

THE OTTOMAN PERIOD. Ottoman remains appear on the upper level of the citadel, clustered around the round tower and abutting it on its southern side (W500–W503). This construction, set against and above the ruins of the round tower, belongs to Dahir al-‘Umar’s fortress, which was restored after the 1759 earthquake. Until the early nineteenth century, the fortress continued to function as a military and administrative center; it was briefly occupied by a contingent of Napoleon Bonaparte’s troops in 1799. It suffered several earthquakes throughout its history, but the earthquake on January 1, 1837 left it in ruins. The site subsequently served as a stone quarry for the rebuilding of the city below, while the government center moved to the Turkish Saraya building to the south.

The 1996 excavation of part of the Khan ha-Yehudim (Khan el-Pasha) building complex within the Jewish Quarter, coupled with a study of surface remains and sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literary sources mentioning this unique building, enable a proposed reconstruction of its size and plan. It was abandoned in the mid-seventeenth century.

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