

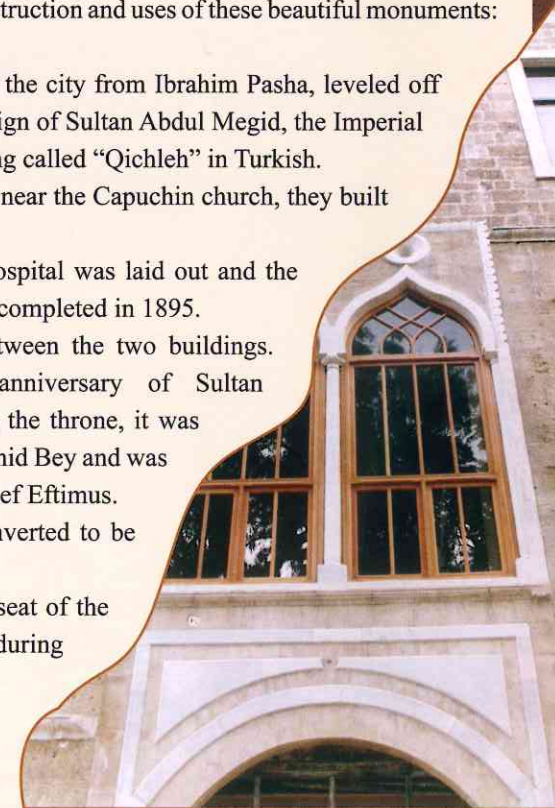


COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENT & RECONSTRUCTION HEADQUARTERS - HISTORY OF CONSTRUCTION

The headquarters of the Council for Development and Reconstruction is one of three historical buildings that adorn "The Hill of the Grand Sérail." Indeed, The Grand Sérail, the Clock Tower and the Military Hospital are situated on one of the most beautiful sites surrounding the old city of Beirut.

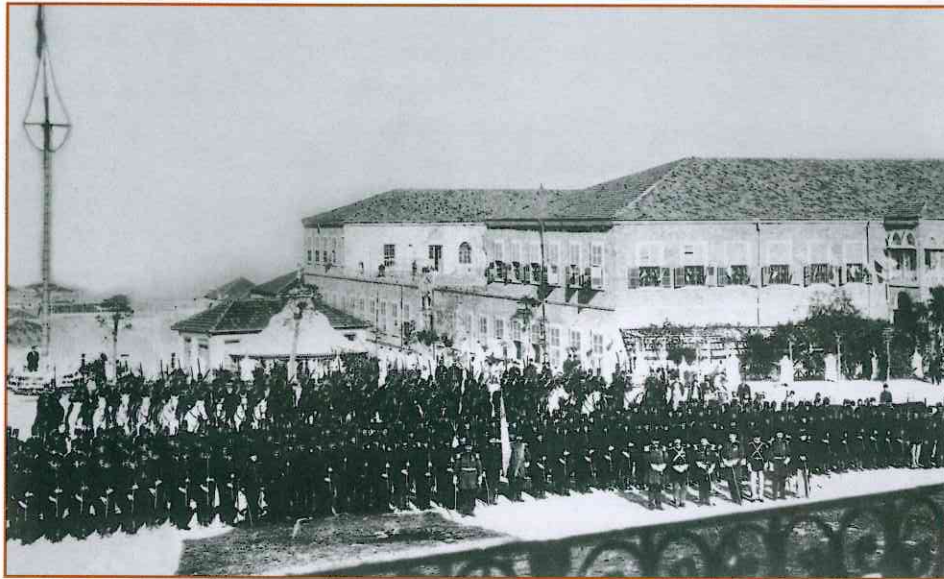
What follows is the timeline of the construction and uses of these beautiful monuments:

- 1853: The Ottomans, who took over the city from Ibrahim Pasha, leveled off the hill and built, during the reign of Sultan Abdul Megid, the Imperial barracks, a huge square building called "Qichleh" in Turkish.
- 1861: To the North of the esplanade, near the Capuchin church, they built the Military Hospital.
- 1890: The garden of the Military Hospital was laid out and the partitioning of the garden was completed in 1895.
- 1898: A Clock Tower was built between the two buildings. Commemorating the 10th anniversary of Sultan Abdul Hamid II for accessing the throne, it was commissioned by the Wali Rashid Bey and was the work of the engineer Youssef Eftimus.
- 1918: The hospital building was converted to be used as the Courthouse.
- 1920: The Grand Sérail became the seat of the French High Commissioner during the Mandate.
- 1965: The Courthouse building was used by the Lebanese University as the Faculty of Fine Arts.
- 1975: A large part of the building was destroyed during the civil war.
- 1992: The building was restored on the initiative of Sheikh Rafic Hariri, and what was the Faculty of Fine Arts was converted to serve as the headquarters of the Council for Development and Reconstruction.





The Ottoman military barracks and Al-Hamidiye clock tower (1908)



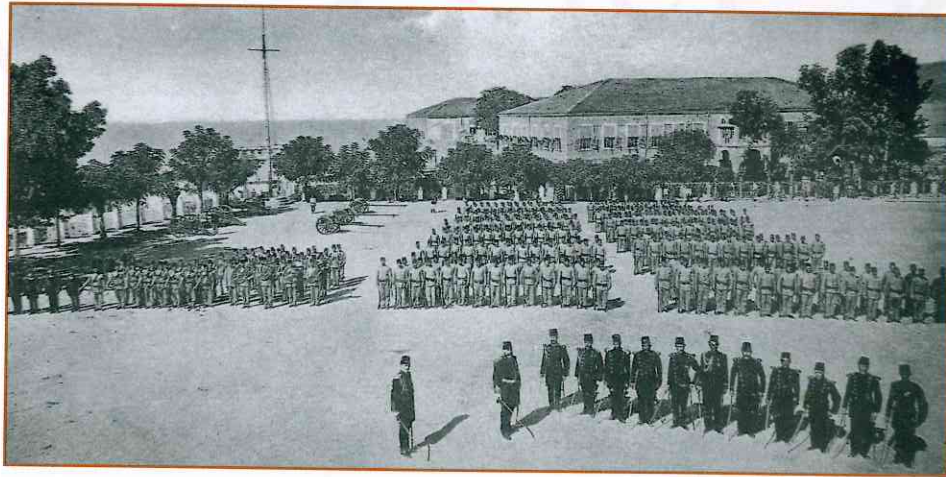
View of the ceremony held at the military training field in front of the military hospital (1900)



Two panoramic photos of Beirut (1908)



Panoramic view of the barracks (Grand Sérail) and the Al-Hamidiye clock tower, we notice at the left bottom of the photo part of the military hospital (around 1920)



▲ Ottoman soldiers being drilled in the training field between the barracks and the military hospital (1895)

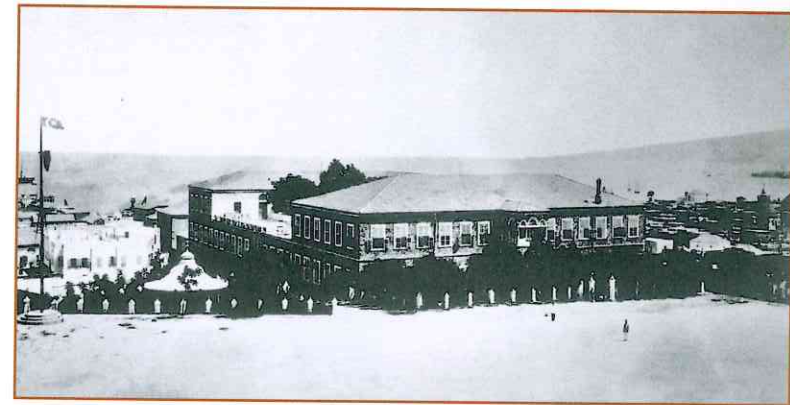


◀ National Institute of Fine Arts (1974)



▲ Council for Development and Reconstruction (1992)

◀ A view of Beirut military hospital before its garden was laid out (1886)



Beirut military hospital and its garden after completion of the perimeter fence (1895)

References:

- *Salnameh de Wilayet Beyrouth*, 1326 H. 1908.
- *A.B. Onsi, Guide et almanach de Beyrouth de l'an 1327 H., Imprimerie Al Iqbal, Beyrouth, 1326 H, 1908.*
- *F. Debbas, Beyrouth notre mémoire, Naufal, Beyrouth, 1994.*
- *K. Tadmuri & S.A. Kassab, Beyrouth et le Sultan, Ed. Terre du Liban, Beyrouth, 2002.*
- *The photos of the CDR before and after restoration are by Ayman Trawi*



Views of the building before and after restoration works (1992)

