British “Pera House”. He agreed to the task of conceiving and constructing a new Swedish-Norwegian minister residence for a fee of 10 000 Turkish lira, in collaboration with the Baltazzi enterprise. Contracts were signed in the autumn of 1869, including with the estate managed by Stenersen. One of the six drawings attached to the contract with the architect has been preserved: Pulgher’s elevation plan of the shopfront along the Grande Rue.

On 18 November 1869, Pulgher’s plan was co-signed by Selim Ehrenhoff, hitherto Swedish-Norwegian consul general in Tangiers, who was appointed resident minister in Constantinople the same year. Ehrenhoff became minister plenipotentiary a decade later, and would hold the position until 1887. Upon his arrival in Constantinople in the summer of 1869, Ehrenhoff reported to Foreign Minister Carl Wachtmeister that he had begun making the diplomatic rounds, meeting with his French, British, Spanish and Italian colleagues in Therapiá (Tarabya) and continuing to Büyükdere, as “the diplomatic corps is dispersed along the shores of the Bosphorus”.

In the same report, Ehrenhoff brought a “disagreeable incident” to the government’s attention, soon after his arrival at the legation. The incident served to illustrate the “deplorable state” of the kiosk building, which by then was deemed beyond repair, with “serious hazards”: the floor had given in on a chamber maid, who suddenly found half a leg suspended in midair. Although this was as far as this accident went, it was enough to justify a new residence, as Ehrenhoff was about to receive his diplomat colleagues: “all comments would in effect be rendered superfluous if any of these *Messieurs* might risk an accident in our *hôtel*.” Perhaps needless to say, such a scandal would likely discredit the good name of the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway.

The new construction plans included demolishing the old kiosk. Upon doing so, the legation was compelled to comply with the widening of the Grande Rue and to cede a small part of the property. Yet the long-standing competitive prestige with Russia remained in play, and Ehrenhoff suggested

that as much property as was asked by the Russian consulate chancellery on the other side of the street should be yielded – no more, no less: an equal distribution – and that the anticipated financial compensation might defray the purchase of an additional small plot of land for direct access to the Dragoman House. Russia accepted such an alignment after drawn-out negotiations, led by Oscar Magnus Björnstjerna, by that time minister in Saint Petersburg, although discussions of indemnity compensation for “the strip land of land ceded on the *Rue de Péra*” were reiterated in 1871.

During the construction of the new palace building and the demolition of the kiosk, Ehrenhoff and his family had to make do with a “barrack” facing the Grande Rue: a temporary all-time low for the Swedish representation in Constantinople. Domenico Pulgher was also charged with repairing the “consular building” (the Dragoman House) – which was included in the commission (although no corresponding drawings by Pulgher have been preserved) – and the rebuilding of the washing and drying facilities. At long last, the makeover of the property was underway: a new palace was in the making.

The new Palais de Suède was in place a year after Pulgher had signed the contract. Ehrenhoff appears to have moved in with his family at the end of October or November 1870, although the building work were not completed until March 1871, with wallpapering completed in the summer. Pulgher's palace – to a large extent realised through the efforts of Stenersen and Ehrenhoff – had three floors on both sides of the building: the relatively steep slope on the Bosphorus side was compensated by a tall basement floor. The original disposition of the chambers is not entirely clear: there was a kitchen and other utility rooms in the basement; the ground floor seems to have housed offices and living quarters for the legation secretaries. The first floor was intended for representative functions and the minister's accommodation, while the top floor was used for servant's quarters and, it seems, by the minister's children.

Due to the incline of the property, the building had to be placed more or less in the same place as its eighteenth-century predecessor, which in this way left an indirect mark on the new palace, positioned about seven metres closer to the street. The relatively narrow plot of land dictated the terms for any large-scale building, which had been the case also for the first palace. Pulgher produced a square master plan centred on an atrium hallway on the ground floor, with some rooms being somewhat stretched out as a result. He may well have drawn inspiration from Turkish notions of a centrally placed common room or “encampment”, encompassed by sofas (*divans*) and openings to adjacent humbler chambers. In order to maximise daylight, communication between the rooms on the first floor was placed

in the middle of the building, in a cross shape around an octagonal central hallway, decorated with pilasters with Corinthian capitals.

The façades are in a discreet generic Italianate renaissance style, with a rusticated grey ground floor in artificial stone, and lion yellow plastered brick walls, modestly decorated mouldings and lightly rusticated quoins. A curious detail is the arched double-window decoration on the first floor of the south (wall) side of the building.

As pointed out by both Bengt Johansson and Sture Theolin, the double staircase, the three-storey façade, the corner *avant-corps*, the accentuated frieze and the fountain (added about fifty years later) on the Bosphorus side of the building provide a faint, minute echo of grand Italian renaissance installations such as the imposing and influential *Villa d'Este* in Tivoli, near Rome. This rear façade is crowned by a version of the national coat of arms (the great, or larger version, used by the sovereign). Horizontal visual effects in the beadings and corniches (ledges) dominate the building. The Palais de Suède was one of the most stylistically restrained legation buildings in Pera. It remains a compactly dignified building with little overstatement; it asserts itself well.



Domenico Pulgher, garden façade (facing the Bosphorus) and bazaar (facing the Grande Rue) of the new Palais de Suède. National Property Board of Sweden.

Unlike the first palace building, and contrary to the suggestions made by the architect Bourgeois and others a few years earlier, the main representational areas with the grand salon (the occasionally named “ballroom”) on the first floor – the *piano nobile* or *bel étage* – face the formal upper garden on the Grande Rue side, and were consequently not placed on the side of the building facing the Bosphorus and the storied view. The vista had admittedly been progressively compromised in recent decades by a rising number of buildings that encroached on it. Yet one of the main reasons for Pulgher's choice in this regard was to make the most of the late afternoon and evening light on the Grande Rue side, when the reception spaces would be expected to be put to the most use. The fact that the building is a fair distance from the street certainly adds to both its charm and modest grandeur.

The relatively restrained yet elegant grand salon has a stuccoed ceiling with decorative grey-gold leaf plasterwork, an elegant ornate mixed tropical wood parquet flooring, and two marble fireplaces crowned with period gilded mirrors. A grand chandelier (its crystal prisms have since gone missing), wall sconces for electric and candle lights, long sofas (*divans*) and a grand piano completed the interior decoration of the grandest room in the palace, which originally included also a sizeable chest of drawers. The sofas, mirrors, chandelier, wall sconces and the original curtain holders still remain. The grand salon features a lavish (Persian) carpet and is eye-catchingly decorated with portraits of King Oskar (Oscar) II (by Edvard Perséus, c. 1880) and his son and successor Gustaf V (by Emil Österman, 1925–1926).

A former passage to a sea view balcony was later enlarged and transformed into the so-called “Löwenhielm salon”, named after reproductions of several watercolours by the former artist-minister. It features a discreetly stuccoed ceiling, a period crystal chandelier, a “Gustavian” (c. 1800) sofa with matching chairs, a yellow carpet and a mahogany table. The more modest salon to the right of the grand salon now features a marble fireplace, a crystal chandelier and modern furniture, renamed the “new salon”. It previously accommodated the portrait of Oskar II, now in the grand salon, which used to lend its name to the room.

The library, on the Bosphorus side, next to the present kitchen area, features a fireplace with rather lavish ornamentation, a sizeable desk, a modern crystal chandelier, period chairs by Carl Malmsten and armchairs by the furniture designer Arne Norell (some with upholstery creations by the designer and architect Josef Frank of *Svenskt Tenn*), facsimiles of drawings of the first Palais de Suède, and Sultan Mahmud I's ratification of the 1739 peace, unity and friendship alliance between Turkey and Sweden.

The dining room, to the left of the grand salon, features a marble fireplace embellished with Delftware ceramic tiles, a period mirror and a *Karl Andersson & Söner* dining room table. The room has previously featured a



Domenico Pulgher, floor plans of the new Palais de Suède. National Property Board of Sweden.

set of chairs by the interior and furniture designer Carl Malmsten, an ardent adherent of “Swedish Grace” – art deco “Nordic Classicism” (c. 1910–1930), perhaps best encapsulated in the living room at Ulriksdal Palace outside Stockholm, decorated in 1924 – and a *Kasthall* carpet. The dining room, its counterpart room on the other side of the grand salon and the Löwenhielm salon all feature restrained stuccoed ceilings.

The hallway in between – in the tradition of a Turkish sofa, with doors in all directions – was originally decorated in lavish Ottoman style, with heavy purple curtains, carpets and a long sofa with cushions. Its present decoration is considerably lighter, with period furniture: two late nineteenth-century tables take pride of place, surrounded by matching pairs of armchairs, chandeliers, gilded mirrors and crystal light sconces. The famed Bosphorus view can still be accessed to some degree on the second floor, from the private apartment of the consul general.

The staircase leading from the chancery offices to the *piano nobile* is decorated with five eighteenth-century plaster medallions by the sculptor and painter Johan Tobias Sergel, portraits of Swedish men and women of art and culture, from King Gustav III to the poet Anna Maria Lenngren. To this is added a nineteenth-century medallion by the sculptor and painter Carl Gustaf Qvarnström. The staircase is guarded by two sculpted lions on the landing.

The new Palais de Suède was more or less synchronous with the establishment of the *Galatasaray Lycée*, in 1868 (preceded by the Galata Palace Imperial School, founded in 1481), described as “a window to the west”. Its grand gates and fence halfway down İstiklal Caddesi provide a visual connection with the present appearance of the Swedish property.

Domenico Pulgher may or may not have been aware of Bourgeois’ earlier suggestions for a row of shops along the Grande Rue. His own proposal combined Medieval-esque shopfronts with a classicising low, relatively restrained gate. Minister Ehrenhoff appears to have intervened, however, wanting to assert the impression of the legation in relation to the row of shops in a grander entrance gate, with sketches for various suggestions and a more Teutonic creation as a result. Ehrenhoff also seems to have requested sturdy doors for the ground floor of the palace, for increased winter comfort.

In a modern survey of local specimens of architectural significance, the design of the gateway is connected with Ehrenhoff’s interventions, and is referred to as “so at odds with Pulgher’s other work”. The gate, which remains today, was crowned with the royal coat of arms in a medallion with the Bernadotte family crest of the reigning king of Sweden-Norway, Karl (Charles) XV. The king was a champion of political “Scandinavism” and historical Romanticism, for example engaging the above-mentioned Fredrik Wilhelm

Scholander to decorate the interior of Ulriksdal Palace with a “knight’s hall” and other historical revival features.

The royal reference was made explicit on the inside of the gateway, on a stylised shield with the king’s cypher and the year of the erection of the gate and the new main building: “C XV 1870”. Today the gateway features two coats of arms: the great (used by the sovereign) and the lesser (used by the government).

After nearly a year of construction work, the Ehrenhoff family moved into the palace in November 1870 at the latest, and “inaugurated the new lodging with a splendid ball the following winter season, which at the time allegedly circulated in the newspapers of Europe”, according to an article about the new building in *Ny Illustrerad Tidning* a few years later. A similar phrase appeared in the newspaper *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* (in 1878); few other traces remain of this inaugural event.



Deposit box: “Dépôt de la légation de S.M. le Roi de Suède et Norvège à Constantinople”, pre-1905, Consulate General of Sweden, Istanbul. The box contains items from the legation chapel (a communion chalice, a portable chalice (for personal visits?), altar cloths, hymn books and orders for mass (in Swedish and in Norwegian), from the mid-nineteenth century until 1963.

Given the connection with the chapel, the box and its contents probably remained at the Palais de Suède when the legation moved to Ankara in the early 1930s. The archive of the consulate general contains a list of “the old devotional manuals and other church service accessories” that have been preserved there.



L'ORIENT ILLUSTRÉ

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BIOGRAPHIE.
Son Excellence.
SELIM D'EHRENHOFF,
Ministre Resident
de
SUEDE ET NORVÈGE
auprès de la Sublime Porte.

La Suède, ce noble pays
 qui a jadis étonné le monde
 par ses exploits, est en
 1874 l'une des nations où
 la civilisation a fait les
 plus grands progrès.
 Ce pays, situé par leur
 Villandre, voit bientôt
 monter sur le trône des
 Soudois (Suédois) et des
 gothas, Eric IX le Saint ou
 plutôt le législateur; tra-
 versant le moyen âge au
 milieu des péripéties de
 l'histoire sans nombrer pour
 arriver à la dynastie de
 Wasa en passant par les
 Règnes des Stenon Sture,
 la Suède touche à l'espérance
 de sa gloire comme à
 sa complète indépendance
 d'abord sous Charles XII
 et enfin sous Gustave A-
 delphus.
 En 1858, fondant par ac-
 ception une nouvelle dy-
 nastie nationale, la Suède
 donne la couronne à Char-



les-Jean Bernadotte qui
 prend le titre de Charles
 XIV et gouverne sagement
 jusqu'à sa mort (1844). Son
 fils Oscar I^{er} marche sur
 les traces de son Auguste
 Père et contribue puis-
 samment au développe-
 ment du progrès pendant
 un Règne de 15 ans (1844-59).
 Le fils aîné d'Oscar I^{er},
 Charles XV lui succède
 ment l'un des Princes les
 plus dévoués de l'Europe
 et son nom, sera toujours
 cher aux Suédois, son
 frère occupe aujourd'hui
 le trône, de Suède et de
 Norvège.
 Après s'être fait aimer
 et apprécier de la Nation,
 comme Prince Royal, il a
 montré dès la première
 année de son Règne qu'il
 était digne de s'accroître sur
 le trône de ses illustres
 prédécesseurs.
 L'objectif des souve-
 rains Suédois est depuis
 un demi-siècle la réali-
 sation et l'application de
 toutes les conquêtes de la
 civilisation.
 Le gouvernement à la
 fois sage et modéré de la
 dynastie régnante a procu-
 ré au pays saillante années
 de paix. La conclusion de
 traités d'amitié et de com-
 merce avantageux avec
 les pays étrangers, l'ex-

Son Excellence M. SELIM D'EHRENHOFF, Ministre plénipotentiaire de Suède et Norvège auprès de la Porte Ottomane.

موندو لوزو مئرى م دروف حطرتوى

Selim Ehrenhoff, from L'Orient Illustré, 25 April 1874. SALT Research.



Robert Haglund, "The Swedish Minister Palace in Constantinople", drawing from a photograph, on the front page of *Ny Illustrerad Tidning*, 13 April 1878 (with a Stockholm skyline in the masthead). Uppsala universitetsbibliotek.

“Proud Palace”. The New Palais de Suède

In June 1870, Domenico Pulgher’s new Palais de Suède emerged more or less unscathed from yet another disastrous fire that destroyed roughly half the neighbourhood – the last of the vast Pera fires. So vast, in fact, that a general abandonment of the Grande Rue was briefly considered. After negotiations with The Imperial Insurance Company during the autumn, the new palace, along with the Dragoman House and, presumably, the row of shops, the chapel and remaining legation edifices – “the buildings in Pera that belong to the Crown” – were insured by the end of the year, to the tune of five thousand pounds sterling.

During the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871), Selim Ehrenhoff corresponded with Foreign Minister Carl Wachtmeister about the ongoing conference that resulted in the Treaty of London (March 1871), signed by Turkey, Russia, Prussia, France, Austria-Hungary, Great Britain and Italy, in which clauses that regulated vessels of war in the Black Sea and Ottoman control of the Dardanelles Strait were updated.

Carl Wachtmeister authorised the purchase of furniture and interior decoration for “the two main salons” of the Palais de Suède in the autumn of 1871. The acclaimed inaugural ball, if it in fact occurred, likely took place that winter. In May 1872, Count Adolf Barnekow arrived in Constantinople as acting consulate secretary, succeeding the Norwegian Berndt Anker Bødtker, who had become consul general in Alexandria. Barnekow (who left Constantinople for England in 1874) installed himself in the new Palais de Suède, in “the most beautifully situated city in Europe”, in “large rooms” described as “decorated in a certain oriental style”.

Design for a Swedish-Norwegian diplomatic rosette, approved by King Karl XV, 1870. Riksarkivet, Beskickningsarkiv Konstantinopel, E1A:248.



A Swedish travel account following a visit in Constantinople in 1872 commented on the lack of a plan or map of the city and stressed the necessity of a physical guide (often a Greek, despite condescending generalising remarks regarding national characteristics), “as indispensable here as [they would be] superfluous in Germany or Italy”. In another travel account from the following year, Constantinople, the “pearl of the Orient”, was compared to “only two cities”: Naples and Stockholm.



Domenico Pulgher, Avrupa Pasajı, Istanbul. Photograph: Olof Heilo.

In 1874, Domenico Pulgher proceeded to create the *Avrupa Pasajı* (or *Passage d'Europe*), a neoclassical shopping arcade close to the Galatasaray High School and the British legation, erected in the wake of the 1870 Pera fire. The passage features Corinthian pilasters and engaged columns, a glass roof, chandeliers, and sculptures of personifications of different crafts. The following year, the iconic *Tünel* funicular railway was inaugurated, a stone's throw from the Palais de Suède, as the second-oldest subterranean railway in the world, connecting Pera with Karaköy and the Galata Bridge below.

In January 1875, the Ehrenhoffs hosted a “particularly splendid ball” in the Palais de Suède to mark the birthday of King Oskar II. The newly redecorated “magnificent string of rooms” on the first floor were thus presented to the assembled diplomatic corps and “the cream of society in Pera”. The dance continued until half past one at night, followed by “a sumptuous supper” and continued dancing “until almost four o'clock”. The evening, “one of the most radiant of the season”, ended with a performance of the royal anthem (today's *Kungssången*).

Another ball – no less splendid, reported in *The Levant Herald*, and cited in Swedish press as “Christmas party in Constantinople” – was arranged in the Palais de Suède at Christmas 1876 for the assembled congregation of diplomats and “a selected ‘bouquet’ of fair young ladies”. The officers of the Swedish steam corvette (warship) *Balder* “represented the Swedish navy with dignity”, and took part in the dancing “with ‘Nordic fervour’”. Elisabeth (Bessie) Ehrenhoff was commended for doing the honours (*les honneurs*) as



*The Swedish steam corvette HMS Balder outside Naples, mid-1870s (unknown artist).
Sjöhistoriska museet, OB 445.*

hostess. Notably, the ball was attended by the Turkish-Egyptian Princess Nazlı Fazıl (Nazlı Hanım), who observed the dancing “from a chamber where she was concealed behind a curtain, the folds of which jealously disguised her from the world.” The Swedish newspaper account emphasises that this was the



first occasion for “a daughter of the harem” to “leave its protected depths to attend a European party.” The princess may have been inspired by the festivities at the Swedish palace: in the 1880s, she contributed to reviving the tradition of female literary *salons* in the Middle East at her palace in Cairo. She reportedly had “a quick wit and loved photographs, champagne, cigarettes and her pianola [a self-playing piano]”.

*Princess Nazlı Fazıl, 1906 (photograph: Gabriel Lekegian, Cairo).
Travelers in the Middle East Archive (TIMEA), Rice University.*

A commission was created in 1876 in order to reorganise Swedish-Norwegian diplomatic and consular service, moving away from the old order of personal wealth, titles and peerages as unofficial requirements for diplomatic service. Despite having previously been consul general, Selim Ehrenhoff essentially took no part in consular affairs, which would annoy his secretary. The following year, 1877, a permanent Ottoman legation was established in Stockholm.

In 1878, Domenico Pulgher published a work on ancient Byzantine churches in Constantinople, and subsequently left the city, not to return, instead going back to Habsburg Trieste. In a survey of the Ottoman Empire translated into Swedish the same year, the “city” of Pera was described as Italianate rather than “oriental”, with “European life”, crowned by “the proud palaces of the European envoys”, hotels “and other considerable buildings, from which one has a magnificent view of Constantinople and the Bosphorus.”

In 1881, as had been the case a decade earlier, the Swedish legation served as “administrator” of the Protestant cemetery at Feriköy. The role rotated among the countries involved, this time it was administered by Legation Secretary Oscar Gustaf von Heidenstam (his predecessor Anker Böttker had been charged with the task in 1871). The new palace building of the legation was at the same time already beginning to show signs of certain construction faults: the ground floor suffered from damp from the garden, for example, which resulted in a replacement of its wooden floor beams with iron substitutes.

The Dragoman House had remained largely unoccupied from 1879 after the demise of the last legation priest, Johan Linus Aspling. A section plan from 1883 indicates that the building retained its overall layout from Georg Christian Sibbern’s interventions 25 years earlier. The legation chaplaincy was abolished around this time, and the continued use of the building was unclear, with only one room being used as an office by the dragoman George Timoni. Ehrenhoff decided to let a legation employee, the Norwegian harbour master Nicolaysen, reside in the house, thereby saving the expense of his rent benefit (the harbour master position would be considered superfluous only a few years later).

One of Ehrenhoff’s two daughters, Aimée or Ida, appears to have received a Swedish decoration (*Amaranterorden*) in 1883. The following year, Ehrenhoff commissioned the architect Bernardo Bottarlini to draft suggestions for repairs to the Palais de Suède. Bottarlini was simultaneously involved in constructing the building for the *Società Operaia Italiana di Mutuo Soccorso*, located on a side street further up the Grande Rue: the “Casa Garibaldi”, named after the illustrious revolutionary and politician who lived in Constantinople between 1828 and 1831.

Selim Ehrenhoff requested an overhaul of the palace building. The suggested maintenance work was however considered exorbitant, and only minor interventions were granted. Legation Secretary Oscar von Heidenstam had in fact been asked to comment on Ehrenhoff's repair requests behind the minister's back. At the same time, in 1885, the Swedish state was prepared to assume the administration of the shops – the *bazaar* – after the loan installments for the building had been settled, fifteen years after the palace was built. By doing so, it sought to limit misappropriation and "abuse" in the administration of the legation buildings which "seems to be more frequent in the Orient than elsewhere".

A tranquil scene from the Palais de Suède, drawn by the officer, painter and writer Fritz von Dardel in 1884 featured the Ehrenhoff family, with the minister reading a recent issue of the world's oldest newspaper, *Post- och Inrikes Tidningar*, on the (slightly aggrandised) ground floor terrace, with attendants in the background. The image was included as an illustration to the published travel diary of Count (later Minister of Finance) Hans Hansson Wachtmeister. He recounted a lunch and an excursion to the Bosphorus with the Ehrenhoffs. The Palais de Suède was described as "elegant and comfortable", with the reputation of being one of the most hospitable and agreeable houses in Pera", indeed "the most welcoming of all the European embassy buildings". According to Wachtmeister, the new *Palais* was more appealing than its predecessor: it was "wholly embedded in attractive gardens with large leafy trees", over which "one has the most splendid view over the Bosphorus and the Seraglio promontory".



Fritz von Dardel, *View from the terrace of the Palais de Suède* ("Från Kungl. Svensk-Norska Legationens palats"), from Hans Wachtmeister, *Medelhafsskizzer. Dagboksanteckningar under en resa i norra Afrika, Grekland och Turkiet* år 1884. *Reproduction*: Kungliga biblioteket.

In *Life on the Bosphorus*, the author William James Joseph Spry published impressions of the city in the 1880s. In a subheading to a chapter, he outlines what “Society doings” entailed: “Tea and tennis–Balls–Dances–At Homes–Garden Parties at the Embassies–A Life of Pleasure”.

The photographer Guillaume (Per Wilhelm) Berggren, originally from Stockholm, was active as a photographer in Constantinople for a period of approximately fifty years, from 1866 onwards – the fact that he styled his (abbreviated) first name in French (Wilhelm, Guillaume) is indicative of the prominence of the language in Constantinople in general and Pera (*Péra*) in particular. His photography studio by the Grande Rue was a focal point for occasional Nordic “oriental” travellers and for the local Swedish community.



*Guillaume Berggren, self-portrait.
Photograph, Moderna Museet, Stockholm,
FM 1984 003 001.*

In 1885, Berggren documented the exterior and interior of the Palais de Suède on account of a visit of the highest order that spring, when King Oskar II and Queen Sofia of Sweden-Norway visited Constantinople. They did so in order to assist their son, Prince Carl (Charles), who had fallen ill with typhoid fever while on a “Grand Tour” of sorts, accompanied by his younger brother (and painter) Eugen. Carl travelled from India, and had met with his brother in Egypt. From there they proceeded to Constantinople via Palestine and Syria (at the same time as the Danish Prince Valdemar also visited Syria and Constantinople). Prior to the arrival of the two Swedish-Norwegian princely brothers in the Ottoman capital, a letter from King Oskar was sent to Selim Ehrenhoff for safekeeping, later to be delivered by Prince Carl to Sultan Abdul Hamid II together with the (Norwegian) Grand Cross of St Olav.

Attempts to travel incognito fell through, however: official visits to the empire by ruling Christian monarchs were rare indeed, and Sultan Abdul Hamid spared little expense in welcoming the king and queen with an extravagant reception at Dolmabahçe Palace, which had replaced the seraglio, Topkapı Palace, as imperial residence. With the sultan’s permission and in order to be close to their bedridden son, Oskar and Sofia however opted to reside in the Palais de Suède rather than in the official guest house of the Porte. When the prince had recovered, the royal party travelled to the island



The Palais de Suède and the front garden, 1885. ©Kungl. Hovstaterna/The Royal Court, photographer Guillaume Berggren, bildarkiv, OII A358f.



The Palais de Suède from the lower garden, 1885, with the Dragoman House before its added second floor to the right. Note the prominent Swedish-Norwegian flag. ©Kungl. Hovstaterna/The Royal Court, photographer Guillaume Berggren, bildarkiv, OII A358f.



The grand salon in the Palais de Suède, 1885. ©Kungl. Hovstaterna/The Royal Court, photographer Guillaume Berggren, bildarkiv, OII A358f.



Edvard Perséus's portrait of King Oskar II, next to the storied view of the Bosphorus, 1885. ©Kungl. Hovstaterna/The Royal Court, photographer Guillaume Berggren, bildarkiv, OII A358f.

of Prinkipo (Büyükkada) outside the city, the largest of the "Princes' islands" in the sea of Marmara.

Oskar II was suitably impressed with the seraglio. He mentioned Constantinople in his published memoirs, and devoted a full chapter to the city in his published travel memories (*Reseminnen*, 1888). Both King Oskar and Queen Sofia wrote to the sultan after the visit; Selim Ehrenhoff was instructed to deliver the monarch's letter in "an audience with His Imperial Majesty." The king decorated the sultan with the Order of the Seraphim (the Order of His Majesty the King), the highest Swedish distinction, on prominent display in the treasury of the Topkapı Palace, and in return received the *Nişan-i Imtiyaz* (the Order of Distinction or Order of Honour), adorned with diamonds. The king also gave the sultan a metre-high urn manufactured by the Swedish porcelain manufacturer *Rörstrand*, decorated with the national coat of arms as well as his own cypher in one medallion and a portrait of King Karl XII in another. In return he received a lavish saddle, on display at the Royal Mews (Stables) in Stockholm.



King Oskar II, Queen Sofia, Prince Eugen, Selim Ehrenhoff, Abdüllatif Suphi Paşa (Ottoman vizier/minister), Şeker Ahmed Ali Paşa (aide to the sultan), Count Carlo Landberg, Vassilaki Kargopoulo et al. on the terrace of the Palais de Suède, 1885. Photograph: Guillaume Berggren. The photograph exists in two versions, one with a handwritten explanation by Prince Carl: "My parents and brother Eugen with suite and the Swedish minister couple, outside the Swedish minister hotel in Constantinople 1885, while I was laid up there with typhoid fever" (signed "Carl").

©Kungl. Hovstaterna/The Royal Court, bildarkiv, OII Kf 8.

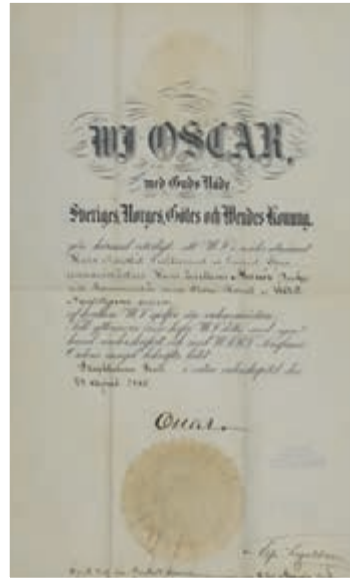
Several individuals also received decorations as a result of the royal visit. The diplomat and Grand Master of Ceremonies, Salih Münir Paşa, later Ottoman ambassador to France, was appointed commander of the Order of the North Star. Ange Marie Duroni, Swedish-Norwegian vice-consul in Varna (in Bulgaria), was made a knight of the Order of Vasa, as was the orientalist Count Carlo Landberg, who accompanied the two Swedish princes on their travels in the “Orient”.

Guillaume Berggren was appointed court photographer, and was awarded the Swedish royal medal *Litteris et Artibus*, awarded for important contributions to culture. This medal was also awarded to Berggren’s colleague, the Ottoman Greek Vassilaki (Basile) Kargopoulo, court photographer to the sultan – Kargopoulo was elevated to this status in 1879, in lieu of the *Abdullah Frères* studio.

Berggren had his photographs of the Palais de Suède mounted in a lavish album given to the royal couple. The album, with the king’s bookplate, is preserved at the Royal Palace in Stockholm. As mentioned above (chapter two), a portrait of Oskar II by the painter Edvard Perséus, keeper of the royal art collection in Stockholm, currently adorns the grand salon of the Palais de Suède.

Oskar II allegedly gave the Greek Protestant congregation in Constantinople permission to make use of Sibbern’s chapel, which had then been idle for more than five years. Services in Greek continued there until at least the 1960s, the longest continuous religious use since the property was purchased in the eighteenth century. The Greek Protestant congregation was, it may be assumed, related to the Greek Evangelical union, established in the early 1880s. It was the Protestant expression of the congregation rather than it being Greek that prompted its use of the legation chapel, which at the same time provided a link to the historical origin of the Protestant property purchase.

The “Orient” certainly left its mark on King Oskar, and stayed with him as a projection surface. His photographic souvenirs from Constantinople were not limited to Berggren’s album of the Palais de Suède, but also included one of the new court photographer’s Constantinople panoramas, a



Certificate for Salih Münir Paşa as commander of the Order of the North Star, signed by King Oskar II, 24 April 1885. Ottoman Archives, Istanbul, HSD. CB.4.75.1.32.



Count Carlo Landberg and his wife, Henriette Gabrielle Friedrike, hosting a party at the Grand Hotel, Stockholm, "for the members of the 8th orientalist congress", 1889 (possibly with a depiction of Crown Prince Gustaf (V), to the right).
Ny Illustrerad Tidning 25, 37, 14 September 1889.

large album from Kargopoulo, with an ornate dedication, and no less than two more from the firm Abdullah Frères with palace and city motifs.

A few years later, in 1889, King Oskar presided over the 8th International Orientalist Congress, held in Stockholm and Christiania (Oslo), and had a room in the Royal Palace in Stockholm decorated in “oriental” fashion, with ceramic tiles on the walls, a stuccoed stalactite ornamental ceiling, oil lamps and richly embellished colourful fabrics, a setting which incidentally likely impressed Oscar’s then seven-year-old grandson, the future King Gustaf (VI) Adolf. The orientalist congress also gave rise to a number of decorations.

The mid-1880s was a peak period for illustrious *belle époque* visits from the north. Possibly inspired by the royal sojourn, the Swedish painter Anders Zorn and his wife Emma (née Lamm) chose to visit Constantinople on their honeymoon in the autumn and winter of 1885–1886. Like Prince Carl and many others before him, Anders Zorn caught typhoid fever, which did not hinder him from painting his well-known “Caique Oarsman”, following a series of sketches from a boat on the Bosphorus. Oskar II had requested a view of the Golden Horn from Zorn, who was known for his mastery of water reflections, which Zorn did not carry out due to his illness – he instead



Anders and Emma Zorn in front of the Palais de Suède, with the later dragoman Fredrik Martin, 1905. The Zorn Collections, Mora, ZFO 1136.

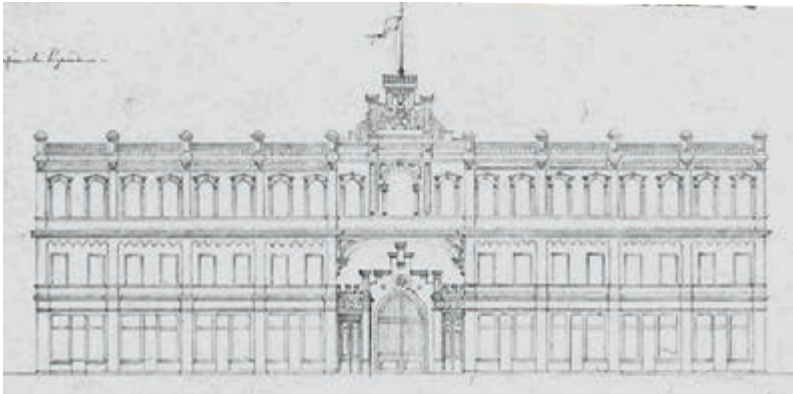
Painted a scene from the port of Algiers for the king the following year. The Zorn couple returned to Constantinople twenty years later, in 1905.

The legation property was and is self-sufficient in terms of its water supply, with its own well on the premises. After various briefings on the present state of the property of the Swedish-Norwegian legation, and the introduction of running water – a novelty in Pera at the time – and fire insurance arrange-

ments (with the Swedish company *Skandia*, for a sum approaching 200 000 Swedish crowns, corresponding to almost 13,5 million crowns today), Bernardo Bottarlini's repair work on the palace and the Dragoman House was carried out in 1886.

At the same time, the question of whether or not all of the staff of the legation might be able to reside on the property was raised by the foreign office, which led to an extension of the Dragoman House: a whole floor was added, as well as a modest wing; the ceiling was raised, together with the basement floor. The entrance to the building was placed on its front. The ground floor was subsequently occupied by the aforementioned Captain Nicolsen, with the dragoman's quarters on the first floor.

It appears that the local star architect Alexandre Vallaury, responsible for buildings such as the Ottoman bank in Galata, the medical university (Haydarpaşa), and, later, the Pera Palace Hotel, had taken over the task of the upkeep of the legation buildings after Bottarlini had passed away. In 1887, as a result of the motion to attempt to create lodgings for the legation staff in its entirety, Vallaury made a suggestion for a second floor on top of the row of shops – a "Vallaury corridor" of sorts – with an enlarged gateway. Nothing came of this suggestion, however, which was likely deemed exorbitant. Five



*A proposal (not realised) for the gateway and "bazaar", possibly by Alexandre Vallaury.
National Property Board of Sweden.*

years later, the matter of a possible added upper floor to the row of shops was raised in correspondence with Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Lewenhaupt.

In the same year that Vallaury made his proposal for a grander façade (1887), Swedish-designed submarines were assembled and launched in the Golden Horn, documented by the new court photographer Berggren. The submarines had been sold to the sultan with Ehrenhoff as intermediary and with the involvement of the international arms dealer (Sir) Basil Zaharoff, who had sold similar submarines to Greece.

In 1888, Selim Ehrenhoff was succeeded by Gustaf Lennart Reuterskiöld. The following year, Reuterskiöld, was approached by the US legation with a request for the use of the Swedish chapel by an American reverend. In 1891, Foreign Minister Carl Lewenhaupt instructed Reuterskiöld's successor Otto Stenbock that he had authorised the harbour master Theodor Reppen to move in to the top floor of the Dragoman House, which had "hitherto been at the disposal of the consulate secretary". Ehrenhoff passed away in La Spezia in 1890. His remains were taken to Constantinople, and were interred at Haydarpaşa cemetery, in a grave next to his (British) wife, Elisabeth (née Reade), who had died in Constantinople in 1878.



The graves of Selim and Elisabeth Ehrenhoff at Haydarpaşa cemetery. A marble plaque with a poem by the poet and novelist Verner von Heidenstam ("Vi människor", 1915) was added to the rear of Selim Ehrenhoff's grave by the (Swedish) Carlander family in September 1970.

Photograph: Frederick Whitling, October 2020.

Fin de Siècle, Belle Époque

In 1890, the Swedish telephone manufacturer *L. M. Ericsson* – founded in 1876 – was engaged to equip the primary residence of the sultan – the Dolmabahçe Palace – with a telephone line. In August 1896, amidst a period of Armenian persecution, acting Dragoman and Vice-Consul Carl Gustaf (“Charles”) Fredholm, chargé d’affaires in Minister Stenbock’s temporary absence, intervened to safeguard the Palais de Suède and its inhabitants during public unrest which caused some (unspecified) damage to the legation property. Fredholm offered refuge in the legation to some of the persecuted Armenians. For his efforts, he was made a knight of the Order of Vasa.

Around that time, Petraki Sofiali, dragoman at the Swedish-Norwegian legation, published a number of books and opened “the first Western public theatre” in Pera. A street close to the Palais de Suède – Sofyalı Sokağı – behind the Narmanlı Han – the former Russian consulate – is named after him. In 1897, the German *Teutonia Club* – which was founded in 1847 and is still active today – inaugurated their new premises near Tünel, just down the road from the Palais de Suède.

The Ottoman envoy to Stockholm for a decade at the turn of the last century (1898–1908) was Şerif Paşa, the son of Said Paşa, former grand vizier and foreign minister. Şerif Paşa was co-founder of the Kurdish Society for Cooperation and Progress in 1908, and was later styled “the king of Kurdistan”.

In the summer of 1898, Minister Otto Stenbock was informed by the foreign ministry that the art collector and orientalist Fredrik Robert Martin, then employed by the National Historical Museum in Stockholm, would with state support be sent “to Russia and to Turkey, with the primary purpose of finding, recording, describing and photographing all objects that might put in mind King Karl XII and his men”. Martin received the necessary Ottoman permissions in 1900. He returned to Constantinople in 1903 and was employed as dragoman at the Swedish legation from 1904 to 1908, alongside the deputy dragoman Epaminondas Papacosta, an Ottoman citizen of Romanian origin. Martin also appears to have been chargé



"Şerif Paşa, the minister of the Ottoman Empire [Osmanska rikets minister] in his office at Kommendörsgratan 32 [in Stockholm]". Photograph: Frans G. Klemming, undated (c. 1900). Stockholms stadsmuseum, SSMC003143.

d'affaires in 1905, the year of the dissolution of the union of the kingdoms of Sweden and Norway, and frequently seems to have managed the legation in the minister's absence, *de facto* if not *de jure*. Among other things, he engaged himself in procuring plants for the garden of the legation.

In the year 1900, Selma Lagerlöf – acclaimed author, schoolteacher and eventually (1909) the first female and first Swedish Nobel laureate in literature – visited Constantinople en route back to Sweden from the Holy Land (Palestine) where, with her friend, partner and fellow writer Sophie Elkan, she carried out research for her novel *Jerusalem*, published 1901–1902. Elkan's novel *The Dream of the Orient* (*Drömmen om österlandet*) was published simultaneously (in 1901).

Jerusalem is based on actual religious emigration of a group of peasants from Dalarna, in Sweden, to the Holy Land in 1896. Employing Thomas Cook's travel agency, Lagerlöf and Elkan travelled via Italy to Egypt. They visited the pyramids, travelled on the Nile, and, among other things, attended a dinner in honour of King Oskar II's birthday, hosted by the Swedish consul general in Cairo in January 1900. They continued onwards to Palestine. They stayed for two weeks in Jerusalem, where they also spent some time with the Swedish pilgrim "colony".

The return journey took Lagerlöf and Elkan to, for instance, Lebanon, Syria, Smyrna and Constantinople. The two travel companions met with Minister Otto Stenbock and had tea in the Palais de Suède, which Lagerlöf succinctly described as “located in its own garden”: “It looks very nice.” The two authors are to have brought up the sometimes-sensitive situation of Swedish pilgrims in the Holy Land with the “consul general” (more likely with Stenbock), aiming to end harassment of their compatriots. Moreover, in *Jerusalem*, Lagerlöf voiced her disapproval with the Ottoman government, which in her view was responsible for the widespread poverty in Palestine, caused by deteriorated logistics, excessive taxation and corruption.

The income from the rent of the shops along the Grande Rue – leased for a period of one to three years at a time (the annual shop rent of 150 lire in 1905 increased to 212 lire after the First World War) – was referred to in Stockholm as the “Pera fund”, and was used for several purposes: from 1893 to 1913 the revenue contributed to the upkeep of the Church of Sweden in Paris (although the religious origin of the eighteenth-century purchase of the Pera property was increasingly overlooked from around 1900 onwards) and of legation buildings in Paris, Madrid, Kristiania (Oslo), London and Berlin. This widespread use of the income from Constantinople ceased in 1921, in accordance with a Swedish parliamentary decree, although the right of disposal of the funds continued to be discussed in the 1920s.

Repairs were continually carried out to the Palais de Suède and the other legation buildings in 1902 and afterwards. A possible greenhouse on the premises was also discussed at this time. With the involvement of the architect Delfo Seminati, some rooms in the Dragoman House were enlarged and rearranged in 1903. Its kitchen was moved to an extension at the back of the building. The legation chapel continued to be used by the Greek Protestant congregation (“the Greek Evangelical congregation in Pera”).

According to almost-certainly fake documents reproduced (with queries) in the legation archives, King Oskar II supposedly entertained the notion of a departure from strict Swedish-Norwegian neutrality in 1904, by suggesting a curious Turkish-Swedish alliance against Russia, whose army was struggling in the war with Japan. The supposed aim of this supposed echo of the eighteenth century was to weaken any Russian expansion plans in the Baltic Sea and in the Balkans, to deal a blow to Russian power once and for all, and to reconquer Finland, all with British support. The authenticity of said documents – forwarded fabricated telegrams in Austro-Hungarian diplomatic dispatches – is indeed highly questionable; the fact that the effort was made to produce this *belle époque* “fake news” is interesting in itself.

King Oskar certainly had other headaches to contend with, however. In 1905, the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway were no more. In the words of the writer and Pera chronicler Said Naum-Duhani “the two Nordic

siamese sisters” were separated by “political surgery”. The legation thereby became exclusively Swedish, as it had been previously, although the question of possibly suspending the envoy in Constantinople and replacing the position with a consul general was ostensibly raised momentarily before the dissolution of the union.

The same year, 1905, witnessed another visit to Constantinople by Anders and Emma Zorn (see chapter three), as well as the first Swedish archaeological teaching activity in Constantinople, when the philologist, classical archaeologist and politician Johan Bergman brought his historical-archaeological teacher training course (given in Italy between 1898 and 1913) to Constantinople. Fredrik Martin, then chargé d'affaires, acted as cicerone to Bergman's group, which visited the Imperial Archaeological Museum and other sites in Constantinople, as well as, unsurprisingly, the Palais de Suède, with excursions also to Scutari (Üsküdar) and the island of Prinkipo (Büyükdada).



The participants in Johan Bergman's Swedish historical-archaeological course, 1905, posing in front of the Palais de Suède, with Fredrik Martin and Ali Effendi, the legation aide (kavass).

From left to right (sitting): Dr Jakobsson, lecturer Hylén, lecturer Nordin, dr Vessberg, dr Snellman; (standing): Dr Blidberg, the legation concierge, Fredrik Martin, Ali Effendi, Johan Bergman (lecturer), the “candidate” (student) Julin (wearing a traditional Swedish student cap) and a Mr Berndtson. Vessberg and Berndtson sported the fez.

Photograph: Guillaume Berggren. From the weekly Idun 27 (1905).

In an account of the Constantinople sojourn published three years later, in 1908, the year of the Young Turk Revolution, Johan Bergman was highly impressed with the Palais de Suède, “that piece of Sweden that can be found

within its walls”. In his words, the representation of Sweden in Constantinople was unequalled anywhere in the world: “The palace of the Swedish legation is highly prominently placed in the row of grand embassy hotels in Pera. Here the Swedish State owns an ample enclosure and foundation, and the stately legation building is surrounded by a splendid park with aged, leafy trees. A stately Albanian stands on guard by the solid iron gates in the picturesque costume of his homeland, and the Turkish chaperone, the honourable Ali, makes a no less picturesque impression [...] armed and adorned at the gate.”



A rare photograph image from inside the gateway to the Palais de Suède, 1905, from the second visit of Anders and Emma Zorn. The Zorn Collections, Mora, ZFO 1141.

Johan Bergman strongly advocated against any notion of “withdrawing” the Constantinople legation. He also gave an account of the “open-air party for our expedition in the spacious park of the legation”, and *les honneurs* offered by Fredrik Martin. In 1906, the count-diplomat-travel writer Birger Mörner arrived in Constantinople and resided in the Palais de Suède, likely as a personal guest of Envoy Charles Emil Ramel. Mörner was confronted with the distant street sounds during his first night in “an empty house in an overgrown garden”, and felt “further away than ever before”.

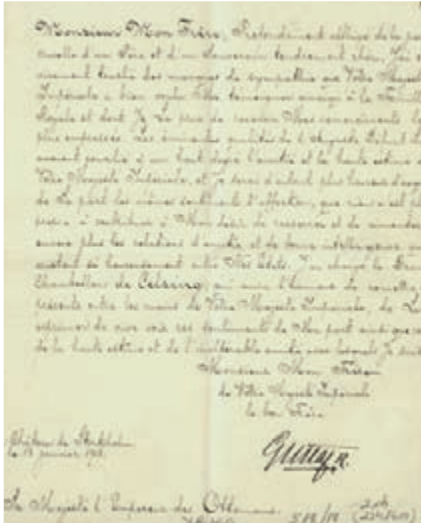
Birger Mörner was present when Ramel’s successor, Cosswa Anckarsvärd, was escorted to be presented to the sultan: the gate to the Grande Rue, guarded by a “soaring Montenegrin with a revolver the size of a rifle”, was open in anticipation of the arrival of the imperial cortege that was to transport the new minister along the Grande Rue towards Yıldız Palace. Mörner was invited to join them, and described his meeting with “the feared and unknown” Sultan Abdul Hamid, “possibly the greatest diplomat of his time”. Mörner was offered the sultan’s “wide and stout” handshake: “One can feel his large rings under the white glove.”

Mörner also related the installation of a marble fountain in the garden of the Palais de Suède in the autumn of 1906, supposedly dragged up from Stamboul by what he referred to as two buffaloes “with the wigs between their horns dyed red with henna, and with blue pearl strands over their foreheads as protection from evil spirits”. The fountain was installed with some fish, although this was not enough to satisfy Mörner: “What good is a fountain without frogs that plop into the water when you approach it?” He took the matter in his own hands and personally bought a “can” of frogs for the new fountain. Like other visiting Swedes, Mörner also spent some time in the company of the photographer Guillaume Berggren and his niece Hilda Ullin, who had visited her uncle in the 1890s and ended up staying in Constantinople for more than 30 years, assisting Berggren as well as the Swedish legation, in the latter case as a typist and go-between.



*Cosswa Anckarsvärd with her daughters Dagmar and Ellen in the garden of the Palais de Suède, 1911.
Private collection, © Gustaf Almenberg.*

Oskar II passed away in 1907, and was succeeded by his son, Gustaf V. The chain of the Royal Order of the Seraphim was then bestowed on the sultan, renewing the decoration that had been conferred in 1885. The same



Letter from Gustaf V to Abdul Hamid II, 18 January 1908, thanking for condolences and accentuating the age-old “amity” between Sweden and the Ottoman empire (with an envelope addressed to “Sa Majesté l’Empereur des Ottomans, Monsieur Mon Frère”). Ottoman Archives, Istanbul, Y.A.HUS.518.18.8 and Y.A.HUS.518.18.9.

year, *Nationalmuseum* in Stockholm sent a number of engravings to the Constantinople legation, as well as portraits of Queen Ulrika Eleonora the Younger, Karl XII’s sister and successor as monarch, and King Fredrik (Frederick) I, her husband, in whose favour she had abdicated. The royal portraits were placed in the grand salon of the *Palais*. Cosswa Anckarsvärd thanked the museum director, Ludvig Looström, for having accommodated his and of his pre-decessors’ requests to “decorate the house of the legation with these pictures”, which would contribute to its dignity and might “remind visitors of our country and its great recollections”. Anckarsvärd’s recent predecessor Joachim Beck-Friis had left frames at the legation for etchings donated by Anders Zorn, presenting them to the Swedish state.

During the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire had increasingly come to be regarded as the “sick man of Europe”, weakened by a combination of political instability, military defeat and internal uprisings. In the wake of incipient parliamentarism and moderate reforms, Sultan Abdul Hamid was ousted in 1908 by the Young Turks movement, which seized power and replaced the sultan with his younger brother Mehmed (V) the following year, implementing a program of political and economic modernisation and reform. The Young Turks restored the Ottoman constitution that had been granted in 1876, reconvened the parliament, and formed political parties, such as the “Committee of Union and Progress” (CUP), which won a majority in the 1908 election.

Although Great Britain remained the principal power in the region, the new Ottoman regime found enthusiastic support from the German Empire, and German investments and influence left a clear mark on the Ottoman army. An inquiry regarding a possible order of Swedish Ericsson telephones for the Ottoman military was conveyed by the Swedish legation in the summer of 1908, just prior to the Young Turk Revolution.



Ottoman guard at the Swedish legation with Maude Anckarsvärd, Hilda Ullin and Ture Söderlund (commercial attaché) with his (hitherto unidentified) wife “during the revolution”, 1908. Mrs Söderlund was later described by the writer Said Naum-Duhani as “the highlight of the legation”, the “northern light” (“l’aurore boréale”) and an “ambadress of beauty”. The image also offers a rare view of the interior of the gate structure. Etnografiska museet.

The constitution was not the only Western novelty in Constantinople in 1908; the same year marked the opening of the first cinema theatre in the city, run by the cinema pioneer Sigmund Weinberg, not far from the Palais de Suède, until a film reel accident caused a fire in which the establishment burned down. Around that time, the seeds for a future Swedish research institute in Constantinople were planted, after visits by the archaeologist and orientalist Ture J. Arne, who collected and purchased Neolithic material from the Bosphorus, and the classical archaeologist Lennart Kjellberg. Arne and Kjellberg anticipated that the Swedish legation might perhaps host such an institute (see chapter five).

The disposal of the legation property, selling it in whole or in part, was suggested in 1906–1907. This was reflected in plans by Delfo Seminati, who then styled himself “architect of the Royal Swedish legation”, and simultaneously worked on the Khedive Palace (or pavilion – “Hıdıv Kasrı”), on the Anatolian side of the Bosphorus (in Beykoz), completed in 1907. Seminati’s plans for the Palais de Suède suggested buildings on the land between the main building and the Grande Rue – the garden was referred to as the “Mars field”, the *Champ de Mars* – as well as extended storage facilities. The ecclesiastic origin of the so-called Pera fund was used as an argument against selling the estate, despite continued discussions on the subject in 1908–1910.



The interior of Sibbern's chapel, c. 1904 (photograph). From "Description of the state property in Pera with movables". Riksarkivet, Beskickningsarkiv Konstantinopel, F2:26.

In 1909, the former dragoman Fredrik Martin advocated the foundation of a Swedish Orient society, a wish that would indeed become reality more than a decade later. The following year, a "grave monument to deceased Swedes" was discussed for the Protestant cemetery at Feriköy. The Dragoman House was rented by the trade attaché (Söderlund) from 1910 until 1912. The question of possibly disposing of the Palais de Suède property remained in play, and the prospect of selling part of it to the Swedish (Christian) YMCA organisation was raised. The issue was dropped by the time of the two Balkan Wars (1912–1913) and the outbreak of the First World War (1914).



The Grande Rue de Pera, c. 1900. Sébah & Joaillier.
DAI-IST-Foto-Archiv, D-DAI-IST-9689.

Tsargrad. Wars, Occupation, Institute

The Ottoman Empire lost most of its territory in Europe in the two Balkan Wars that preceded the First World War, to the added cost of exhausting its resources. Financial aid was offered by France, Britain and Germany. The pro-British majority in the Ottoman government was opposed by a pro-German faction under the influence of Enver Paşa, one of the Young Turk leaders and former military attaché in Berlin. The Swedish Count Philip von Schwerin decided to join the Ottoman forces in the First Balkan War. On his way to the Thracian front, Major von Schwerin passed through Constantinople: “the queen of cities’, the past and, who knows, the coming mistress of the world”, as he put it in his published wartime account. His participation in the war was backed up by Captain Wiktor Unander (later major), military attaché at the Swedish legation in 1912–1913.

Maude Anckarsvård, of American origin, married to Minister Cosswa Anckarsvård, made considerable efforts to assist the Swedish Red Cross in the hospital that had been installed in the Imperial Military Academy in the Harbiye neighbourhood (not far from Taksim Square at the end of the Grande Rue), assisted by, among others, Hilda Ullin (see chapter four) and Trade Attaché Erik Nylander.

The Swedish “colony” raised funds to assist victims of the First Balkan War, with contributions also from the Swedish king and queen. The Swedish nurse and later human rights activist Anna (Anna Maria) Vogel traveled to Constantinople as a volunteer during the war, and wrote a report for the Swedish weekly magazine *Idun* from the Red Cross sisters’ celebration of Christmas in Constantinople in 1912.

The Swedish steamer *Herakles* was waiting in the port to spirit the members of the Swedish colony away should the unstable situation degenerate. 1913 also witnessed the switch from horse-pulled to electricity powered trams, with the inauguration of the streetcar along the Grande Rue that is



Foto: *pubblicharquest*. In: *Cartesius*, rivista della Chiesa cattolica del Lazio. Roma, 1998. In: *La Repubblica*, 1998.

Våra Röda-Kors-syslars jul i Konstanlinopel.



AL ENNA VOCE

deliberat, affertur ad fidei iudicium, non tamen in decessu. Tunc
est per singulos dies communicatio medicamentis per os et in-
teritum et per singulos dies medicamentis, ad singulos dies singu-
lamente affertur in non interitum, non interitum non
fuit. Non tamen ad os et in singulis singulis in singulis
et singulis singulis singulis. Ad singulos in singulis
et non in singulis, ad singulos singulis in singulis
Patria singulis singulis singulis singulis in singulis
et singulis singulis.

ATT MAN ER MIDT I JERHELIGEN KAN MAN
engelske linke sig her. Vædet er ad-
færd, skindene vædet, og en temperatu-
rænd og meget skæddet og smukke. De
dager da syvdel Ellers er vædet fætte-

Äldre människor brukade och får de yngre mycket mer.

Äldre personer som i affären köpa en eller flera saker till sig själva och till sina barn, och de enkla grejerna, som tappar, i en del fall, verka något obehagligt. T. u. n. på affären vara en del affärer, men och för på affären gick affären affären som väntat, och förhöll man efter det hela till.

Det första, som vi möter allra först, är bedrägligheten i ljuden – en oerhöllad låg bång eller ljud. De mest vackra bakerna bryts på så enkla och förbiffliga sätt. De mest sköna, all deras ställning är i betydligt sådana och all tillgången av sköta långa gynnarna är först. "Vive la guerre!" har varit alla ågarna med kända och oerhölliga.

Kalender, som för några veckor sedan härskade på frukost-
bordet, lyfts nu som ett tecken, underligt nog till så gott som inget
gäns för att be-
stämna den.

[illegible]

Nu ar inceput cauterizat rana si s-a pus un pansament steril.

Vad kan man i spektet, skulle man sagt i hals
sönga hörsamhet (det är en hörsamhet), som man
det en en, här det alltså i andra hand och sönga sö-
ger översett till mycket dålig och oöversättbar text.

Det karkins spröder är ej fullt all lika, och icke samma energiska spröder ha vi mycket små lösnider i det svenska. Jag tror dock att vaktens och ledningens till ett enda svenskt lot i karkins. Det som den svenske samfund all harna hana: "luck ha mycket" efter "and megen, tvetyd, ha till det till" m. d., som vi lart dem. Sverige är ett av världens rikaste länder, alltså är karkins. Karl III har väl varit all till all på en karkins och samfundet, alltså är all svenskt.

Min hel och en bevisning en dag, då en gammal chock, som ej kunde bli en annan, inte, inte en bevisning, en bevisning, en bevisning.

Tænk alle vandskillelindes og skovind, rider de ned til den lille
græsset ved fiskebækken, hvor du står med det røde, som ligger
af den sødte.

Effects on health

Vi få dagligen en
muntlig träna till
och genom åläng
med följande följ-
ter, beroende på
all de så länge följ-
et : upprepning
då de två följ-
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ter utmanar
och ofta följ-
ter utmanar

De karnegiske
boller, som man
skal i det kortest-
te øst, er en af
de bedste af alle
boller, og de er
meget billige.

Ph. nuda below the
vi. a dem. nuda below
moderately



Flästa, ledaren hade inte tillräckligt med

The first page of the article "Våra Röda-Kors-systrars jul i Konstantinopel", Idun 26, 3 (1913), 45, with a photograph of the author, Anna Vogel.

still in use today, operated by a Belgian-administered consortium in charge also of the Tünel cable car system (adjustments to the street in front of the Russian consulate general did not take place until after 1914).

The German General Otto Liman von Sanders was sent to Constantinople as the head of a military mission to modernise the Ottoman army, and became a military adviser and commander during the coming world war. In 1914, the age-old capitulations treaties that had ensured that foreign nation-

SVENSKA KOLONIEN I KONSTANTINOPEL.

ETT AFKOPPS TILL OROSDAGARNE I TURKIET. — FÖR H. S. D.

Ju längre ett antal svenskar komma från löstlandet, dess snabbare och fastare gro de samman — ej blott i levande intressen utan i åskådningar, tycke och sympati. Mera än en gång har jag haft tillfälle se, huru det gemensamma svenska nationellt hätt en sällsam föreniga att emälla samman skilda element och löda ihop strödda villor hos landodnen i försörjningen. Där ute råderas så lutt bort de otämlt balancerande skifferkonfona och transporterats så gärna öfver till smeslugg förder hvarje liffet godlynt lynd i karaktärerna. Det är godt att så är, och det värmer underbart den gåstande landsmannen.

Nere i Orientens stora inkörsport, Konstantinopel, har sedan länge det svenska intresset satt rot och skuter nu raskt upp, gynnadt af den i snabb utveckling varande svenska affärsvärlden där. Efter hand har den lilla koloniens kolonister ökat ut, förstärkt med tillfälligare reserver, och står nu som en säker utpost i öfverströmmande östern.

Naturligt nog har det blifvit kring svenske envöy som skaren i blotta hand slutt sig. Ministern Ankerswärd delar med sin — i alla landsmäns vördnadshulla minne tackasamt bevarade — maka den sällhynta förmågan att ej blott som officiell orien fastimer som enskild person vinna de vidsträcktaste sympatier. I Palais de Suède röra sig glästande svenskar med en känsla af, att de stå på ett stycke svensk jord, sällsamma och vilseleda. Det magnifika ministerhotellens gemak och salar bevarar också många goda och glada minnen, bundna vid och förknäade med svenska besök.

Kolonien's oldfader är hotellografen Herggren, sedan ett halft sekel bostad i den orofliga turkistaden. I hans lilla varmt hemtrefliga atelierlokal vid galan Anadolı Mevdi 9 är koloniens sällsamma samlingsplats. Hvarken då på dagen man gläntar på glasöfverarna och sticker in huvudet, kan man vara sä-

ker på att litta pratande, röljande svenskar, bekvämt gästrande, så langt det öka kroppa utrymmet vider. Den gamle handelsmannen sjuttitjend sidorar med sin utomordentliga systemhotter, fören J. Ullin, vid sidan bakom det till hemtändsk apterades bordet midt i allfren, och om kolonisterna gett gatafs folk intrycket af att en så talrikt besökt affärsmäster ha en oerhörd omsättning, är det förfäligt.

Bländ blifiga svenska fäst kolonister ha vi vidare handelsattachén E. Nylander med sin unga fru samt en i Konstantinopel allmunt känd och omtyckt sjuk-symmarist dr. Sixten Anderson, stockholmar till böden. Så ha vi ett par damer af svensk extraktion, samt ytterligare en och annan skandinav, som sluttit sig till den lilla svenska kretsen.

Det har, naturligt nog, varit kolonien beskidt att i samma grad som andra i Konstantinopel bosatta europier dela de ytterst osäkra förtärlandena just nu. Larmryktena ha duggat till, men koloniens medlemmar ha med erkännansvärd lugn och stor behållning burit sin part af oron. Vid ett par tillfällen har den allmunt sett sig nödsakad mobilisera, och upprepade öfverläggnings har måst hållas. Tack vare vår ministers stora lugn och förtärlighet ha dock till och med de mest pådrivande timmarna liti en prägel af fast tillförsikt. Men jag skulle kunna onöta en allon, då kolonien allmunt lann sig bära ställa sig under vapen, tänkt att, om så erindrades så dyrt som nödligt sälja sina till. Det lann orsak nog att då belara det västa, och länna svallar molnet tungt öfver oss alla här nere.

Men äro vi en liten del af Sverige, så utgöra vi dess utpost här nu, vare sig vi rikna vår närvaro i år eller veckor — vi skola veta, att lika vännar som fiender förtä. att oss trampar ingen öfverlätt på, var rätt fräder ingen förtä, så länge vi bära svenskar's namn.



1. SVERIGES ENVÖY OCH GENERALKONSUL C. ANKERSVÄRD. — 2. HANDELSATTACHÉN E. O. NYLANDER. — 3. STORA SALONGEN I MINISTERHOTELLET. — 4. SVENSKA MINISTERHOTELLET I KONSTANTINOPEL.

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Minister Coswa Ankerswärd, trade attaché Erik Nylander, the "grand salon in the minister hotel" and the Palais de Suède, from the front garden. From Various authors, "Svenska kolonien i Konstantinopel. Ett afropos till orosdagarne i Turkiet", Hvar 8 Dag 14, 7 (1912/1913), 107.

als resident in Ottoman Turkey were subject to the laws of their respective countries rather than to local regulations were abolished. This was however not accepted by the nations concerned, Sweden included.

In August 1914, the Ottoman Empire signed a secret alliance with the Central Powers — the German and Austrian-Hungarian Empires — and entered into the First World War at the end of October 1914 by launch-

ing two formerly German battle ships, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* (renamed respectively the *Yavûz Sultân Selîm* and the *Midilli*, Turkish for Lesbos), into the Black Sea and raiding Russian ports. The Triple Entente – first Russia, then Britain and France – subsequently declared war on the Ottoman Empire in November.

In his memoirs, Einar af Wirsén, officer and Swedish military attaché at the legation in Constantinople, related a brief encounter with Mustafa Kemal and Otto Liman von Sanders at Gallipoli in 1915. That autumn, af Wirsén also participated in a commission for the delineation of new borders between Ottoman Turkey and Bulgaria. Two years later, af Wirsén obtained Ottoman permission to travel to Sweden via a “Balkan train”, as did Cosswa Anckarsvård and his wife Maude with their daughters. Af Wirsén aptly described the Palais de Suède as one of the most “elegant and pleasant” buildings that he had come across, thus conveying its balanced proportion between dignified official residence and downplayed restraint. He succinctly summed up the property as in the style of “a Swedish stately home.”

The Swedish writer Stéphanie Beyel, who styled herself “coloneless” and resided a stone’s throw from the Palais de Suède (on the *Rue Journal*), documented both life and death in Constantinople during the Balkan Wars and the First World War, and regular social meetings with the Swedish “colony”, the members of which amounted to a generous handful at best, including, for example the writers Elsa Lindberg and Hanna Hindbeck. These meetings were orchestrated by Hilda Ullin and Guillaume Berggren, who was referred to as, simply, “uncle”, also by, for instance, Stéphanie Beyel.

Berggren’s photography studio was located a stone’s throw from the Swedish legation, by the Grande Rue, on the corner of Asmalı Mescit Caddesi. It was sometimes referred to as the “Swedish club”, and was frequented by Stéphanie Beyel and other local Swedes. In a Swedish weekly (in 1912), the Palais de Suède was portrayed as a welcoming “piece of Swedish soil”. Beyel published a glimpse of Christmas celebrations in the *Palais* 1915, together with af Wirsén, Berggren and Hilda Ullin as guests of the Anckarsvårds: “The Christmas tree, the ham, candles and warmth spread an atmospheric holiday ambience in the genteel halls and salons of the attractive legation building, and the Christmas spirit made one think of home and absent friends.” On the occasion of the explorer Sven Hedin passing through Constantinople en route to Baghdad, Beyel also recounted a shrovetide meal, featuring the traditional Swedish Lenten bun (*semla*, traditionally served with hot milk and cinnamon).

From a Russian perspective, Constantinople, *Tsargrad* – with the double meaning of the “emperor of cities” – was a coveted prize, and the straits – the Dardanelles – offered a much-desired access to the Mediterranean. From the late eighteenth century onwards, Russia had come close to controlling

Constantinople on a number of occasions. This time it was very close indeed. The imperial ambitions for the city included the establishment for two decades (1894–1914) of the Russian Archaeological Institute of Constantinople. They were however thwarted by the revolutions in 1917. The Red Army, busy elsewhere, gave up on the earlier Dardanelles ambitions, which if realised, would reasonably have had a strong impact on the historical trajectory of the twentieth century.

The Ottoman-Romanian Epaminondas Papacosta had been employed as dragoman at the Swedish legation since 1904 (acting dragoman after Fredrik Martin from 1907/1908 and awarded the Royal Order of Vasa in 1915). He worked in the same capacity for the Romanian legation. When Turkey and Romania entered into a state of war in 1916, Papacosta could no longer remain in Swedish employment, however, and was duly replaced by the Armenian Zareh Tchopourian, who had been employed as dragoman at the Danish legation. Tchopourian was the “sole functionary for the Turkish language” at the Swedish legation until his employment ceased around the new year 1918.

Tchopourian’s successor was to be the Swedish linguist and orientalist Johannes Kolmodin, who arrived in Constantinople in 1917 to conduct research in Ottoman archives on King Karl XII’s stay at Bender two hundred years before. He had been to Constantinople for research purposes a few years earlier, after a visit to Ethiopia, before studying Turkish in Berlin and teaching at Uppsala University. Kolmodin thus followed in Fredrik Martin’s footsteps (see chapter four). His research on the “hero king” was funded by *Karolinska förbundet*, established in 1910.

Prior to his departure for Constantinople in 1917, Kolmodin was appointed honorary attaché at the Swedish legation by Foreign Minister Arvid Lindman (a week before Lindman left office). Minister Anckarsvård was informed by the foreign ministry that Kolmodin intended “to stay in Turkey possibly for a few years”, and that his command of Turkish might be of service to the legation.



Johannes Kolmodin together with Sophie Wallin (Stockholm) and Tewolde-Medhin Gebre-Medhin, Ethiopian pastor, educator and translator, in Sweden, 1910.

Wikimedia Commons.

Contributions to the salaries of Lutheran priests in Bucharest continued by way of the German consulate general in Constantinople during the First World War, when the neutral Swedish legation administered the local interests of various nations: the United States, Belgium, Serbia and Finland. After the 1918 armistice with the Ottoman Empire, having requested permission from Stockholm, this responsibility was extended also to the Central Powers Germany and Bulgaria (in the latter case until the summer of 1923). Contacts with the Protestant congregation in Bucharest were maintained also in the 1920s. By the same token the Swedish legation in London protected Turkish interests in the transitional period before the Republic of Turkey was declared in 1923. Other nations took on a similar role: the Dutch legation for example protected French and Russian interests in Constantinople during the war.

Minister Cosswa Anckarsvård was appointed guardian of American interests in Turkey from 1917 to 1920. To a large extent, the wartime and post-war administration of foreign interests at the Swedish legation entailed the management of personal affairs and registers of deaths and arrests of citizens of the respective countries, as well as representation of institutional interests. In the American case, this included colleges and religious organisations, such as Roberts College, Constantinople College, the American College for Girls, the American Bible House and Mission House. Two American attachés for example styled themselves “of the Swedish Legation, Constantinople”. The legation assisted in the liquidation of German-owned property and assets, administering business interests and assisting with personal assets, as well as contending with prisoners of war. It also aided Serbian prisoners of war, and assisted Finnish citizens in Ottoman territory after the civil war in Finland in the wake of its independence in 1917.

The Swedish legation staff consisted of Minister Anckarsvård, Johannes Kolmodin (dragoman), Military Attaché Einar af Wirsén, Trade Attaché Erik Nylander – in the early stages of the war, until 1915; Nylander became treasurer of the Swedish Orient Society in the early 1920s – the young Chancery Clerk Paul Mohn, who arrived in Constantinople in 1917, and Hilda Ullin as typist. The legation at this time seemingly boasted a billiard room. Paul Mohn went through much of the legation archive which was still *in situ* (it was transferred to Sweden after the Second World War). He also initiated a historical study of Swedish diplomacy in Turkey in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Hilda Ullin has been referred to as a “sort of assistant minister”; she would often type rough copies in Guillaume Berggren’s photo studio, on a typewriter with separate keyboards for upper- and lower-case letters. The documents were transported back and forth by one of the legation’s two armed officers (cavasses). At Minister Anckarsvård’s suggestion, Ullin was awarded



*Ellen Anckarsvärd, the Palais de Suède of her childhood, painted from memory.
Tempera painting, 1943. Private collection, © Ellen Almenberg.*

a Swedish royal gold medal decoration in 1920. Yet Berggren's photography business was suffering in the political turmoil, the changing times and the wartime demise of photography: for his and his niece Hilda Ullin's upkeep, Berggren was forced to sell some of his glass plates to gardeners who converted them into greenhouses. A modest fundraising campaign for the upkeep of Berggren and his family was initiated at the legation in 1916. Funds were raised in a similar way for Ullin's return voyage to Sweden in the early 1920s.

For the Ottoman Empire, the First World War came to an end on the last day of October 1918, with a temporary Allied administration of Constantinople as a result of the Armistice of Mudros (a town on the island of Lemnos in the northeastern Aegean), signed on the British battleship HMS *Agamemnon*. The Allied administration – which became an outright occupation in early 1920 – divided the city into three main police zones: the old city, Stamboul, was assigned to the French; Pera and Galata was under British jurisdiction and Kadıköy and Üsküdar in Italian hands. The Swedish

writer Fredrik Böök visited Constantinople (and Kolmodin) in 1922, and gave an eyewitness account of “the English, French, Italian and Greek battleships” that loomed in the dark, and “commanded the city with its cannon gun muzzles”: “Constantinople was occupied for the first time since 29 May 1453.”

After the Russian Revolution and the end of the war, the geopolitical location of the city made Constantinople, and Pera’s foreign quarters in particular, a first-rate contender as an intelligence centre. The end of the war effectively meant the end of the empire, and during the five years of Allied administration of Constantinople, 1918–1923, the end of the old Ottoman order. The last sultan, Mehmed VI, withdrew from the old imperial capital on a British warship in November 1922. The antiquated sultanate-caliphate, romanticised by some, dissolved at the same time as a modern state based on secular European-influenced sociopolitical, religious, cultural and judicial principles came together in Anatolia. In due course, the Ottoman Empire was thereby replaced by the Republic of Turkey: a new constitution, a new secular attitude, a new leader – Mustafa Kemal, later styled Atatürk (“Father of the Turks”) – and a new capital city: Ankara.



"Nouveau Plan de Péra, Galata et faubourgs" c. 1919/1920. SALT Research.

In the spring of 1919, Stéphanie Beyel expressed her yearning to return to Constantinople to “found a small Swedish lodging house”, which did not materialise, however. In the summer, Johannes Kolmodin wrote an early diplomatic report on Mustafa Kemal, in which he expressed dispassionate, legitimising and appreciative opinions of his Anatolian government. The same autumn, Military Attaché Einar af Wirsén was sent on a strategic “study trip” to Palestine, via Egypt. Earlier that year, af Wirsén had reported to Kolmodin that “the Turks have occupied [Hagia Sophia] militarily and equipped it with machine guns. They claim that they would rather blow it to pieces than give it to the Greeks.”

The honorary attachés Gunnar Broman and Edvard Mannberg joined the Swedish legation after the war; the latter was employed in the legation’s “German section”. Since late 1918, the Swedish legation clerk Paul Mohn lived in a house that belonged to the German congregation in Constantinople, which was visited in his absence during the summer of the following year by a staff member of the French High Commission, potentially with a view to requisition the building for the Allies, which caused slight tension. In addition, diplomatic interventions from the Allied High Commissions were required when the attaché Mannberg was assaulted by three US Marines on the Grande Rue in January 1920.

Foregoing a potential debate regarding its possible discontinuation, the twenty-one-year-old Paul Mohn wrote a memorandum on “the significance of the Swedish legation in Constantinople” before Christmas 1919: “It can be reasonably anticipated that Constantinople henceforth will not have the same role as before, even if it should remain the capital of [Turkey], which appears to be the only possible way out of the tangle of difficulties that its future [status] seems to occasion.” Mohn emphasised that the issue hinged on Russia from a Swedish perspective, as in the past, and Russian presence in the Baltic and the Black Sea, which depended on the development of post-revolution Soviet foreign policy: The “Constantinople question” would be of importance to Sweden in relation to its association with “Russian interests”.

Paul Mohn stressed that access to the Bosphorus, the straits, and the Mediterranean remained a Russian hot potato: “in anti-Bolshevik Russian circles, one seems to be little inclined to forever reject the right to ‘keep one’s own latchkey in one’s pocket’”. It would thus be wise for Sweden to maintain its legation in Constantinople, regardless of the future status of the city: “It would perhaps be imprudent to bereave oneself the possibility of following the development at close quarters.” Perhaps, indeed.

The upkeep of the Palais de Suède and the row of shops along the Grande Rue – “a disfigurement to the city centre”, according to Paul Mohn – was “not the most unimportant” reason for the post-war aversion to maintaining the legation. In his 1919 report, Mohn argued that the plot of land facing

the street might be put to more profitable use, thus planting the seeds for the notion of replacing the shops with a larger building, referred to after the Second World War as a *Maison suédoise*, or “Sweden house”: “Architects and businessmen have accentuated [...] that a considerable income could be attained if, with the use of private capital, were to construct a substantial four- or five-storey building [...]. Thereby a considerable share of the undeniably heavy expenses for the maintenance of the legation could be covered on the spot. This method would certainly be preferable also from the point of view of prestige, all-important in the orient, to selling the magnificently situated site, purchased 150 years ago for such a tremendously low price in comparison with current circumstances.”

Einar af Wirsén, the military attaché, wrote to the dragoman Kolmodin about “the sale of the legation in Pera”, which would be “a shame”, as he put it, although he was not necessarily against selling the row of shops, which would give “a pretty penny without significant detriment to comfort and the decorum required in the Orient”. In 1920, af Wirsén related plans to sell the legation and to convert it into a consulate general, emphasising “the significance of prestige” and possible selling the shops as a feasible compromise. He referred to a missive from “the Swiss Constantinople colony”, which would prefer “no representation at all rather than merely a consulate general.”

Sweden did not establish a legation in Athens until after the Second World War – the envoy to Bucharest was accredited to Athens in the 1920s and early 1930s, when the accreditation was transferred to Ankara – although this was considered after the First World War in light of the expected increased regional importance of Greece. In his 1919 memorandum, Paul Mohn was prescient in relation to the Greek advances in Anatolia and claims on Constantinople, and emphasised how “ominous in all respects” it would be “to represent the establishment of a legation in Athens as a transfer there of our legation in Constantinople. This would seriously hurt the Turks’ self-esteem, and could complicate an efficient utilisation of our interests in the near East in the extreme for a long time to come.”

The photographer Guillaume Berggren did not live to see the transformation of Constantinople. He died in 1920, and was buried in the Protestant cemetery at Feriköy, with some photograph negatives and his 1885 *Litteris et Artibus* medal. His tombstone succinctly reads “court photographer”. The same year, Cosswa Anckarsvärd was succeeded as Swedish envoy by the businessman, diplomat and politician Gustaf Wallenberg, from the well-known banking family.



Guillaume Berggren's tombstone,
Feriköy Protestant Cemetery.
Photograph: Anders Ackfeldt.

Although the war was over, a “state of war” persisted until a peace treaty had been negotiated – first at Sèvres in 1920, which was not ratified, then at Lausanne in 1923 – that ended the Allied occupation of Constantinople. During this period, the British high commissioner was effectively the supreme executive authority in the city. In February 1919, the incumbent of this office, Admiral Somerset Arthur Gough-Calthorpe, turned down a request from the Swedish legation to allow Johannes Kolmodin to travel to and from Constantinople as courier. A similar request later that year for the clerk Paul Mohn was also denied.

Gustaf Wallenberg ostensibly turned down the offer of being posted to London. He was attracted to Constantinople, “our most important future political lookout post”, and related his first impressions of Constantinople and the Palais de Suède to his wife, Annie, who remained in Stockholm: “the legation property is much smaller than I had thought, but the house is bigger and more spacious” – all the better, given the more than two hundred boxes of personal belongings that had been sent from his earlier posting in Tokyo.

The notion of selling the property was, it seems, relinquished, and in 1920, the installation of central heating in the Palais de Suède was considered. It was argued that the risk of fire would thus be strongly reduced, as the “many fires” in Constantinople could be ascribed to bad stove pipes and cracked chimney stacks. General repairs were initiated, although Wallenberg reported to the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1922 that repairs on the “consulate building” (the Dragoman House) had not yet been able to even start, as it housed the numerous people working for the busy “German section” of the legation, dealing with post-war German business and other interests.

On the whole, things were beginning to slow down at the Swedish legation after the war years. At the same time, much was shifting in the city; the old cosmopolitan capital was changing, with or without the temporary Allied administration. Perhaps indicative of a transformation into an increasingly Turkish metropolis, the rental contracts for the shops along the Grande Rue were drawn up in Turkish only. In 1919, the Armenian hat seller Baptiste Agrachanian, a long-term tenant, was writing to the Swedish Legation (in French) requesting that his contract be transferred to another Armenian business that he could vouch for. The eight available shop rental contracts – tailors, bookshop, a lamp shop – were divided between two Austrian, one German and five “Ottoman subjects” (of which at least one was ethnically Greek). The most renowned commercial activity on the property was possibly that of the Cohen booksellers (*Kohen Hemşireler Kitap Evi*, founded in 1918, still active today, in the nearby Tünel Pasajı).

After the war, the Swedish Archbishop Nathan Söderblom raised the issue of again employing a legation priest. The issue of resuscitating the old

Protestant tradition at the legation was raised in the Swedish press in the early 1920s, and Söderblom encouraged a young priest to take on the task: “you have a church, and you will find countrymen, as long as you seek them out and gather them.” During the war, Archbishop Söderblom had commended Johannes Kolmodin’s efforts to uphold contacts with the Orthodox Patriarchate in Constantinople and inquired if Kolmodin might be charged with the task of delivering a missive from the Church of Sweden to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Apart from the chapel, the bottom of the garden also featured an annex with storage facilities, which was later demolished. In 1920, in preparation for the jubilee exhibition that celebrated the 300th anniversary of the city of Gothenburg three years later, the legation was contacted by a precursor to *Riksföreningen Sverigekontakt* with a request for a picture of the Palais de Suède.

Unusually for a member of the diplomatic corps, Johannes Kolmodin decided to leave his living quarters in Pera and to settle in Stamboul, in “a delightful small apartment [...] with an enchanting view of the Sea of Marmara”. After the Treaty of Lausanne had been ratified in Turkey in the late summer of 1923, Kolmodin described the public celebrations in a letter to his parents: “The firing of the 101-round gun salute that celebrates the event has been going on for the last half an hour, at the same time as all Turkish and Allied boat whistles in the harbour are tooting and the muezzins are crying out the occurrence from the minarets in all the mosques.”

Voices were raised in Sweden – for example that of the renowned explorer Sven Hedin – in favour of Johannes Kolmodin’s continued archival work in the Ottoman archives. The same Prince Carl who had visited the Palais de Suède in 1885 had a word with the foreign ministry on behalf of Kolmodin and the value of archival work on his namesake Karl XII’s sojourn. Nathan Söderblom had gathered 5 000 Swedish crowns (the equivalent of about 95 000 crowns today, and half of Kolmodin’s imminent yearly salary as dragoman) in support of his continued archival research in Constantinople, submitted via the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the summer of 1920. In September that year, the firmly conservative Kolmodin – who also translated and published poetry – was, like Fredrik Martin before him, employed by the Swedish legation as temporary dragoman, which Cabinet Secretary Wollmar Boström hinted was a stepping stone to the position of legation secretary. Kolmodin has accordingly been styled Sweden’s “last dragoman”, as the function ceased with the advent of the Republic of Turkey.

Writing to Boström in 1920, Gustaf Wallenberg portrayed Kolmodin as “a splendid talent, a scholar with a significant practical interest and a sound connoisseur of the Orient”, and “one of the most agreeable co-workers imaginable”, provided he was “used correctly”: “the model of a good dragoman”.

Wallenberg concluded that the legation in Constantinople was “surely one of our most interesting” diplomatic missions. In another letter to Boström, Wallenberg repeated that Kolmodin was “cut out for” the dragoman position (rather than that of legation secretary), which could also enable him to continue his research activities.

Wallenberg’s tenure as envoy coincided with the Swedish property in Constantinople being placed in the care of the new government agency *Kungl. Byggnadsstyrelsen*, the present National Property Board of Sweden. He wrote to Carl Möller, its director-general, about “some repairs and improvements” to the Palais de Suède, possibly the first Swedish embassy building to be handled by the new agency. The main building was then fifty years old, and needed some maintenance work according to Wallenberg, who lamented the “abominable tone of different colours” in the repainted interior, a patchwork similar to “what one sees in the cottages in the countryside”. He emphasised the heating costs, as well as his own expertise and experience of erecting buildings in Sweden – he mentioned for example a building on Karlavägen in Stockholm, since demolished and replaced by a modern hotel – and establishments at Saltsjöbaden, the Wallenberg family seaside resort south of Stockholm.

Wallenberg concluded his missive to Carl Möller by mentioning entrepreneurs in Constantinople, and maintenance work being carried out on the Dutch and Spanish legation buildings, “more or less similar to ours”. The foreign ministry suggested that possible savings be made by modifying the kitchen quarters and installing a heating pipe, and Wallenberg invited Möller to visit and to stay in the Palais de Suède, despite the “impoverished” interior installation.

Archbishop Nathan Söderblom also took an early interest in the Swedish Orient Society, which was established in March 1921, with an aim to establish a Swedish research institute in Constantinople with Kolmodin’s assistance. Söderblom was actively engaged in ecumenical contacts with the Orthodox Church, through the Patriarch in Constantinople, its “highest spiritual authority”, with Johannes Kolmodin as a go-between, and was an avid supporter of Kolmodin’s research work in the city, “which eventually ought to be increasingly expanded to a scientific institute worthy of Sweden, with its centre in Constantinople”, as he put it to Wallenberg in the spring of 1920, aiming to ensure the new envoy’s continued support.

The research institute ambitions were indeed provisionally fulfilled in early 1922: Johannes Kolmodin mediated the rental of a villa in the fashionable Moda neighbourhood on the Asian side of the Bosphorus (close to Kadıköy) until 1924. The tenant of the villa was Ernest Mamboury, a Swiss professor based in Constantinople, who was writing the first modern guidebook to the city (1925). The house, located on 10, Mekteb (school) street



Moda, 1920s. Photograph: Ali Enis Oza, © Suna and Inan Kiraç Foundation Photography Collection, FKA 005055 (courtesy of İstanbul Research Institute).

(Moda Mektebi Sokağı; the building is not preserved), likely with stunning sea views, was equipped with a study library and was used for accommodating objects and belongings of the royal museums in Berlin, administered by the Swedish legation in the wake of the war. It could accommodate up to three researchers simultaneously, with Kolmodin acting as superintendent. The rental arrangement was clarified in 1923, with an official note to the effect that the house in Moda was rented by the Swedish legation “as one of the premises that are necessary for accomplishing its mission in Turkey”.

The research institute in Moda received few visitors, however, and proved to be transitory: it did not survive the death in 1923 of its main benefactor, the historian, political scientist and conservative politician Pontus Fahlbeck, which occurred at the same time as the last gasps of the old Ottoman system. One of the few guests in Moda appears to have been the classical archaeologist Einar Gjerstad, en route to Cyprus for archaeological investigations. The institute experiment was synchronous with discussions regarding a potential Swedish or Scandinavian institute in Athens, as the collapse of the Ottoman Empire might have entailed a Greek administration of much of Asia minor. Instead, a Swedish institute was established in Rome a year after the Constantinople guest house fell through, in Athens after the Second World War, and in Istanbul in 1962 (see chapter seven).

In September 1922, Johannes Kolmodin’s association with the Swedish Orient Society was seen as a suitable smokescreen for sending him on a three-week overt reconnaissance assignment on Mustafa Kemal’s government,



*Interior images of the Palais de Suède, undated (1920s).
Riksarkivet, Gustaf Oscar Wallenbergs arkiv, 37c.*



Interior images of the Palais de Suède, undated (1920s).
Riksarkivet, Gustaf Oscar Wallenbergs arkiv, 37c.



*Interior images of the Palais de Suède, undated (1920s).
Riksarkivet, Gustaf Oscar Wallenbergs arkiv, 37c.*

with the blessing of both the Swedish foreign ministry and the authorities in Ankara. The pragmatic objective was to investigate the prospects of a possible Swedish-Turkish safety match company: Kolmodin's task was to anticipate possible Dutch attempts to establish a similar business enterprise.

In 1922, the journalist, historian and (liberal) politician George Peabody Gooch asserted that "the world has become a hall of echoes, a vast whispering gallery. For good or evil the civilized nations form a single family. [...] Isolation spells stagnation and hermit kingdoms are out of date." The same year, the failed Greek invasion of Turkey culminated in the burning of the coastal metropolis of Smyrna (İzmir) in September, with mass displacement and the population exchange between Greece and Turkey as a result of the Treaty of Lausanne the following year.

The Swedish diplomat Einar Ekstrand, who had also worked for the Swedish Red Cross, served as president of the mixed commission for the complicated exchange operation. Ekstrand collaborated with the diplomat René Gyllenram, who was appointed deputy commissary in Istanbul to ensure that the stipulation of Article 107 in the Lausanne treaty was carried out (in 1925): that railway transits to Turkey and Greece should be exempt from duty or tolls or "any formality of examination in connection with passports or customs."

In his capacity of chairman of the Swedish Red Cross, Prince Carl approached Ottoman authorities offering assistance with the "evacuation of Turkish prisoners" in Russia. Carl contacted the envoy Gustaf Wallenberg on the subject of aid for refugees and "for the victims of the war in Asia Minor" – to the detriment of additional assistance for refugees in Constantinople after the Russian Revolution – as well as concerning an "emergency relief expedition" to the Swedish-speaking village Gammalsvenskby in war-ridden Ukraine. Writing to his father, Kolmodin expressed that he pitied the refugees of various stripes: "We have many different kinds of them here in Constantinople: Russians, Georgians and Tatars who have fled the Bolsheviks, Turks that have fled the Greeks, and Greeks that have fled the Turks, as well as some Armenians". Gustaf Wallenberg's archive contains numerous newspaper articles on the turbulent contemporary political developments, including a Swedish piece from 1921 that proclaimed that "the Russians are conquering Constantinople", as the city was "swamped with refugees from the former Tsar empire".

The following year, Wallenberg emphasised the need to purchase a car for the legation, writing to the National Property Board of Sweden: "Most legations have automobiles, and Constantinople is truly a city where they are much needed, considering the dreadful hills and the slippery pavings. It was easy enough back in the day when one was tugged around in sedan chairs." Wallenberg's description is a useful illustration of the situation of the upper echelons of society in the final days of the Ottoman Empire: "I am in mortal anguish when I use a coach in the company of my family. It is like traveling

on slippery ice, and the horses skid incessantly. I personally prefer taking the tram, but one cannot very well do that with well-dressed ladies.” Wallenberg subsequently informed the property board that he had taken the matter in his own hands, and had invested in a car for the legation: an “Austrian Fiat” purchased in Vienna during the winter. He also raised the issue of constructing a garage on the property, above the chapel.

The iron gate to the grand property was lavishly embellished. Images of the Palais de Suède during Wallenberg’s tenure as minister are testimonies to that the *Palais* lived up to its stately appellation, perhaps more than in any other period, with a reclining classical sculpture, lush floral installations and sumptuous furniture. It also illustrates how Wallenberg, like many of his predecessors, left his personal mark on the interior decoration, with private photos and various personal possessions: an Asian-inspired study, for example – an echo of his previous position of Swedish envoy to Japan. In 1922, the classical archaeologist Axel Boëthius, later the first director of the Swedish Institute in Rome, summarily referred to the legation premises as “incomparable”.

Johannes Kolmodin was appointed special adviser to Patrick Adlercreutz, Swedish delegate in the Lausanne Conference, charged with notifying him when the “capitulation question” appeared on the agenda. Kolmodin thereby spent Christmas that year in Lausanne. The conference was to last until the summer of 1923, when Kolmodin was appointed secretary at the Constantinople legation. Wallenberg, who (possibly influenced by Kolmodin) had referred to Mustafa Kemal as “protector of the realm”, welcomed the Treaty of Lausanne and the new beginnings that it foreshadowed.



Palais de Suède, coloured postcard. Riksarkivet, Gustaf Oscar Wallenbergs arkiv, 37c.



Jacques Pervititch (Jakub Pervitić), Kadıköy–Moda, insurance map, 1937
(courtesy of Istanbul Research Institute).

Starting from Scratch. Republican Turkey

The eighteenth-century commercial agreements and military alliances that had led to the honorary title of Sweden as “Turkey’s oldest friend” were followed by a “treaty of friendship and cooperation” with the Republic of Turkey. The new treaty, negotiated by Gustaf Wallenberg and signed at Ankara the last day of May 1924, referred to “an unbreakable peace” between Turkey and Sweden. Sweden thereby officially recognised the recent republic. In January 1925, King Gustaf V issued a new letter of credentials for Wallenberg, addressed to President Mustafa Kemal.

The botched Greek invasion of Turkey in 1922 and the ensuing Treaty of Lausanne was followed by a Greek-Italian conflict in 1923–1924. In 1924–1925, Einar af Wirsén, former military attaché in Constantinople (see chapter five), then Swedish envoy in Berlin, was chairman in the League of Nations’ post-Lausanne Mosul commission for the border dispute between Turkey and Iraq. Swedish Prime Minister Hjalmar Branting was *rapporteur* (appointed reporter) until his death in 1925. The Kurdish area was to be administered by Britain for 25 years, although Sweden abstained from the final vote, which caused a diplomatic snag.

Several of Guillaume Berggren’s glass plate photographs from Anatolia in connection with the Berlin–Baghdad railway were preserved at the Palais de Suède before being purchased by the German Archaeological Institute, possibly even before its establishment in 1929, as Hilda Ullin was discussing a possible sale in Sweden in 1925. It is also possible that certain glass plates had been purchased by the German legation in 1916, before its interests were assumed by the Swedish legation two years later.

In 1924, Gustaf Wallenberg purchased an additional marble spring water fountain for the Palais de Suède. Akin to the fountain installed in 1906, it was allegedly pulled by two black oxen from Stamboul up the hill to Pera.

This may be the fountain in either the front or the back garden of the Swedish compound – the one in the back garden remains in place today.

Johannes Kolmodin was engaged to be married and moved from his “oriental idyll” in Stamboul to the Dragoman House – the “consulate house”, referred to in a letter by Hilda Ullin as “the little house that has now been repaired”. Earlier holders of the dragoman office had made use of the building without paying rent, a favour that Kolmodin hoped would be extended also to him; at the same time, he grumbled that the Wallenberg couple “would prefer to have the legation as a small manor to themselves.” An oven and an “unserviceable” tiled stove was installed, and the Kolmodins moved in.

Although Ankara, Angora, was the new capital, most legations thus far remained in Constantinople. Before a Swedish “pied-à-terre” was set up in Ankara, predating a move of the legation proper, Johannes Kolmodin remarked (in 1925) that “it should now in fact be as natural to take the train up there as it used to be to take a car to the Sublime Porte”.

A Turkish-Swedish Society was established in Stockholm in 1925. The following year, when a new Turkish-Swedish trade treaty was concluded, the then thirteen-year-old Raoul Wallenberg – of later international renown as a diplomat during the Second World War, when he was abducted in Budapest in 1944 and ended up in Soviet Russian custody – travelled by train alone, supervised by train conductors, through Europe to Constantinople (via Belgrade, where he inspected ongoing political unrest) to visit his grandfather, Gustaf Wallenberg.

Prince Eugen, who had visited Constantinople and the Palais de Suède with his brother and parents – King Oskar II and Queen Sofia – in 1885, returned to the city in the spring of 1927 on an incognito visit, traveling from Athens. Johannes Kolmodin notified the Swedish consul at Piraeus about the prince’s travel arrangements, and Gustaf Wallenberg helped administer the consignment of “carpets and antiquities” purchased by Prince Eugen while in Constantino-



Gustaf Wallenberg to Noussret Bey, Constantinople delegate of the Turkish foreign ministry, concerning his grandson Raoul Wallenberg's journey to Turkey, 1926. Ottoman Archives, Istanbul, HR.İM.253.89.

ple. Before leaving Turkey, Eugen expressed his “respect and admiration for the noble nation and its great leader” in a note conveyed to Mustafa Kemal by the Swedish legation.

In the summer of 1927, Harry Fett, director-general of the Norwegian National Heritage Board, praised the Palais de Suède – “your beautiful Swedish legation” – in a letter to Johannes Kolmodin. Archbishop Nathan Söderblom was considering an ecumenical visit to Constantinople and to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. This was however dissuaded by Gustaf Wallenberg, partly to Kolmodin’s surprise and disappointment: it would be “seemly” in his opinion “if a Swedish high mass might be held in the legation chapel.”

Word of a possible transfer of the legation to Ankara began to circulate in Swedish newspapers, and Hilda Ullin, writing to Kolmodin from Sweden, expressed alarm at the prospect, which she found “downright dreadful”: “What will then happen to the pleasant legation house and the beautiful garden; will it be left deserted?” Ullin had recently been to a meeting of the Swedish-Turkish association where a promotional film from the L. M. Ericsson factories which was to appear in Turkey (with subtitles) was shown.

At the same time as the fate of the Swedish legation was discussed, the Soviet Union, in need of rapid revenue, rather reluctantly put the erstwhile Russian consulate general building opposite the Palais de Suède up for sale in 1928; it was purchased by Narmanlı Hacı Mustafa Bey in 1933, and has since been referred to as the Narmanlı Han, today a refurbished food hall and shopping centre. A new (tiled) roof for the Palais de Suède was discussed in 1929; the following year, the drains from the row of shops along the Grande Rue were connected to the sewer system that ran through the garden of the Swedish legation.

In the first years of the Republic of Turkey, the foreign ministry of the Grand National Assembly maintained a “Constantinople delegation”, and the Swedish legation did not transfer fully to Ankara until 1934. Gustaf Wallenberg was not inclined to leave the former imperial capital, and chose to remain there also after his retirement in 1930. He rather grudgingly referred to the city by its new official name, Istanbul, and wistfully clung to Constantinople, both as a name and as an idea. Wallenberg chose to live in Pera, close to the Palais de Suède, and was elected president of the *Cercle d’Orient* club on the Grande Rue: the *Büyük Kulüp*, or “big club”, described as *the* club (or the “club de la Ville”), founded in 1882, operating in its stately Neoclassical premises on the Grande Rue designed by Alexandre Vallauray from 1884 until 1971. Wallenberg’s favourite restaurant was that of the Park Hotel near Taksim square, a choice that he apparently shared with Mustafa Kemal.

The new *Ankara Palas* hotel (1928) became the temporary residence par excellence when visiting the new capital. Wallenberg for example notified Johannes Kolmodin about the death of Queen Victoria of Sweden in March

1930, in a telegram sent to Kolmodin at *Ankara Palas* from “Stamboul”, the same year that Constantinople officially changed its name to Istanbul. The old name was even legally banned in the wake of the name reform, the 1934 surname law, as was the case also for instance for Smyrna/İzmir and Trebizond/Trabzon.

Swedish business enterprises entered into the swift development of the nascent Republic of Turkey, amid Mustafa Kemal’s rapid reforms. The telephone manufacturer L. M. Ericsson started operating in İzmir and the coast of Asia minor in the 1920s, supplying the postal and telegraph company (PTT, the Turkish post) from the 1940s onwards; in the 1990s Ericsson was a founding shareholder and supplier of the mobile phone operator *Turkcell*.

Contemporary with the birth of the republic in 1923, the industrial manufacturing company *Atlas Copco* invested in a Turkish subsidiary. In 1927, the manufacturing company *Nydqvist & Holm AB (Nohab)* was contracted to build two railways in Anatolia alongside two Danish companies, delivering railway engines and freight carriages, the largest business deal that Sweden had made abroad, according to Gustaf Wallenberg. The Scandinavian enterprises were entrusted with connecting Ankara and the Black Sea (Ereğli) by 1935, and with tracks to the southeastern hinterland (Diyarbakır) and the Mediterranean (near İskenderun/Alexandretta).

Following an initiative by Wallenberg, the Swedish writer and journalist Ludvig “Lubbe” Nordström documented the railway constructions and other aspects of Kemal’s new republic in 1928, accompanied by Johannes Kolmodin. The ball-bearing and seal manufacturing company *SKF* initiated operations in Turkey the same year, the first Turkish branch of a Swedish corporation, followed by the vehicle manufacturers *Volvo* and *Scania (Scania-Vabis)* in the 1930s.

The chancery clerk Paul Mohn wrote a piece on the early history of the legation, and enthusiastically wrote to Johannes Kolmodin in 1928 about “Turkish-Swedish friendship”. Before setting off on a pioneer journey to Afghanistan, Mohn referred to the first Swedish envoys in Constantinople and the officer-adventurer de Bonneval: “I feel sort of like von Höpken and Edvard Carlson. It would of course be fun if I could meet a Bonneval as well in my expedition.”

The age-old translator-dragoman office had become defunct with the demise of the Ottoman state. Archbishop Nathan Söderblom, who had long hoped that the Swedish chapel might be resuscitated – allegedly even to the point of taking the job as chaplain himself – to no avail tried to persuade Johannes Kolmodin to be ordained as a priest and to become “a vicar in Constantinople”. Kolmodin was promoted to first secretary at the Swedish legation in 1928.

The following year, Kolmodin communicated with the classical archaeologist Axel W. Persson (Lennart Kjellberg's successor as professor in Uppsala) regarding a possible archaeological reconnaissance trip to the ancient region of Caria in Turkish Asia Minor. In the autumn of 1930, Persson's colleague Einar Gjerstad benefited from Kolmodin's benevolence and made use of the Palais de Suède as storage for no less than three crates of pottery from "various prehistoric places in Cilicia" (southwestern Turkey, where Gjerstad had gathered archaeological material earlier that year), sent by train from Antalya to Haydarpaşa station. In 1931, Kolmodin returned to Ethiopia as political adviser to Emperor Haile Selassie. He died in Addis Ababa in 1933.

When Gustaf Wallenberg retired in 1930, he was briefly succeeded by Carl von Heidenstam, who rented a villa on the outskirts of Ankara for occasional visits to the new capital – the house was slightly sardonically called the "Forest Edge House" (*Villa Skogsbrynet*), as there was one single tree next to it in the otherwise barren landscape. Von Heidenstam was soon transferred to Helsinki, however, and was in turn followed by Erik Boheman, who identified suitable new legation premises in the Çankaya district, then in the outskirts of the city, since then its cultural, financial and diplomatic centre.

Erik Boheman supposedly employed an Austrian architect to design an Italianate villa on the property, which was purchased in 1933. However, Boheman and his successors continued a tradition of furnishing also the Palais de Suède in Istanbul with personal household effects for temporary visits to the city (until 1951, when Envoy Adolf Croneborg was informed that the transport costs would be excessively high, which ended this practice).

In 1933, Torsten Weman, employed at the Swedish legation, clarified the arrangements concerning the new legation building ("Minister Boheman's invention") in a letter to Johannes Kolmodin: a "Swedish group" (seemingly connected to railway business interests) would erect the building, and the state would thereafter pay annual rent instalments. After 10 years, the Swedish state would assume ownership; in the interim period the "railway group" could claim demands due in Turkey. Weman outlined the advantages of the selected leafy plot of land, the "best situated" of several suggested alternative locations, "below the residence of [Prime Minister İsmet] Paşa" (later İsmet İnönü). Weman described the site as "surely the most beautiful in all of Çankaya".

In the summer of 1934, Axel W. Persson communicated with Envoy Erik Boheman regarding an excavation permit application "for a place in Turkey close to İzmir", in Caria – then a military exclusion zone – focusing on the area around Milas, northwest of Bodrum. The requested permit for preliminary excavations was denied, however, according to Boheman undoubtedly for military reasons. Persson instead made an inventory trip through Caria the following summer. He excavated the nearby hill of Gencik Tepe in 1938,

and returned to the area after the Second World War to excavate the site of Labraunda.

Arthur Engberg, Swedish minister of education, and Kerstin Hesselgren, the first female member of the Swedish Parliament, visited an “Interparliamentary Union” congress in Istanbul in 1934. A newspaper article reported the northern representatives’ “best impression of the Ottoman” (!) hosts.

The new Swedish legation premises in Ankara, with their residence and chancery, were completed by October 1934, when Crown Prince Gustaf (VI) Adolf – then chairman of the Swedish Orient Society – visited Turkey with his wife, Crown Princess Louise, and his daughter, Princess Ingrid (later queen of Denmark), on an “Orient” voyage (September 1934–January 1935).

When the Turkish leg of the royal tour was being prepared in the spring of 1934, the Envoy Erik Boheman informed Hans Gustaf Beck-Friis, head of the political department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, that due to the “all but brilliant developments down here”, all his political and economic reports ought to be shared with Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf and with Erik Wetter, director of the Swedish Orient Line (and later member of the board of the Swedish institutes in both Rome and Athens), who accompanied the royal party.

In a confidential ciphertext telegram from Carl Hamilton, cabinet secretary at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Boheman was asked his opinion whether a gift from the king of Sweden to both the president of Greece and to Mustafa Kemal would be opportune, as “the crown prince presumes that the Turks do not accept decorations”



“Istanbul: from left [Göran] Posse, [Crown Princess Louise], [Erik] Boheman, [Stina] Reuterswärd” (photograph: Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf), October 1934. ©Kungl. Hovstaterna/The Royal Court, bildarkiv, GVIA A346e.



“Kemal [Atatürk’s] extra train en route from Smyrna to Aleppo” (Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf and Crown Princess Louise, with Atatürk’s portrait in the background), October 1934. ©Kungl. Hovstaterna/The Royal Court, bildarkiv, GVIA A346e.

(this predated the later Kemalist principles introduced in 1937). The royal travel program was discussed in great detail with the Swedish legation. The royal party first travelled to Ankara to inaugurate the new Swedish legation premises there, in Atatürk's presence. The ensuing lunch was frequented also by Prime Minister İsmet İnönü and Foreign Minister Tevfik Rüstü Aras. A gala banquet at the presidential mansion was described in a Swedish newspaper as the first such official event organised there. Atatürk – unusually – spoke French with his royal guests.

The royal party seemingly resided in the Palais de Suède during their near week-long stay in Istanbul (6–11 October). A reception was organised at “the nearby Pera Palace hotel”. Four of the days in Istanbul were spent incognito. On 7 October, the royal party visited Hagia Sophia “with newly uncovered mosaics”, followed by a tea reception at the Palais de Suède for the Swedish colony in Istanbul.

In his travel notebook (notes on art), Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf expressed his admiration for Hagia Sophia: “A wonderful church! I had not thought that it was so well preserved. Everything is in place, despite the church being built in 532–537.” He continued to note details in the entrance hall, the mosaic decorations, the “stately” columns with “their entirely intact capitals”: “The large 6–8 metre-high bronze doors still stand in their place after 1400 years!”. He was also presented with a photograph album at the Istanbul archaeological museum.



“L. and G. [Louise and Gustaf Adolf] in the Sultan Ahmed [Sultanahmet] Mosque”.

©Kungl. Hovstaterna/The Royal Court, bildarkiv, GVIA A346e.



“Kemal Atatürk and G.” (among others, from the occasion of the inauguration of the Swedish legation at Ankara, October 1934).

©Kungl. Hovstaterna/The Royal Court, bildarkiv, GVIA A346e.

The royal party travelled onward to İzmir (Smyrna), where they stayed in “Kemal Atatürk’s house” and went on excursions to Ephesus and Pergamon, before leaving Turkey on a special train provided by Atatürk for the onward journey to Syria. In between cultural history sightseeing and receptions, Gustaf Adolf also promoted Swedish business and industrial interests on the royal Orient voyage. He for example visited a recently founded Swedish-backed galosh factory in Istanbul. His son Prince Bertil joined the party in Aleppo for its onward Eastern travels.

On their return to Sweden in late January 1935, the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* noted apropos the Turkish leg of the “Orient” tour, that “the Turks know us particularly well by means of [King] Karl XII, whose memory truly still lives on, but also through the railway constructions in Anatolia to which Swedish railway constructors have contributed.”

In 1936, Torsten Weman, later vice-consul (deputy consul) in Istanbul, wished to join the Swedish Orient Society, and was welcomed by its secretary-founder, the archaeologist Ture J. Arne, who “hoped to win more of the members of the legation as members, with the envoy at its head”; a wish that was soon fulfilled when Erik Boheman’s successor Wilhelm Winther followed in Weman’s footsteps, with an invitation to Arne to stay in the Palais de Suède or in Ankara, “which is well worth a visit.”

Looking back on his period as envoy in Ankara and Turkey as a “bridge between the Orient and the Occident” in a 1937 interview, Winther specifically stressed the significance of the royal Orient voyage. In 1938,



The row of shops along İstiklal Caddesi (to the left) c. 1937.
Riksarkivet, Kungliga Byggnadsstyrelsen, Utrikesbyrån, F1A:83.

Torsten Weman met with the two Swedish sisters Elisabeth (“Lisbeth”) and Margaretha (“Greta”) Listervik at the Palais de Suède, and attempted to deter them from their staggering project of circumventing the globe by foot.

The row of shops continued to provide rental revenue for the Palais de Suède (approximately 20 000 Swedish crowns annually from 1920 to 1933), although a 1937 report emphasised that the commercial epicentre of İstiklal Caddesi (still referred to as “Pera street”) was increasingly being transferred from the Tünel area to its other end, towards Taksim Square, with a feared continued “qualitative degradation” of the shops and their commercial profiles as a result.

The overall identity of the property was suddenly uprooted. No longer a legation, it was no longer a focal point of Swedish diplomacy, although the state ownership was maintained. A “serious offer” to purchase the Palais de Suède property (for 250 000 Turkish pounds) appears to have been made during the Second World War, in 1940, although it did not “occasion taking any measures”.

The Swedish legation, later embassy, in Ankara took over the functions of the ex-legation in the former capital. The legation secretary upheld an official residence in the Palais de Suède, which was used until the early 1950s only for brief spells as the summer residence of the Swedish envoy. Before and during the Second World War, minor reparations were carried out to the premises, expenses added to illumination and heating, as well as upkeep of the garden and the subsistence of a gatekeeper.



The row of shops along İstiklal Caddesi (to the right) c. 1937.
Riksarkivet, Kungliga Byggnadsstyrelsen, Utrikesbyrån, F1A:83.

With the experiences from the First World War and their disastrous consequences for the Ottoman Empire in mind, Republican Turkey opted for neutrality in the Second World War. During the war years, when a large number of Jewish and other refugees found shelter in Turkey, several cases of exchanges of women and children were handled by the Swedish legation in Ankara, where certain dossiers were deposited for safekeeping in a tin locker in the minister's residence.

In 1943, the Palais de Suède became the seat of an honorary (unsalaried) consulate general. The first and only incumbent was the businessman Carl Gustaf (Gösta) Gislöw. The Dragoman House was the seat of the honorary consul general – until 1953, when the position became a career consulate. Towards the end of the war (1944), financial contributions were dealt with to the upkeep of some of the Swedish Red Cross liners that transported grain to Greece – and to Turkey.

The row of shops along İstiklal Caddesi remained a defining feature of the surrounding Tünel area, with some establishments continuing as household names after the war, such as the tailors Voedovich, the Heidrich book shop and the shoemaker Burguy. Competition could be found at the Dutch tailor Botter next door (the building is still referred to as the Botter apartments) and the British fabric seller Hayden. The writer Said Naum-Duhani captured much of the mood and character of İstiklal Caddesi in a post-war book that documented the “Pera” – renamed *Beyoğlu* – “of jazz and saz” (the latter being a long-necked lute).

After the war, in the autumn of 1946, the same year that parliamentary democracy was introduced in Turkey, two separate suggestions were raised by the Swedish Envoy Eric von Post for “a better utilisation of the legation property in Istanbul”: to use the chapel for a seamen's home or a guest house, and to erect an “office building” on İstiklal Caddesi, a *Maison suédoise*, or “Sweden house”, possibly funded by Swedish company representatives in Turkey, in effect replacing the row of shops. This echoed the earlier notion of removing the buildings along the street. By then, the pre-war commercial “balance” in relation to Taksim Square appears to have shifted, in favour of the Tünel area: “the business location is said to be as good as it gets”. The suggestion also included a possible expansion of the property with an additional narrow strip of land, a notion not further acted on.

The legation archive at the Palais de Suède that had been scrutinised by Paul Mohn in the turmoil after the First World War was sent to Sweden after the Second, in 1947. The following year, when an earthquake caused cracks in the perimeter wall of the legation – possibly in the vicinity of the Dragoman House – the classical archaeologist Axel W. Persson returned to Caria in southwestern Turkey, this time to start excavating the site of Labraunda, close to Milas, associated with the supreme deity, Zeus. The site had been

identified in the mid-nineteenth century, and preliminary studies had been carried out in 1932, by the French archaeologist Alfred Laumonier. Its best-preserved archaeological remains were erected during the Hekatomnid dynasty, particularly the mid-fourth century BC rulers (and brothers) Mausolus and Idrieus.

Other than to investigate the site itself, Axel W. Persson was – without success, as it turned out – hoping to find traces of a continuation of Bronze Age Cretan (Minoan) culture at Labraunda and a possible “Rosetta Stone”-like inscription in Carian and the as yet undeciphered Minoan “Linear A” script. Later Carian inscriptions were revealed, however. The Labraunda excavations continued until 1960, despite Persson’s demise in 1951, and were resumed in the 1970s, then under the aegis of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul. The excavations have continued until today, since 2018 under the auspices of an international team.



*From the excavation of Andron B, Labraunda, 1948. Photograph: Åke Åkerström.
Labraunda-arkivet (fotografier), Uppsala universitetsbibliotek.*



The garden of the Palais de Suède, c. 1937. Riksarkivet, Kungliga Byggnadsstyrelsen, Utrikesbyrån, F1A:83.

“Make the Valuable Property Profitable”. “Sweden House” and Research Institute

Kemalism, or Atatürk’s “Turkish Socialism”, began to lose its grip on the young republic after the Second World War, with an ensuing liberalised political plurality and a parliamentary democracy in Turkey in the immediate post-war period. The Democrat Party, founded in 1946, won the 1950 elections, a stepping stone to a modern Western-influenced democracy. Adnan Menderes became prime minister, and the office at least temporarily surpassed that of the president in political significance.

The earlier notion of a possible *Maison suédoise* on İstiklal Caddesi was reintroduced in the summer of 1950, when the Swedish government assigned a considerable sum of money (500 000 Swedish crowns) for the erection of a “Sweden House”, which was to replace the row of shops with offices and exhibition spaces in order to showcase Swedish export industry – the concept predated for example the present “House of Sweden” in Washington, D.C. (2006) by fifty years. A clear interest was shown by SAS (*Scandinavian Airlines System*), the ball-bearing company SKF, the Swedish Orient Line and L. M. Ericsson.

As was the case in 1946, a merchant sailor’s home was again considered for the Swedish property, although this time neither in nor attached to the chapel. Voices were raised to “make the valuable property profitable”, and to dedicate up to three floors in the suggested four- or five-storey office building (with “the character of a private business complex”) to the activities of the planned “Sweden House”, with a separate entrance. Yet the project could only be achieved if the row of shops was demolished, and the issue of legal procedures for evicting its tenants was thus raised. It all came to nothing, however, although similar discussions would resurface ten years later.

At the same time, in the early 1950s, the idea of establishing a Swedish research institute in Istanbul was raised, following in the footsteps of the earlier attempt in the 1920s and the similar institutes in Rome and in Athens. King Gustaf VI Adolf, chairman of both institutes (in Rome and Athens) before he ascended to the throne in 1950, enthusiastically supported the idea of an institute also in Istanbul, a good match with his personal strong interests in archaeology, art and cultural history. The question was where to house such an institution, and what to do with the Palais de Suède itself.

In the summer of 1952, King Gustaf Adolf discussed the by and large neglected “legation building in Stambul” with Adolf Croneborg, the first Swedish envoy to Turkey with the title of ambassador (in 1957). The king received Croneborg at Sofiero Palace, his summer residence in southern Sweden. The palace building and the chapel, it was felt, played second fiddle to the property per se, to the point of running the risk of the structures being replaced by new buildings: “It is quite likely the property itself and its old local denomination: Palais de Suède, that has traditional value”.

The only viable way to fund a new building in Istanbul, with a “*piéd à terre*” in the former capital for the envoy in Ankara, seemingly would be to sell the attractive property. Domenico Pulgher’s nineteenth-century palace would “probably be very impractical to use as a Swedish institute, for the house is much too big and would only adequately be made use of in part to such an end – for example the top floor. What should one then do with the rest of it?” Gustaf Adolf however admitted that “in and of itself, it would be most tempting to attempt to create a Swedish research institute in Stambul, and I have often considered it. But how shall one fund it?” The issue was partly resolved when the research institute was created a decade later.

At the time of Gustaf Adolf’s discussion with Adolf Croneborg, the Palais de Suède was inhabited by Vice-Consul Torsten Weman, who had lost some personal possessions when the building was burgled in the spring of 1951. Two years later, the Palais de Suède adopted a new guise, having served mainly as an occasional summer residence for the Swedish envoy for almost twenty years, when a career consulate was created in 1953 – the consulate was upgraded to a consulate general in 1962. The legation in Ankara was accordingly restyled as an embassy.

The Istanbul premises, with two twenty-metre cypresses in the front garden as landmarks, had for some time also housed



The Palais de Suède gateway on İstiklal Caddesi, September 1955. Riksarkivet, Kungliga Byggnadsstyrelsen, Utrikesbyrån, F1A:84.

the Swedish Seamen's Church, open also to other Scandinavian (Norwegian and Danish) merchant seamen. Various repairs and rearrangements were carried out in 1953–1954, with the conversion to a consulate: the main entrance door as well as the gateway appear to have been refashioned at that time; a kitchen and bathroom was installed on the first floor, and a new gatekeeper was employed.

The open roof terrace of the Dragoman House was covered the same year. 1953 was also the year of the inauguration of the Atatürk Mausoleum (*Anıtkabir*) in Ankara – one of the architects on the monument jury was the Swede Ivar Tengbom – and of the accidental collision in the Dardanelles of the Swedish Orient Line vessel *M/V Naboland* with the Turkish submarine *Dumlupınar*; an incident that took some time to unravel, with the Swedish Captain Oscar Lorentzon ending up being detained in Turkish custody for six months, assisted by Vice-Consul Torsten Weman. Weman was later described by the Envoy Eric von Post as an "indefatigable guide and counsellor of so many Swedish tourists and sailors". In 1963, the Swedish author Artur Lundkvist commended "consul [Weman], the turkified Swede, who could draw upon vast and often unique experiences of the country".

Echoing his nineteenth-century predecessor Oscar Magnus Björnster-na's reference to the old town of Stockholm, Eric von Post compared İstiklal Caddesi, which he referred to still as "Pera Street", to the main urban artery of *Drottninggatan* (Queen Street) in the Swedish capital, emphasising the commercial potential of the location of the Palais de Suède vis-à-vis the other former legion buildings in the vicinity.

In 1954, parts of the wall around the Swedish property were repaired. At the same time, a (nominal) rent was suggested for the use of the chapel by the Greek Protestant congregation, which had enjoyed free access to it since 1889. Three years later, the congregation approached King Gustaf VI Adolf with a supplication to that effect – use free of charge – when a possible extension to the chapel was on the agenda. The possible sale of the land next to the chapel was considered in 1955. The tiled roof of the Palais de Suède is clearly visible in the bottom-left corner of a panorama photograph from the same year, when the 1758 fountain in the garden was seemingly also given some refurbishment attention.



The Palais de Suède and its surrounding wall, with cars and pedestrians, September 1955. Riksarkivet, Kungliga Byggnadsstyrelsen, Utrikesbyrån, F1A:84.



*The Palais de Suède and the Dragoman House, summer 1956. Photographs: Jaan Allpere.
Riksarkivet, Kungliga Byggnadsstyrelsen, Utrikesbyrån, F1A:85.*

In the process of adjusting the spatial disposition of the Palais de Suède, two rooms on the top floor were to be made available for research use. Bearing in mind his conversation with Gustaf VI Adolf a few years earlier, Envoy Adolf Croneborg raised the notion of “somehow making this space available to Swedish scientists” in a 1955 memorandum: “Especially if one thinks of Istanbul as a vantage point for studies in all of the Near East, the circle of researchers that could be interested in a ‘pied-à-terre’ in Istanbul would seem to become rather substantial.” According to Croneborg, Foreign Minister Östen Undén considered decorating the two rooms “with suitable standard Swedish furniture, at the expense of the state”. No rent expenses would thus be necessary, and travel and subsistence costs could be covered by grants for researchers that, Croneborg suggested, might be directly appointed by the university chancellor, thus sidestepping the need for an institute board such as those for the Swedish institutes in Rome and Athens.

The arrangement would have several advantages: “presently unused spaces in the envoy’s residence could benefit Swedish research at little expense”, “at the same time contributing to the strengthening of cultural relations between Sweden and Turkey [and] giving additional life and meaning to our country’s almost two-hundred-year-old property in Istanbul.” Croneborg’s vision would indeed come to fruition before long, and a research institute seed had unquestionably been sown.

A few months later, in early September 1955, in connection with Greek-Turkish disputes over Cyprus, a bomb exploded at the Turkish con-

sulate in Thessaloniki, the house where Kemal Atatürk was born. The event, which was falsely portrayed as a Greek attack, instigated the so-called "Istanbul pogroms": two days of mob riots and assaults on non-Muslims, primarily the Greek minority, that harmed also Armenians, Jewish (and Muslim) Istanbul and their properties. A large number of shops along İstiklal Caddesi were destroyed in the process, with some damage also to some of the shop fronts of the "Swedish bazaar".

The Swedish-Estonian architect Jaan Allpere assessed the Palais de Suède in a report commissioned by the national property board, submitted in July 1956 from the Swedish Institute in Rome. A return to its earlier formal appearance was under consideration, comparing the hitherto "semi-uncultivated", "near-romantic" garden of the palace with that of the "shady, cool and moist" Soviet consulate garden along İstiklal Caddesi, with its "elegant atmosphere". The "colourful flowerbeds of the Swedish consulate general" were described by Allpere as "a touching attempt to create manor-like surroundings": "It appears that the interest in details have been given precedence to the totality."

A new flagpole was ordered for the Palais de Suède following Jaan Allpere's report. In a 1957 essay on the bicentenary of the former legation ("Sverige 200 år i Turkiet") the linguist, teacher and author Gösta Langenfelt summarised its history. He also took the opportunity to advocate a Swedish research institute in Istanbul. The archivist Alf Åberg was also approached regarding a possible anniversary publication.



The Palais de Suède chapel and its surroundings, summer 1956. Photographs: Jaan Allpere. Riksarkivet, Kungliga Byggnadsstyrelsen, Utrikesbyrån, F1A:85.

Adolf Croneborg, the Swedish envoy, was elevated to ambassador the same year, 1957, and simultaneously promoted an informal arrangement in the Palais de Suède: the use of a two-room apartment on the second floor by Swedish archaeologists, vacated by the clerk at the consulate-general towards the end of 1956. Croneborg had received authorisation for this setup from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1956 (renewed in 1958).

The researcher rooms were furnished using funds made available by the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation and were launched around 1957, with involvement by the Swedish Institute organisation for the promotion of Sweden abroad, which advertised scholarships for sojourns in the Palais de Suède. The historian of religion Stig Wikander was one of the early residents in the researcher rooms (in 1959). In early 1961, Wikander, representing an interim committee for the establishment of a research institute in Istanbul, approached Östen Undén and Ragnar Edenman, ministers of respectively foreign affairs and education, regarding the possibility to dispose the top floor of the Palais de Suède “for the institute”.

An interim board for a Swedish research institute was arranged in February 1961, and the institute received early financial support for three years from the Swedish lumbering company *Mo och Domsjö Aktiebolag* (*Modo*, today *Holmen*). Stig Wikander thanked the company chairman, Carl Kempe, and added that the view from the researcher rooms in the Palais de Suède, that included “a part of Asia”, was “the most beautiful in Europe”.

The significance of a research institute was framed by Stig Wikander at an early stage as enabling specialist education in connection with Swedish “oriental” aid and relief work, as well as organising field activity and excavations, also further eastward: possible excavations in Iran (Persia) were mentioned in this connection. A possible new edifice along İstiklal Caddesi, a replacement for the row of shops, was discussed as an alternative to future lodgings for the intended institute. A possible institute in Ankara was also mentioned as an alternate prospect.

1960 witnessed a military coup in Turkey, with officers and cadets from the Istanbul and Ankara war colleges ousting Adnan Menderes’ government on the pretext that the principles of the secular and progressive Kemalist state were being threatened. The Democratic Party was dispersed, and three ministers, including Menderes, were executed after a trial on the island of Yassıada in the Sea of Marmara. A new constitution followed in 1961 – the same year that a chancery was added to the Swedish embassy premises in Ankara – and İsmet İnönü, Atatürk’s successor as president in 1938, reappeared, this time as prime minister. İnönü suppressed criticism of the army, despite criticism of the 1960 “revolution” having been made illegal in 1962. A radicalisation of the left and the right and political violence was to follow over the coming two decades.

At this point, the Swedish consul general resided in the Dragoman House (which was partly redecorated in 1960). The sometimes-leaking roof of the main building was a weak spot and a recurring nuisance. In 1961, Vice-Consul Torsten Weman referred to it as "a sword of Damocles literally hanging over the Istanbul property".

Despite perhaps initial misgivings regarding state funding, the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (*Svenska forskningsinstitutet i Istanbul*) became a reality the following year, in 1962, run by a board in Stockholm – preceded by a committee, founded in May 1961 – the only Nordic such institution in Istanbul to date. Stig Wikander served as chairman in the mid-1960s. Various summer courses for archaeologists and art historians were organised during the institute's early years, with the philologist and Byzantinist Gustav H. Karlsson as its first director. In due course, the institute offered scholarships for studies in Turkey, covering a wide range of scholarly disciplines: classical archaeology, linguistics (Turkology), history, art, cultural heritage, ethnography, sociology, political science and international relations.

The consulate became a consulate general the same year (1962), when a UNESCO council meeting was also held in Istanbul. The National Property Board of Sweden concurrently commissioned the architectural historian Bengt Johansson to conduct a historical study of the Palais de Suède (the idea was raised in the autumn of 1961) as a basis for a decision on the future of the property, "as certain difficulties present themselves for the rational use of the premises for their present purpose", as Johansson put it. He spent the autumn in Istanbul on a grant from the recently established research institute. Johansson's inquiry was completed in 1964, and was published by the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities four years later.

Bengt Johansson expressed to Mårten Stenberger, chairman of the board of the research institute, that he hoped that his study and "the historical facts that [he had raised] could be an argument against selling the property, should this still be on the cards." Stenberger duly thanked him for his "grand" history of "the Constantinopolitan consulate property".

The first lecture organised under the aegis of the institute was held by the architect Börje Blomé – on research in Italy – to an audience of about 120 people in the spring of 1965. The institute also received support via King Gustaf VI Adolf, from the so-called "King's Fund" (*Kungafonden*).

Bengt Johansson's historical survey of the Palais de Suède effectively ended in the late 1880s, however, due to a hiatus (in 1887) in the then available foreign office archival material. The inquiry indeed provided the Swedish government with sufficient grounds not to sell the property, but to rather use it in order to strengthen relations with Turkey in general and Istanbul in particular. Johansson for example highlighted the eighteenth-century religious rationale for representation in Constantinople in the first place. He

also stressed the somewhat cynical Swedish treatment of the property on several occasions, and that it would be noteworthy if it were to endure.

The row of shops that formed the “Swedish bazaar” along İstiklal Caddesi was ultimately demolished in the summer of 1965, despite proposed façade alterations two years earlier (the decision to tear down the shops was made in December 1961). Several of the tenants were far from pleased, however, and protested in writing to the Swedish foreign minister. They also took legal action; a process was initiated in 1962 that lasted until spring 1965.

Swedish attempts at settling the issue amicably were made, to no avail. It was a losing battle in the end, however, and the remaining shop tenants were ultimately evicted after a drawn-out court process. The supposed difficulty of finding equally commercially attractive premises locally was an argument that did not much impress the Swedish powers that be. One of several arguments in favour of the demolition was freeing space for a parking lot – a hundred square metres in total, for six cars.

The shops were replaced with the present perimeter wall, limited to half a metre in height, and an iron fence on either side of the Pulgher-Ehrenhoff gateway, which remained in place. The fence was regarded as “absolutely required as protection in view of the unsettled circumstances that often prevail in Istanbul, recently the action against the Greek minority on account of the Cyprus crisis.” A small section of land was concurrently conceded for the planned widening of İstiklal Caddesi.

Repairs, roughcasting, were carried out to the wall of the adjacent house after the shop buildings had been demolished. The earlier suggestion of replacing the row of shops with a “Sweden House” to promote Swedish businesses had resurfaced. Another suggestion raised before the demolition took place was to erect a new living quarters for the porter and the gardener, as well as a building for the Swedish Research Institute, with plans drawn up by Orhan Günsoy, the national property board’s local architect representative.

It is notable that the decision to demolish the shops was made without a clear notion of what was to replace them: in the spring of 1965, only months before the shops were taken down, the options discussed by the property board still ranged from fencing off the garden, building new offices – or shops! – to putting the entire property up for sale.

The Palais de Suède was beginning to run the risk of becoming a historical curiosity of sorts; a precarious condition in the modernising wave of the 1960s, with suggested linoleum and wall-to-wall carpets, as well as an (unspecified) “gentleman’s room”. The main palace building was renovated soon after the demolition of the shops along İstiklal: the “beautiful old parquet flooring” was damaged by insects, and “pieces of the gypsum ceiling” in the “state apartment” had begun to crumble and to become detached.



Photograph of damages to the adjacent wall following the demolition of the row of shops, 1965.
Riksarkivet, Kungliga Byggnadsstyrelsen, Utrikesbyrån, F1A:87.

The restoration resulted in a partly new disposition of the palace building: the consulate general shared the office space on the ground floor with Swedish, Norwegian and Danish naval representatives for trade and other commercial purposes, and one more room was considered for an extension of the research institute apartment.

The Church of Sweden Abroad organisation – the former Seamen's Church – did not show much interest in the chapel on the premises, which was instead used by the Greek Lutheran congregation. A new organ for the chapel was discussed (and possibly installed) in 1963, at about the same time that Consul General Harald Edelstam acquired a rug that is still in place today, in the grand salon of the main building.

In 1965, the Swedish writer and poet Gunnar Ekelöf, who referred to himself as "as Byzantine as a Swede can get", visited Turkey for two weeks,

immersing himself in historical and spiritual inspiration. After his death three years later, Ekelöf's ashes were scattered on the river Pactolos (the Sart stream, or Gümüş Çayı, the silver brook) at Sardis (Salihli); an alabaster egg engraved with the years of Ekelöf's birth and death was placed among the pebbles in the river bed.

In the 1990s, a monumental bust of Ekelöf by the sculptor Gürdal Duyar was commissioned by a group of Turkish poets, and was to be placed where Ekelöf's ashes were scattered, but was instead installed in the lower garden of the Palais de Suède, next to the Dragoman House. The sculpture was recently (2020) moved to a more prominent location next to the entrance of the research institute auditorium and its guesthouse annex building.

An early guest in the research institute's apartment in the Palais de Suède in 1965/1966, was the classical archaeologist and ancient historian Paavo Roos, who would later direct the institute. The consul general at this time yet resided in the Dragoman House (next to which a new wall was erected).

Pierre Bothén, the new consul general, was unimpressed with the state of the palace upon arrival the same year. A large chunk of plaster for example suddenly dropped from the ceiling in one of the chancery rooms on the ground floor. Bothén wrote to the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and drew a drastic conclusion, along the lines of an (unnamed) inquiry: "The present use of the two buildings [the palace and the Dragoman House] is not rational"; "the buildings are advanced in years and worn out": they "should be demolished, and a new building should be erected on the property. [...] The building as a whole would in this way adopt the character of a Sweden house, which would seem to me to be a welcome solution." Bothén however drew the line at selling the property. Thankfully, not all aesthetic historical sensibility was sacrificed on the altar of modern functionalism and "rationality"; the era of demolitions came to a halt with the disposal of the "Swedish bazaar" on İstiklal.

Commercial opportunities were, unsurprisingly, a recurring feature of such a visible, prominently placed property. When the row of shops were demolished, the consulate general was approached by the Istanbul "Union Church" – a "non-denominational Protestant church serving the English-speaking community", housed in the nearby Dutch consulate general chapel – regarding consent for the installation of a possible advertisement board on the now visible firewall next to the Swedish property, which would however affect the appearance of the house and the garden.

Until that point, one of the gardener's tasks was to raise the Swedish flag on the roof of the Palais de Suède, "at least every Sunday, according to Turkish custom". In 1967, Consul General Bothén instead suggested the installation of a flagpole in front of the palace: it would be more visible, he argued, and the gardener, Hasan, "would not need to risk his life every time he is to

hoist the flag". Pierre Bothén remained largely unimpressed with the building as a whole, however, and referred to a "difference of opinion" regarding "the character of the house", as well as to the memoirs of Erik Boheman, in which the former envoy had somewhat disparagingly compared the aspect of the Palais de Suède with that of "a substantial Swedish manor building".

Pierre Bothén was not pleased with the living quarters in the Dragoman House for himself and his family: it was, in his view, surrounded by "slum-like habitation" that resulted in "vermin" – he mentioned rats and a scorpion – and he expressed a wish to "move out from the Pera area". In spite of this, a modest extension to the chapel was suggested in this period. In 1969, the foreign minister decreed that the residence of the consul general would be the Palais de Suède itself rather than the Dragoman House. Bothén consequently moved into the palace building. He occupied its first floor and part of the second, leaving the research institute apartment on the top floor intact. The vice-consul Ralf Erro moved into Bothén's former quarters, although the board of the institute were beginning to consider the possibility of making use of the Dragoman House.

The same year, *Alarko Holding*, a business conglomerate co-founded by Istanbul businessman and investor İshak Alaton, oversaw the installation of a new water reservoir in the Dragoman House. Alaton was in many ways a "Swedophile"; he had spent three years in Sweden in the early 1950s working as a welder at the *Motala Verkstad* locomotive manufacturing plant. Alaton learned Swedish, and married Margarete von Proschek in 1958 in Sweden. Telegrams to his holding company were sent to "Svedotürk – İstanbul". It would seem that he was also quite well-acquainted with Consul General Bothén.

The 1960s witnessed a steady increase in labour immigration from Turkey to Sweden. The early trade investments in Turkey by the above-mentioned Swedish companies in the 1920s and 1930s were followed by many others from the late 1960s onwards – in food processing, power transmission and energy distribution, pharmaceuticals, household appliances, as well as in education, tourism and information technology – with an increase in bilateral trade from the 1980s onwards.

In 1970–1971, Pulgher's palace could celebrate its centenary. The commemoration seemingly elapsed in anonymity – no traces have yet come to light of any anniversary celebrations, official or otherwise. In March 1970, Vice-Consul Ralf Erro sent a postcard to the national property board that pictured the new Bosphorus Bridge under construction (it was completed in 1973). A year later, the military "coup by memorandum" led to Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel's resignation.

İstiklal Caddesi and its pavements were given an asphalt makeover in 1971. A sentry box was installed by the gateway of the Palais de Suède "for the two policemen who are stationed in the garden day and night", at the

same time as iron lattices for the ground floor windows of the palace were suggested by Consul General Bothén, who also oversaw refurbishments of the residence of the consul general in 1972, the year that he was succeeded by Louis De Geer. The new consul general was sent a copy of Bengt Johansson's book on the property by Tom Sacklén, director of the national property board, with the hope "that it will substantiate your good relations with the Turkish authorities."

The chancery ground floor of the Palais de Suède featured a small apartment (with a kitchen) to the right of the entrance. New locks were installed in the spring of 1973; De Geer requested "a yellowish colour if possible, in order to harmonise with the style of the house". Alarko Holding returned in the summer of 1973 with a bid for repairs to the water pump in the cellar of the Palais de Suède.

In the autumn, the Swedish research institute discussed a rental of the Dragoman House with the national property board. It would thus move from the top floor of the Palais de Suède and effectively change places with the consul general, who would occupy the remainder of the third floor. The arrangement had been raised that spring. The Dragoman House was thereby indeed rented out to the institute, initially on a yearly basis. The setup was an elegant solution, potentially more long-term, and was appreciated by most, except – at least initially – by the vice-consul (later consul general), Erik Sidenmark, who had no choice but to vacate the premises. The decision was communicated to him in a telegram; adding insult to injury, Sidenmark was forced to move during a period of post-surgery convalescence: "Rarely have I received a more disagreeable message in the 23 years that I have spent abroad".

The Swedish research institute moved into the Dragoman House in the spring and summer of 1974, more or less at the same time that Turkey invaded and occupied northern Cyprus. Some library shelves from the apartment in the Palais de Suède were transferred to the institute's new lodgings. From then on, after various relocations, the consul general has occupied the second floor of the palace building. Since 1992, the director of the research institute has resided in the top floor apartment of the Dragoman House, also with views of the Bosphorus.

The Dragoman House salon, used for receptions, was decorated with Swedish Karl Johan (Charles XIV John) Empire style furniture. The institute had thus far relied mainly on funding from Swedish foundations (such as the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation), private companies (such as *Asea Brown-Boveri*, *Atlas Copco*, Ericsson, SAS and *Tetra Pak*) and individual donations. Possible state funding was considered at the same time as the institute moved into the Dragoman House in 1974. This came to fruition two years later, in 1976.

“Shops, a Hotel Tower and What Have You”. Neoliberalism, Protection, Restoration

Louis De Geer was succeeded by Erik Sidenmark in 1975: first as consul, then as consul general, in 1977. The following year, after paint works in the chapel and repairs to the national coat of arms on the roof of the Palais de Suède, Sidenmark reported damages to the roof and the terrace of the Dragoman House.

The influential Turcologist Gunnar Jarring, former ambassador (to Washington, D.C. and to Moscow) and UN special envoy, was chairman of the board of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul for a number of years, during which period the annual proceedings of the institute began to be published – from 1976, renamed *Dragomanen* (“the Dragoman”) in 1996. The institute’s publications included continuous Labraunda excavation reports. In 1977, marking the research institute’s fifteenth anniversary, an exhibition took place at the royal library in Stockholm, on “Sweden and Turkey” in historical retrospect, from the mid-sixteenth century until the 1930s.

In the summer of 1979, the Greek Protestant congregation appealed to the consulate general for the continued use of the main gate rather than “the lower gate” by the chapel for its Sunday morning church services, “a privilege [that] we have been enjoying for the last 100 years”. The main reason for this request was that the steep hill leading to the back entrance would be a strain on the community, which consisted of a dozen “elderly people” (the congregation had once counted up to 120 members). It is unclear whether or not this request was granted.

Another military coup took place in Turkey in September 1980, amid fears of a religious upsurge drawing inspiration from the Iranian Revolution (1978–1979) that had resulted in the declaration of an Islamic republic. The same period witnessed the creation of the leftist PKK and increased Kurdish

unrest. A major anti-terrorist security operation with armed clashes, thousands of arrests, imprisonment, torture, and executions followed in the wake of the 1980 coup. The political system was reformed once more, resulting in a new constitution, approved by referendum in 1982.

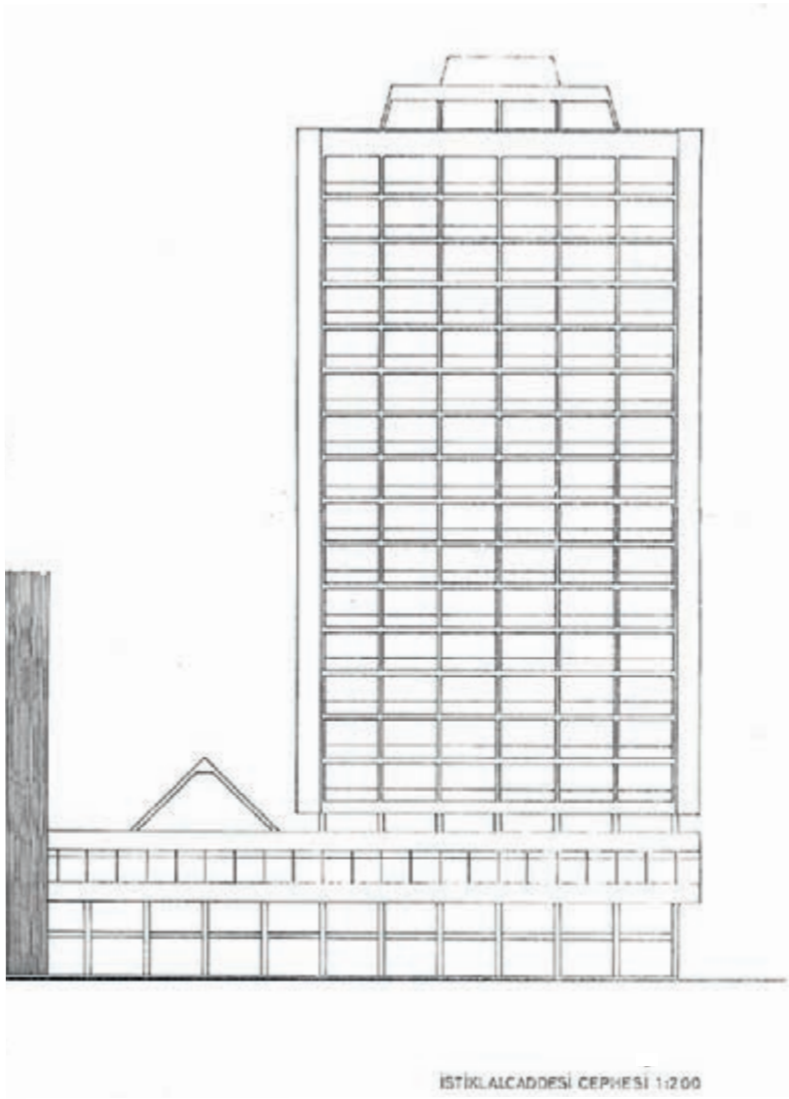
Turgut Özal, prime minister of Turkey 1983–1989, thereafter president until his death in 1993, strived for improved connections with Western Europe and to make Turkey a full member of the European Communities. Özal emphasised Turkey as a bridge between East and West in an increasingly neoliberal system that promoted privatisation, a useful lens through which to view a contemporary planned hotel project on the Swedish property, a development that with its recent history of buildings along İstiklal Caddesi might perhaps be phrased “from bazaar to bizarre”.

In the early 1980s, the expenses for the state of maintaining the valuable Swedish property in Istanbul led to renewed discussions regarding whether or not to put the Palais de Suède up for sale. Meanwhile, Consul General Erik Esseen welcomed discussions regarding “future repairs and other maintenance works”. In April 1984, the same year that the Prince islands near Istanbul were registered as archeologically protected sites, the Turkish Ministry of Culture declared the Palais de Suède to be a notable building of cultural value and historical importance.

This cultural heritage standing, later reiterated on a municipal level, limited any activities geared towards financial profit, and proved to be of much significance in discussions regarding the erection of a hotel on the property, on İstiklal Caddesi, by Alarko Holding (by then one of the largest business conglomerates in Turkey), advanced by its co-founder and owner, the aforementioned İshak Alaton, who at the same time advocated political reforms in Eastern Turkey.

Before Christmas 1985, İshak Alaton unveiled a “pre-feasibility study with a preliminary project covering a building along the street [façade] of the consulate garden”. The immodest idea was to construct an almost 25-metre high eight-floor building that would infringe at least 12 metres on the Swedish property, a four-to-six million dollar investment: the first four floors would be shops, the rest would be a hotel with a night club and a roof terrace that faced the Bosphorus view and, necessarily, the Palais de Suède. The garden would be dug up in order to cover a large-scale subterranean garage, and the gateway on İstiklal would be replaced with a “sliding gate”, with the hotel entrance to its left and the entrance to the new shops on the right.

Nils-Urban Allard, the new consul general, gave the national property board a general outline of the setup, inspired by a municipal initiative to attract foreign investments: “hotel projects where the city council offers land [and] the foreign investor pays rent [amounting to] a certain percentage of the invested capital in rent”. The idea was that Alarko Holding was to rent



Plan of the proposed Beyoğlu Viking Oteli, 1987. Consulate General of Sweden, Istanbul.

the part of the property facing the street for a period of 49 years, after which the deed would pass to the Swedish state.

Yet Consul General Allard was not pleased: the already curtailed privacy of the consulate general would be further reduced, to say the least, and the suggested hotel project would be “a very drastic interference that would affect the entire property complex indeterminately.” He stressed that the “lesser night club district in Istanbul are located in our immediate vicinity”, and that “it would be an irony of fate if the property purchased through [religious] collect funds was to be used for such purposes.” Allard agreed with

Hans Gustafsson, minister of housing, who visited Istanbul and the Palais de Suède in May 1986: “Sweden is not so poor that we need to build a hotel on the property in order to maintain a historic building.”

In a meeting in Stockholm, Bedrettin Dalan, mayor of Istanbul, expressed skepticism regarding the Alarko hotel plans; he appeared to be “anxious to preserve the exterior” of the Palais de Suède, “not least the garden”. The Turkish ambassador to Sweden, Ömer Ersun, had expressed a wish to construct new living quarters for the embassy’s staff in proximity to the ambassador’s residence in Stockholm. The Swedish ambassador to Turkey, Lennart Dafgård, was concurrently informed by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that it “counted on a commercial main focus” of the projected activities of the consulate general in Istanbul.

At the same time, ideas of pedestrianising İstiklal Caddesi began to take shape, at odds with the proposed parking garage under the Palais de Suède, and not necessarily popular with the foreign representations along the avenue, as expressed in a missive from the Dutch consulate general to the deputy mayor, highlighting “the problems that will arise [...] for the Consulates-General of Sweden, the [USSR], the Netherlands and France.”

The homogenous dimensions of most buildings along İstiklal Caddesi became an architectural limitation on the planned hotel development. In early 1987, in order to bypass such restrictions to the earlier suggested eight floors, Alarko came up with a new plan: a free-standing 15-floor tower block, in the upper corner of the Swedish property, “at the corner of the land”, facing the Tünel area, and an elongated “one-storey cafeteria-pergola” along the



*The gateway and fence of the Palais de Suède before the pedestrianisation of İstiklal Caddesi.
Undated. SALT Research.*



*The gateway and fence of the Palais de Suède before the pedestrianisation of İstiklal Caddesi.
Undated. SALT Research.*

street. Adding insult to injury, the suggested name for the planned enterprise was the not-so-subtle “Beyoğlu Viking Hotel”. To this would be added, it was suggested, a fifteen-metre, five-floor parking garage between the Swedish and Soviet consulates general.

Consul General Allard turned to the Swedish foreign ministry about the hotel plans, which had become a “question of fate”, it was do or die for the palace property. The only high-rise building along İstiklal, further down the street, was the mid-1970s “structural expressionist” twenty-plus floor Oda-kule building, constructed for the Istanbul Chamber of Industry. While the “Viking” parking garage on the Swedish property had become defunct before leaving the drawing board, due to the simultaneous pedestrianisation of the avenue, the hotel threat remained.

Another planned feature of the new pedestrian street was a three-metre arcade on both sides, running its length, implying that “all new buildings must be erected taking this into consideration.” The municipal (city) council wanted the Palais de Suède and its garden to continue being visible from the street, with a “solution” that would have increased the height of the Viking tower even further by placing it on pillars.

Alarko prepared two suggestions, for a hotel and an office block. Yet no fewer than 27 new four- and five-star hotels were planned in Istanbul at the time, which Allard hoped might complicate matters for the Viking enterprise. During a visit to the Palais de Suède in April 1987, the director of the Istanbul “Tourist Planning Office” had expressed ill-concealed disbelief when Allard had brought up the hotel encroachment: “he was very surprised

and wondered if [we] were not aware of that our building and its surroundings were rated as historical”, referring to the 1984 declaration by the Turkish Ministry of Culture.

The hotel plans did not end there: the representation rooms on the first floor of the Palais de Suède were almost parodically considered being rented to the hotel for festivities. Consul General Allard protested vividly: “Life would be unbearable with banqueting rooms under [our] feet, which could in no way be compensated for by the assuredly beautiful view. Considering the Turkish smoking habits, one would furthermore run the risk of being burned to death.” Allard instead presented a plan for the maximum “representational effect” for the Palais de Suède, should its activities be expanded: the consul general was to dispose of the first and ground floor, the research institute be located on the top floor, and “a possible trade office” be installed in the Dragoman House.

Representatives from the Swedish Ministry of Finance visited the property in April 1988, in order to determine the value of the property, should it be put on sale or rented out. This potential development caused concerned voices being raised in protest: “one of the foremost functions of the state is to protect our historical monuments, not to embezzle them.” In the midst of the hotel discussions, Stephen E. Castor, the Istanbul representative of the *Trans-Arabian Investment Bank*, presented a suggested “potential new construction on the church property adjoining your premises”: a proposed art gallery with an elongated glass wall on its first floor on the site of the 1858 chapel.

In a stereotype 1980s neoliberal context of commercialisation and increasing privatisation, the Palais de Suède was, then, threatened from all angles. It was essentially saved by the 1984 rating as a notable building of historic and cultural significance coupled with individual action and protests, in this case not least from Consul General Nils-Urban Allard. This was neither the first nor the last time that the hotel idea was raised. The mid-1860s grand hotelier schemes had come close to being realised, closer perhaps, even, than Alarko’s modern Viking fantasy. As we shall see, yet another hotel attempt would be made at the turn of the millennium.

Alterations to the Palais de Suède itself were also considered at that stage, for example an additional terrace on the second floor, on top of the existing one, as well as a separate (private) entrance to the residence of the consul general. The chapel was renovated in 1985, funded by various Swedish corporations in Turkey. Electrical heating was installed, and a gilded cross was placed on the roof. A garage, later removed, was built the same year, above the chapel, and repairs were carried out to the Dragoman House (and its roof).

In the early 1980s, the administration of room bookings at the research institute was carried out by Vice-Consul Margaretha Lindström together with Ulla Ehrensvärd, secretary of the institute, who was succeeded by

Paavo Roos. Visitors to the institute were informed of a nighttime curfew, as the gates to the compound were locked between two and five am. In 1988, Ehrensvärd became chairman of the newly founded friends association of the institute.

In 1991, the idea of converting the garage plot into a separate chancery building was put forth (this would be realised twenty-five years later); a separate chancery building in front of the palace was also put forth, as was a suggestion to convert the roof terrace top floor of the Dragoman House to the residence of the institute director, in this period used as a roofed balcony with a ping-pong table.

The research institute initiated a scholarly series in 1988, its *Transactions*, which was introduced with a *Festschrift* for Gunnar Jarring. The direction of the institute was not formalised until the 1990s. The Byzantinist Gustav H. Karlsson had directed the institute in 1978–1979. A decade later, the classical archaeologist and ancient historian Paavo Roos combined a research grant with a part-time post as director of the institute in 1987–1990. He was succeeded in 1990–1992 by the first full-time director, the classical archaeologist Pontus Hellström, who was also in charge of continued excavations at Labraunda.

The research institute has been fully state-funded since 1990, when a Swedish trade council office was also established in Istanbul, aiming to promote the Turkish market to Swedish businesses. The Ambassador in Ankara, Erik Cornell, suggested reconverting an apartment on the second floor of



A ram grazing on the front lawn of the Palais de Suède, still rich in trees, before a Kurban Bayram (Feast of Sacrifice) celebration. Undated (late 1980s). Photograph: Paavo Roos.

the Palais de Suède for an annual weekly visit to Istanbul. In the wake of the near-hotel experience, a certain consensus seemed to form regarding the İstiklal side of the property. Writing to the national property board on the matter, Ambassador Cornell decisively put his foot down: “It would be a cultural historical and aesthetic abomination to run up buildings along the main street, from which the garden of the consulate general constitutes an exceptionally appealing streetscape element.” According to Cornell, “the state should not embark on becoming a landlord for hotels, shops or offices through the consulate general”.

In 1992, the Palais de Suède was photographed for the newly founded *Cornucopia* magazine. The following year, the Dragoman House was inspected in light of a refurbishment of the research institute facilities. The same year put on record Turkey’s first female prime minister, the liberal economist Tansu Çiller, who advocated privatisation and closer ties with the European Union. A few years later, Consul General Kaj Falkman wrote of “the inexorable logic of Europeanism” in late 1990s Turkey. Falkman also related the cavalry captain (*ryttmästare*) Fredrik von Celsing’s satisfaction of “treading the ancestral floor planks” on his visits to the Palais de Suède (von Celsing passed away in 2008).

A possible “Swedish Business Centre” in the Palais de Suède via the Swedish Trade Council (*Exportrådet*, later *Business Sweden*) was put forward, but abandoned, in 1994–1996. Instead, the Palais de Suède underwent an overall overhaul under the aegis of the national property board in 1995–1996. In anticipation of this, Erik Cornell wrote to Ingemar Börjesson, the new consul general, calling for “a collective approach for a long-term solution” to the disposition of the Palais de Suède premises. His missive summed up the wide range of schemes regarding the slippery Swedish palace: “Lots of suggestions, one stranger than the other, have been whirling around over the last ten years. Shops, a hotel tower, evacuation and rented premises in town, barracks in the garden, a hanging tunnel from the street to the chancery reception and what have you.”

The considerable ensuing “reconstruction” and renovations resulted in modern office facilities for the consulate general on the ground floor. The façades and roof of the main building underwent renovation and maintenance scrutiny. The marble floors of the ground floor chancery were decorated with modern carpets and a chandelier, and with reproductions of Domenico Pulgher’s watercoloured elevations of the building. The parquet floor on the second floor was also restored (a suggested “smoking room” did not come to fruition, however). The iron balustrade on the garden terrace staircase was remodelled, and the coats of arms on the roof and over the main entrance were painted in “a suitable heraldic colour” (the present blue and yellow adaptation occurred after 2008). The first floor *piano nobile* was

(and is) mainly used for official functions. The consul general resided on the top floor, as is still the case today.

In 1997, the academic, author and journalist James Pettifer gave "the Swedish building" as an example of one of the "unnecessarily large western consulates" in Beyoğlu, in other words not acknowledging the legation and embassy histories of the foreign "palaces". At the end of the year, the Swedish foreign ministry approved a request from Nationalmuseum in Stockholm to incorporate the consulate general's eight watercolours by Carl Gustaf Löwenhielm into its collections.

The same year, 1997, bore witness to ruinous earthquakes in eastern Turkey that claimed thousands of victims, as well as to the establishment of a Swedish Chamber of Commerce in Istanbul – with the involvement of Alarko's İshak Alaton, who some years earlier had been awarded the Order of the Polar Star – which aimed to facilitate cooperation between Swedish companies and their Turkish trade partners, as well as business contact requests, with meetings held also in the Palais de Suède. This was followed in 2000 by a joint commission for trade and economic cooperation. The Viking motif resurfaced: a Viking ship was used by the Turkish-Swedish friendship association in Istanbul and by the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in (a blue-and-yellow rendition).

The refurbished Palais de Suède was called on by the Swedish Princess Birgitta in 1998 on a private visit. In that year, when the embassy chancery premises in Ankara were extended, the architect Eric Sörling submitted a (rejected) proposal for restructuring the Dragoman House with a separate entrance from the back gate, below the chapel. Until the late 1990s, the chapel occasionally functioned also as the auditorium of the research institute. By 1998, ventilation was considered needed in order to avoid mould formation, and the national property board considered "discontinuing" or "dismantling" the chapel building and moving it in order to free up the rear end of the property either for some other use or to be sold. A possible sale was prevented by the lack of an official zoning plan, with no official market value as a consequence, although the national property board continued to consider possibly parcelling it out and moving the chapel elsewhere.

By March 1999, Sture Theolin, the new consul general, had identified a prospective stakeholder: the Beyoğlu section of *Lions Club International*, which expressed an interest in renting or buying the land at the end of the Swedish property in order to construct "a one- or maximum two-storey building for its administration and as exhibition/concert premises". Theolin hoped that some of the resulting funds might be invested in renovating the "representation rooms" on the first floor of the main palace building. Another grievous earthquake hit Turkey in August 1999, this time in north-western Turkey. Rescue teams and detection dogs were sent from Sweden.

The earthquake threat eventually led to reinforcement works on the Palais de Suède.

The local *Lions Club* had however lost interest by the summer, although discussions regarding possible club house premises and selling the chapel seem to have resumed briefly in March 2000. Consul General Theolin lamented that the lower end of the property was increasingly being “turned into slum”, and that the chapel was “moulding away”, posing the rhetorical question to foreign ministry if this was indeed acceptable? It was decided to find a tenant for the rental and maintenance of the chapel; the Finnish Evangelical congregation in Istanbul, which had shown an interest the previous year, was suggested as a suitable candidate.

Sture Theolin had begun to compile a “folder” on the Palais de Suède in 1998 (originally a “presentation leaflet”). A year later, this had expanded into a book project, encouraged by Bengt Krantz at the national property board. Photographs of the palace interior were commissioned the following year. In 1999, a new auditorium named after Carl-Gustaf Andrén, former institute chairman – funded by the research institute, Ericsson, *Tetra Pak Turkey*, *ABB* and İshak Alaton’s Alarko Holding – was added to the institute in the basement of the Dragoman House, making use of its unused inner courtyard. The building was simultaneously renovated, after a quarter century as the seat of the research institute, and the top floor residence of the Institute director was refurbished as per designs by the Swedish-Turkish architect Chet Kanra.

In addition, other minor repairs were carried out on the property, including a renovation of the marble terrace and staircase on the Bosphorus side of the Palais de Suède, refurbished wooden shutters, the installation of air conditioning systems, outdoor lighting – also for the chapel – and a new well cover construction. The National Property Board of Sweden furthermore made preparations in anticipation of the year 2000. With impending plans to renovate the parquet flooring on the *piano nobile* of the main building, the stage was set for the new millennium.

“If it Ain’t Broke, Don’t Fix it”. Navigating the New Millennium

In spite of the investments in refurbishments and the overhaul of the main building in the mid-1990s, in 2000, Swedish state authorities once again came close to turning their backs on the Palais de Suède. That year, Consul General Sture Theolin published his book on its history, with a foreword by Anna Lindh, minister for foreign affairs (who was assassinated in 2003). Lindh emphasised that the Palais de Suède “is our oldest state holding abroad”: “since 1757, Sweden owns a Palace, albeit a modest one, in Istanbul.” She also referred to a rapprochement of Turkey to Europe at the time, and to its “eventual membership of the European Union”.

However, the same year that Theolin’s book was published, the Swedish government (and Anna Lindh) unexpectedly decided to pull the plug on the consulate general, despite an inspection report on the Swedish embassy in Ankara in May 2000, in which the collaboration between the embassy and the consulate general was said to “function very well”. In early July 2000, during the summer holidays, the Swedish government without warning decided to close the consulate general as of January 2001: a bolt from the



The Palais de Suède today. Consulate General of Sweden, Istanbul (photograph: Erhan Erik).

blue and “a mid-summer thunderclap” in the words of the journalist and writer Sigrid Kahle (also a former chairman of the Swedish Orient Society), who described the consulate general as “indispensable”.

The reason for this curious decision was entirely financial: the competitive market-based rental costs, paid by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the National Property Board of Sweden – in other words a transfer of state funding from one agent to another – had increased to levels that could no longer be defended, referred to as a “rip-off” in a message to the head of the foreign ministry administrative department. The decision appears to have been based on a ministry budget deficit. It is possible that the projected increased expenses as a consequence of a Swedish promise to the other Nordic countries to assume all visa matters after joining the Schengen area in 2001 may have contributed to the decision, to save money and to save face. A possible new institute for Swedish-Turkish relations was suggested as a replacement for the consulate general, with projected funding from the foreign aid budget rather than the foreign ministry.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs declared that other possible Swedish tenants in Istanbul were to be sought: “otherwise the property should be sold.” The archive of the consulate general was correspondingly to be “cleared out”. Erik Cornell, former ambassador to Ankara, pointed out the irony of the terms of Swedish foreign policy being directed by the national property board, as the Ministry for Foreign Affairs could no longer afford to rent the property in Istanbul which had been purchased “250 years ago”, and which had not burdened the state finances with purchase or mortgage expenses.

“What have you done Sweden?” The government decision stirred up an outright storm of protests, in Sweden, in Turkey and elsewhere: it was, simply put, “ridiculous and wrong”, in the words of the representative of a Turkish branch of a Swedish company (*Avesta Sheffield*). Voicing a common concern, the clerk Barbro Arguvanligil, who was just about to retire from the consulate general in Istanbul after several decades, approached the Swedish community in Istanbul, rhetorically asking what was to become of the Palais de Suède, “the apple of the Swedish colony’s eye, this piece of Swedish history in Turkey?” Sture Theolin emphasised that the Palais de Suède itself represented “not only Sweden in Istanbul”, but also “to a high degree Swedish presence in Turkey”. He also pointed out that the USA was in the process of constructing new consulate general premises, and that “the significant EU countries” were simultaneously strengthening and widening their presence in Istanbul.

Foreign Minister Anna Lindh received numerous letters urging that the government decision be reversed, including from the Turkish direction of Volvo, Tetra Pak, Ericsson, *Astra Zeneca*, *Sandvik* and other Swedish business enterprises, representatives of a number of Turkish companies – one of whom (Mario Kornfilt) asked rhetorically if Sweden could “really afford having vir-

tually a diplomatic void in one of the world's most important hubs" – the Turkish-Swedish friendship association in Istanbul, the Swedish Chamber of Commerce and the scholar Birgit Schlyter, later director of the research institute. The businessman and investor İshak Alaton, then honorary consul general of South Africa – described at the time by former Swedish Consul General Kaj Falkman as "one of the most prominent entrepreneurs in the country", and still keenly engaged in Swedish-Turkish relations – also wrote to Anna Lindh impelling a reversal of the decision.

Dag Klackenborg, head of the foreign ministry's administrative department, replied to many of the letters addressed to the foreign minister, emphasising a "transformation of the Swedish presence in Istanbul, not a withdrawal", which "will strengthen the long-standing relations between Sweden and Turkey." Henrik Liljegren, twice Swedish ambassador in Ankara and former consul general in Istanbul, related Turkish appeals "at the highest level" for the Swedish government to rethink, emphasising that the building and the property of the Palais de Suède itself, rich in tradition, in fact "symbolised historical ties between Turkey and Sweden". The issue was soon politicised in Sweden through a joint parliament motion from the centre-right opposition that objected to the decision and emphasised the importance of Sweden's relations with Turkey and human rights.

An expression of interest for the Palais de Suède property was made in August 2000 by the Istanbul-based British hotelier William (Bill) Trustram Eve, a "hotel operator looking for a property in Istanbul and especially in Tünel to create and operate a small, luxury 'boutique' hotel in conjunction with an international hotel operator/investor", as he had understood that the consulate general "may be considering moving" from its "present premises". As it turned out, for a third time, the Palais de Suède was to be saved by the bell from another hotel.

The property was intended to remain in Sweden's hands, preferably with a Swedish tenant, although several voices were raised in concern regarding a suitable candidate. The Spanish consulate general, seeking to strengthen the Spanish presence in Istanbul, expressed an interest in renting the premises (conveyed by the Spanish embassy in Stockholm). Yet the foreign ministry was adamant in "examining another form of [Swedish] presence in the property other than a consulate general", and the national property board were encouraged not to give a committed reply: "we might get back to Spain if our plans for some reason did not succeed." Sture Theolin also reported an indicated French interest in the Swedish property.

Contradicting lofty statements of the geopolitical importance of Istanbul and Turkey's road to democracy, the outcome of discontinuing the Swedish consulate general would in practice be to "degrade" its status, replacing the consul general with an honorary consul (or to associate this position with

the Swedish research institute, if this could indeed continue to function): in other words an honorary task for a Turkish citizen, a similar setup to İshak Alaton's South African position – possibly with Alaton himself as a potential candidate for the position. An honorary consulate would however “solve nothing”: “the research institute would have to close for good and the trade office would lose its possibilities to efficiently promote Swedish exports.”

The Swedish government seemed convinced that Turkey would be joining the European Union in the near future, and argued that the consulate general in Istanbul therefore should not be closed down but remodelled, and that the Palais de Suède be converted into “a base for supporting Turkey as an EU-candidate country.” This attitude met with some criticism, not least as it gave rise to a diplomatic faux-pas: “The Turks don't want to be lectured to by the Swedes”.

The same year, 2000, witnessed the foundation of a Swedish institute in Alexandria explicitly for an improved dialogue with countries in the Middle East, organised by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, funded by financial aid resources, making use of a building on the seafront *corniche* that had been both a Swedish consulate and a seamen's institute; the position of director was offered to the diplomat Ingmar Karlsson, who turned it down. In 2018, the activity in Alexandria was closed down, it has subsequently been transferred to Amman, Jordan. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs appears to have entertained the notion of possibly remodeling the consulate general in Istanbul into a similar institution. The Turkish authorities were however not interested in this suggestion in the least.

The fate of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul was and is tied to that of the Palais de Suède: the institute's legal status is tied to the consulate general, and would cease without it. Several scholars associated with the institute became involved in attempts to salvage the situation, including Carl-Gustaf Andrén, its former chairman and erstwhile Swedish university chancellor.

As a consequence of the decision to close the consulate general, Elisabeth Özdalga, director of the research institute, was prepared to leave her position ahead of time, having investigated if it might be at all possible to continue to rent the Dragoman House regardless of the outcome of the government decision. Özdalga's predecessor, Bengt Knutsson, had been listed as cultural attaché with the consulate general in order to obtain permission to reside in Turkey. Suggestions were raised of granting diplomatic status to the institute – with a connected trade secretary – or making the institute director a paid consul, replacing the consul general. Addressing future concerns in her 2000 annual report, Özdalga likened the institute to “a lavish theatre equipped with an undersized company”.

In September 2000, Sture Theolin was approached by the Assyrian Orthodox Church with an offer to purchase the Swedish property in its entirety. Theolin informed the chairman of the church board that there were no forthcoming sale plans. The issue hung in the balance, although a slight shift in attitude was beginning to manifest itself on the part of the Swedish foreign ministry: the consulate general was still to close after the new year, but a few months later than had originally been intended, after Sweden implemented joining the Schengen area in the spring of 2001.

In mid-September 2000, the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in Istanbul sent a joint missive to Anna Lindh signed by the managing directors of several companies (including SKF, Astra Zeneca, Ericsson, Volvo, *IKEA*, *Alfa-Laval*, the *Postgirot* bank and *Pharmacia & Upjohn*). The business representatives jointly expressed what they referred to as their consternation regarding the decision to close the consulate general: "Since there is still time, we urge you to reconsider!" The politician Alf Svensson saw a closure of the consulate general as an act of "betrayal" of human rights organisations in Turkey. A few weeks later, Svensson believed that "some form of withdrawal" was being contemplated, to avoid a potential "loss of prestige".

In a letter to Anna Lindh, the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Gothenburg emphasised that the "splendour" of the Palais de Suède itself, "Sweden's oldest permanent legation", "undoubtedly" contributed to attracting research expertise to participate in conferences at the Swedish institute. Sture Theolin suggested that the private residence of the consul general on the second floor of the main building might be divided in two apartments: one for the consul, should there indeed be one after the coming spring, and one for the director of the research institute.

A suggested transformation of the consulate general to an institute for Swedish-Turkish relations was decisively linked with Turkey's foreseen near-membership of the EU. A two-month Swedish government inquiry was commissioned, which should take into account "the experiences from the Swedish institutes in Paris, Athens, Rome and Alexandria". The inquiry was conducted by Anita Gradin, a former (social-democrat) minister and EU commissioner.

Anna Lindh replied to a joint letter of protest from the businessman Percy Barnevik and Lars Ramqvist, managing director of Ericsson, emphasising that although unable to "anticipate" the outcome of Anita Gradin's inquiry, there were assuredly "several alternatives". In October, Sture Theolin addressed Gradin, stressing that the only solution that would "meet the conditions" would be to maintain the consulate functions. He in other words advocated a high status quo, highlighting that the first floor "has Ottoman salons for representation, and an overnight room for Sweden's ambassador in Ankara". Theolin's book was presented at a reception with a good turnout

at the Palais de Suède in November 2000, a tempestuous time for both the consulate general and the research institute.

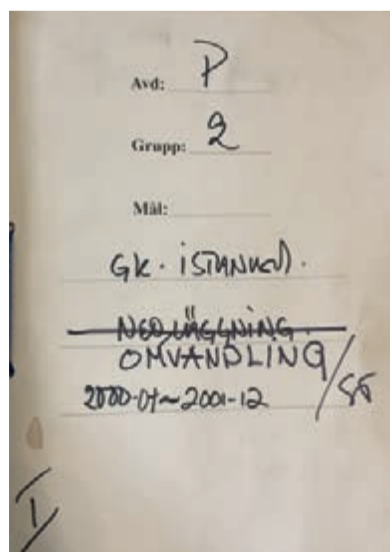
The collegium of the Swedish research institute met at the Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities in Stockholm to discuss the fate of the institute should the government persist in altering the standing of the premises in Istanbul. After drawn-out discussions, and a four-day visit in Istanbul by Commissioner Anita Gradin in November 2000, the suggestion was to maintain the consulate general after all, but to add “Istanbul Centre for Turkish-Swedish Cooperation” to its designation, and to widen its activities in such a cooperative direction, for as low an overall budget as possible.

According to one suggestion, the new centre for cooperation would be one of four “sections” of the consulate general that connected Turkey and Sweden, together with the research institute, a trade office and a visa section (in a projected separate “visa pavilion”, an arrangement akin to that of the consulate general of the Netherlands). Anita Gradin’s inquiry was to be completed by February 2001.

In the meantime, the chapel continued to be regarded with little favour. As Sture Theolin put it, “in 1999, it was established that neither the Church of Sweden nor the national heritage board were interested” in it. Further restoration work was nonetheless carried out around the turn of the millennium. The chapel was then used by members of the Evangelical Church of Finland, with church services every Sunday in Finnish (alternatively in Swedish or German, “should this be of interest”).

In January 2001, Anita Gradin published her inquiry which advocated “a Swedish centre in Istanbul” at the same time as Sweden assumed the presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first time. By the end of March, the Swedish government resolved to

maintain the consulate general after all, with many sighs of relief as a result – and several claims to having been personally instrumental in preserving the *Palais*. Leif Pagrotsky, minister for industry and trade wrote to İshak Alaton, thanking him for his support. The “Swedish Consulate General – Istanbul Centre for Turkish-Swedish Cooperation” thus became a reality in spring 2001, although Theolin referred to certain turbulence – “musical chairs” – before the summer.



The cover of an archive file with the word “discontinuation” crossed out, replaced with “conversion” (with, presumably, Consul General Sture Theolin’s initials). Consulate General of Sweden, Istanbul.

In late March 2001, Sweden joined the Schengen area. The question of a possible refurbishment of the visa section premises was raised the same year. In a missive to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs arguing against the installation of a lift in the palace building in July, Sture Theolin summed up the attitude that prevented the sale of the property the year before: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!"

Theolin's successor as consul general in September 2001, Ingmar Karlsson, also became director of the new centre – on the condition that he would be consul general, not cultural attaché – which was administered by Annika Svahnström. In addition to supporting a Turkish EU membership candidacy in a financial aid framework, the centre encouraged exchanges in conflict and crisis management, as well as issues related to democracy, the environment, asylum, migration and equality.

Karlsson arrived in Istanbul by car one day before the 11 September 2001 attacks in the USA. Karlsson personally vouched for the new centre's activities vis-à-vis the Turkish authorities, and it was soon transformed into a section for Turkish-Swedish cooperation of the consulate general. In April 2002, a workshop was organised at the Palais de Suède that focused on "Turkish experiences": "Migration and Labour Markets in a European Perspective". Over the coming years, until the end of Karlsson's tenure in 2008, seminars were organised in 25 cities all over Turkey, often broadcast on local television channels.

Karlsson reported a verbal permission from Kadir Topbaş, mayor of Beyoğlu (later mayor of Istanbul), to make a hole in the "Ottoman wall" of the Swedish property as a separate entrance for the projected visa pavilion. In an encrypted message to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the spring of 2002, Karlsson expressed a pragmatic "when in Rome"-approach to dealing with the construction developments: "When in Turkey do as the Turks do or forget about it." By the end of the year, Karlsson reported to the National Property Board of Sweden that "the [state of] disrepair of the church continues, and the Finnish congregation is concerned". An enquiry regarding the possible additional use of the chapel was made earlier that year by the Beşiktaş Protestant Church.

In 2001, Ann Dismorr became Sweden's first female ambassador to Turkey, marking the new millennium also in this direction (the first female consul general in Istanbul, Therese Hydén, followed fifteen years later). The same year, 2001, witnessed the formation of the AKP, the conservative Islamist Justice and Development Party. The new centre for Turkish-Swedish cooperation occasionally rented the research institute's auditorium for discussion activities. In 2003, adjustments were made to the garden wall, and the offices and gateway guardhouse were repainted. A new police sentry box was

installed outside the gates in 2004, concurrently with further maintenance work on the parquet floor and the roof of the *Palais*.



Different generations: Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden flanking a photograph of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) and Crown Prince Gustaf (VI) Adolf at the Swedish legation (embassy) in October 1934 in the same location in 2005. Embassy of Sweden in Ankara.

The Palais de Suède witnessed various royal visits from Sweden in the years 2005–2007, a reflection of the improved trade and other relations with the European Union in the first decade of the new millennium. Crown Princess Victoria made an official visit to Ankara and Istanbul in 2005, in the company of Thomas Östros, minister for industry and trade.

The first formal Swedish state visit to Turkey took place the following year, 2006, “with the possible exception of the five-year sojourn of Karl XII in the Ottoman Empire”, as a Swedish report put it (one might perhaps add “and that of the visit of Oskar II and Queen Sofia in 1885”). King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia inaugurated an exhibition in the Pera Museum on the seventeenth-century paintings commissioned by Envoy Claes Rålamb (see introduction). The Istanbul programme included a reception at the Palais de Suède and a very brief visit to the Dolmabahçe Palace, followed by a dinner cruise on the Bosphorus. In the late summer of 2007,

Crown Princess Victoria returned to Istanbul, this time for a private visit with her sister, Princess Madeleine, and their significant others.

Refurbishment works to the garden of the Palais de Suède were carried out in 2005–2006. In the autumn of 2006, the research institute and its Director Karin Ådahl prepared the acquisition of an additional plot of land with a small building below the Dragoman House, which was subsequently demolished and converted into the present multistorey annex (guest house) building. Strengthening works to the main building were carried out in 2006–2008 along with updated fire precautions.

In 2008, the “Istanbul Centre for Turkish-Swedish Cooperation” published a report which coincided with the end of Ingmar Karlsson’s seven-year tenure; the name was subsequently dropped from the designation of the consulate general, although a “Section for Turkish-Swedish Cooperation” has been maintained since. The staircase and terrace on the Bosphorus side of the

Palais de Suède were refurbished in 2009, followed by renovation of the large windows by the indoor staircase.

The ambitions of the "maintenance plans" (*vårdprogram*) of the National Property Board of Sweden have perhaps not always materialised on site. When the main building came to fruition in 1869–1870, it was erected on remaining foundations of its precursor. Although some basement rooms are intended to resist possible earthquake or bombardment damage, further structural strengthening works were carried out in 2009–2010 to meet the threat of possible high-magnitude earthquakes. New reinforced walls were added, floors were strengthened with steel beams, and new pipes and electric fittings were installed. The building was duly "reinaugurated" by the national property board in 2010.

The "annex" extension of the research institute – which significantly increased its visitor capacity – was completed in 2010. The façade of the Palais de Suède was repainted the following year, and additional façade restoration work was conducted in 2013. The chapel was rented out to the Korean Church of Jesus Christ from 2012 until 2015. It has not since had any religious tenants.

Along with the similar Swedish institutes in Rome and Athens, the research institute in Istanbul came under threat in the autumn of 2014 – this time without involving the consulate general, however – when the Swedish government proposed cutting the state funding for the research institutes, which would effectively have forced them to close. After an intense month of much debates and international protests against the suggestion the government again reconsidered and withdrew the proposal.

The Palais de Suède remains a bastion of free speech. Through its history and its location on İstiklal Caddesi, it provides links with both cosmopolitan Constantinople and republican Istanbul: a blueprint perhaps for navigating in present-day Turkey. Former Consul General Kaj Falkman has pointed out that the Swedish palace is both elegant and homelike, large enough for official representation and sufficiently small to feel comfortable and at home. It has been described as "idyllic" by Suzi Erşahin, the first incumbent of the position as counsellor of cultural affairs at the consulate general, as a workplace, with "an openness and freedom of speech that enables conversations that can otherwise be impossible", as "an oasis, where thoughts can flow freely and anyone can feel free without fear" of repercussion.

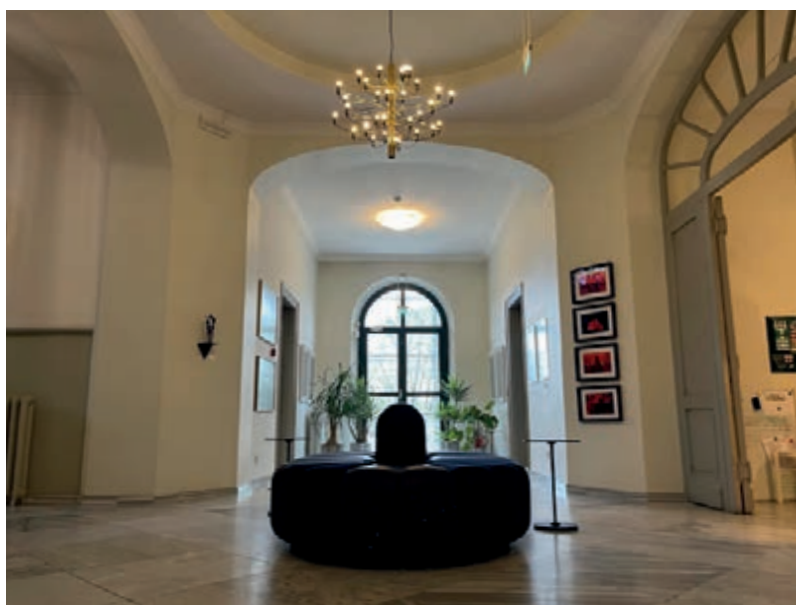
The Palais de Suède stands out along İstiklal Caddesi. Unlike for example the consulates general of Russia or the Netherlands, the Swedish *Palais* is clearly visible despite the fence that runs along the street, which rhymes well with ideas of openness on a symbolic level. The architect Johan Mårtelius, director of the Swedish research institute in 2015–2017, even suggested bringing back the nineteenth-century row of shops – the "Swedish bazaar" – an

idea that appears to have met the interest of Consul General Jens Odlander, but was eclipsed by security measures in the wake of the refugee influx due to the civil war in Syria and the attempted military coup in July 2016. Johan Mårtelius also arranged for an entrance canopy to the institute auditorium.

Use of the paved driveway on the corner of the property facing İstiklal Caddesi has recently ceased – all car traffic currently passes through the main gateway. A new entrance door to the private apartment of the consul general on the top floor of the Palais de Suède was installed in 2016, when a thorough restoration of the parquet flooring of the first floor was initiated and a migration office was erected on the site of the former garage.

As this book illustrates, the Palais de Suède has almost slid out of Swedish hands on a number of occasions. Today, the buildings as well as the activities on the Swedish compound appear to have quite a firm foundation. Sweden asserts itself to the current visitor to the Palais de Suède with the three crowns of the national coat of arms – changed from a more subdued darker colour to blue and gold – above the entrance door, and with photographs of the king and queen in the entrance hall.

In the summer of 2020, decisions to replace some of the existing furniture were made, such as a new couch and chairs for the salon to the right of the grand salon, a new dining room table, as well as a couch for the entrance hall on the ground floor. The overall interior design management plan included upholstery of some of the furniture, also in the grand salon, and new curtain sets.



Palais de Suède, the entrance hall on the ground floor, 2023. Photograph: Peter Ericson.



Palais de Suède, the dining room, 2023. Photograph: Olof Heilo.



*Palais de Suède, the salon right of the grand salon, with new furniture, 2023.
Photograph: Olof Heilo.*



Carl Michael von Hausswolff and Cevdet Ereğ, "Red Dream (for Gunnar Ekelöf)", 2021. Photograph: Kayhan Kaygusuz.

In early 2023, before maintenance work on the roof of the Palais as well as the devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria, protests took place outside the consulate general, with the Palais de Suède once again in the limelight as a locale for Turkish-Swedish relations. The centenary of the Turkish republic in 2023 was preceded by the 150th anniversary of the main building of the Palais (2020–2021). In this context, Consul General Peter Ericson removed the plastic screens along the İstiklal Caddesi fence that had obscured the view of the Palais de Suède for some time.

The 150th anniversary was celebrated in September 2021. During three late summer evenings, the Palais was turned into a conceptual artwork: "Red Dream (for Gunnar Ekelöf)", a site-specific sound and light installation by the Swedish artist Carl Michael von Hausswolff and his Turkish colleague Cevdet Ereğ. The exterior and interior of the building was immersed in red light while the two artists performed electro-acoustic music in the grand salon. The many guests experienced a garden reception as the Palais de Suède was bathed in a new light, literally and figuratively. This book is a further outcome and expression of this anniversary.

Icon, Symbol, Haven, Landmark

The Palais de Suède epitomises three centuries of Swedish presence in Turkey. The history of the property illustrates both impressions of permanence and inconstancy, and shows that individuals make a difference in relation to sociopolitical trends and developments. It provides numerous examples of the tendency to want to leave personal marks on developments within the scope of personal influence. Icon, symbol, haven, landmark: in this book, the Palais de Suède refers equivalently to the main building itself and to the property as a whole. The concept reaches further.



The “storied view” from the roof of the Palais de Suède, 2020. Photograph: Frederick Whitling.

Despite the indubitable historical and representative (as well as financial) value of the Palais de Suède in its prime location, the property has from time to time become a slippery soap in the hands of Swedish authorities. In some instances, the combination of individual agency and sociopolitical circumstances have occasionally resulted in hasty solutions to essentially illusory problems, such as rejected embellishments of the kiosk along İstiklal Caddesi by the architect Gaspare Fossati in the late 1850s and the threatened status of the palace building in the 1960s and the 1980s, when it was treated startlingly flippantly. The property has come quite close to being sold in roughly twenty-year intervals, only a few signatures away in the year 2000.

Yet the Palais de Suède and its premises have survived the various threats, and have retained an overall late-nineteenth century ambience – save for the row of shops, the “Swedish bazaar”, which was demolished in the mid-1960s – and an atmosphere of *fin de siècle* and *belle époque* Constantinople in the heart of modern Istanbul. The old embassy “palaces” in the city were national showcases and strategically placed lookout points rather than the stately family homes that the term often indicates. In the modern urban tissue of Istanbul and of Beyoğlu, the Palais de Suède and other former legation compounds might be regarded by some as historical hurdles, as symbols of the past that also represent the bygone identity of Constantinople as imperial capital.

In present-day Istanbul, the New York City of Turkey, the largest city in Europe and one with a particular, “loose” status of not being the capital, where the character of an area or neighbourhood can change around a street corner, the Palais de Suède represents something other than the Ottoman imperial palaces: it indicates other histories, other narratives, and transnational points of connection.

When modern Turkey was created after the First World War and the Treaty of Lausanne, and the capital was moved to Ankara, the question arose of what would become of the old embassy buildings in Constantinople. The Palais de Suède ceased to be an ambassadorial residence in the 1930s, and became a consulate general during and after the Second World War. The former legation “palaces” in Istanbul can be said to symbolise the West, as emblems of western Europe, and the continuous “tug of war”-dynamic regarding aspects of European identity in the metropolis. The classicising, European architectural language of the former embassies in Beyoğlu, in its own way expresses value-systems, economic and other interests, along with perceptions of both “East” and “West”.

The Palais de Suède is one of the most understated and relatively modest of the foreign “winter palaces” in the Constantinople of old. It remains a venue of representation as well as a workplace, the two main objectives for which it was created. Unlike for example the United Kingdom or France,

Sweden could not quite justify a second “summer palace” on the Bosphorus in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Along with other similar consulate general assets in Istanbul today, the Palais de Suède faces the challenge of how to combine continued use with future preservation, and how to protect the building from transient trends without necessarily musealising it. A sensible compromise in that regard might perhaps be not to unduly alter the first floor and what are referred to internally as the so-called Ottoman reception rooms in Swedish documents. This would arguably increase its value also in accordance with the original purpose, to represent Sweden. The present position can perhaps be seen as the product of an ongoing negotiation of past and present choices.

The Palais de Suède has hosted several wide-ranging activities that offer insights into the historical developments of Swedish public administration and a coordination of religious and civil concerns. The plot of land was purchased in the mid-eighteenth century with painstakingly gathered funds for a Protestant church and for the release of Christian prisoners in Ottoman enslavement. This was justified by installing a chapel in the original legation building, which burned down in 1818. Forty years later, a modest chapel was indeed built, this time however principally through the use of funds that had been donated in 1758 for the benefit of Protestants in Hungary (a resource that had been drawn on also to repair the initial *Palais*). In a similar liberal rendition of the intention of these funds, the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway used some of the revenue from the property to help erect the present main building, and the subsequent so-called “Pera fund” to the upkeep of other legation buildings in Europe.

As the architectural historian Bengt Johansson put it in the conclusion to his 1960s study of the Palais de Suède, if any foundation or entity existed (other than the Church of Sweden) that could speak for the former church funds vis-à-vis the state, “dizzying compensation amounts could be recovered”. Johansson also admonished against any future temptation to sell the property in whole or in part in order to reduce the net investment for new building projects, as it would be “remarkable if the state should continue to treat the property in similar cynical ways as before given what one now knows concerning the economic history of the consulate general.” Although the mid-nineteenth century chapel remained in operation until 2015, the Swedish-speaking priest and congregation on the premises are now long gone.

Much of this history of the Palais de Suède reflects underlying economic interests, from the early eighteenth-century endeavours to settle the debts of King Karl XII and thereafter: loans, profits, transactions, currency fluctuations and other financial stakes that in turn reflect political concerns, from protectionism, colonialism and nationalism to global neoliberalism.

As for the building itself, the Palais de Suède and its premises today offer a late-nineteenth century rendition of neo-renaissance classicism: the main building can be understood as a European expression of an official residence with public as well as private functions: a “palace” in both senses. Its Italianate neoclassicism, with numerous architectural precedents, is expressed in a rusticated ground floor, a *piano nobile* specifically designed for representative functions and a top floor that today serves as the private apartment of the consul general.

From a Swedish perspective, one might consider an architectural dialogue of sorts between the Bosphorus façade of the Palais de Suède and the main façade of the foreign ministry building in Stockholm, *Arvfurstens palats* (“Palace of the hereditary prince”), erected in 1783–1794 and acquired by the state in 1902 (the Ministry for Foreign Affairs moved into the building in 1906). Other than the similar generic neoclassicism expressed in both buildings, chronologically almost a century apart, they share more specific similarities: the rusticated ground floor, the yellow second and third floor façade, and the strong association of two related female royals. Princess Sofia Albertina, sister of King Gustav III, was the patron of the hereditary palace in Stockholm. In Istanbul, a memento of their mother, Lovisa Ulrika – queen of Sweden when Envoy Gustaf Celsing purchased the plot of land in 1757 (the year after she had organised a failed *coup d’état*) – is preserved on the period fountain in the palace garden. The buildings also share a state seal of approval in the national coat of arms, a medallion flanked by two lions, prominently placed on the crest of the two buildings, an attribute also of the eighteenth-century Palais de Suède (which preceded the hereditary palace).

Quoting the website of the National Property Board of Sweden, *Arvfurstens palats* is “today a symbol of Swedish foreign activity”. Needless to say, the architect Domenico Pulgher had no reason to refer to the building in Stockholm (at the time not connected to the foreign service), yet the two buildings in Istanbul and Stockholm share widespread aspects of neoclassicism, in abundance also in Pulgher’s native Trieste and indeed most cities in Europe. Pulgher’s Palais de Suède predates other possible Stockholm references such as the Parliament House and the Royal Swedish Opera buildings (the former Parliament House was rebuilt in 1865–1866, however, at the same time as the rusticated *Storting* (parliament) building in Oslo, of which Pulgher may or may not have been visually aware).

Historical value, longevity and continuity is not necessarily held in very high esteem in the Swedish public sphere, and the past has somehow seldom seemed to be a comfortable place to turn to in Sweden. A more balanced awareness of links between the past and the present, and its implications for the future, would probably serve both the Palais de Suède and the country that it represents well.

In his book on the *Palais*, former Consul General Sture Theolin quoted the lawyer, preservationist, writer and poet Çelik Gülersoy's observation that the Swedish palace "came in like an iceberg from the North". Yet this imagery is maybe not entirely fitting, given the general Mediterranean classicising aspect of the building – perhaps a somewhat exoticising "Occidentalism" from a Turkish point of view. Rather than an iceberg, the Palais de Suède can perhaps better be described as an intersection – of west, east, north and south – and as a site of hybrid histories.



The Palais de Suède: the Bosphorus façade and the gateway, drawing by David Whitling, 2021.

Appendices



A Series legatorum of Swedish envoys to Turkey, Embassy of Sweden in Ankara, 2020. Photograph: Frederick Whitling.

Swedish Envoys Extraordinary to Constantinople, 1630–1714

Paul Strassburgk	Envoy extraordinary, 1630–1633
Claes (Clas) Brorson (Brorsson) Rålamb	Envoy extraordinary, 1656–1658
Gotthard Wellingk	Envoy extraordinary, 1656–1658
Martin von Neugebauer	Envoy extraordinary, 1709
Thomas Funck	Envoy extraordinary, 1711
Christian Albrecht Grothusen	Envoy extraordinary, 1714

Swedish Ministers in Constantinople, 1729–1738

Axel Reenstierna	Minister, 1729–1730
Carl Rudenschöld	Minister, 1734–1738

Swedish Envoys to Constantinople, 1734–1934 (Swedish-Norwegian Envoys, 1814–1905; Swedish Envoys before the Transfer of the Legation to Ankara in 1934)

Carl Fredrik von Höpken	Chargé d'affaires, 1734–1739 Envoy, 1739–1741
Edvard Carlsson (ennobled 1743: Carleson),	Chargé d'affaires, 1734–1739 Envoy, 1739–1745
Gustaf Celsing	Resident, 1747–1750 Envoy, 1750–1770
Ulric Celsing	Envoy, 1770–1780
Gerhard von Heidenstam	Chargé d'affaires, 1779–1783 Minister, 1783–1790
Georg Joseph von Brentano	Minister, 1790–1791
Per Olof von Asp	Minister, 1791–1795
Ignatius Mouragdea d'Ohsson	Minister, 1795–1799
Carl Gustaf König	Chargé d'affaires, 1799–1805
Nils Gustaf Palin	Chargé d'affaires, 1805–1814 Minister resident, 1814–1824
Carl Gustaf Löwenhielm	Minister resident, 1824–1827
Albrecht Elof Ihre,	Chargé d'affaires, 1827–1831
Antoine Testa,	Chargé d'affaires, 1831–1838 and 1839–1858
Uno von Troil	Minister resident, 1838–1839
Georg Christian Sibbern	Envoy, 1858
Peter Collett	Envoy, 1859–1860
Carl Wachtmeister	Envoy, 1861
Oscar Magnus Björnstjerna	Chargé d'affaires, 1861–1863 Minister resident, 1863–1864
Carl Fredrik Palmstierna	Envoy, 1865–1868
Oluf Stenersen	Chargé d'affaires (?), 1868 Minister resident, 1869
Selim Ehrenhoff	Minister resident, 1869–1879 Minister plenipotentiary, 1879–1887
Gustaf Lennart Reuterskiöld	Envoy, 1888–1890
Otto Stenbock,	Minister plenipotentiary, 1890–1900 Envoy, 1900–1903
Joachim Beck-Friis	Envoy, 1903–1905

Charles Emil Ramel	Envoy, 1905–1906
Cosswa Anckarsvärd	Envoy, 1906–1920 (accredited to Sofia)
Gustaf Wallenberg	Acting envoy (?), 1920
	Envoy, 1921–1930
	(accredited to Sofia)
Carl von Heidenstam	Envoy, 1930–1931
	(accredited to Sofia)
Erik Boheman	Envoy, 1931–1934
	(accredited to Sofia and to Athens 1933–1934)

Swedish Envoys to Ankara, 1934–

Wilhelm Winther	Envoy, 1934–1937
	(accredited to Athens and to Sofia)
Eric Gyllenstierna (af Lundholm)	Envoy, 1937–1940
	(accredited to Athens 1938–1940)
Einar Modig	Envoy, 1939–1945
	(accredited to Athens)
Knut Richard Thyberg	Acting chargé d'affaires, 1940–1941
Eric von Post	Envoy, 1945/1946–1951
Adolf Croneborg	Envoy, 1951–1957
	Ambassador, 1957–1959
Åke Malmaeus	Ambassador, 1959–1963
Jan Stenström	Ambassador, 1964–1968
Harry Bagge	Ambassador, 1969–1973
Östen Lundborg	Ambassador, 1973–1975
Lennart Myrsten	Ambassador, 1975–1977
Rune Nyström	Ambassador, 1977–1981
Henrik Liljegren	Ambassador, 1981–1985
Lennart Dafgård	Ambassador, 1985–1990
Erik Cornell	Ambassador, 1990–1995
Michael Sahlin	Ambassador, 1995–1998
	(accredited to Baku)
Henrik Liljegren	Ambassador, 1998–2001
Ann Dismorr	Ambassador, 2001–2005
	(accredited to Baku)
Christer Asp	Ambassador, 2005–2010
Håkan Åkesson	Ambassador, 2010–2013
Lars Wahlund	Ambassador, 2013–2018
Annika Molin Hellgren	Ambassador, 2018–2020
Staffan Herrström	Ambassador, 2020–2023
Malena Mård	Ambassador, 2023–

Consuls General (and Consuls) of Sweden in Istanbul, 1943–

Carl Gustaf (Gösta) Gislow	Honorary Consul general (?), 1943–1953
Ingvar Grauers	Consul, 1953–1957
Bo Alander	Consul, 1957–1961
Harald Edelstam	Consul with the status of consul general, 1962–1963
	Consul general, 1963–1965
Pierre Bothén	Consul general, 1966–1972
Louis De Geer	Consul general, 1972–1975
Erik Sidenmark	Consul, 1975–1979
	Consul with the status of consul general, 1977–1979
Gösta Westin	Consul general, 1979–1980
Olof Bjurström	Consul general, 1980–1983
Erik Esseen	Consul general, 1983–1985
Nils-Urban Allard	Consul general, 1985–1990
Kaj Falkman	Consul general, 1990–1995
Ingemar Börjesson	Consul general, 1995–1997
Henrik Liljegren	Consul general, 1997–1998
Sture Theolin	Consul general, 1998–2001
Ingmar Karlsson	Consul general, 2001–2008
Torkel Stiernlöf	Consul general, 2008–2013
Jens Odlander	Consul general, 2013–2016
Therese Hydén	Consul general, 2016–2019
Peter Ericson	Consul general, 2019–2023
Johanna Strömquist	Consul general, 2023–

Chaplains of the Swedish Legation in Constantinople, 1709–1818

Michael Eneman and Sven Agrell	1709–1713
Magnus Troilius	1737–1745
Petrus (Pehr) Nenzén	1748–1756
Martin Höckert	1757–1773
Martin Lutterman	1774–1775
Carl Petter Blomberg	1776–1780
Adolf Fredrik Sturtzenbecker	1780–1784
Jonas Scarin	1785–1797
Isaac Lagus	1799–1802
Adolf Henrik Arnberg	1803–1805
Gustaf Ernst Sprinchorn	1805–1811
Sven Fredrik Lidman	1812–1818

Chaplains of the Swedish-Norwegian Legation in Constantinople, 1819–1822 and 1859–1879

Jacob Berggren	1819–1822
Peter Blom	1859–1864
Per Johan Svärd	1869–1873
Johan Linus Aspling	1874–1879

Directors of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 1962 (1978)–

Gustav H. Karlsson	1978–1979
Paavo Roos	1987–1990
Pontus Hellström	1990–1992
Éva Czató Johansson	1992
Bengt Knutsson	1993–1998
Elisabeth Özdalga	1999–2001
Karin Ådahl	2002–2008
Elisabeth Özdalga	2009–2011
Birgit Schlyter	2012–2014
Johan Mårtelius	2015–2017
Kristina Josephson Hesse	2018
Ingela Nilsson	2019–2022
Olof Heilo	2022–

Counsellors of Cultural Affairs at the Consulate General of Sweden in Istanbul, 2014–

Suzi Erşahin	2014–2019
Mike Bode	2019–2023

Ottoman Envoys to Stockholm, 1637–1733

Arslan Ağa	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1637
Kozbekçi Mustafa Ağa	Representative, 1727–1728
Mehmed Sait Çelebi	Representative, 1733

Ottoman Envoys to Stockholm, 1877–1923

Murat Efendi	Ambassador, 1877–1880
	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1880–1881
Jan Karaca Paşa	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1882–1891
Stefan Karatodori	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1891–1898
Şerif Paşa	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1898–1908
Mustafa Asım Bey	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1908–1909
Mustafa Şekip Bey	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1909–1915
Hüseyin Cevat Bey	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1915–1917
İsmail Canbolat Bey	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1917–1918
Hüseyin Cevat Bey	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1918–1919
Nusret Sadullah Bey	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1919–1921
Ali Şevki (Berker) Bey	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1921
Galip Kemal Bey	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1921–1923

Turkish Envoys to Stockholm, 1923–

Laik Mukbil Bey	Chargé d'affaires, 1923–1926
Ali Haydar Aktay	Chargé d'affaires, 1926–1928
Ragıp Raif Kösearif	Chargé d'affaires, 1929–1933
	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1933–1938
Agah Aksel	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1939–1943
Nizamettin Ayaşlı	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1943–1946
Bedii Arbel	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1946–1949
Emin Ali Sipahi	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1950–1951
Haluk Kocaman	Chargé d'affaires, 1951–1952
Cevdet Dülger	Ambassador plenipotentiary, 1952–1954
Haluk Kocaman	Chargé d'affaires, 1954–1957
Orhan Eralp	Ambassador, 1957–1959
Şadi Kavur	Ambassador, 1959–1961
Veysel Versan	Ambassador, 1961–1964
Talat Benler	Ambassador, 1964–1968
Osman Dostel	Ambassador, 1968–1969
Necdet Kent	Ambassador, 1969–1972
Bedii Karaburçak	Ambassador, 1972–1976
Mehmet Baydur	Ambassador, 1976–1979
Şefik Fenmen	Ambassador, 1980–1984
Müfık Özdeş	Chargé d'affaires, 1984–1985
Haluk Özgül	Ambassador, 1985–1986
Ömer Ersun	Ambassador, 1986–1989

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Erdil Akay	Ambassador, 1989–1991
Orhan Ertuğruloğlu	Chargé d'affaires, 1991–1992
Solmaz Ünaydın	Ambassador, 1992–1996
Oktay Aksoy	Ambassador, 1996–2000
Selim Kuneralp	Ambassador, 2000–2003
Tomur Bayer	Ambassador, 2003–2004
Necip Egüz	Ambassador, 2003–2009
Zergün Korutürk	Ambassador, 2009–2013
Ömer Kaya Türkmen	Ambassador, 2013–2017
Hakkı Emre Yunt	Ambassador, 2017–2022
Yönet Can Tezel	Ambassador, 2022–

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This book was commissioned, researched and written in 2020 in preparation for the 150th anniversary of the Palais de Suède, with additions and amendments carried out 2021–2023. It focuses on the history of the buildings and the property, predominantly from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, in the local surroundings in Pera/Beyoğlu, in Constantinople/Istanbul, as well as in a wider Turkish, Swedish and international context. The book focuses on archival material and sources with a direct connection to the object of inquiry, and does not specifically address wider issues of modern Turkish history in the post-1923 republic.

The text does not make use of footnote or endnote references. It is based on the sources listed below, and deals only peripherally with, for example, the archives of the post-Constantinople Swedish legation, later embassy (*Riksarkivet, Beskickningsarkiv Ankara*) or the State Archives, Republic Archive (*Cumhuriyet Arşivi*) in Ankara. Similarly, although the book addresses and incorporates the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, it does not specifically take its institutional archive into account (*Riksarkivet, Svenska forskningsinstitutet i Istanbul*); it instead makes use of instances of institute-related material in the inventory of archival collections below.

The book has also benefited from various online resources, including those of the Turkish Historical Society (*Türk Tarih Kurumu*), of *SALT Research*, Istanbul and, for example, the Swedish women's history resource *KvinnSam – nationellt bibliotek för genusforskning*, Gothenburg (formerly *Kvinnohistoriskt arkiv*). All translations from Swedish to English are by the author.

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F2:24, F2:25, F2:26, F2:57, F2:86, F2:95, F3:10, F3:46, F3:52, F3:67, F3:85, F3:86, G1:1, G2:1, G2:2, G3:1–3, G5:1, Ö1:1. Volumes F2:13–18 have been damaged by moisture and are therefore hitherto inaccessible for research.

Björnstjernska familjearkivet. O.M.F. Björnstjernas arkiv (SE/RA/720686), E6911 and E6913.

Gustaf Oscar Wallenbergs arkiv (SE/RA/720372), 24, 25, 26, 37c.

Kabinettet/UD Huvudarkivet (SE/RA/221/2210.01.1), E2D:238 and E2D:256.

Kartor och ritningar, Utrikesdepartementet med föregångare (SE/RA/221/2210.02/#), 0010:00001-00010, 0011:00001-00006, 0014:00001-00004, 0015:00001-00010. Also SE/RA/221/2210.01.1/E/E 2/E 2 D/i/238 (1830), SE/RA/221/2210.01.1/E/E 2/E 2 D/i/256 (1850s) and SE/RA/221/2210.01.1/#/0027:00001.

Konsulatarkiv Istanbul (SE/RA/231/231227), E1:1, F1:F1a:1, D1:1, C1:8, C2:8, C4:7.

Kungliga Byggnadsstyrelsen, Utrikesbyrån (SE/RA/420508/42), F1A:83–90.

Sven Hedins arkiv, 311 (Prince Carl) and 341 (Johannes Kolmodin).

Svenska forskningsinstitutet i Istanbul (SE/RA/730687).

Turcica Plans, attachments to dispatches. Also, for example, “Mémoire pour M. Mouragdea d’Ohsson [...] Contre M. de Heidenstam [...] et M. Antoine de Murat, Second Interprete de la Légation de Suède à Constantinople” (Paris: Laillet & Garnéry, 1793).

Överintendentsämbetet, Huvudarkivet (F1C:1). Manuscript by Riksarkivarie Claes Theodor Odhner: “P.M. rörande Svenska legationshuset och kyrkan i Konstantinopel” (undated, 1890s, referred to in Bengt Johansson’s *Svenska palatset i Konstantinopel* (1968, see below), 116).

Sigtunastiftelsens klipparkiv, Sigtuna

Arkeologi Grekland Italien (J2).

Statens fastighetsverk, Stockholm

Vårdprogram, 2008.

Beställning, konsultuppdrag (Tengbom), 2011.

Ritningsförteckning, objektnummer Q046100, 2018.

Diarielista 2020-05-27 (for example “Uppsägning av objekt Q046100”, 2000–2001).

Correspondence with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (*Utrikesdepartementet*) regarding the “termination of object Q1 046100”, 2000–2001.

Statens museer för världskultur, Stockholm and Gothenburg

Etnografiska museets arkiv, Stéphanie Beyel.

Several of Guillaume Berggren's photographs are preserved also at *Statens museer för världskultur* and in various museum collections in Sweden.

His work was for example exhibited at *Medelhavsmuseet*, Stockholm; in 2010: "Istanbul–Konstantinopel. Fotograf G. Berggren" (no exhibition catalogue).

Uppsala universitetsbibliotek, Uppsala

Carl Gustaf Löwenhielm, *skissbok* (sketch book) 2 and 3 (purchased in 1936 from Alice Rosenswärd, royal housekeeper at Gripsholm castle).

Paul Mohns arkiv, 5 ("Manuskript till arbete om svensk diplomati I Turkiet under 1700-talet[.] Med utdrag ur Svenska beskickningens I Konstantinopel arkiv 1737–1802", with examples from the archive of the Swedish legation in Constantinople; the typewritten (fragmented) material is gathered chronologically, in envelopes); 6 (a, autobiography manuscript); 25 (list of increase in prices (Constantinople), 1914–1917 (Swedish translation of French original); "Iakttagelser vid besök I hospitalet I Maltepe där sjuka serbiska krigsfångar äro förlagda, lördagen den 28 september 1918" (Mohn, 29 September 1918); "P. M. angående svenska beskickningens I Konstantinopel betydelse" (Mohn, 22 December 1919, Stockholm); "En krigsbok om Turkiet", an undated typewritten review of Liman von Sanders' *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 1920); and 26 (typewritten inventory record of the historical development of the Swedish legation in Constantinople, 1734–1737).

"Paul Jamjouglous resejournal", F 382 g (1746, 126 pages).

Adolf Kolmodins efterlämnade papper, T 3 l:19.

Johannes Kolmodins efterlämnade papper, Q 15:1–10, Q 15:12–13, Q 15:19–20.

Turkey

Consulate General of Sweden, Istanbul

Archive of the consulate general, C 50 “Kungliga huset [...] Främmande furstehus och statschefer”; P 2 “GK Istanbul Nedlägg. Omvandling” (2000–2001); P 30 (1983–1991); P 30 (2000–2002); P 30 (two volumes, one without designation, 1990–1999, with, inter alia, Bengt Knutsson’s “The Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul – meeting place for science and culture”, 2000; the other comprising 1997–1999); P 30 “Forskar.” (1982–1989); P 30 “Forskar.” (1990–1998), P 80 “80 81 82 95”; P 80 “Kyrkogård 1987–1991”; R 20 “Jordbävningen 17 augusti 1999 [...] 990817 ≈ 010711”.

Various material exhibited at the consulate general, including a *Kyrko-handbok* (Norrköping, 1811) from the “Swedish congregation in Constantinople”.

Items for religious use, preserved in nineteenth century depot box in the office of the consul general.

Istanbul residens. Inredningsförvaltning 2019 (20 June 2020).

Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Istanbul

DAI-IST-Foto-Archiv, Guillaume Berggren, glass plates and photograph prints.

Boxes 340 (*Topographie Istanbul Pera Straßen Häuser ab ca. 1930 un Bau d. Parkhotels*), 341 (*Topographie Istanbul Pera Straßen Häuser bis ca. 1930 und Stadt-Ansichten*), 350 (*Topographie Istanbul Pera ausl. Botschaften ohne DGK ohne Tarabya Yeniköy*), 351 (*Topographie Istanbul Pera Deut. Konsulat Schule Krankenhaus Altersheim*), 351 A (*Teutonia club*), and 352 (*Topographie Istanbul Maçka Harbiye Şişli Feriköy*).

Guillaume (Per Wilhelm) Berggren, album cover, “Anatolische Bahn” (undated).

Ottoman Archives, Istanbul

BEO 3345.250834.2, HR.İD.107.26.1, HR.İD.107.31.1, HR.İD.107.40.3, HR.İM.4.43.1, HR.İM.4.43.9, HR.İM.4.45.1, HR.İM.4.47.3, HR.İM.4.48.6, HR.İM.4.48.9, HR.İM.4.50.1, HR.İM.4.50.4, HR.İM.4.51.3, HR.İM.4.53.3, HR.İM.4.53.6, HR.İM.4.53.9, HR.İM.150.19.2, HR.İM.150.19.3, HR.İM.175.27.2, HR.İM.243.49, HR.İM.244.111.3, HR.İM.253.89, HR.MKT.1037.57.5, HR.MTV.749.1, HR.MTV.752.72, HR.SYS.760.7.1., HR.SYS.760.7.2, HR.SYS.760.7.4, HR.SYS.1896.30.1, HR.SYS.1896.31.1, HR.SYS.1896.32.1, HR.SYS.2100.15.5, HR.SYS.2100.15.8,

HR.SYS.2295.3.4, HR.SYS.2410.3, HR.SYS.2431.41,
 HR.SYS.2464.38.2, HR.SYS.2464.38.3, HR.SYS.2464.38.9.2,
 HR.SYS.2464.38.9.3, HR.TO.272.40.1, HR.TO.272.40.2,
 HR.TO.272.40.3, HR.TO.272.75, HR.TO.273.5.3, HR.TO.273.29.2,
 HR.TO.313.74, HR.UHM.207.38.1, HR.UHM.207.38.4,
 HR.UHM.212.47.1, HR.UHM.212.47.2, HSD.CB.4.75.1.32, HSD.
 CB.4.75.33, TSMA.E.0533.10, Y.A.HUS.180.55.2, Y.A.HUS.518.18.8,
 Y.A.HUS.518.18.9, Y.PRK.TŞF.2.57.1. Y.EE.60.6.1, Y.EE.60.6.2.

SALT Research (SALT Galata), Istanbul

Photographic Archive.

Press (e.g. *French Press in the Ottoman Empire*).

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<http://itinerari.comune.trieste.it/neoclassic-itinerary/>.
<https://www.britannica.com/place/Turkey>.
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Palais de Suède

From Ottoman Constantinople to Modern Istanbul

Frederick Whitling

The *Palais de Suède* in Istanbul is the first Swedish embassy building built on state-owned land abroad, the oldest such Swedish property in the world. The main building, the present Consulate General of Sweden in Istanbul, was completed in 1870–1871 as the legation (embassy) of the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway in Constantinople. It housed Sweden's official representation to Turkey until 1934, when the embassy moved to Ankara, the capital of the new Republic of Turkey. With the move of the embassies to Ankara, the “glory” of the erstwhile embassy palaces in Constantinople that in themselves typify European elements of the character of the city and the country was, in the words of the historian and travel writer John Julius Norwich, “stolen away”.

The Swedish property in Istanbul is situated in pole position on İstiklal Caddesi (Independence Avenue), formerly known as the *Grande Rue de Péra*. It also houses the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, established in 1962. The estate is maintained by the National Property Board of Sweden, the government agency responsible for state-owned properties, land and historic buildings. Its prominent location to some extent reflects an eighteenth-century defense alliance that resulted in the epithet of Sweden as “Turkey's oldest friend”. This book traces almost three hundred years of Swedish presence in the former Ottoman capital and modern metropolis, with a focus on the Palais de Suède itself in the wake of its 150th anniversary.



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