FEMALE PATRONAGE IN CLASSICAL OTTOMAN ARCHITECTURE: FIVE CASE STUDIES IN ISTANBUL

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

FİRUZAN MELİKE SÜMERTAŞ

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE

SEPTEMBER 2006

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Sencer Ayata
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

Prof. Dr. Suna Güven
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

Assist. Prof. Dr. Lale Özgenel
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Assoc. Prof Dr. Ali Uzay Peker (METU, AH) _____

Assist. Prof. Dr. Lale Özgenel (METU, AH)_____

Assist. Prof. Dr. Zeynep Yürekli (TOBB, TLL) _____

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last name : Firuzan Melike Sümertaş

Signature :

ABSTRACT

FEMALE PATRONAGE IN CLASSICAL OTTOMAN ARCHITECTURE:
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Sümertaş, Firuzan Melike
M.A., Department of History of Architecture
Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Lale Özgenel

September 2006, 163 pages

The aim of this thesis is to discuss and illustrate the visibility of Ottoman imperial women in relation to their spatial presence and contribution to the architecture and cityscape of sixteenth and seventeenth century İstanbul. The central premise of the study is that the Ottoman imperial women assumed and exercised power and influence by various means but became publicly visible and acknowledged more through architectural patronage. The focus is on İstanbul and a group of buildings and complexes built under the sponsorship of court women who resided in the Harem section of Topkapı Palace.

The case studies built in Istanbul in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are examined in terms of their location in the city, the layout of the complexes, the placement and plan of

the individual buildings, their orientation, mass characteristics and structural properties. It is discussed whether female patronage had any recognizable consequences on the Ottoman Classical Architecture, and whether female patrons had any impact on the building process, selection of the site and architecture.

These complexes, in addition, are discussed as physical manifestation and representation of imperial female power. Accordingly it is argued that, they functioned not only as urban regeneration projects but also as a means to enhance and make imperial female identity visible in a monumental scale to large masses in different parts of the capital.

Keywords: Ottoman Classical Architecture, Female Patronage, Ottoman Imperial Women, Power, Architectural Complexes

ÖZ

OSMANLI KLASİK MİMARLIĞI'NDA KADIN BANİLİK:
İSTANBUL'DAN BEŞ ÖRNEK

Sümertaş, Firuzan Melike
Yüksek Lisans, Mimarlık Tarihi Bölümü
Tez Yöneticisi: Yard. Doç. Dr. Lale Özgenel

Eylül 2006, 163 sayfa

Bu tezin amacı, on altı ve on yedinci yüzyıl İstanbul'unda Osmanlı hanedan kadınlarının mekansal varlıkları ve mimarlığa katkıları ile ilişkili olarak görünürlüklerini tartışmak ve örneklemektir. Osmanlı hanedan kadınlarının çeşitli yollarla iktidar ve etki sahibi olmalarına karşın, kamusal alanda görünürlük ve takdir kazanmalarının mimari banilik yoluyla olmuş olması çalışmanın dayanak noktasını oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın mekansal odağında, Topkapı sarayında yaşamakta olan hanedan kadınlarının İstanbul'da yaptırmış olduğu çeşitli yapılar / yapı grupları (külliyeler) bulunmaktadır.

On altı ve on yedinci yüzyıllarda kadın baniler tarafıdan yapılmış bu seçilmiş örnekler kent içindeki konumları, arazi özellikleri, ve bina programları ve tasarımları üzerinden incelenmekte ve kadın baniliğinin Osmanlı Klasik Mimarlığı

üzerinde görülür ve farklı bir etkisinin bulunup bulunmadığı tartışılmaktadır.

Bu yapılar ayrıca hanedan kadınlarının ellerinde bulundurdukları iktidarın kamusal göstergeleri olarak da tartışılmaktadır. Bununla ilintili olarak bu yapı ve yapı grupları, hem kentsel dönüşüm projeleri olarak işlev görmüş hem de hanedan kadınlarının kimliğini ve iktidarını İstanbul kentinin farklı bölgelerinde anıtsal ölçüde ve geniş bir halk kitlesine görünür kılmıştır.

Keywords: Klasik Dönem Osmanlı Mimarlığı, Kadın Banilik, Osmanlı Hanedan Kadınları, İktidar, Külliye

To My Father, who inspired me to be a historian…

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Before anybody else, I would like to begin by expressing my heartful gratefulness to my thesis supervisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Lale Özgenel, who I owe much, not only for the way she contributed to this thesis process, her scholarly guidance and moral support, but also for providing me a vision, and being a role model for me as an academician. This thesis would not be possible without her.

I am also grateful to my thesis examining committee members, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ali Uzay Peker and Assist. Prof. Dr. Zeynep Yürekli Görkay, Their scholarly critics and advises provided this thesis to move on further.

There are a few people I am indebted to in this thesis process. Firstly I would like to thank to Kıymet İşeri from Topkapı Palace Museum for her kind help about my research in the Palace and especially in the Harem quarters and to Hatice Karakaya, the head architect of the restoration team of the *Yeni Valide Camii Hünkar Kasrı* for her kindness about sharing her archive about the *kasr* with me.

I owe much to Lucienne Thys-Şenocak from Koç University for her kind help, scholarly guidance and support. I also owe my debts to my friends, Özlem Tekmek, Seçil Yılmaz, Aris Nalcı for their help.

I also would like to express my thanks to my teachers, friends and classmates who I have learned and shared much, from both at bachelors and masters at METU, Department of Architecture.

I am grateful to my friends and colleagues from Eskişehir and Anadolu University, for their support and guidance. I owe my debts to my friend, colleague and my homemate, Figen Kıvılcım for her kindly support throughout this study, especially in the last and the most difficult phase.

[laboratuar] has a special place in my life, though in this thesis. What have been done in this "[lab]" added me so much which I am sure was reflected somehow in this study. I am thankful to everyone in [lab].

I would like to thank to my cousins Sertan Aşkan, Hülya Aşkan, Gökçe Aşkan and Emre Çalışkan for their support throughout my bachelors and master studies, besides being friends and family to me for years. I additionally owe much to the rest of my family, my aunts, uncles and grandparents. Their existence together as a family provided me courage to go on my studies in very difficult times.

Lastly I would like to express my hearthful thanks to my mother, Müjgan Sümertaş. It is difficult for a daughter to express her admiration to her mother in a few words. Besides everything else she did for years and years, for my education, for her endless support and guidance, I would like to thank to her for being my inspiration about being hardworking, ambitious and strong against difficulties of life.

This study is dedicated to my father, Enver Sümertaş. I am sure that he is watching me from somewhere in the sky. Whenever I felt stuck and could find no way out, I felt his existence deep in the heart. Besides anything else, I would like to thank him for providing me an interest about history and the vision for always search for knowledge. I missed him so much.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the last quarter of the twentieth century, there is an increasing awareness among historians and architectural historians on a topic that had until then not received enough attention: the history of women or in a broader context the study of gender in historical contexts. In this sense, the evidence and knowledge on women from different periods in history is now investigated with a fresh approach. One such period is the Ottoman era. In contrast to the "orientalist" perspective that considers Ottoman women invisible, locked behind the doors of the harem and as sexual subjects, new approaches to Ottoman history seek to understand the role of women in the public sphere by examining several less-studied archival sources such as legal and administrative records and personal documents, as well as visual depictions (images) and architecture (the built environment).

The aim of this study, in accordance with this impetus, is to illustrate the visibility of Ottoman imperial women in relation to their spatial presence and contribution to the architecture and cityscape of sixteenth and seventeenth century Istanbul. The central premise of the study is that the Ottoman imperial women assumed and exercised power and influence by various means but became publicly visible and acknowledged through architectural patronage.

It is foremost relevant to state that the term ‘Ottoman women’ refers to a mixed group of women coming from different origins, regions, social status, wealth and religion. This study (in this sense) focuses on a specific period and an elite group of women who lived in that period. They assumed imperial power by becoming the wife or mother of Ottoman Sultans. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are significant for a number of reasons. First of all, this period is the beginning of a different era for the Ottoman imperial women: the unification of the Sultan’s house with his harem was realized in this period and constitutes one of the significant social changes seen in the Ottoman palace structure that caused an increase in women’s power. It was in the sixteenth century and especially in the beginning of the so-called classical era of the Ottoman Empire in the period of Süleyman I (1520–1566) that the imperial women also began staying in the capital city and involving into public sphere while their sons continued to move to the provinces (*sancak)* for their administrative education. The period therefore defines a significant phase of activity in the history of the court women, especially of the mother sultans.

The central focus of this study in terms of location is Istanbul and a group of complexes built under the sponsorship of court women who now resided in the Topkapı Palace. The discussion is structured in three chapters. The second chapter presents brief information on the visibility and activities of ordinary women in various contexts in the Ottoman period and in the preceding imperial cultures such as the Byzantine or Seljuk empires. An introductory knowledge on women in Islamic societies is brought together from the modern scholarship to demonstrate their visibility in the public arena, their social rights and activities as well as their status in the family. In relation to social status, the study then portrays the court women, whose social status was directly related to their

relationship or marital status with the sultan. The court women are investigated in relation to their prominent role as mothers of reigning or future Sultans and power holders in the imperial household.[1] How and in which contexts they assumed and exercised power are outlined in the same chapter.

The third chapter focuses on the relationship of female power and its representations as well as on the Topkapı Palace as the seat of power. Representation of imperial power through rituals such as the imperial ceremonies taking place in the palace for example is exemplified. In the section on the Topkapı palace the focus is on its general layout as the seat of power, and the Harem quarter as the seat of female power. The Harem, besides its architecture, is analyzed in terms of its institutionalized structure, social hierarchy and architecture to introduce the private setting of the Ottoman imperial household.

The fourth chapter dwells on how architecture was used as a reflection of power and source of visibility by women; namely on the imperial female patronage: what, why, where and how they build within the Ottoman Capital city. By taking a group of buildings as case studies built in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the chapter discusses whether female patronage had any recognizable consequences on architecture, and whether female patrons had any impact on the building process, the selection of the site and location of the building or the plan scheme of the building.

The case studies include the buildings that are known to have been built by the order of an imperial women such as the

[1] Although female power was investigated mostly in relation to motherhood, the individual figures investigated in this study also include a wife and a daughter as representing different phases of female presence and power in the palace.

külliyes (complexes) and individual buildings in complexes like mosques, *medreses*, fountains, baths, kiosks, and hospitals. These complexes played a significant role in the formation and development of the cityscape in the capital city Istanbul. These are:[2]

- the Haseki Complex of Hürrem Sultan in Avratpazarı,
- the Haseki Bath of Hürrem Sultan in Sultanahmet,
- the Mihrimah Sultan Complex in Edirnekapı,
- the Mihrimah Sultan Complex in Üsküdar,
- the *Yeni Valide* Complex of Hatice Turhan Sultan in Eminönü.

The discussion of these complexes is centered foremost on their location in the city. The setting of the layout, the placement and plan of the individual building, especially the mosques and *medreses,* their structure and orientation are taken into consideration to argue whether there is any difference in terms of plan, decoration and construction which could be attributed specifically to female patronage. These complexes, in addition, are discussed in terms of being the representation of imperial female power in certain ways. Accordingly it is discussed that, these complexes functioned both as urban regeneration projects while at the same time enhanced and made imperial female identity visible in a monumental scale to large masses.

[2] There are also other complexes commissioned by imperial women in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as the Atik Valide Complex of Nurbanu Sultan in Üsküdar, which are not included into this study as the aim is not to make a comprehensive study of all buildings commissioned by imperial women. This study rather, dwells on selected imperial women as representing the three different status of womenhood: wife (Hürrem), daughter (Mihrimah) and mother (Hatice Turhan). For a list and catalogue of the buildings commissioned by female patrons see İyianlar(1992), and for a list and an analysis of the mosques in Istanbul, see Öz (1997).

CHAPTER 2

THE CONTEXT OF OTTOMAN WOMEN

2.1. State of Ottoman Women: Sources and Visibility

Women of the east have been investigated often with an uncritical approach until recently. Accordingly a generalization, based mostly on gender segregation, described woman as secluded behind the walls of her house (Peirce 1992, 41). Within the same attitude of generalization the “inside” is protected by the walls and is associated with the female. The only interaction of women with the so-called male world within this protected inside is perceived only through a sexual connection (Peirce 1992, 41).

However, these are non-verified generalizations, more like the tendency of the western scholars to perceive the Islamic society through western concepts of public and private. Moreover they are not based on a critical evaluation of sources. In order to argue against such misconceptions it is foremost necessary to make a critical reading of the evidence at hand. Hence Leslie Peirce relates the misconceptions concerning the Ottoman women and the Harem to a lack of critical reading of the evidence at hand (Peirce 1993, 118):

> Do we reject everything European accounts tell us and retain only the fragments that can be acquired from Ottoman sources, or do we risk compounding the errors of European writers by admitting their evidence?

In this respect Peirce (1993, 118) proposes a framework which includes studying both the Ottoman sources, including the legal

and economic records, and the European accounts together. In this framework the legal and economic records become significant documents as they can provide more concrete data on women's involvement and part in daily life.

Another important aspect of a critical inquiry is to trace and investigate the historical developments in terms of both the continuities and changes of cultural habits and traditions, and also the religious and social dynamics or political structure.

Hence in order to introduce the social context of the Ottoman imperial women, this chapter will first describe briefly how "women" were positioned in Byzantine and Seljuk traditions, both of which would have a great impact on Ottoman women's social role and participation as leaders, wives and mothers. Following this will come the section on the status of women in the Ottoman period until the late sixteenth century in order to present an overall view of the social status of women in the Ottoman Empire.[3] The last section will focus on the Ottoman imperial women.

2.2. The Status of Women in the Pre-Ottoman Context: The Byzantine and Seljuk Eras

Many social and political institutions and customs of the Ottoman Empire were no doubt adopted from or influenced by the preceding cultures.[4] The Byzantine Empire in this respect was an influential culture on the Ottoman Empire in many ways; both

[3] There is definitely no such prototype as the "Ottoman Woman" based on the regional and religious ethnic origin, and also social status. The traditional society is also not a stable entity but changes from time to time and hence the diversities and changes should be taken into consideration where possible. In this study, the Ottoman Women refers to the muslim women living in the capital city in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

[4] For the women in pre-Islamic societies see Türkdoğan (1992), Can (2004), Tezcan (2000), and Doğan (2001),

empires ruled over approximately the same territory and from the same capital.[5]

The role and importance of women in economic and social terms were recognized in the Byzantine society (Hill 1999, 15).[6] Women had economic freedom as the Byzantine law provided women with a certain amount of freedom for the economic administration of the family (Nicol 2001, 5). For instance, a woman owned the rights of controlling her dowry and could have been an owner of a property administered by her husband (Hill 1999, 15). Upon the death of husband, a woman could become the head of the family and administrator of the family property; if the widow was from the imperial family, she could even administer the state (Hill 1999, 16). Such rights given to a widow however could be taken away with her remarriage. Widowhood, together with motherhood, was therefore also a powerful state for the Byzantine woman (Hill 1999, 16, 93).[7]

The Byzantine women could use their dowry and inheritance to get involved in trade and business and thus were seen in marketplaces.[8] They could lend money, do trade or manufacturing, work as bakers, textile workers and own street shops and alike (Laiou 2001, 271-272).

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[5] This is reflected in the city structure of Istanbul. The main avenues, the placement of the city gates, jetties, ports and bazaars do show continuity from the Byzantine era. The palace institution and the social context of woman are two other areas that presumably were influential on the Ottomans. For instance the main avenue of the Byzantine Constantinople, the Mese, coincided with the main avenue of the Ottoman Istanbul Divanyolu. See page .. in this study. The Eminönü or Üsküdar port and many other trade centers of the Ottoman Istanbul were also the trade centers of the Byzantine era.

[6] The Ottoman Sultans also acknowledged this heir that they used the naming of "Han" from the pre-Islamic Turks and "Sultan" from the Islamic tradition. They also used the title "Caesar" meaning the roman emperor in order to announce that they acquired all the imperialistic traditions and power at one hand.

[7] See Talbot (2000), Laiou (1992) and (2003) for more information about the role of women in the Byzantine society. Herrin (1993) provides a critical overview of the studies concerning the history of the Byzantine women.

[8] See Talbot (2000) for working women in the Byzantine era.

The social status of women in the Islamic society to some extent was similar to Byzantine women.[9] Women had their social rights under the Islamic rule. The women's activities in the Islamic society could be traced in social, political, economic, religious, and cultural spheres (Can 2004, 16). With assuming the title "Terken" they could even share political power (Can 2004, 16). Terken Hatun – the wife of Melikşah, Terken Hatun – the wife of Sultan Sencer, Terken Hatun – the wife of Celaleddin Harzemşah, Altuncan Hatun – the wife of Tuğrul Beg were among those women whose name we know as female political actors in the Seljuk context.

2.3. The Status of Women in the Ottoman Context

The Ottoman Empire, being the heir of both the Islamic Turkish societies as well as the Byzantine culture most probably inherited some of its traditions and social codes from its ancestors. In addition, as the Ottomans lived in a broader geography, and controlled a vast amount of land, the social norms in the Ottoman society were also more differed from the Byzantine and Seljuk states.

Within the orientalist context it is commonly stated that the ordinary women in the Ottoman society did not leave much trace about their daily life (Gerber 1980, 231). According to this common belief the Ottoman women could become visible, only after

[9] Islamic Turkish family developed the traditions inherited from the pre-islamic societies in new ways. For instance, women kept their rights through marriage or divorce. Türkdoğan states that, the Islamic family accordingly was structured by the Islamic law and the ancient Turkish traditions. His main thesis is that the Turkish family structure relies on the pre-Islamic traditions (Türkdoğan 1992, 59).

the modernization process of the Ottomans in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[10]

Most of the research on Ottoman women stemmed from investigating their role and place described within a public – private dichotomy.[11] Accordingly, women were assumed to have lived in the house and looked after children and done housework. The role of women in the house was explained, for instance, by Doğan (2001, 69) as such: They were educated at least to the level of primary school and had an active role in the sustainability of the family especially in child rearing and their education. Within this public – private dichotomy the "public" is taken as the sphere of men which corresponded to the world outside home.[12]

An alternative approach in this context came from Göçek and Baer (2000, 47). According to them the public – private dichotomy inevitably suggested an inequality in favor of patriarchy. So, referring to Smith and Harding, Göçek and Baer (2000, 48) propose a new focus which centers on woman's power. Such an approach includes studying activities and social interactions of women in all spheres of daily life including

[10] However, it is recently shown, in especially the studies concerning the urban culture in the Ottoman context, that women played an important role and had several responsibilities in both social and economic spheres much before *Tanzimat* (regulations) period (The period starting from 1839 which is accepted as the beginning of a modernization – westernization process in the Ottoman Empire) (Doğan 2001, 70).

[11] This public and private dichotomy is debatable from the beginning as the borders between these two separate arenas are not clear. For instance the home which was claimed to be a private area is claimed to be also a public arena into which the state had the right to intervene in matters concerning family such as violation over women or children (Can, 2004, 64).

[12] As a general characteristic of the Mediterranean cultures, the social spheres of women and men were separate. This separation is based more on a geographical distinction rather than a religious one. Ortaylı(2001, 118) states that the Middle Eastern-Mediterranean cultures were the very first settled civilizations of the world and that led them to develop a culturally defined gender segregation. This statement however should not lead to the conclusion that women were invisible in the social arena (Ortaylı 2001, 118). A separation is observable mostly in the social habits which should not be seen as restrictions.

material benefits, social rituals and symbolic expressions. In this approach the verbal history, poems, songs, proverbs or the reinterpretation of the local sources assume a primary importance.[13] For example, it is relevant to examine the *Şer'i Mahkeme Sicilleri* (Islamic court records) in a wider socio-cultural context and not as mere legal documents, since the court records demonstrate not only women's accessibility to courts but also their visibility in the social arena (Göçek & Baer, 2000, 49).[14] Especially the estate records which constitute a part of these legal documents provide information about the properties that women could own, and their involvement in trade.[15] They also provide information on social issues such as marriage, divorce and inheritance.

2.3.1. Women in Courts

In the Ottoman society, parameters of power concerning women were strictly related to their social place in the community (Göçek and Baer 2000, 62). The spatial restrictions, mostly coinciding with the restrictions imposed by the Islamic law and the society defined the borders of female presence and activity. The court records however include clues about the life and visibility of women outside their "assigned" space, namely their house.[16]

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[13] Moreover, in the last few decades, several more sources such as letters, diaries and alike were also taken as evidence to trace the life and activities of women (Faroqhi, 1997, 115).

[14] There are also visual depictions of the social life such as the miniatures which represent the women in the social arena such as the courts or the marketplace.

[15] For more information on the economical activities of women in the Ottoman society, see Faroqhi (2004) and Kafadar (1994).

[16] However, as Göçek and Baer (2000, 53) state, these records bring forth only the women who were able to apply to the court or rather who preferred to apply.

Figure 1: Women in the court, a miniature from Hamse-i Ata'i, Istanbul – end of eighteenth century, *Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi, Istanbul, Ms 1969, f. 102a. from Kafadar (1994, 207)*

Women both sued and were sued (figure 1) in the Ottoman period (Zarinebaf – Shahr 2000, 241). Besides, except being a judge they could also appear in courts as witnesses or experts.[17] There were also records of "female courts" which meant that the courts were not only held for men (Göçek and Baer, 2000, 49).

[17] Women were referred to as experts in several issues related mostly to womenhood such as birth, pregnancy and alike (Can 2004, 25).

Assuming that the notable women mostly preferred to use the influence and help of their male relatives in solving their legal problems, it is plausible to suggest that it must have been mostly the middle class women who applied to the courts. For the lower class women on the other hand suing was not easily affordable due to the costs of the court expenses. So it is not surprising that they are not represented in the records (Zarinebaf – Shahr, 2000, 241).

Figure 2: Women applying to Divan, Şehname-i Sultan Selim, 1581, Topkapı Palace Museum A 3595
from Kafadar (1994, 197)

It is known that the Ottoman women applied to the courts as well as to the *Divan* (figure 2) in the second half of the seventeenth century, at a time much earlier than the westernization process of the empire which took place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Zarinebaf-Shahr 2000,

242).[18] This also supports Gerber's (1980, 231) view in contrast to the orientalist view indicating that the Ottoman women were in fact not totally suppressed.[19]

The language of the court records, actually, both reflects and reproduces the status of women within social hierarchy (Göçek and Baer 2000, 61-62). Accordingly, although women were able to sue, the language of the court was still in favor of men and Muslims and not of women and non Muslims.

As Ortaylı (2001, 97) states, in the Ottoman society, the religious law, sharia was replaced by *örf* (tradition - non sharia) especially in the public arena and the issues related with land.[20] He also disagrees with the belief that the sharia was applied in the private arena. The traces of non-sharia applications of law could be found in family matters as well as the administrative or penalty issues. Traditions were often more valid and influential than the sharia in most cases as long as they did not conflict with the Islamic rules. In some divorce or adultery cases for example the judge could have decided less strictly than an Islamic law would have (Ortaylı 2001, 78).[21]

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[18] The courts than were accessible for most levels of the society. Moreover, if there was a conflict about the wisdom of the judge, the citizens were free to apply to the high court; *Divan-ı Hümayun*. *Divan* was a complementary institution to the juridical courts, and combined the sharia and unreligious law and was based in Istanbul. It was also known that, the women and the non-Muslims could also easily apply to *Divan* even though they might have lived in cities far from the capital.

[19] For a detailed and comparative study on the court records of sixteenth century Bursa, see Gerber, (1980).

[20] For more information about Ottoman religious law, see Imber (1997) and (2000).

[21] Although included in the Islamic law, *recm* (throwing stones to kill a woman accused of adultery) was not accepted and applied (Ortaylı 2001, 80).

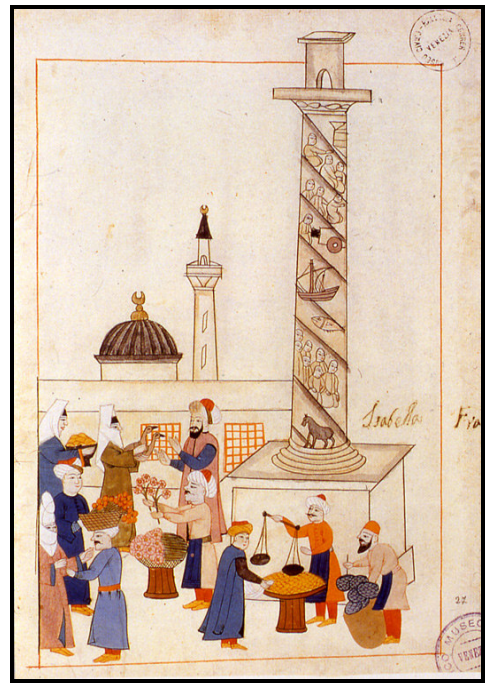

Figure 3: Women in the market place in *Avratpazarı, Museo Civico Correr, Venice, Ms. Cicogna 1971. courtesy of Dr. Namık Erkal*

Most of the cases concerning women in the courts dealt with problems related to marriage or divorce such as the *mehr*, heritage or tutelage and determination of the alimony.[22] One other sphere where the activities of women can be traced in the legal records is trade. Doğan (2001, 70) mentions that, the records dating from the period of *Süleyman* I portray women who were involved with slave trade or laundry, even franchising the property and the business. Faroqhi (2004, 239) also mentions women who are involved in slave selling business or textile production and trade. The active involvement of the female labor in the marketplace caused the emergence of women markets

[22] As an example Ortaylı, (2001, 78) states how the wealth of woman and man could be separated within a family; a fact which is unusual for the Islamic law.

where the sellers and the buyers were both women. Almost in every city "women's bazaars" (figure 3) were held.[23]

The economical activities of women, besides trade, include the foundations (w*aqf*) as well.[24] The foundations, established by an endowment of certain wealth provided social services for the public. The women, who assumed a certain amount of wealth, endowed their money or land to provide an income for the construction of a mosque, *medrese,* convent and alike or to some one to read Quran at a mosque and alike. Among the approximately 26.000 waqfs founded since the establishment of the Ottoman Empire, 2309 were founded by women (Can 2004, 98).

2.3.2. Marriage and Change of Status

Two significant areas of female involvement in the court records were marriage, and the related economical matters such as the *mehr*. The women in the Ottoman society could hold several rights through marriage; as such, marriage was an important social institution which allowed women to become active in spheres outside home. Marriage, by many scholars, is taken as a strong motive for changing the social status of women.[25] Ian Dengler (1978, 229) when drawing a portrait of the Ottoman woman, defined her as invisible, lacking presence and rights; as a part of Islamic culture, the Ottoman society segregated sexes and put women behind the walls of their

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[23] The women's bazaar, especially the one in Istanbul, will be mentioned in chapter 4.

[24] See Duran (1990) for the waqfiyas of imperal women.

[25] Most Ottoman scholars such as Dengler (1978) and Kafadar (1994) mention about the role and significance of marriage. Also see Imber (1997) for a detailed legal analysis of marriage in the Ottoman religious law. The age of women was also influential in changing status. The older a woman was the more respect she would get in the family and in the society. The elderly also gained more mobility in the society since they were regarded as sexually inactive though benign (Can 2004, 68-69).

houses. According to him marriage functioned as the breaking point.[26] Marriage, especially with the arrival of children, brought presence, social rights and even power to women.

Marriage in the Islamic Ottoman society mostly began with a contract. It was traditional that this contract was recorded in the court (Imber 1997, 175). As such marriage was, in a way, taken under the control of state. This record made the marriage contract publicly acknowledged and allowed women to get their rights in case of death of their husbands or a divorce (Imber 1997, 176).

Marriage in fact affected both partners if the family of the groom was an important and powerful one; since it was the woman who would nourish the continuity of the next generation of the powerful family.[27]

In an inquiry made by Dengler (1978) the Ottoman women are divided into four different social groups: a 'servitor class' mostly made up of unmarried woman and whose identities were defined by their labor role; the 'artisans'; 'women of urban notables' and lastly the 'women of the ruling elite'.

In this classification although the servitors form the largest group they are the least known. These women worked as housemaids, cooks, washerwomen or like; they were mostly employed in domestic tasks. The entertainers and the prostitutes on the other hand are two significant groups among the servitors who were employed in the public arena and hence they could trespass the socially desired borders between the "male" and the "female" areas. However, it was known from a

[26] Despite his other disputable statements, Ian Dengler's claim on the role of marriage in changing the status of women is a valid one.

[27] The Ottoman dynastic family was not exceptional in this respect.

number of instances that these women were of non-Muslim origin and thus their contact with the rest of the society was limited.

The position of a servitor woman in the Ottoman society on the other hand was not fixed. There were a number of ways for such women to get their freedom or change their status. One was marriage. Though some servitor women could manage to marry men from high ranking classes, most could not socially go further than the artisan class who were not much different in terms of social status than the servitors (Dengler 1978, 234). This group of women did their own housework in a small family and besides they provided income for their families mostly through textile labor (Dengler 1978, 235).

The women of the urban elite according to Dengler were at an intermediate position. They employed servants at home for helping the housework. Their main concern was to supervise the domestic labor and staff. The existence of many service people in a house created possibilities for the urban elite women to involve in non-domestic issues like public matters (Dengler 1978, 236). These women could thus become writers or poets or could engage themselves with religious matters. If they were the women of the ruling class, they could even become political and social arbiters (Dengler 1978, 236). Because of the division of the activity areas the male and female formed their own hierarchical structures especially in information exchange and decision making. Women of the high ranking class, either by personal ability or by their kinships could form factions, “clientage” and “patronage networks”. Such networks could even allow them to assert direct control over the Ottoman state apparatus (Dengler 1978, 237). Such influential women could benefit from most of the advantages that the Ottoman society could provide for any of the sexes, such as “wealth, power and

virtually unlimited control over self, property and leisure time" (Dengler 1978, 237).

2.3.3. Polygamy – Divorce

Islamic law permitted polygamy as well as divorce (Imber 1997, 174). However, Faroqhi (1997, 117) states that, polygamy in the Ottoman society was mostly exaggerated. Though not illegal, polygamy was not favored, even among the higher social classes (Ortaylı 2001, 89).[28] Moreover, referring to Rasonyi, Türkdoğan (1992, 39) mentions that the pre-Islamic Turks lived with one woman. Indeed according to the information found in most court records about heritage, it is not polygamy but rather monogamy that was accepted as the usual practice.

Islamic law also allowed women to keep their own property. In addition, as a part of the marriage contract, the law required a payment, called *mehr,* given from the husband to wife. *Mehr*, was necessary and traditional for the societies in which the age of first marriage and the age of economical dependence was very low (Ortaylı 2001, 75). It functioned as insurance for women in a society that had high death rates as well as frequent divorces (Imber 1997, 185 and Faroqhi 1997, 117).

Although the decision of divorce often came from the husband there were cases in which it was woman who wanted a divorce. In such cases however, a woman would renunciate from her *mehr* (Kafadar 1994, 192). Ortaylı (2001, 86-87) illustrates this from Rodosçuk, where women are known to have got a divorce.

Women living alone were rarely seen in the Ottoman society. However, the widows were not always forced to move into a male relative's house. They could earn their life, for example from

[28] For instance, before a matrimonial with a woman from the imperial family a pasha had to divorce from his previous wife/s.

agriculture. Especially in *Rumeli*, says Faroqhi, (1997, 126) there was a special section in the tax records about women going after cultivating their lands following the death of their husbands. It is known from the tax records of Central Anatolia that there were also women who owned houses, and were the family leaders. As Peirce (1993, 7-8) mentions:

> A further source of women's influence beyond the family was their ownership and exploitation of property. A woman's economic independence derived from her rights under Islamic law to the dowry provided by her husband and to fixed shares of the estates of deceased kin.

The widows could even invest money to gain interest. They could lend money to merchants who sold goods, earn money and then pay back a profitable share. In the instances when a husband died without leaving much to invest, then the woman could also work as a craftswoman.

2.3.4. Marriage, Concubinage and the Ottoman Dynastic Family

Conditions of marriage reflected in the Ottoman court records can be viewed in relation to the 'politics of reproduction' in which context marriage became significant for the continuity of the dynastic family; the future of both the Sultan and the dynasty were closely tied to reproduction and marriage. As concubinage and living with concubines without an official marriage was not unusual among the Muslim Ottomans, matters of marriage and reproduction got more and more complex in time. As Peirce (1993, 28) underlines, what was understood by 'reproduction' is, in a way, a reflection of the 'power' understanding of the dynasty, that is, the choice of partner for marriage reflected the image to be presented to the public by the Sultanate.

More can be reflected on the operation of 'marriage' in the Ottoman palace. The woman upon marrying a Sultan for example became foremost a Sultan and hence received a similarly high

level of respect due to her new status. She gained several other rights through marriage which brought some responsibilities for the Sultan himself. Another aspect of marriage was the political benefits, and its impact on the Ottoman state and the Islamic tradition (which is in fact a significant characteristic of the early Ottoman period).

Marriage, for some time, was not preferred by the male members of the dynasty who would practice concubinage. According to some common opinions the preference of concubinage over marriage is because of two reasons, one of which was the '*mehr*' system. As the husband, the Sultan had to give *mehr* to his wife for marriage and this meant a share from the treasury of the state. Some scholars associated the end of the marriage system (in the fifteenth century) with the protection of the treasury from subdivisions (Peirce 1993, 38). [29]

The second significant point in the rise and preference of concubinage was related to the slavery system.[30] Slavery was also present in the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates and indeed it became an important institution for the training of the young for the service of the palace and also for the state in terms of either administrative or army personnel.[31] A significant point here is that, although named as slaves and considered legally as slaves, these educated youngsters were a socially different class from those slaves who were sold as 'properties' in the West. Women likewise were also taken as slaves to the harem of the dynasty. They too were educated in the Harem to serve either as service people or else as

[29] Peirce (1993, 38) relates this point of view of European scholars to the lack of knowledge about how a concubine could acquire great wealth through her daily payments.

[30] For an informative but concise insight into female slavery in the Ottoman world, see Faroqhi (2004).

[31] The young novices were educated in the Enderun.

concubines. Many young and beautiful non-Muslim slave girls filled the harem of the palace, thus making concubinage a desired practice for the male members of the dynastic family.

The last reason for preferring concubinage to marriage was that strategical alliances with neighboring powers were needed less. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries of the empire, the Ottoman governors and their sons often married the princesses of the neighboring powers. These marriages were mostly designed as strategical organizations. The aim was to build strategical partnerships and alliances through marriage between two dynastic families, in order to sustain a more stable political platform with the neighboring powers. Altınay (2005, 4-9) exemplifies the Byzantine princesses who were married to Ottoman Sultans in the very early years of the state.[32] Yet, the end of the fourteenth century dynastic family is known to have preferred having heirs from their concubines, although legal marriages were still operative (Peirce 1993, 31). Strategical marriages came to an end towards the mid fifteenth century, as the Ottomans defeated most of their powerful neighbors, and became the leading power of the era and the region. Ottomans did not establish relations through marriage with the eastern Islamic dynasties after the sixteenth century (Ortaylı 2001, 37).

2.3.5. Court Women: Motherhood and the Way to Power

As mentioned above, women in the Ottoman society gained or changed status mostly through marriage, and bearing children supported their new status, especially if it was a son. In the Ottoman dynasty, bearing a child, as a power-generating issue was governed by the 'politics of reproduction'. For instance,

[32] For more on the wives and partners of the Ottoman Sultans, see Altınay (2005), and Uluçay (1992).

as a strategy, wives of Sultans who came from other noble lineages were not allowed to have children in the early years of the empire (Peirce 1993, 41). This had several reasons; one main reason was the danger of a possible division of imperial power between two families; that of the Sultan's and his wife's when their child became an adult and was ready for inheriting the Sultanate.

As another strategy within the politics of reproduction, a mother was allowed to have only one male child though she may have had several daughters (Peirce 1993, 42). In association with motherhood-power relationship; this was a desired situation for not dividing the influence and power of the mother in the case of a possible struggle among a number of sons for becoming a Sultan, as well as not making her choose one of her sons for support. A mother was expected to protect her only son in order to protect her future life. If her son lost the power struggle, the mother would also loose her status.[33]

The motherhood-power relationship in the Ottoman dynastic context is comparable to some other earlier and contemporary dynasties. Accordingly, it is known that women had political power in the earlier Mongol tradition as well. Not different from the mother of a *Şehzade* living in a *sancak* a Mongol woman could lead a house. Yet, what brought power to a woman in the Mongol case was to become a wife rather than to become a mother (Peirce 1933, 54).

The power of imperial women is observable in the Seljuks as well. However, unlike the Ottoman case, a Seljuk imperial

[33] For instance, in terms of architectural patronage rights, a woman who lost her imperial power could only build a tomb for herself and her son and not monumental public buildings.

mother did not end her sexual intercourse with the Sultan after the birth of her son. A Seljuk dynastic woman could even marry the *atabey* of her son after she left the Imperial House and was no more the wife of the Sultan.[34] This notion of sexuality and re-marriage of women led to the centralization of power around those *atabeys*, and hence to the decline of the (Seljuk) state. Such a marriage for instance led to the Sultanate of a slave, initiating the Memluk dynasty in Egypt (Peirce 1993, 54). The mothers in the Ottoman case however were safe political actors as their power was directly related to becoming a mother; they could only gain political safety through their sons to such an extent that they were named, only after their sons, as their mothers (Peirce 1993, 55).[35] The Ottoman state controlled the sexuality of the women of the palace strictly.

The Ottoman dynastic family was as important as the Sultan himself; it was commonly believed in the *tebaa* that any disorder in the family of the Sultan would be reflected in the state as well (Peirce 1993, 353).[36] It was indeed the *tebaa* who had drawn the social boundaries and norms for the family of the Sultan. The Ottoman power in this sense was not a kind of despotism. Although the Sultan had the ultimate power, there were some social, unwritten rules defined and set by public opinion that limited or directed his actions. Those rules were also valid for the family, especially for the women of the dynastic family.[37]

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[34] *Atabey* is the ancestor of *lala* tradition. It meant the tutor of a son, the person who was responsible for his education.

[35] Indeed it was only in the Ottoman tradition that the motherhood and wifehood were handled separately. However, an exception was Hürrem Sultan. What made Hürrem Sultan, wife of Süleyman I, such a powerful woman was the fact that she had them both at hand.

[36] *Tebaa* is the people of the Sultan, *kuls,* the people under the sovereignity of the Ottoman Sultanate.

[37] As Peirce (1993, 354) states, the public role of women in the Islamic world goes back to the period of Prophet Mohammed, to his third and most powerful, as well as visible wife Ayşe Hatun. However, in relation to the rooted belief of

An important set of rules for the activity areas of women was "constructed" by the *Ulema.*[38] *Ulema* adopted the traditional view of Islam that did not approve of women's participation in social life, especially in politics, and reflected the same perspective in their *fetvas* and nonreligious writings as well (Peirce 1993, 268). However, as it is rightly underlined, to consider only the writings of the *Ulema* provides a narrow framework for understanding the position of women.[39] Moreover it may even lead to false conclusions which may lead to describing the involvement of women who participated into the social sphere either as illegitimate or nonexistent (Peirce 1993, 269). Yet such gender segregation should not be taken also to mean that the women, especially the higher class women, lacked power (Peirce 1993, 270). On the other hand it was also a part of the political strategy that the Ottoman administrators reflected their power, by exerting control over women as well. Moreover referring to E.J.W. Gibb, Peirce (1993, 272) states that it was "an age when a rampant and aggressive misogyny was reckoned honorable".

In fact this control was related with the increase in the power of the imperial women who increasingly drew attention to the political or social activities of women in the late sixteenth century (Peirce 1993, 273). This increase was inevitable

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the Islamic *Ulema,* who considered the presence of women in administration as causing disorder, the power of women was also regarded as the basic cause of disorder in the Islamic society of the time.

[38] *Ulema* refers to the people who received a high level of education, especially on religious issues. The term "*Ulema*" in the Ottoman context refers to the religious scholars within the imperial religio-legal cadre (*ilmiye*).

[39] Peirce (1993, 270). What Ortaylı (2001, 54) states about the daughters of *Ulema,* however, is very significant in this context: despite the conservative nature of *Ulema*, the daughters coming from the *Ulema* families were well educated. Young members of *Ulema*, in order to have a social advancement, married with the daughters of higher status *Ulema*. In this respect the *İlmiye* (members of *Ulema*, the educated, the intellectuals) class women were the most encouraged and best educated.

especially because of the politics of reproduction in the dynastic family since the women became the main focus for the inheritance of the Sultanate as they were the mothers of the future Sultans. Hence in the beginning, the imperial women owed their power to being the wives of Sultans; after the end of fourteenth century, however, their power relied more on becoming a mother (*Valide)*, whose sexual relation with the Sultan then ended (Peirce 1993, 275).[40]

2.3.5.1. *Sancak*: Home of the Early Dynastic Women in the Fifteenth Century

The motherhood – power relationship was enhanced with the bearing of a son for the mother. The mother was the guide, support and protector of her son till he became the next Sultan. When the young prince (*Şehzade*), came to a mature age he was sent to a province (*Sancak*) together with his mother and his tutor (*lala*).[41] The political maturity of both the *Şehzade* and his mother were indeed publicly announced with the establishment of the new house of the *Şehzade* in a *sancak.* This move also initiated their political activities. Moving to a *sancak* represented the first stage of the political career of a *Şehzade* and it was celebrated as an important ritual. The mother accompanied the *Şehzade*, so that she could guide him in his education and help and protect him in his political struggle for the throne. The mother was the most loyal ally of

[40] There is a strong prejudice on the "notion of sexuality" in the Islamic societies, which is also supported by the orientalist point of view (Peirce 1993, 1). Yet as Peirce argues both the Islamic society and the Harem are actually defined by 'family politics' and not by sexual issues. The sexual relationship between the Sultan and the selected women of his harem, for example, was under the direct control of 'politics of reproduction'. This conflicts with the belief that the power of women in the Harem depended on their sexual influence on the Sultan (Peirce 1993, 2). One other misconception in this context is the perception of acquisition of power by dynastic women. Accordingly women were believed to have gained power due to the political disabilities of the Ottoman Sultans (Peirce 1993, 207).

[41] Manisa and Bursa were the two provinces that Şehzades were mostly sent to.

the *Şehzade* as her future career was also related to that of her son's. This was not just a power struggle. If the *Şehzade* failed to defeat his brothers, the tradition required that, his mother would be sent to Bursa for an 'exile' in the best condition (Peirce 1993, 48).[42]

In order to provide for and protect her son, a dynastic mother had to be in contact with the administrative and military forces in the capital. She had to lobby for her son's Sultanate and she also had to keep an eye on the administrative officials appointed by her son. The houses of *Şehzades* in *sancaks* were actually small models of the palace of the Sultanate in Istanbul. The same system of social hierarchy and service was in operation; the service people had the same titles with those in the palace. If a *Şehzade* became the Sultan, his house (*hane*) would become the core of his new *hane* in the palace in Istanbul.

It was the responsibility of the mother to decide for the partners of her son and also to make sure that he got the perfect education for administrative and military skills from his *lala*.[43] Both the mother and *lala*, in fact, could once have been slaves but they were the main figures responsible for controlling the early years of the future Sultan of the age.

The mother could continue to show a concern for the family of the *Şehzade* even after his death in which case she would not return back to Istanbul after the funeral but rather go to Bursa where the members of the royal family were buried until the conquest of Istanbul.

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[42] The choice of Bursa might have been related to the fact that it was the preceding capital.
[43] *Lala* was another high ranking slave whose job was to educate the Şehzade. *Lala*s lived with the family of the young princes in the *sancaks* and hence also kept an eye on the mothers so as to inform the Sultan about their activities as well.

2.3.5.2. The Sixteenth Century: the Period of Süleyman I *(1520–1566)* and the Imperial Palace

At the peak of the Ottoman imperialistic power in the sixteenth century, a number of changes were seen in both the administrative and social codes of the empire. The policy of dynasty was not planned from a central palace until the period of Süleyman I.[44] It was distributed to a number of palaces within the empire.[45] In the period of Süleyman, Istanbul became the seat of power which caused the establishment of a new network of relations that led to grouping of power.[46] Süleyman I revised foremost the codifications of the central state.[47]

Another significant change dated to Süleyman I's (1520 – 1566) period was the tremendous increase in the power of *Hasekis*, in particular that of Hürrem.[48] As the wife of Süleyman I, she was the first woman who stayed in the capital and did not accompany

[44] Though investigated through periods and regions, the historiography of Ottoman era also concentrates on individuals. The sultans, the high ranking officials and their family members were among the historically investigated figures. This is due to the continuously changing character of the Ottoman era from person to person, from sultan to sultan. It is therefore difficult to propose generalizations

[45] Edirne and Bursa, as the previous capitals of the state, were among the cities in which the Sultans stayed. Especially before the military campaigns to Europe, the sultans would reside at the Edirne Palace.

[46] Likewise, most of the networking of the harem women was through the family based relationships, not only through the blood ties but also through the entire household. It was mostly the queen mother and the favorite concubine/s of the Sultan that had the easiest access to the information networks outside the harem. Through their wealth and status they could control the future careers of their personal attendants as well as harem's administrative officials (Peirce 1992, 50).

[47] Mehmet II was the first Sultan that codified several rules.

[48] *Haseki* is the favourite woman of the Sultan who had born a male child. For more information about Hürrem Sultan, see Chapter 4.

her sons to the *Sancak* (as she had more than one son, her choice would cause an inequality between her sons). Another point which made Hürrem significant in the Ottoman history was the fact that Süleyman I violated the existing cultural traditions and freed and married her. Although it was not illegal to marry a concubine, it was against the law-like customs (*örf*) which did not favor such a matrimonial.

Hürrem moved her quarter from the old palace to the Imperial Palace at Topkapı.[49] She became the consultant of Süleyman I after she started to live in the new palace. For example when Süleyman I left Istanbul for campaigns, she kept in touch and wrote him letters in which she informed him about the status of politics and herself in the palace and capital. As a smart woman she played an important role especially during periods of war when all the administrators of the empire including the viziers and the Sultan were away from the capital.

With the unification of the house of the Sultan and the house of his Harem[50], the royal family emerged as a 'clique' (faction).[51] Especially in the period of Hürrem, the family of the Sultan including the sons, daughter Mihrimah and Mihrimah's

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[49] The first palace built by Mehmet II after he conquered Istanbul. It was built in today's Istanbul University area at Beyazıt in Istanbul. Mehmed II then built the Topkapı Palace and moved there, while the female members of his family stayed in the old palace.

[50] It is also put forward that the power of women was also increased because they had easy access to the political information and issues discussed in the Council hall which was located right next to the harem. The Gold Path enabled women as well as the Sultan, to watch the sessions taking place in the Council Hall from a round hole placed above the Sultan's royal window (Necipoğlu 1991, 175).

[51] The most important networks were set through the marriages of the daughters of the women in the Harem. The royal "*damad* (groom)" was given a palace and a high ranking status such as a grand vizier in the administrative hierarchy. The dynasty always made use of those marriages as a political end (Peirce 1992, 53).

husband Rüstem Paşa, became a powerful group.[52] Referring to Ives, Peirce mentions that, a "clique" was a natural political outcome of an absolute monarchy (Peirce 1993, 77). An ongoing process was directed by the clique formed by the *Haseki*, her daughter and her daughter's husband, who supported *Haseki's* son in his struggle for the throne.

One other factor that led to an increase of female power was the change in the educational system of the *Şehzades* which was initially based on the tradition of sending *them* to *sancaks* where they were expected to learn the politics of administration. Within this system, the mother also accompanied the *Şehzade* to the *sancak*. Starting from the seventeenth century onwards *Şehzades* were no more sent to *sancaks* and stayed in the harem with their mothers, where they grew up under their influence. They were literally kept as "prisoners" which influenced and limited their knowledge, intelligence and actions. Most of their expected responsibilities were fulfilled or defined by their mothers. Mehmed III (1595 – 1603) was the last *Şehzade* who was sent to a *sancak*.

It was in the seventeenth century that the enthroning system changed to "Seniority" (*Ekberiyet*). Seniority was based on enthroning the oldest male member of the dynastic family.[53] This system brought to an end the violent tradition of murdering brothers. The change in the enthroning system directly affected the power of the female members of the family as well. *Hasekis* started to stay in the palace with their sons, together with

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[52] Such kind of clique formation was non-existent until Süleyman's period as the *Hasekis* used to go to *sancaks* with their sons.

[53] Until then, the most capable Şehzade was chosen to ascend to the throne which had caused severe throne struggles between brothers and their mothers. For a detailed investigation of the Ottoman state structure see Kunt (2005) and İnalcık (1997).

all the other *hasekis*, concubines and their children.[54] Not only their sons' but also their political maturity was not anymore publicly acknowledged as opposed to the case in moving to *sancaks*. Similarly they became even more invisible as the sons were no more given the privilege of acquiring high status. Yet, as their sons were still counted as the potential future Sultans, they too were considered as the candidates to become a powerful woman in the future. Hence they kept their importance in the Harem.

The success of *Valide Sultans* gaining power, beginning from the sixteenth century onwards, then depended very much on the socially acknowledged relationship between the mother and her son, the Sultan (Peirce 1993, 284).[55] In addition, *Valide Sultans* established a different, rather a symbolic, relation also between the Sultan himself and his son, which provided an ease in the operation of *Ekberiyet* system that provided room to manipulate their power on their sons.

It is first in the period of Murat III (1574-1595), that the mother of the Sultan, Nurbanu Sultan, was named as *Valide* Sultan.[56] With this official title, *Valide* became one of the high ranking officials in the Empire. Although her new title was defined in regard to her son, her role did not solely depend on him and possessed official approval (Peirce 1993, 187). Thus motherhood was not conceived as a secondary status. Indeed a mother was also perceived as a representative of the elder generation; she for instance would have the privilege of constructing buildings in the *sancaks.*

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[54] Hürrem Sultan was an exception as her sons went to *Sancaks* but she did not.

[55] One more source of power apart from marriage and motherhood was the money gained by dowry and daily payment. Through these revenues dynastic women acquired both economical and social power (Peirce 1992, 44).

[56] For a list of the succeeding Valide Sultans, see Appendix D

The women had a significant place in the society in the pre-Islamic Turkish tradition. They were portrayed and respected as sacred figures who could even share the administrative power. This did not change after the acceptance of Islam as a religion; the Islamic codes were integrated into the traditions of the Turkish culture. (Under the Islamic rule, the concept of women did not change so they were still visible in the public life, could deal with public issues such as trade or could even apply to the court. In this respect, the court records, besides several contemporary visual depictions, provided the main group of evidence for female existence in the public arena.[57]

In the Turkish tradition it was the marriage that brought a change in social status of woman and motherhood supported and reinforced this change. This was also valid in the Ottoman era and even also in the Ottoman Imperial Palace. The women of the Imperial Palace namely the court women exercised power which they gained through motherhood. The court women on the other hand included several concubines who would not become official wives by marriage. As such marriage was not a required practice for the dynastic male members. The concubines, who bore a male child, became the *haseki* of the sultan. After a male child became the sultan, a *haseki* would be named *Valide* sultan, the queen mother. With that official title of *Valide* Sultan, the mother of the reigning sultan would assume a higher rank in the palace hierarchy and thus also power and wealth to exercise and use in many ways.

The following chapter will illustrate the means and representations of power assumed by the Ottoman imperial women by looking at ceremonies, rituals and architecture.

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[57] The marketplaces and the law courts were among the “public interfaces” of Ottoman women (Seng 1998, 264).

CHAPTER 3

POWER AND ARCHITECTURE

3.1. Representations of Power

Power can be expressed in different ways in different contexts and in this study the focus is on imperial female power and its architectural representation. Authority becomes officialized and legitimized through symbolic acts such as ceremonial court rituals and various other visual representations and hence it is impossible to separate the political power from its symbolic expressions (Peirce 1993, 186). This is precisely why in places where monarchies, dictatorships, and military forms of government prevail, monuments, parades and ritual strutting are found more abundantly. This was also the case in the past cultures: the Greeks, Romans and the Byzantines made use of imagery for propaganda purposes. They had displayed the emperors' images on coins (figure 4); they had painted the iconic images of the holy and the powerful in the churches (figure 5), and they had built monuments, statues and alike.

Figure 4: Roman coins,
From http://www.karaman.gov.tr/karaman/kultur/muze/sikkeler.asp

In some other past cultures, including the Ottomans power was reflected in different ways. The image of the Sultan for

example was not presented to public consumption. For the Ottoman case this meant the lack of a strong means of visual propaganda commonly used in other imperial traditions (Peirce 1993, 187). Yet, the Ottomans made use of other means of power representation such as ceremonies, rituals and architecture to create and reflect a strong and enduring imperial imagery.

Figure 5: Byzantine Emperor, Justinian with Bishop Maximilian, clergy, courtiers and soldiers,
Mosaic Panel in St. Vitale, Ravenna,
from Lowden (1997, 132)

For the Ottomans indeed, architecture became a strong tool of power manifestation that in a way, replaced other forms of imperial imagery. In fact architecture became the most visible, appealing and permanent form of imperial imagery compared to other media like painting, sculpture and coinage. Especially after the Sultans stopped leading the army and attending the meetings of *Divan-ı Hümayun* in person, building monuments and public buildings became the means of showing power and sovereignty (Necipoğlu 1991, 174). Despite the fact that it was regarded as a religious necessity, the most visible advantage of architectural sponsorship and patronage in this context was

to manifest wealth, social status as well as philanthropy of the donor or the patron (Peirce 1993, 198).[58]

3.2. Rituals of Power: Court Ceremonies

Ceremonies were among the most significant means of making propaganda and acknowledging authority. The ceremonies were the means through which the imperial power defined itself and through the symbolism employed their powerful identity was internalized in the society (Karateke 2004, 211). This was also the case in the Ottoman state.[59] The ceremonies gained importance especially after the centralization of the state in the period of Mehmed II. In fact it was Mehmed II (1451 – 1481) who codified certain ceremonies, set rules and declared them as such in a *Kanunname* between 1477–1481. These rules were set towards the end of the reign of Mehmed II, and correspond to the period of the construction process of the Palace and the imperial mosque complex in the new capital. The structure of the Ottoman court ceremonials, before are not known and documented (Necipoğlu 1991, 21):

> The new palace and the *Kanunname* were established during a period of empire building and centralization of power which culminated in Mehmed's definition of a new self image.

Inspired from the codification books of the Byzantine court as well as the Turco-Mongol heritage, *Kanunname* included various types of information from the hierarchical structure of the state to the minute details of the court ceremonies. *Kanunname* became a reference for the institutional framework of the empire. According to Necipoğlu (1991, 21), the *Kanunname*

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[58] The building activities of the Ottoman elite and the imperial family were financed with the income of *İltizam* (the grants in freehold by crown lands), from the land of the Sultan and from other income types (Peirce 1993, 205).

[59] For a detailed study on the rituals and ceremonies of the Ottomans, see Uzunçarşılı (1984) and Karateke (2004).

regulated the appearance of the Sultan in the public activities and codified the hierarchical order. In fact it actually served to isolate the Sultan from the public (Necipoğlu 1993, 303).

The Sultan accordingly could contact and communicate directly with few people; others were expected to communicate only by signs or intermediary persons.[60] The structured nature of the ceremonies underlined the detachment of the Sultan from the outside world and also clearly differentiated the accessible and the inaccessible zones in the palace.

Figure 6: Ceremonies held in second court, *from Ertuğ (1986, 128-129)*

The Palace was the stage (figures 6-7-8) for several ceremonies that reflected the authority of the Sultan. Not only the *Kanunname* but the new palace was also established during a period of centralization and empire building.

Kanunname regulated and brought forth the use of certain spaces in the palace. In this context the Chamber of Petitions[61] and

[60] According to an anectode for example Süleyman found the silent communication in between two mute brothers, who came to the palace, very respectful and ordered this sign language to be used also in his presence.

[61] It was located just at the entrance of the third courtyard, right behind the third gate.

the Council Hall[62] (*Divan-ı Hümayun*) were the two major buildings that hosted ceremonies in the palace (Necipoğlu 1991, xvi):

> Ceremonial movement articulated and highlighted the imperial architectural iconography of the palace, adding a narrative dimension to its hierarchically ordered spaces, which drew the observer from one clearly marked ceremonial station to another.[63]

Figure 7: Salutation (*Bayramlaşma*) ceremony of Selim III, *from Akşit (2000, 126-127)*

[62] It was located at the second courtyard of the Imperial Palace, on the left side of the court, next to the Harem quarter, and underneath the Tower of Justice.

[63] Ceremonial station: the courts of the palace, each hosting different types of ceremonies.

Figure 8: Culüs ceremony of Selim II, from Hünername I, 201a, *from Ertuğ (1999, 45)*

It was the imperial axis that hosted the ceremonies outside the palace. Named as "*Divanyolu*", this path began from the imperial palace, passed through the Beyazid mosque and reached the *Edirnekapısı* (gate to Edirne).[64] All the ceremonies beginning or ending at the palace proceeded along the imperial axis. This path was the outside stage for the palace ceremonials and thus the focus for imperial concern. The imperial mosques and tombs located along and around the axis were frequented by the Sultans during the ceremonies.

[64] See Cerasi (2006) for more information on the imperial axis: the "*Divanyolu*".

The codes of palace ceremonies were later elaborated by Süleyman I, after which the Sultan gained a more iconic image. As such the ceremonies, spatially supported and elaborated by the architecture of the palace grounds, became one of the implicit ways of showing imperial authority.

The Ottoman court women became part of the court ceremonials as well. Especially after the period of Murad III (1574–1595), the transfer of the "*Valide Sultan*" and her entourage from the old palace in Beyazit to the new one along the imperial axis in *Sarayburnu* became an important ritual. At the same time, it announced the new "*Valide Sultan*" following the announcement of the new Sultan. This ceremonial "procession of *Valide Sultan*" in between the two palaces became more elaborate in terms of the number of the participants scale and increased in number in the succeeding centuries (Peirce 1993, 188). All imperial administrative staff would be present in this ceremonial, during which *Valide Sultan* distributed rewards to the janissaries (*yeniçeri)*. The Sultan himself welcomed the *Valide Sultan* at the palace gate, a salutation which was not done to anybody else. Obviously this salutation itself can be seen as a sign for manifesting the power of Valide *Sultan*; she came to share the imperial power with her son, the Sultan (Peirce 1993, 188).

Valide Sultans never left the palace unaccompanied. The "*alays" (possessions)* would accompany *Valide Sultan* as the head of the Harem and her own service people during her visits to the city center. In fact, the Sultans withdrew themselves more from the public gaze after the period of Süleyman I (1520–1566) and thus *Valide Sultans* filled the absence of their sons in the court ceremonials (Peirce 1193, 192). The public could see the Sultan mostly during the Friday Prayer time. After Murat III (1574–1595), however, the Sultans rarely attended the prayers at the *Selatin* mosques. Hence it became even more visible and

pronounced that the *Valide Sultan* became a more popular court figure in public and the *Valide alays* received more attention.[65]

One other ceremony the court women attended was the circumcision ceremonies of the *Şehzades*. Women of the palace played an important role in these ceremonies. The circumcision ceremony was an important one, as the Sultan would invite several guests including foreigners and ambassadors. As such the ceremony became an important occasion for setting and regulating the diplomatic relations as well. The court women participated into circumcision ceremonies for practical reasons but as Peirce (1993, 192) mentions their presence was an acknowledgement of their position in the diplomatic relations too.

Another ceremony with implications of power representation was the welcoming of the Sultan from a victorious campaign. Accordingly it was traditional that the *Valide* Sultan welcomed her son outside the city gates.[66] This was also an occasion for *Valide* to show her philanthropy to her *tebaa* through those ceremonies.

3.3. Seat of Power: The Imperial Palace of Topkapı[67]

A palace is not merely the residence of a central authority. It is the "by products and catalyst of the culture it represents

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[65] A valide sultan would usually not expose herself directly (Thys-Senocak 1994, 81). The *taht-ı revan,* the carriage of the *Valide* carried by the servants was the symbol of her presence in those ceremonies.

[66] The most frequented ceremonial gate was the Edirne Gate on the Imperial Axis. For detailed information about Edirne Kapı see chapter 4.

[67] The Topkapı Palace is briefly discussed here. For a detailed account about the architecture and the life within the palace see Penzer (1967), Sakaoğlu (2002), Goodwin (1999), Rogers (1988), Sözen (1990) and (1998), and especially Necipoğlu (1991)

and the indicator of the distinctive lifestyles and the civilization of the era" (Ertuğ and Kölük 1992, 9).

A palace is also the locus and the architectural manifestation of imperial power.[68] As an institution based on the operation of a social and spatial hierarchy, it displays wealth and power in many ways including its plan, architecture, means and limits of accessibility and decoration. The Topkapı Palace (figure 9) which has been the headquarters of the Ottoman Empire and the home of the royal family for almost 400 years is therefore a convenient setting for presenting a preliminary discussion and examination of the relationship between imperial power and architecture in the Ottoman period.

Figure 9: Topkapı Palace, *from Ertuğ (1986, 74 –75)*

The Topkapı Palace was one of the biggest urban projects and monuments of the Ottoman imperial building program. The palace however, was not built at once. Despite several additions as well as renovations that took place in almost four centuries,

[68] The palace on the other hand was not merely an administrative center or a stage for state ceremonies. It was also the residence of the dynastic family, and a school for both the members of the dynastic family and the slaves who were expected to serve the Sultan. The palace complex actually consisted of both the residential quarters, and the non-residential sections such as the school, ateliers, libraries, small mosques, hospitals and baths which were arranged in different courts and separated by different gates.

the Topkapı palace was actually shaped in three main building phases. The first building phase of the palace was initiated by Mehmed II in the second half of the fifteenth century. This phase which took place between 1459-1478, witnessed a period of development, empire building, and centralization of power during which the "Ottoman imperial image" was also constructed.[69] The first major buildings and the main layout was conceived during this early period. Several buildings were added to this layout with the rise of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century. It was Süleyman I (1520-1566) who initiated the second building phase of the palace while the last phase took place under Murad III (1574-1595). The palace continued to be the center of the state until the mid-nineteenth century, when the administrative center moved to the new, neoclassical palace of Dolmabahçe on the Bosphorus in 1853. The Topkapı palace therefore, should not be seen only as an architectural manifestation of Ottoman absolutism; its architecture reflects the discourse and conceptualization of the empire for future generations as it was built to be a "sublime symbol" (Necipoğlu 1991, 242).

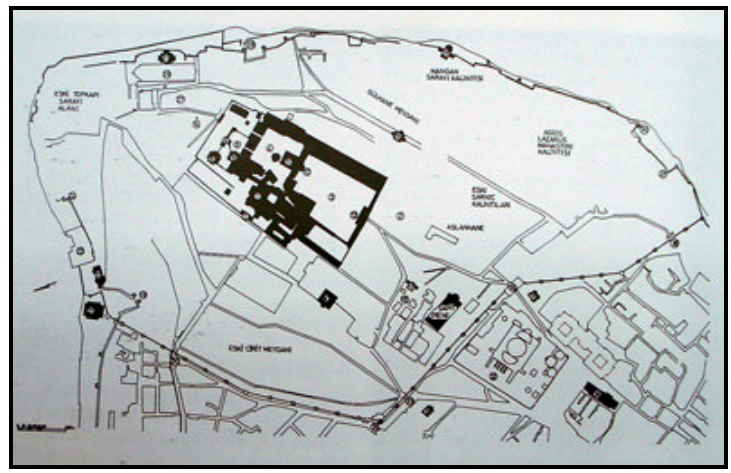

Figure 10: Topkapı Palace Plan, from *Kuban (1998, 208)*

[69] The core of the new palace (Topkapı Palace) was built in between these years.

As a center for central authority, the architecture of a palace was expected to reflect that authority as well. The Topkapı Palace however, does not have an axial layout, a rational, strict geometric and symmetric planning or a monumental scale (figure 10). It is not composed of a single big building but a cluster of buildings of varying size (figure 11).[70] As such it might be claimed that it lacked the design principles associated with power manifestation in several European palaces.[71] Yet, the Ottoman sources mention the grandeur of the palace and how it was conceived as a source of pride (Necipoğlu 1991, xi). The criteria for "grandeur", as Necipoğlu (1991, xi) states, then are not necessarily manifest in explicit ways such as monumentality for the modern observer. It can be sought in other ways, such as in the image displayed. For instance, the "perfect" image of the palace chosen to be displayed to the outsider was actually captured from the sea side and not from the land side and hence could only be captured from a distance, from where the complex stood out as an 'aesthetic object'. According to Necipoğlu (1991, 244) the two central themes characterizing the design of the complex were the view of the palace as an object in the urban fabric and the spectacular view of the surrounding landscape. As such the palace was built both *to see* and also *to be seen.*[72]

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[70] The Topkapı Palace in that respect was different then the contemporary imperial palaces in the west such as the Versailles Palace in Paris or St. Petersburg Palace in St. Petersburg.

[71] Meisler (2000, 12) adds that, the Topkapı Palace reflects the imperial power through its inaccessibility and the mystery of the Sultan and of the palace (cited by Seles, 2004). For more information about the relation of power and the buildings see Markus (1993) and Markus and Cameron (2002. Dovey (1999) provides a broader context for the relation between power and architecture in contemporary terms.

[72] This dual nature of the design of the palace, that is, the way it is designed both *to see* and *to be seen*, is in fact in harmony with the idea of architecture displaying power.

Figure 11: Aerial view of the Topkapı Palace, harem quarter, *photographed by the author*

The palace, with its imposing location, symbolizes the authority of the Sultan; the "Ruler of the Two Seas and the Two Continents" (Necipoğlu 1991, 244). The invisible but ever present Sultan could command his world empire and extend his gaze, literally and metaphorically, over his vast dominions from his palace.[73] As such the palace functioned like the tower at the center of the *panopticon*.[74] Hidden behind grilled windows

[73] The royal pavilions raised on view-commanding platforms in the gardens or along the seashore; the belvederes crowning the towers and gates of the imperial fortress, the hanging garden of the third court, and the Tower of Justice in the second court, all signified the ever-presence of the Sultan. The palace in this sense functioned like a theater in which power was displayed. The higher one moved in the ruling hierarchy, the closer he came to that locus, stage and owner of power.

[74] Jeremy Bentham's design for a prison according to which the prisoners are controlled by central surveillance and were compelled into self-discipline. In

the Sultan saw and was looked at without being seen. The political order was constructed around this symbolic center, the innermost and the private core which was occupied by the Sultan.[75]

3.4. The Architecture and the Construction of the Palace

Mehmed II (1451 – 1481) needed a headquarters in Istanbul after his conquest, a victory which is seen as the climax for the westward movement of the Turks (Penzer 1967, 57). Although intended to move on and establish his new capital beyond Istanbul, Mehmed II chose to build a palace in Istanbul (Goodwin 1999, 14). He ordered the first palace (old palace) to be built in the area which was once the forum of Theodosius.[76] According to the historians of the period, such as Tursun Beg, this palace had a well-protected harem, residential quarters and kiosks for the Sultan and his pages. Unfortunately none of the buildings of that palace survived today (Necipoğlu 1991, 4).

Soon after the completion of this palace, Mehmed II ordered another palace to be built to function both as a residence for him and also as an official center of government for the 'Ottoman Empire'. For this palace he also chose a Byzantine

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the "Panopticon", the rooms are arranged around a circular area that had a tower at the center. From that tower the prisoners, who can not see what is inside the tower, can easily be seen and watched. Knowing that they are watched at all times the prisoners are forced to develop self control. Just as the guardians and the prisoners in a Panopticon, the gaze of the Sultan, architecturally framed by ceremonial windows of appearance, implied a form of domination and control that accentuated the spatial and sociopolitical distance between the ruler and the ruled. The invisible ruler could not be seen directly at all times, but his invisible potency became known indirectly. Also see Foucault (1979, 195-228) for a discussion of the relationship between the self control imposed by surveillance and the self control of all society.

[75] There were several of those windows located in the buildings of the palace such as the new council hall, and will be mentioned in the following section.

[76] In today's Süleymaniye Mosque and Istanbul University area.

site, the ancient acropolis of Byzantium, located at today's *Sarayburnu* (Seraglio Point). Many architects who included Arabs, Persians, Ottomans and (even) Europeans such as Italians were involved in the construction process (Necipoğlu 1991, 16). Mehmet II himself was also involved in the planning of the palace and the site.

There is no doubt that with this new Palace, Mehmed II aimed at reflecting the grandeur of his state evolving from a small principality to a world empire. The palace was also meant to serve the symbolic transformation of the Byzantine Constantinople to Ottoman Istanbul. As several contemporary historians like Tursun and Bidlisi mentioned, the palace ground was at the tip of the peninsula on which the city was located. The palace thus could control both the European and Asian sides of the Bosphorus as well as both seas; the Marmara and Bosphorus (and also the Black Sea). On the inscription panel of the Imperial gate, Mehmed II announced himself as "the Sultan of the two continents and two seas"; the site located at the junction of two seas, Black Sea and Mediterranean, and two continents, Europe and Asia, perfectly suited to his claim.

According to Penzer (1967, 58) and some other scholars the Seraglio Point was a conscious choice since a desire for seclusion was one of the determinative factors. This desire of seclusion was later on sustained by the codifications of ceremonies and transformed the Sultan into a Holy iconic image. The location of the new palace was an ideal preference when the settlement traditions of the nomadic Turks are taken into consideration as well.[77] Isolated from the rest of the city, the palace was raised over the Byzantine acropolis, and as such the new order was superimposed "on the old". Indeed the whole

[77] Nomadic Turks preferred to settle in a scattered way around a water source, rather than building and living in one big space (Necipoğlu 1991, 242).

palace district can be described as an "architectural palimpsest" (Penzer 1967, 53). Mehmed II ordered the site to be terraced as it was a steep hilltop. On the uppermost terrace were located the Sultan's own residence and the council hall. Once the construction of buildings and the gardens were finished, a fortress-like wall and a gate named the Imperial Gate; *Bab-ı Hümayun* were built.[78] With this wall the site of the palace was delineated, and separated from the city; it became surrounded by high walls and the sea.

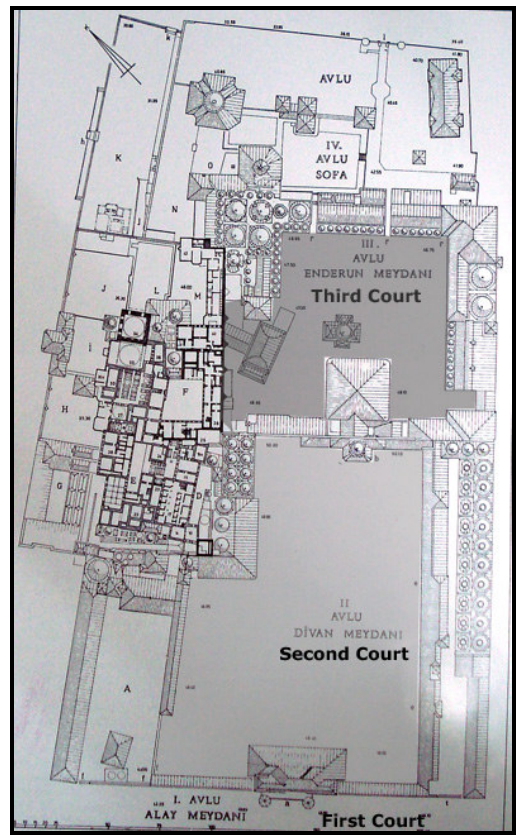

Figure 12: Courts of the Palace, *after Eldem and Akozan (1986, Plate 100)*

[78] It might be claimed that seclusion is a necessity for security. Yet the contemporary sources do not emphasize security as an important criterion in the construction of the palace (Necipoğlu 1991, 16).

The palace was designed around three courtyards placed in a sequential order (figure 12). These courtyards controlled public accessibility. The innermost court was the private section where the residence of the Sultan was located; this was publicly inaccessible. The palaces planned with courtyards are also common in several other empires. As Seles mentions (2004, 39), in reference to Sözen (1998, 28) in the eastern palaces like those in the Far East, the courtyards did not simply function as design elements; they also served to separate the accessible and the inaccessible areas and hence to organize a spatial hierarchy. In fact the use of walls, courtyards and transitions is a way of expressing domains in relation to the human behavior. Accordingly, the human behavior that needed to be controlled by rules could be controlled by the use of architecturally separate zones structured around a system that sustained the power relations as well (Ertuğ and Kölük 1992, 11).

In the Topkapı Palace, the order and the relationship of the buildings with respect to each other resemble, in a way, the order of the tents in a military settlement, in which the tents with different functions were lined up according to a predetermined scheme. This arrangement is visible in the layout of the new palace (Necipoğlu 1991, 242). The buildings of the palace did not necessarily and actually copy the order and form of the tents, but they were similar in scale, that is, they were not very monumental in size, had mostly a single-story elevation, and had minimal furniture.[79] The buildings were not monumental in scale but they were rich in decoration.

[79] The rooms were arranged with movable furniture, a tradition that is still seen in the vernacular Anatolian houses.

The Sultans following Mehmed II did not change the original layout of the palace. However, in the course of the sixteenth century, different Sultans added new buildings to the palace complex. Several buildings were replaced with the new ones, and many were redecorated. Beyazid II (1481 – 1512) did not change much in the palace (Necipoğlu 1991, 22). He rebuilt the palace walls after a devastating earthquake. He also built small garden pavilions in three palaces; the palace in Edirne, the Old palace and the Topkapı Palace. Selim I (1512–1520), also did not build much as he was often away for military campaigns. He only renovated the Privy Chamber and built a new shore pavilion.

It was Süleyman I (1520 – 1566) who did most of the changes to Mehmed II's layout. He renovated and expanded the palace buildings. In Süleyman's period, the service buildings were relocated in the first two courts. The Public Treasury and the Council Hall with the Tower of Justice were also built during his reign. The chamber of petitions in the third court was rebuilt, the Harem section of the palace was enlarged, and new pavilions were added. Süleyman's reign was also significant as the empire had reached its broadest territories as well as the peak of its power. Necipoğlu (1991, 29–30) relates the changes made by Süleyman I, both in the architecture of the palace and the codifications of the ceremonies, to the strengthening of the "powerful image" of the world empire.

The most significant change occurred in Selim II's (1566–1574) period following a great fire in the kitchen of the palace in the second court. The chief architect of the age, Sinan, was ordered to build a bigger kitchen complex after this fire. Sinan also built a new royal bath in the male section of the third court. Several additions were also done to the Harem quarters. However Harem was mostly enlarged in Murad III's (1574 – 1595) period who ordered a new privy Chamber, a throne

hall and a new royal bath together with residential quarters and baths for the increasing population in the harem quarter.

By the end of the sixteenth century, the Palace took its present form. It gradually evolved from a seasonal stop where the Sultan had resided when he was not in military campaigns to a permanent residence for him and his family. The population of the palace also increased accordingly. Most of the ceremonial changes introduced in the period of Süleyman I (1520–1566) were supported also with the architectural changes as a ceremony requires an appropriate architectural and spatial setting.[80]

3.4.1. The Imperial "Fortress": Walls, Gates and Courts

The walls of the Topkapı Palace were not built entirely for defensive purposes, as the thin walls could allow for little room to maneuver. The walls gave the palace a commanding appearance and the look of a fortified castle. The imperial fortress which was not meant solely to serve for defensive functions can also be seen as a statement of sovereignty and power. On the other hand they were meant to protect the administrative functions as well as the treasury.

The Topkapı Palace had 3 courts arranged from public to private. The three main gates in each court provided passage from one court to the other with an increasing level of privacy. The visitors' passage through the successive monumental gates also marked their transition from one realm to the other and foreshadowed the ceremonial journey beyond.

[80] Although there had been several changes and additions to the palace and the *Kanunname* in different periods, the establishment of both the Palace and the *Kanunname* were still attributed primarily to Mehmed II by the chronicles.

The Imperial Gate: *Bab'ı-Hümayun* and the First Court

Figure 13: *Bab-ı Hümayun, photographed by the author*

The very first gate of the palace (figure 13), known as the *Büyük Kapı*, *Alay Kapısı* or *Saltanat Kapısı*, was named as *Bab-ı Hümayun* in sixteenth century. It was the first of the three main ceremonial double gates with domed vestibules through which one had to pass through before encountering the Sultan in the Chamber of Petitions (*Arz Odası*). The gate gave access to the first court which was open to the public. It was the largest and the most accessible court of the palace. It is the court where the public ceremonies started. The first court, entered after the *Bab-ı Hümayun*, is a huge open area and was accessible for everyone in the empire. Several service buildings like the ateliers, stables and storehouses were constructed in this court in the sixteenth century. The gates of these paths were kept guarded. In this public courtyard exotic animals like elephants or giraffes were displayed which was another manifestation of the imperial grandeur. Rather than described and identified with buildings, this part of the palace was associated with soldiers, horses and exotic animals,

namely the life within the court in the written sources of the period.[81]

The Middle Gate: *Bab'üs-selam* and the Second Court

Figure 14: *Bab'üs-selam, photographed by the author*

The monumental double-towered gate (figure 14) at the center of the high wall separating the first court from the second one was the most imposing structure visible to those progressing along the ceremonial path. It immediately attracted attention by its curiously medieval appearance. Unlike the relatively accessible Imperial Gate, passage through this second gate was restricted only to those with official business in the second court.[82] The gate however was a place for the reception of the

[81] St. Irene church was also located in the first court and was transformed into an armory after the conquest like many other Byzantine churches in Istanbul.

[82] Beyond this imposing edifice only the Sultan could ride a horse, as was also the custom at the imperial gates of Abbasid and Byzantine palaces. At the end of a ceremonial procession in the first court, all but Sultan had to dismount the horses closer to or further away from the second gate according to their relative status. The only exceptions were the old administrators or the *Silahdar Ağa* who carried the sword of the Sultan in a ceremony.

visitors as well as the ambassadors and hence was formerly called as *Bab'üs-selam*, the Gate of Salutation (Sakaoğlu 2002, 81). Behind the Gate of Salutation, there is the second court of the palace. This was a semi-public, court in which a select group of people were allowed to pass. The court was surrounded by a colonnaded arcade behind which were several service buildings such as the palace kitchens, stables and alike. Important administrative buildings like the Council Hall, Public Treasury, Tower of Justice (figure 15), the Canopy of the Third Gate and *Bab'üs-saade* were also located in the Second Court.

Figure 15: Tower of Justice and the Court Hall below, *photographed by the author*

The second court also acted as a "stage" as it was the setting of the palace ceremonies.[83] Several times in a week, a special

[83] The second court is also "significant" strategically as it included some of the surveillance points such as the Tower of Justice and the Council Hall's

ceremony was organized here to impress the ambassadors of several important monarchs despite the fact that the Sultan was rarely seen on the stage.

Figures 16a–b: Grilled window on the wall of the Court Hall, seen from the Court Hall and the Tower of Justice, *photographed by the author*

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curtained royal window. The Tower of Justice, was first built by Mehmed II, and was altered by Süleyman I. It was used as a temporary treasury in the period of Mehmed II. It was renovated in 1819-20 in the period of Mahmud II (1808-1839) and took its final shape in the period of Abdülaziz (1861-1876).When Süleyman I built a new treasury, the tower lost its function and was remodeled to be used as a watch tower. The Sultan watched the ceremonies in the second court from this tower. A eunuch guard watching the Harem courts and controlling the concubines was also present in the tower. Another surveillance point in the Second Court was at the Council Hall built by Süleyman I. The Sultan sat behind and watched the council meetings behind a grilled window (figures 16-17) on one of the walls in this hall. Hiding the person from the council hall, the window actually acted as a surveillance window. This window was also accessible from the Golden Path at the harem. As mentioned before, women in the Harem had an opportunity to listen to the council meetings and thus get information about the state politics due to this close spatial relation.

Figure 17: Tower of Justice where the Sultan as well as the women sat and listen to the Council Meetings, *courtesy of Kıymet İşeri*

Third Gate: *Bab'üs-saade* and the Third Court

Figure 18: *Bab-üs Saade, photographed by the author*

Mentioned in the official documents as *Bab-ı saade* (figure 18), *Yaldızlı Kapı*, *Arzhane kapısı*, *Arz kapısı*, *Harem kapısı*, *Akağalar Kapısı*, *Enderun kapısı*, *Bab-üs saade* means the gate of happiness, the gate of felicity. According to Necipoğlu (1991,

90), it is situated at the very threshold of a "key opposition between interior and exterior;" it marked the real entrance of the royal palace. Some of the significant imperial ceremonies including *Cülus* and the *Sancak-ı Şerif İhracı* took place here (Koçu, 55). It was where the Sultan of the empire was crowned and announced to the public with the gifts distributed to the soldiers (*Cülus-ı Hümayun*) (Koçu, 56). The funeral ceremonies and the procession of Sultans also began at this gate (Sakaoğlu 2002, 139). This gate then was the symbol of both the beginning and the end of the reign of a Sultan.

The Third Court behind the Gate of Felicity is where the Sultan had lived with his family and household. It was composed of three parts; the male section, the female section and the hanging garden, known as the fourth court today. It was constructed mostly in the period of Mehmed II. The women's quarter was located off-centered, while the male section was on the same axis with the central ceremony path; showing the relative hierarchy between the male and female quarters.[84] Among the significant buildings located in the third court, was the Chamber of Petitions at the entrance of the court just behind the third gate. Mehmed II, built his privy chamber and the treasury – bath in this court.

3.4.2. The Harem: Seat of Female Power

In the third courtyard, the female quarter of the palace was located. The family of the sultan lived here with its service entourage. The word *Harem* means a banned, sacred place. It refers to a temple like place, where the entrance is limited or restricted. It is also a term recalling "respect" to whatever or

[84] Similarly, the council hall was also located off-centered in comparison to the Gate of Felicity and the Chamber of Petitions which were located directly on the central axis.

whoever it referred to. Hence the residence of the Ottoman Sultan was also regarded as a sacred place since he was regarded as the shadow of God on earth. That's why the third courtyard of the Topkapı Palace is named *Harem-i Hümayun*; the private living quarter of the Sultan.[85] The women's living quarter was also called harem as the entrance to this section, of men who did not have a blood tie was banned. The family of the Sultan moved to the Harem quarter in the sixteenth century and from then on the word "Harem" assumed another meaning: it was also used to denote the household living in the harem which included its servants, educators and administrators.

The Topkapı Palace Harem was not solely a residence for the Sultan and his family but it was an institution that educated women just as *Enderun*, the school for males in the palace. The male and female members of the palace were educated in those schools were later on married to each other in order to form a palace aristocracy.

The Topkapı Palace already had a harem quarter from the very beginning; however it was small in scale and did not house the royal family (Necipoğlu 1991, 161). The Privy Stables and the Privy Chamber were reserved as the Harem section (Ertuğ and Kölük 1992, 107). Until the unification of the residence of the Sultan with that of his family under Süleyman I, the royal household actually lived in the Old Palace.[86]

The institutionalization of the *Harem* and the transfer of the royal family to the Harem in the new palace dated to the period of Süleyman I. From the archival legal records it is also

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[85] The holy lands of Islam, Mecca and Medina are known as *Haremeyn-i Şerefeyn*.

[86] The first palace that Mehmed II built in today's Süleymaniye region. That's why it was also known as *Saray-ı Duhtaran:* Ladies Palace (Ertuğ and Kölük 1992, 107).

understood that the Harem was restored in 1520s. This restoration as well as the movement of the family to the new palace shows that both were planned by *Süleyman* himself (Peirce 1993, 163). In this context the assumptions made by some scholars in reference to Evliya Çelebi cannot be taken as true since the archival documents clearly show that *Süleyman* renovated a harem that already existed in the new palace (Necipoğlu 1991, 159). [87]

This institutionalization and increasing power of the Harem as an institution is in fact not only related to the presence of the family of the Sultan in Istanbul but also to the unification of the residence of the Sultan with that of his family. Till the period of *Süleyman*, the family of the Sultan, the women including the concubines, the mother of the Sultan, the *hasekis*, his daughters, grand-children and their servants lived together in the Old Palace and the Sultan frequently visited his family in the old palace. Although he had his own chamber in the Old Palace his main residence was in the third court (Harem) of the New Palace in Topkapı. The old palace was later called the "Palace of Tears" (*Gözyaşı Sarayı*) since it became a retirement place where the "widows and the disgraced women", now the unfavorites of Sultan, were sent back from the new palace to spend the rest of their lives (Necipoğlu 1991, 175).

The complete unification of the residence of the Sultan and his family occurred under Murad III (1574 – 1595). It was also in his period that the Harem quarter was enlarged, almost rebuilt and took its present-day form (Ertuğ and Kölük 1992, 109). The

[87] "In this palace no harem had been established. Later, in time of Süleyman Khan, a harem was built, together with a Chamber for Eunuchs, a chamber for Halberdiers, a Kiosk of Justice, and a Council Hall", Evliya Çelebi 1314 *Seyahatname*, Vol:1 p.116. Goodwin, (1971, 132) Kuran, (1986, 115), Anheeger and Eyüboğlu, (1979, 26-27) are among the scholars who described Topkapı as a mere administrative center (Necipoğlu 1991, 289).

structural formation, the institutionalization and the hierarchical formation of Harem were completed in this period as well.

3.4.2.1. Social Hierarchy

The Topkapı Palace harem was not a mere residence for the family of the Sultan. In time it became a hierarchical institution in which the female slaves as well as the princesses were educated. According to Sakaoğlu, (2002, 275) the Harem was a very well-organized and disciplined institution which resembled the *Enderun, the school for the male,* in terms of its social, educational and service structure.[88] There was also a strong hierarchy imposed by the *Valide Sultan* (the Queen Mother).

An important feature that reflects and verifies the existence of a strict social hierarchy was the scheduled payment given to those living in the harem; a procedure which even included the *Valide Sultan* and the Sultan himself.

There were three groups of residents in the harem (Peirce 1993, 168):[89] "the elite", who constituted the family of the Sultan, (were also named Sultan[90]), *Daye Hatun*[91] (*sütanne)* and the *Kethüda, (*chief of the institution); the "middle class"

[88] Not different than the *enderun* which was a school for the young slave boys, the harem was a school for the young slave girls (Necipoğlu 1991, 161). In the *enderun*, the quarters of the service personnel were clearly separated from those of the students; similarly the quarters of the *Valide Sultan* and the *Sultan* in the harem was also separated (Sakaoğlu 2002, 310).

[89] The life and the social structure in the harem were also subject to transformation in time. For a more comphrensive study Harem must be examined in relation to the period of each Sultan. In this study, the sixteenth century is the focus.

[90] Peirce mentions that, the common usage of the word "Sultan", both for the Sultan as the sovereign and also for his mother and daughters, is a clue about how Ottoman women also assumed, carried and transferred the dynastic power.

[91] Bates (1978, 249) states that Daye Hatun was a signifant figure, she could also comissions buildings. In the context of mother-son relationship she could act in the capacity of a mother to the sultan.

comprising the administrative and educative staff and lastly the “ordinary service women”.

The *Valide Sultan*, the mother of the Sultan of the age, was the head of the Harem institution. She was responsible from the administration of the daily activities in the harem quarter, as well as the guardianship of the royal family (Peirce 1993, 126). Her section was the most imposing after the Sultan’s quarter. It had its own service rooms organized around a courtyard, and also its own service people.

Haseki was the favorite concubine of the Sultan as well as the mother of potential, future Sultan of the age. She came second after the *Valide Sultan* in the hierarchy, also according to her salary. She likewise received her own service people and rooms (Necipoğlu 1991, 177). This meant that she was in a higher social position even compared to the daughters or sisters of the Sultan who came from the imperial lineage. The high status of the *Haseki* came from the fact that she was the mother of the future Sultan; hence she was the potential *Valide* Sultan (Peirce 1993, 127).

As the power in the sixteenth century Ottoman harem was directly related to becoming a mother; the concubines who did not have male children, did not get much attention and their salaries were also relatively very low. The daughters of the Sultans also did not receive much attention unless they were married to high level administrators of the state (Peirce 1993, 127). Only such a marriage provided an increase in their salaries.[92] The *Şehzades,* the sons of the sovereign Sultan lived

[92] The female members of the harem and the concubines (if they could not bear a child for the sultan) were married to the administrators who were also educated in the palace, in the *enderun* and hence left the harem to live in their own houses.

in the harem quarter together with their mothers (after the sixteenth century). However, as mentioned before, they were kept behind the walls of the harem while waiting to be ascended to the throne.

3.4.2.2 The Architecture of the Harem Quarter

The harem quarter (figure 19) of the Topkapı Palace was the most unknown section of the palace to the outsiders. Both the architecture and the life within were unknown for centuries to the people outside the palace. The only information we get from the life inside the harem was from the chronicles of the European visitors who once visited Istanbul and perhaps also the palace. [93] There were several reasons for this lack of information. First of all, the harem was the most inaccessible place of the palace for all male residents, except the Sultan, the eunuchs and the male children of the Sultan. Secondly, there was an unwritten policy of silence among the people living in the Harem or those who once lived there; it was considered inappropriate to talk about the Sultan's harem anywhere in the empire. The writings of the contemporary European visitors therefore reflected mere fantasies or stories about the harem and not the realities.

[93] Sakaoğlu (2002, 276) mentions about visitors or travelers who attempted to get information about the Harem. An early traveller was Dominico Hierosoliminato, the doctor of Murad III, in 1599. Dominico had drawn a sketch plan of the harem and marked several rooms. He also mentioned about some of the traditions in the harem. Another visitor, Dallam who brought a present from the British Queen Elizabeth I to Mehmed III in 1599, could to some extent come closer to Harem and noted his observations secretly. In seventeenth century, the Venetian ambassador Ottavio Bon and Rycaut the secretary of the English ambassador and Jean Baptise Tavernier visited the palace but could get very little information about the Harem quarter.

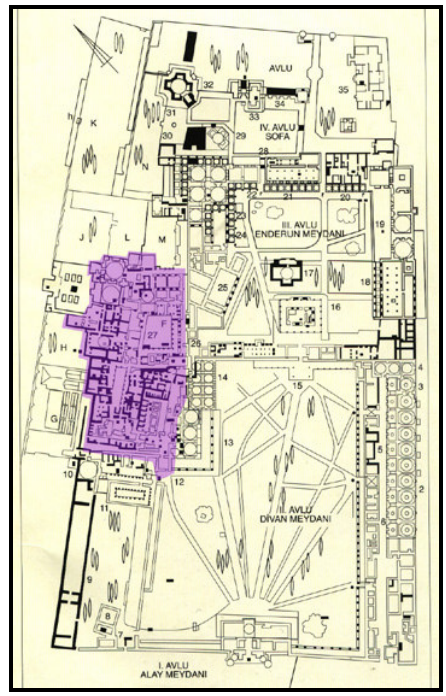


Figure 19: Location of the harem quarter in the palace, *after Esemenli (2002)*

The complex architecture of the harem quarter could only be studied by the help of a series of restorations that took place successively. Like the palace itself, the Harem quarter was not also built at once. It was first built in the period of Mehmed II (1451–1481), then renovated and enlarged by Süleyman I and lastly more expanded by Murad III (1574–1595). It is significant that these renovations and enlargements in the harem quarters coincide with the enlargement of the Harem as an institution. The change in the Ottoman state formation was also reflected the architectural development of the Harem quarters (Esemenli 2006, 94).[94]

[94] For instance, after the end of the tradition of sending *Şehzades* to *sancaks*, a separate quarter (this time with no courtyard) was built as the residence of the *Şehzades*.

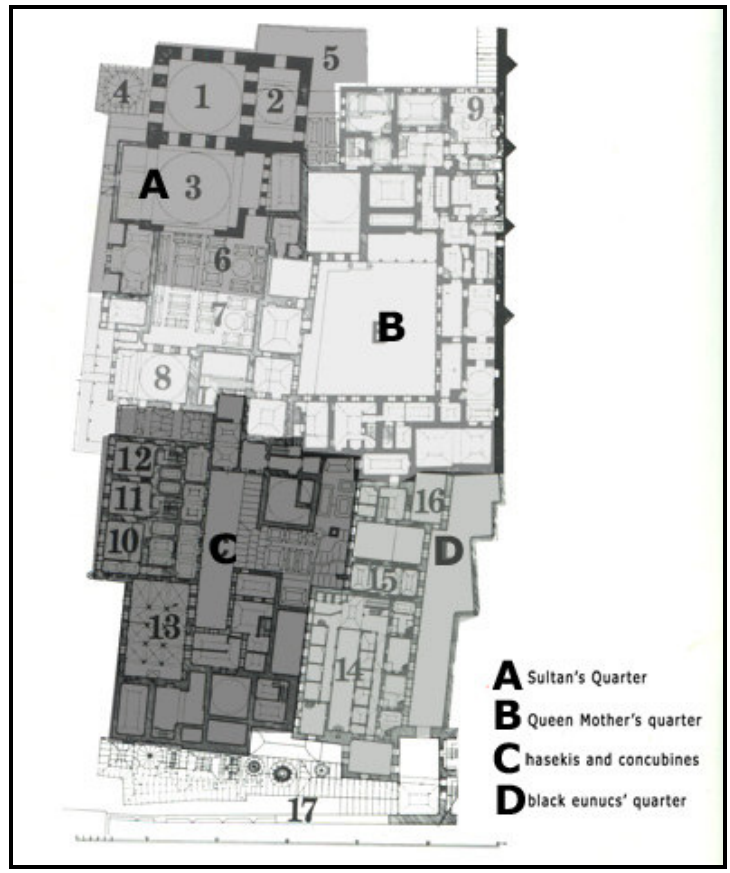


Figure 20: Quarters of the harem, *after Necipoğlu (1991, 168)*

In its present form the harem is composed of four main sections (figure 20). This scheme reflects mostly a functional as well as a hierarchical zoning:

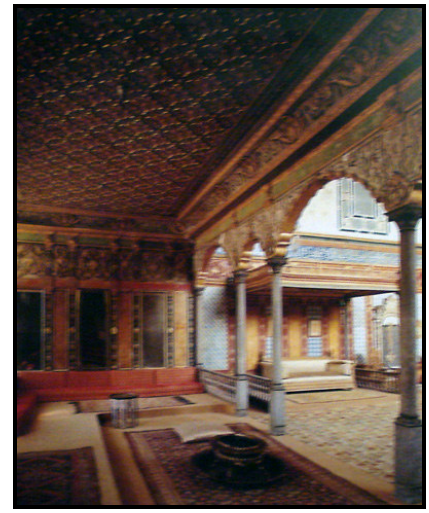
- *Mabeyn-i Hümayun or* the section of the Sultan and the Şehzades,
- the quarter of the *Valide* Sultan and *kadınefendis,*
- the quarter of the *haseki*, *cariyes* (concubines) and *kalfas*
- the quarter of the *darüssaade ağası* and harem *ağaları.*

Just like the palace grounds, the harem is also shaped around courtyards (figures 21a-b):

- The Marble Garden of the Sultan,
- The Court of the Queen Mother,
- Court of The Concubines and *Hasekis*
- The Court of the Black Eunuchs.

Figures 21a-b: Courtyard of the Black Eununchs (left) and the courtyard of the concubines and *Hasekis* (right), *photographed by the author*

Limited accessibility between different zones, as in the palace structure, is also valid for the harem. Although zones can be distinguished from a plan, it is difficult to understand the function of each room in a zone due to the lack of written evidence.



Figures 22a–b: Sultan's chamber in the harem, from *Akşit (2000, 164 and 167)*

The Harem as a whole served for the pleasure of the Sultan. With its high lantern domes, rich and expensive building materials and splendid decoration and furnishing the most imposing section in the harem belonged to the Sultan (figures 22a–b). The second lavish section was reserved for the *Valide* Sultan (figures 23a–b) (Necipoğlu 1991, 182). Necipoğlu describes this section as a "miniature of her son's section" (Necipoğlu 1991, 183). The quarter occupied by *Şehzades* was located between the two and did not have a separate courtyard (Necipoğlu 1991, 183).

The harem is in fact a cluster of rooms, one next to each other and developed around courtyards. Yet, in order to provide privacy as well as security, there are many corridors, locked doors and *cul de sacs*, staircases leading nowhere. The quarter therefore looks like a labyrinth as a whole. It is difficult for someone who was not familiar to find his/her way in the harem;

it is not possible to follow a certain direction while moving from one quarter to another.[95]

Figures 23a-b: Valide Sultan's chamber in the harem, *from Akşit (2000, 154 and 157)*

The Harem had two main gates, called *araba* and *kuşhane*, and five other secondary entrances. Unlike the palace, the gates of the harem did not open to the courtyards. The gates were linked to the courtyards through several corridors surveillanced by the black eunuchs. *Araba* gate is the first and the oldest gate.[96] It was the only gate that connected the harem to the outside world. At this gate there is also the guardian's place (*nöbet yeri*), the mirrored room that connects the Golden path leading to the Queen mothers section, the passage to the dormitory of the Black

[95] The visitors' route in the Harem quarters of the Topkapı Museum today covers a very small portion, less than a quarter of the whole of the harem. Even along this short path, it is difficult to follow a certain direction. Passing from one room to another and from one quarter to another, it is difficult to maintain orientation.

[96] The modern visitors to the Topkapı Museum are taken inside to the Harem section from this gate.

eunuchs and the passage to the Concubines' quarter.[97] As such *araba* gate was a very significant node in the Harem quarter. *Kuşhane* gate on the other hand connected the Harem to the *Enderun* Court.

The harem quarter was the private quarter of the Sultan. His section was the most imposing one of the harem. It was composed of places for living, sleeping, resting, praying, and also a bath. The main imperial hall was the locus of the Sultan's quarter. It was the place where all the ceremonies of the harem, thanksgivings to Sultan and leisure activities as well as the celebration of births took place. It is stated that it was built by Sinan at the end of the sixteenth century (Sakaoğlu 2002, 369). It was redecorated after the great fire of 1665. The hall took its final and present day form and decoration in the eighteenth century in the period of Osman III (1754-1757). Besides this main hall, several Sultans including Murad III, Ahmed I, Ahmed III built private chamber for themselves in the harem. Each of those chambers reflects the taste of a different Sultan.

Valide Sultan's quarter was almost like a smaller version of the Sultan's quarter. Likewise it was a small complex in itself and was composed of rooms for eating, living, sleeping, resting, and praying as well as cleansing. The main room of this quarter was also called the "*Valide Sultan Sofası".* It was first built by Murad III for his mother Nurbanu Sultan in the late sixteenth century. This hall was the biggest room reserved for women in the whole harem and was a domed hall with a heart. Similar to the rest of the harem, this room was also adorned with lines and panels of inscriptions, mostly from Koran. The other rooms

[97] The Black eunuchs were responsible of the work and administration as well as security of harem. They were among the highest officials in the palace. Yet, they were also among the service people of the Valide sultan who kept her in touch with the outside world.

surrounded this main hall. From the door on the right hand side of the room, it was possible to enter the private section of the *Valide*. The refined decoration of this section shows the importance and the high status of *Valide* in the Harem hierarchy as well. From the main hall, through a corridor, the *Valide* could pass to her bathroom which was designed as a double bath together with the Sultan's bath. So, both baths were placed next to each other and the same corridor led to the Sultan's main hall.

The other sections of the harem were reserved the quarters of the concubines, *hasekis* and *kalfas* and the *ağas* (black eunuchs). They were also built around their own courtyards and were self-sufficient with all the services included. The concubines' quarter additionally had a hospital at the lower level.

Besides its architectural qualities what is especially significant for the harem is its location.[98] Built on the Golden Horn (north) side of the third court, the Harem was located just behind the *Kubbealtı*, where the Divan meetings were held. As mentioned before, the women could follow the Divan meetings behind a grilled window, a fact taken as one of the reasons for the increasing power of the Harem women. Although this may have been true to some extent, the women of the imperial family as briefly outlined above had already received some power and

[98] The Harem quarter had many problems created by its architecture. The three basic problems of the Harem were privacy, light and heat. The necessity for closure and concealment restricted the efforts and means for aesthetics and illumination (Sakaoğlu 2002, 313). The intricate and dense conglomeration of rooms only allowed for lantern domes or *havale* windows for illumination. That is why despite the effort and importance given to the decoration of the quarter, the Harem ended up by turning into a large labyrinth in the successive periods. According to Necipoğlu (1991, 182) this architecture; closure and conglomeration were influential on the origin of the "perception of harem" in the minds of the orientalists and westerners. Harem actually was the very first place that adopted and received the artistic and architectural tendencies of the age. It was continuously rebuilt and decorated following the rapidly changing fashions in art and architecture (Necipoğlu 1991, 183). As such it was perhaps the most changing and dynamic section of the palace.

certain privileges by becoming concubines, wives, mothers and queen mothers.

The harem quarter became the seat and symbol of the increasing power that the imperial women exercised after the sixteenth century. The female members of the Imperial family always had a significant place in the dynastic hierarchy. Yet, some became more visible for the public than it ever was before after the sixteenth century.

Once firmly settled in the harem as the powerful and dominating figures, especially the mothers (the future queen mothers) stepped outside the palace grounds to make their presence and power publicly acknowledged through architectural patronage.

The sixteenth century was the peak of the imperialistic power of the Ottoman Empire. Throughout the fifteenth century, the state developed its imperialistic identity as well as its central authority. The seat of that power represented by Topkapı Palace was also shaped to reflect the central authority as well. The Ottoman palace, while it lacked several organizational and architectural qualities such as axiality or monumentality which are claimed to be the signifiers of power in modern terms, was the stage of the ceremonies which were one of the means of reflecting and imposing authority in the Ottoman Empire. The architectural manifestation of power in the palace was designed to separate along a sequential access marked with gates and courtyards which imposed and implied power by controlling approach and accessibility to the Sultan.

Likewise, the harem quarter of the palace was the seat of female power where this power was also centralized and institutionalized by the Valide Sultan. The plan organization of the harem also reflected the hierarchy in the institution. Arranged around courtyards, the present and the final layout of

the harem was composed of four main sections used by the sultan, *valide* sultan, the black eunuchs and the concubines. As this was the private and the more inaccessible section of the palace, a different but controlled system of access and circulation was developed in time.

The institutionalization of the harem quarter coincided with the unification of the Sultan's house with that of his family. The movement of the female members of the dynastic family to the core of the administrative center increased their political abilities due to the increase in the information they received and also to their proximity to the sultan and state administration. Their political activities later on would become more visible with the seclusion of the Sultan from the public.

The activities of the dynastic women were not only limited to politics. The high ranking dynastic women in the harem hierarchy such as the Valide Sultan, or Haseki were involved in meeting several social needs of the society mostly as religious or pious acts. These pious acts in consequence became a means for sustaining visibility and acknowledging power. The major pious act of such dynastic women included endowing money, founding waqfs and above all ordering religious and social buildings for public use.

CHAPTER 4

FEMALE POWER AND ARCHITECTURE

4.1. Court Women and Power: Symbols of Imperial Sovereignty

Architectural patronage was a political tool for monarchies. It was an instrument of legitimization and public acknowledgement of the imperial power. This was more pronounced in the case of the Ottoman Empire since the image of the Ottoman Sultan was not presented to public consumption in any other media like painting, sculpture or coinage. The imperial family instead utilized architecture to make their power publicly seen and acknowledged and thus architecture became the most visible, appealing and permanent form of imperial imagery compared to other forms in the Ottoman Empire (Erzen, 2004, 5):

> The expression and exercise of power find their correlation in architecture, which was conceived as a tool given by the divine for the establishment of earthly power, i.e. of the empire. Thus, architecture was used as the basic earthly device for imperialization.

Building monuments and public buildings in the urban context became the means of showing power and sovereignty. Among the male members of the Ottoman dynastic family it was the Sultan who had the right to comission buildings. In the very first years of the state, the *Şehzades* (crown princes) also used to commission buildings but as these buildings became attraction and gathering points for the public to acknowledge the power of *Şehzades* and to support them, they were not allowed to build in later times.

In order to be publicly acknowledged and represented, the women of the imperial family as well commissioned buildings, that is, to express and manifest their power publicly they became patrons of architecture.[99] The female members of the imperial family –both the once slave concubines and the women of the imperial lineage– could commission buildings although there seemed to be certain rules.[100] Only a group of women like the wives of the Sultans from other imperial lineages are known not to have initiated building programs till the mid fifteenth century.

The Ottoman imperial women sponsored mostly charity institutions.[101] As such much of the wealth of *Valide Sultans* was returned back to their *tebaa* by means of the charity institutions they established. Through the waqfs, they channeled their wealth and concern to the public. It is also important to note in this context that the imperial women could spend their wealth independently (Bates 1978, 257). Because, whether for charity or for glorification, patronage always relied on economics (Atıl 1993, 3).

Sponsoring public monuments as a means to underline presence and manifest power was actually a known tradition in both the Byzantine and the Islamic cultures as well (Peirce 1993, 186).

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[99] Some slave concubines could became patrons due to the crucial factor that brought them power as well as wealth: motherhood.

[100] In fact several unwritten rules were applicable both for male and female patrons. The scale of the building, its decoration and alike were decided according to the "codes of decorum" (Necipoğlu 2005, 115 – 124). The concept of "decorum" was first defined by Vitruvius and was later also used in the Ottoman architecture. In Sinan's architecture "decorum" relied on limiting the status signs such as the scale, the number of the minarets and alike according to the social rank of the patron. For a detailed investigation of "Codes of Decorum" see Necipoğlu (2005, 115–124).

[101] For information about other forms of art patronage in Islamic context, see Grabar (1990).

The Byzantine woman belonging to the imperial family, and especially the empresses, could assume imperial power as well.[102] In the Byzantine Empire, it was the emperor who had the ultimate power but some empresses are known to have played an important role in administration and even ruled the empire. Empresses came to power mostly as regents for their young sons.[103] They ruled until the young emperor reached the age for assuming the throne.[104] Co-ruling regents were also known to have been officially acknowledged on coins, and mentioned in historical accounts (Garland 1999, 1).

The empress had a privileged position in the Byzantine era. She was ascended to throne by marrying the emperor and was then considered as a representative of imperial authority. Marriage to an emperor also provided great power for the woman's family. The officially acknowledged empress took part in the ceremonies and rituals, dressed in elaborate robes and attended by her own service entourage. If the emperor died, the empress could choose or marry the successor.

Empresses who did not remarry, or who remained single, ruled in the same way as the emperors: they presided over the court, appointed officials, issued decrees, settled lawsuits, received ambassadors and heads of state, fulfilled the emperor's ceremonial role and made decisions on matters of financial and foreign policy. They only could not personally lead an army (Garland 1999, 4).

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[102] See Hill (1997), (1999) and Talbot-Rice (2000) for more information about Byzantine imperial and elite women.

[103] Empresses who were regents for their young sons could also marry while in power, in order to protect the rights of their young sons. In this case the young emperor remained as the senior, but administrative decisions would be made by his stepfather until he came of age (Garland 1999, 4).

[104] Üçok (1965) mentions about women who ruled or co-ruled their states in the Islamic societies as well.

Empresses either consorts or regents could command a considerable amount of wealth (Garland 1999, 6). Their privileged high social status was also reflected in their omnipresent retinues, means of patronage and spending money. The possessions of their own imperial seals, the image of empresses displayed on coinage their portraits painted in frescoes or inserted into mosaic panels demonstrate their publicly visible and acknowledged power.

The Byzantine empress was also expected to demonstrate her piety and concern for her subjects in social welfare projects and charity institutions. Commissioning and sponsoring churches, monastic institutions and facilities for the poor and sick were among the more frequently mentioned public projects conceived for the use of larger masses.

As such, the female patronage could be traced in the Byzantine Empire as well. The elite women of the Byzantine court concerned mostly with religious architecture (Gittings 2003, 70), starting from the 5th century onwards (Gittings 2003, 71):

> Empresses publicly displayed their devotion through pious vows staged for maximum effect, the collection of holy relics and the endowment of churches, ecclesiastical furnishings, and charitable institutions.

For instance the Empress Theodora was the co-patron of the Hagia Sophia together with her husband Justinian I.

The female patronage was also popular in the contemporary European traditions. The Medici family constitutes a good example. The female members of the Medici family such as Catherine de Medici endowed charity institutions such as convents, schools, tombs and sometimes hospitals (Thys-Şenocak 2000a, 118).

A number of public buildings from the Seljuk period are also known to have been sponsored by imperial women. From the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, the period between the Seljuks and the earlier Ottoman dynasty, 5 of total 100 *medreses* are known to have been built under female patronage and 3 of them by the mothers of Artukid and Seljuk Sultans (Bates 1978, 246-247). Likewise 6 of 119 caravanserais were also built by women; 5 were commissioned by Mahperi (Huand) Hatun the wife of Aleaddin Keykubat and the daughter of Kir Vand, the mayor of Alanya (Bates 1978, 246).

Figure 24: Gevher Nesibe Hatun Hospital, *from Kuban (2002, 178)*

One of the most significant types of public buildings sponsored by Seljuk court women were the hospitals (figure 24). Gevher Nesibe Hatun, the sister of Keyhüsrev I and daughter of Kılıç Arslan II, in 1204 - 1210 in Kayseri; Turan Melik Hatun, the daughter of Fahreddin Behram Şah, in 1228 in Divriği; Ildız Hatun, the wife of the Ilhanid Khan in 1308 in Amasya had all built hospitals (*darüşşifa).*[105] Among the types of buildings built by the order of Seljuk court women mausolea constitute the largest group. As opposed to these, few religious buildings were sponsored by Seljuk imperial women. The mosque of Mahperi (Huand) Hatun in Kayseri is one example.

[105] According to Kuban (2002, 47) Turan Melik Hatun and her husband Ahmet Şah were co-patrons of the building.

Mahperi (Huand) Hatun, the wife of Aleaddin Keykubat was the most famous female patron of the Seljuk period (Durukan 2002, 47).[106] The complex (figure 25) completed under her patronage in 1238–39 in Kayseri composed of a mosque, a *medrese* and a tomb. Mahperi was also responsible from building a h*an* in Pazar (1238–39), the Akdağ medrese, and the Çinçinli *han* in Yozgat. Hüdavend Hatun, the daughter of Kılıç Arslan IV who had built a tomb in Niğde (1312 –13), and Raziyye (Devlet Hatun) the wife of Keyhüsrev I, who had ordered Konya Hatuniye Mosque (1213–14), and a caravanserai in Kadirhan (1223) were among the other known female patrons of the Seljuk era. The *medrese,* the hospital and the bath that formed the complex of Gömeç Hatun, the mother of Keyhüsrev III, another Seljuk female patron, does not exist today (Durukan 2002, 47).

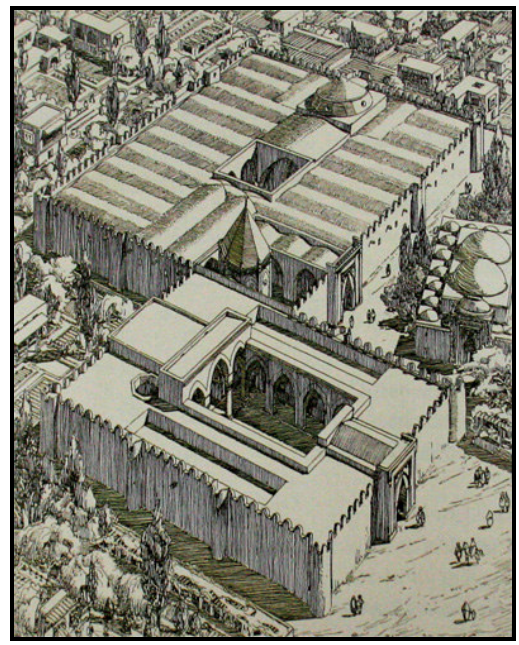

Figure 25: Huand Hatun Complex in Kayseri, A.Gabriel, *from Kuban (2002, 134)*

[106] She became regent for her son who ascended to throne at the age of sixteen.

The Ayyubids were another Islamic power where the women became patrons of architecture.[107] In the late twelfth and early thirteenth century, Ayyubid dynastic women ordered 16% of almost 160 new religious and charitable institutions in Damascus (Humphreys 1994, 35) and among 147 patrons 14% were again women. These women came from the members of the court, military families, *Ulema* families and the princely households of Ayyub. They mostly ordered *medreses*, sufi hospices and mausolea (Humphreys 1994, 36). Likewise in Aleppo, *medreses*, and mosques with mausolea were among the building types ordered by the female members of the court (Tabbaa 1997, 47).

In the Ottoman period on the other hand the imperial female patrons built more mosques than their Seljuk or Ayyubid predecessors. 68 of 953 mosques were completed under female patronage while 39 of the 448 buildings built by Sinan were also commissioned by female patrons (Bates 1978, 246 – 247). It is also known that the imperial women sponsored schools, convents (*zawiyas)* and mausolea in the Ottoman period as well. Other non-religious buildings such as *hans and* bazaars were also built to provide income for the religious establishments. Secular buildings known to have been sponsored by imperial women however were rare (Bates 1993, 63). Large building complexes (*külliye*) including mosques and baths were among the monumental undertakings within the architectural programs sponsored by the imperial women in the Ottoman era.[108] These *külliyes* (complexes) were actually used as strategically important elements in the Ottoman urban development schemes (Erzen 1996, 19). They became places of attraction and a means

[107] According to Tabbaa (1997, 46) the initiation of the female patronage in Syria is dated to the Seljuk reign in the early 12th century. Fore more information about patronage and female patronage in Damascus and Aleppo see Humpreys (1994) and Tabbaa (1997).

[108] The cluster of waqf buildings built for pubic service and formed a group around a mosque in a certain region.

for channeling the imperial sources to the districts where renovation and social and urban improvement were needed.[109] All these were religious complexes in which the mosques constituted the main building and the focus (Erzen 1996, 6)

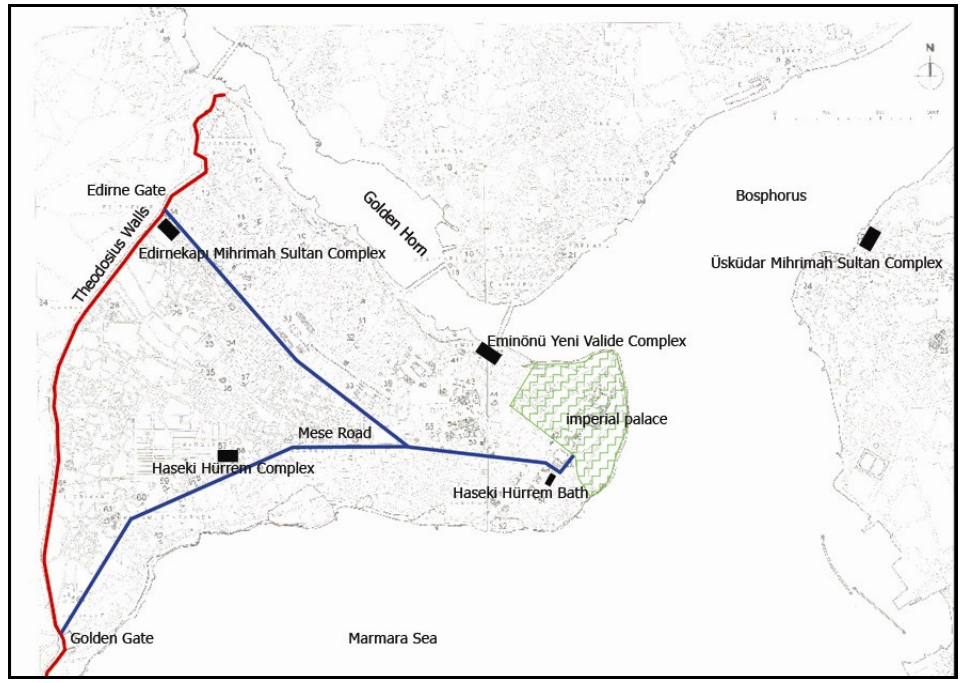

Figure 26: Location of the complexes, after Günay (2002, 18-19)

A group of monumental urban projects sponsored by the Ottoman imperial women was built in Istanbul between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These include the Haseki Complex and Bath of Hürrem Sultan in Haseki, the complexes of Mihrimah Sultan in Üsküdar and Edirnekapı and the Yeni Cami or New Valide Complex built by Hatice Turhan Sultan[110] in Eminönü

[109] In addition, there are Ottoman sources that include anecdotes about the imperial women helping women of lower social classes, especially the unfortunate women such as the prostitutes, slaves, prisoners and orphans (Peirce 1993, 201).

[110] Safiye Sultan, the favourite of Murad III and the mother of Mehmed III, was the one who had first commissioned the construction of *Yeni* Mosque in 1603. The building however could not be completed as her son died and she no longer could keep the status of being a queen mother. In addition, her grandson Ahmed I commissioned himself another great mosque which meant the channeling of labor

(figure 26).[111] The following sections will first introduce these female patrons and then will discuss the architecture of these complexes to demonstrate their distinguishing characteristics in terms of location, site, plan scheme and decoration that can perhaps be attributed specifically to female patronage.

4.2. Imperial Female Patrons: **Hürrem Sultan** (1500 – 1558), **Mihrimah Sultan** (1522 – 1578), **Hatice Turhan Sultan** (1627–1683)

Hürrem Sultan (1500 – 1558)

Figure 27: Portrait of Hürrem Sultan,
Venice School, Anonymous 18th century, Jak Amram Collection
from *Kafadar (1994, 223)*

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and imperial concern to that mosque. Today's *Yeni Valide* mosque is the one built by Hatice Turhan Sultan. In this study Hatice Turhan Sultan will be considered as the patron of the mosque as well as the whole complex.

[111] For a list and catalogue of the buildings commissioned by Valide Sultans, see İyianlar (1992).

Hürrem (figure 27) was the official wife of Süleyman I, mother of Mihrimah and Selim II. Originated from Rogatin (in today's Ukraine) she was Russian or Polish in origin (Necipoğlu 2005, 268). She was nicknamed as Hürrem but contemporary Europeans called her Roxelana. After Süleyman I married Hürrem around June 1534 she became the first slave concubine freed to become a Sultan's legal wife. Hürrem had five sons: Mehmed (1521) Abdullah (1522–23 died shortly after birth) Selim (1524) Bayezid (1525) Cihangir (1531) and a daughter: Mihrimah (1522); who also became a powerful woman as her mother Hürrem.

Hürrem had a significant role in the Ottoman political history. She was the first imperial mother who did not accompany her son on the way to a *sancak*. She became the most powerful woman in the palace after the death of Süleyman's mother, Hafsa Sultan, and Mahidevran's move to the *sancak* from the palace.[112] In order to be closer to her husband she moved the Harem from the Old Palace to the Topkapı Palace and became closely involved in the state affairs. Together with Mihrimah, her daughter, and Mihrimah's husband Rüstem Paşa, she formed a powerful and affective trinity and played an important role in the political and administrative matters.[113]

Hürrem had commissioned complexes in Istanbul, Edirne, Medina, Mekka and Jerusalem. Hence she was also the first royal woman who sponsored buildings not only in Anatolia but all around the empire (Peirce 2000, 58–59). She was buried in the Süleymaniye complex.

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[112] Mahidevran is the mother of Şehzade Mustafa, first son of Süleyman I.

[113] The *tebaa* criticized Hürrem because of her political activities. Especially her great will to make one of her sons a sultan was regarded as a negative attitude in the public opinion. Some scholars claim that, Hürrem plotted many pious activities to gain a positive image on the *tebaa*.

Mihrimah Sultan (1522 – 1578)

Figure 28: Portrait of Mihrimah Sultan,
anonymous 17th century – Rahmi Koç Collection
from Kafadar (1994, 226)

Mihrimah Sultan (figure 28) was the only daughter of Süleyman I and Hürrem Sultan. She received a special education and was the favorite of her father. She had one daughter, Hümaşah Hanım Sultan, and a son whose name is not known. As one of the most famous daughters of an Ottoman Sultan she acquired great wealth as well as political power.[114] She for example donated money for the construction of 400 ships from her own wealth before his father's Malta campaign. Mihrimah, her mother Hürrem and her husband Rüstem Paşa formed a powerful and affective clique and involved in political and administrative issues.

Mihrimah Sultan acted as the queen mother of her orphan brother Selim II as their mother Hürrem died before becoming a queen

[114] She even had correspondence with the Polish king like her mother Hürrem (Necipoğlu 2005, 197).

mother. She supported him in both political and economical terms (Sakaoğlu, İstanbul Ansiklopedisi V:5, 453).[115] As a wealthy and powerful imperial woman she spent most of her wealth on charitable institutions. She sponsored two complexes, one in Edirnekapı and another in Üsküdar and also an aquaduct built from the Mount Ararat to Mekka. She had died at an early age in 1578. She was buried in her father's tomb in the Süleymaniye complex.

Hatice Turhan Sultan (1627-1683)

Hatice Turhan was captured as a slave at the age of 12 and was given to Kösem Sultan, the mother of Sultan İbrahim as a gift. She was Russian in origin. Hatice Turhan Sultan was the mother of Mehmed IV and the favorite of Sultan İbrahim. She also had a daughter called Atike Sultan. Sultan İbrahim died in 1648 and her son Mehmed IV assumed the throne at the age of 7 after which the 21 years old Hatice Turhan Sultan became the queen mother. Hatice Turan could not be politically active until Kösem Sultan's death in a rebellion at the Harem in 1651. Following the death of Kösem Sultan, Hatice Turhan actually became the head of the administration only until Mehmed IV came to the age of 19. She then moved away from the political arena and dedicated herself to charity.

She initiated a number of architectural charity projects. She commissioned the establishment of a foundation and completed the *Yeni Valide* complex in *Emin iskele* (Eminönü) which was initiated first by Safiye Sultan, but abandoned because of the death of her son. She also ordered a fortified citadel to be built in

[115] She for example loaned him 50,000 gold from her own wealth. Mihrimah Sultan acquired wealth both from her imperial salary and also the heritage of her husband Rüstem Paşa (Necipoğlu 2005, 197).

today's Çanakkale (Dardanelles) from her own wealth.[116] After Hatice Turhan Sultan died in 1683 she was buried in a tomb in the *Yeni Valide* Complex.

4.2.1. Haseki Hürrem Complex in *Avratpazarı* – Haseki

The first building activity of Haseki Hürrem Sultan in the capital city was in *Haseki*[117] – in *Avrat Pazarı* (women's bazaar)[118] (figure 29), near the imperial forum[119] of Arcadius (figure 30).[120] The site was away from the administrative and prestigious center of the capital. However, it was a significant area for a female patron to build a complex. As a marketplace for the women selling and buying goods, and also a female slave market, the area was an appropriate choice for Haseki Hürrem to establish her foundation and complex.[121] This location seems to have been chosen especially to modify Hürrem's image on the female public and to show imperial concern towards the female *tebaa*. The complex might also have served to improve the conditions of women in this area as well, as it was built

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[116] A survey and architectural documentation of the Ottoman Fortresses of Seddulbahir and Kumkale is now held by a team under the directorship of Lucienne Thys-Şenocak. For the survey project and the site see http://www.seddulbahir-kumkale.com Also see Thys-Şenocak (2000a) and (2000b).

[117] The district where Hürrem Sultan's complex is located was named after her title *Haseki*.

[118] *Avrat Pazarı*: Old quarter (*semt*) food bazaars that were set up once a week; sellers and customers were mostly women, *Istanbul Ansiklopedisi, Vol.1:340*

[119] A Byzantine period forum in which there was a triumphal column known as the Arcadius column.

[120] The first emperor of the Eastern Byzantine Empire, son of Theodosius I who ruled from 379-395.

[121] The women bazaars were the weekly bazaars where women could buy and sell goods, mostly food. The famous women bazaars were held in Üsküdar, Fatih and Aksaray. These bazaars served to bring together the producers and the customers. The market in the Arcadius square took place on Sundays. On three sides, the square was surrounded by cheap wooden stalls which were providing income to various endowments. The remains of the imperial forum were visible only on the fourth side. Necipoğlu (2005, 273), referring to the Austrian Hapsburg traveler Hans Dernschwam who visited Istanbul around 1550, states that on the remaining days of the week, the same area was used as a "slave market".

especially for the use of sick women of any ethnic and religious origin.

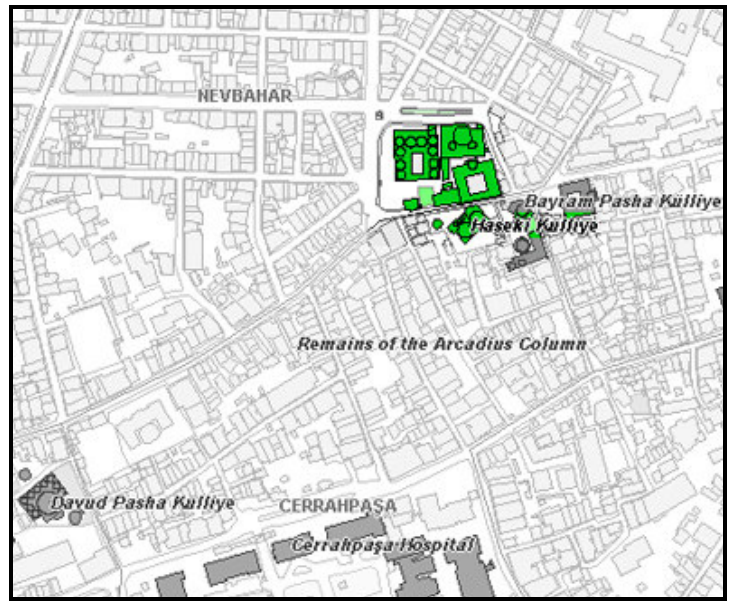

Figure 29: Haseki Complex, *from Architectural Guide of Istanbul – http://www.mimarist.org/guide*

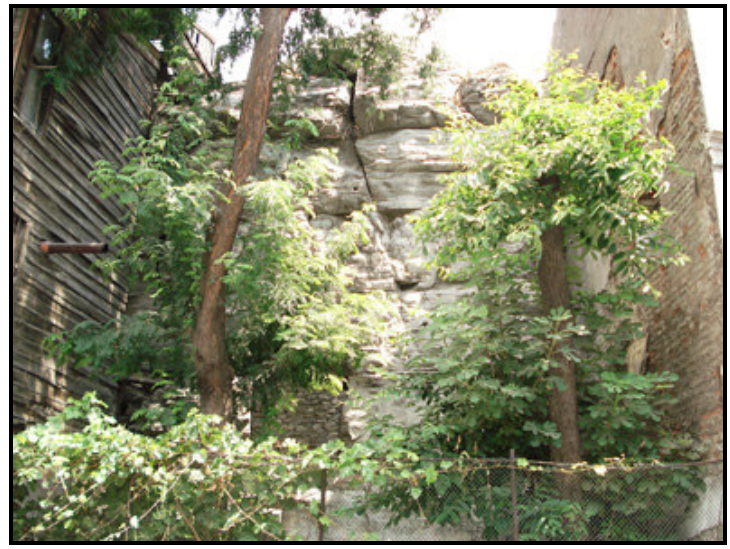

Figure 30: Remains of the Arcadius Column, *photographed by the author*

The Haseki Hürrem complex (figure 31) was built after the marriage of Süleyman I and Haseki Hürrem and was probably financed by her dowry (Necipoğlu 2005, 271).[122] The period when this complex was completed then was politically significant as well. Following her marriage to Süleyman I, Hürrem publicly announced and acknowledged her new status as the free wife of an Ottoman Sultan coming from a slave origin. Moreover their elderly son, Mehmed had grown old enough at that time to receive political and administrative experience and thus was sent to the *sancak* without his mother Hürrem. [123] She therefore not only stayed in the capital but also adorned the city with public buildings bearing her name.

Figure 31: Haseki Hürrem Complex, *from Günay (2002, 24)*

It is a fact that there had been an increase in the number of architectural establishments under the name of imperial female

[122] This might be interpreted as the celebration of her new status as well (Necipoğlu 2005, 271).

[123] However, as Şehzade Mehmed died at a young age, Hürrem's position as the possible future valide sultan fell into danger. Through several political tricks she eliminated the eldest son of Süleyman I and made it possible for one of her other sons to be the possible future sultan and herself the future queen mother. In the end one of her sons, Selim became the sultan following Süleyman I but Haseki Hürrem could not live long enough to see the sultanate of her son.

patrons but these were located mostly away from the imperial center of the capital. Haseki Hürrem complex likewise was also located away from the center so that it functioned as the only Friday mosque in its region and thus came to be perceived as a monumental establishment regardless of the modest size of its mosque.[124]

The details about the complex as well as its foundation such as the provision of income in order to sustain the complex, the lists of the responsible personnel, their salaries, and the definition of their responsibilities can be found in the foundation records (*Vakfiye*) which was originally written in Arabic. There were two main records for this complex; 28 November 1540 and 1551 (28 *Recep* 947 and 958*)*.[125] The records include several details about the complex that was commissioned to be built by the endowment of Hürrem Sultan who was then called as "*Fatimat el-Devran, el-Sultan el-Zahira, Valide-i Sultan Emir Muhammed*". According to the foundation records the Babüssaade Ağası was responsible (overseer) for the waqf itself and Mehmed b. Abdurrahman was the trustee (endowment administrator). The income of the lands of Hürrem which were given to her by Süleyman I coincided with the first building phase and was mentioned in this first record. The second record, dating to 1551, mentions about the new endowments as well as the addition of the new hospital building (Necipoğlu 2005, 272).[126]

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[124] Necipoğlu (2005, 269) states that what makes her significant as a female patron was not the monumentality or the stylistic aspects of her buildings but the number of them and also the rich endowment she gave. Hürrem, being aware of the influence of such endowments on the public opinion, wanted to construct herself a positive image not only for God's sake but also for the public opinion and hence spent most of her wealth on the realization of such endowments.

[125] Those records were official documents with the signs of Süleyman I and the signs and approval writings of the head of the courts (*kazasker)* of Anatolia and Rumeli at the very beginning of the records (Kafadar 1994, 224).

[126] This record also includes information about the responsibilities of the personnel, their salaries and even the details of the food to be prepared in

The maternal approach of Haseki Hürrem to the inhabitants of the complex can be read in the foundation records. Hürrem noted that the attitude of the elementary school teachers to the students and, the attitude of the physicians to the patients should be delicate. Necipoğlu (2005, 273) relates Hürrem's concern for the children and patient psychology to her experiences with her frail, ill son Cihangir and her gout-stricken husband. She additionally provided a share from the income of the foundation to free the female slaves which according to Necipoğlu (2005, 273) can be interpreted as a sign showing that she never forgot her slave origin.

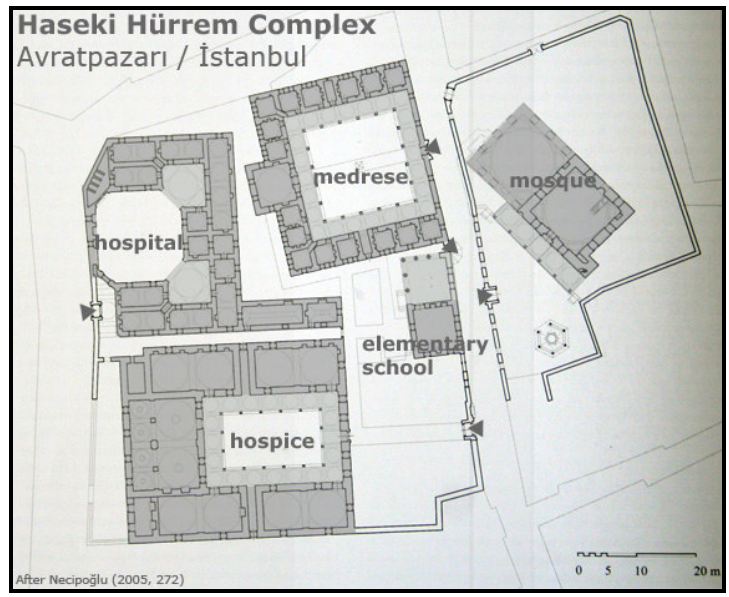

Figure 32: Plan, Haseki Hürrem Sultan Complex in Avratpazarı *after Necipoğlu (2005, 272)*

The complex was built by Sinan and is the first work attributed to him in Istanbul. Goodwin (1971, 205) however states that the

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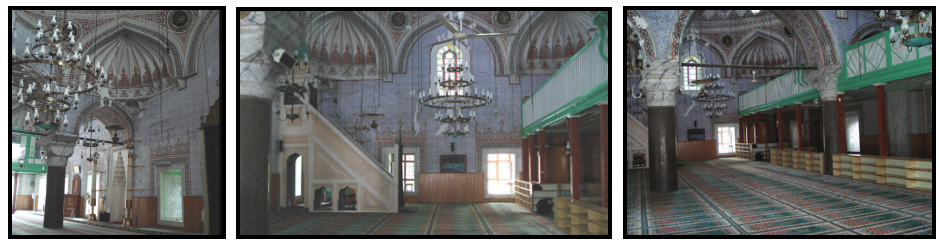
the hospice. Additionally this second record included several details about some other endowments of Hürrem Sultan in Ankara, Denizli and Istanbul.

construction of the complex probably started first by Sinan's predecessor; Sinan was responsible only from its completion as indicated by some unusual design details such as the waste spaces created by the design of the *medreses* which are usually not seen in Sinan's buildings.[127]

The complex (figure 32) included a mosque, a *medrese*, an *imaret*, a hospital (*darüşşifa*) and an elementary school (*sıbyan mektebi)*. The complex, started with a small single domed mosque which was completed in between 1538-39, and was enlarged with the additions of a classical *medrese* (1539-40) and a school a year later.[128] An *imaret* and a hospital (*darüşşifa*) which turned the complex into a large social center were added in between the construction of *Şehzade* mosque (1548) and the Süleymaniye mosque (1559).[129]



Figures 33 a-b-c: Interior views, *Haseki* Mosque, Haseki Complex photographed by the author

The mosque and the rest of the complex were separated by a lane. The mosque which was located at the southern side of the complex was a single-unit domed mosque with a 5 domed portico

[127] For more information about the exterior spaces in Sinan's complexes, see Tanyeli (1990).

[128] The complex did not have a master plan (Necipoğlu 2005, 272) but was built on the site surrounded with streets.

[129] The hospital was added in 1551 according to the second record. Goodwin (1971, 204) accepts this hospital as the first building of Sinan in Istanbul.

at the entrance. It was constructed with alternate courses of brick and stone. The portico however was only made of brick. The capitals of the columns of the portico were lozenge (*baklava)* shaped capitals. On the west end, there is a single minaret.[130] The second domed part of the mosque was added to eastern side of the mosque in between 1603-17, by the trustee of the foundation, Hasan Bey.[131] Two columns carrying three arches in between those two spaces replaced the eastern wall of the old unit (figures 33a-b-c). As those columns were collected from other buildings (*spolia*), they all differ in diameter (Kuban, *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi V:4*, 5). The dome of the mosque sat on shell squinches. Because of the lack of available empty land in the region, the portico (*son cemaat yeri)* was placed only in front of the first domed space. The mosque was demolished in the 1894 earthquake but was repaired afterwards. The decoration of the building was renovated recently in 1969-70.

Figures 34 a-b: Courtyard of the *medrese* (left) and detail from lozenge capitals (right), Haseki Complex, *photographed by the author*

The *medrese* (figures 34a-b) building is located on the other side of the lane, just across the mosque. The 16 rooms of the

[130] Hürrem Sultan's mosque did not have the symbolic sign of a Sultan's mosque: the double minarets.

[131] According to Necipoğlu (2005, 271) it was enlarged in 1612-13.

medrese surround an arcaded courtyard on three sides. There are no rooms at the entrance. The 20 columns of the arcade surrounding the courtyard were lozenge (*baklava*) shaped and decorated with rozettes. The elementary school (*Sıbyan mektebi*), is a single room building with a *hayat* in front. It is located on the south, across the mosque, and near the *medrese*.

The entrances to the mosque, the *medrese*, the elementary school and the hospice were from the same narrow street located in between the courtyard of the mosque and the rest of the complex. Contrary to all other buildings in the complex which are all located around the same lane, the hospital entrance is at the north and shaped by an unusual octagonal courtyard.[132]

The building was renovated in 1748, and it was assigned to the use of women in 1843. The most unique aspect of the Hürrem Sultan complex is the hospital and the court that were not planned in the usual Ottoman style (Goodwin 1971, 205).[133] Goodwin (1993, 91) himself, describes the "usual style" as:

> During the fifteenth century Ottoman Mosques developed a standard form of courtyard, either square or rectangular, with a tall portico of five or seven arches in front of the mosque itself.

The hospital (figures 35a–b) was the only building in the complex that was built of ashlar masonry, which might be claimed as Sinan's "classical" style (Necipoğlu 2005, 275). The entrance to the court was on one side of the octagon. The gatekeeper used the small room attached to the hospice building behind the entrance of the hospital at an angle which provided the privacy of the octagonal courtyard of the women's hospital.

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[132] According to Goodwin (1971, 205) the entrance of the hospital was through a small covered gate because the hospital was used by women.

[133] As the *eyvans* of the hospital are now closed with window sashes, the unusually shaped court had lost its extraordinary effect on the viewer.

Two large *eyvans* connected to the courtyard are now closed with glass which presents a perception different than the original one. According to Goodwin (1971, 206) the four rooms behind each *eyvan* were for special consultations or operations or may have been private patient rooms. Due to privacy requirements the hospital is planned introverted with no windows except on the west side.


Figures 35a–b: Courtyard of the hospital and the outside view of the hospice, Haseki Complex, *photographed by the author*


Figures 36 a–b: Interior views of the hospice and the kitchen, *Haseki* Complex, photographed by the author

The hospice (figures 36a–b) of the complex was located next to the hospital, across the mosque. It is approached through a path from the garden on the south. Kuban (*İstanbul Ansiklopedisi V: 4*, 5) states that the construction of the hospice, although was not listed among Sinan's buildings must have been controlled by Sinan himself. This building has a

symmetrical and interesting plan. On the east and west sides, there are four main halls which were once used as storerooms and dining rooms and on the north there is a large kitchen with several fireplaces. The four octagonal chimneys and four ventilation shafts of the kitchen must have been impressive (Goodwin 1971, 205). The expenses for the food prepared in the hospice were covered by the palace treasury, funds left over from the *medrese* and the waqf surplus.

Haseki Hürrem complex in Avratpazarı is a significant example as it was the first endowment of a female member of the imperial family in the capital city. Hürrem first managed to marry the Sultan and then stay in the palace, in the seat of power where she made herself visible through architectural patronage. Moreover through her complex and foundation, Hürrem also materialized the imperial concern towards her female *tebaa*, both free and slave women. Although her complex was far from the prestigious center of the capital it nonetheless was located on a site that was suitable to the service provided by the complex.

4.2.2. Haseki Sultan Bath in Sultanahmet

Figure 37: *Haseki* Bath, Sultanahmet
from Architectural Guide of Istanbul – ***http://www.mimarist.org/guide***

The second building activity of Hürrem Sultan is a bath located (figure 37) at the imperial axis defined by the imperial palace, the great Hagia Sophia mosque (the greatest *selatin* mosque of the capital at that time) and the Hippodrome which was the open-air ceremonial place of the capital (imperial ceremonies like weddings and circumcisions were held here) (Peirce 1993, 203).[134] It was built in between 1556-57.

Figure 38: *Haseki* Bath, Sultanahment, *from Ertuğ (1986, 62-63)*

The building (figure 38) which is one of the most significant and splendid baths of Istanbul, was commissioned by Hürrem Sultan and designed by the chief architect Sinan. In this area, there was the famous "Zeuxippos Bath" of the Byzantine Era (Yenal 2000, 63; Goodwin 1971, 248) which served for public cleansing before the Haseki bath was completed. Yenal (2000, 63) asserts that, the choice of this location had some significance: it demonstrated the passersby the Imperial axis and hence reminded the power of Haseki Sultan, providing also a social service for the district.

[134] The main ceremonial axis of the city was in between the palace and the great complex of Mehmed II, the Fatih Complex, and led to the Edirne Gate (Erzen 1996, 16). The main muslim settlement and also the large religious complexes were located around this axis. It was the "artery" of the royal and religious power.

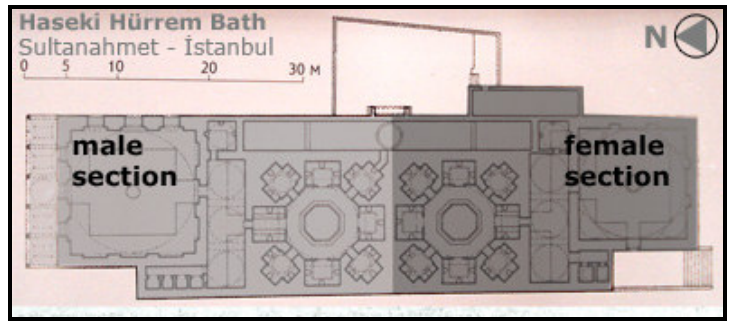

Figure 39: Plan, *Haseki* Bath, Sultanahmet, *after Günay (2002, 131)*

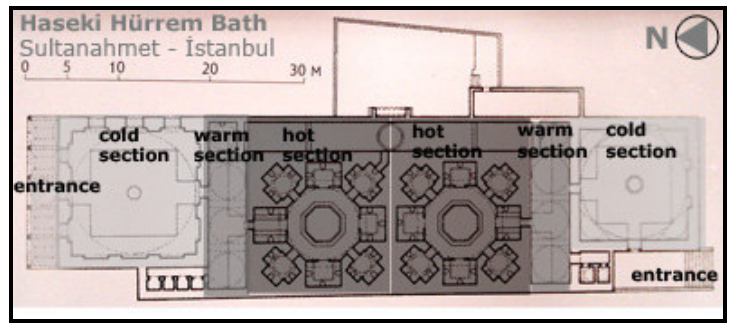

Figure 40: Sections, *Haseki* Bath, Sultanahmet, *after Günay (2002, 131)*

Designed as a double bath, the building is planned along a north-south axis and is 75m long. On the north there is the male section and on the south is the female section (figure 39). The organization of spaces is more or less symmetrical except for the entrances which were planned according to a gender based distinction (figure 40). The entrance of men's section faced Hagia Sophia whereas the entrance of women's quarter was hidden at the opposite end (Goodwin 1971, 248). The women's entrance was on the west façade of the building and was not preceded with portico. Due to the topographical conditions, this entrance was below the eye level, which also provided a secluded private entrance (figures 41a-b).

The portico on the north side which housed the male entrance was an unusual element for the bath. It was composed of five units.

The one in the middle had a square plan and a dome on top. The remaining others on each side however had rectangular plans and were vaulted.


Figures 41 a–b: Male and female entrances, *Haseki* Bath, Sultanahmet *photographed by the author*

The cold section (*soğukluk*), the place for disrobing and which was higher than the other spaces, was covered with a lantern dome sitting on squinches. In the cold section, there is a marble *sofa* in the middle for the mattresses leaning against the wall (Goodwin 1971, 248). In the middle of the room there is the fountain with the dome above (Goodwin 1971, 248):

> The room is as spacious as many mosque interiors, and appropriately so, since the ritual of the *hamam* is a religious rite as well as a pleasure.


Figures 42 a–b: Warm (*ılıklık*) and hot (*sıcaklık*) sections, Haseki Bath, *photographed by the author*

The rectangularly planned warm section (*ılıklık*) (figures 42a-b) was covered by three domes connected by pointed arches. The lavatories are located in this warm section. The axis shifted, while passing from *soğukluk* to *ılıklık* and then to *sıcaklık* because of the furnace room which was located at the other side of the bath. The plan of the hot section (*sıcaklık*) is a combination of the traditional scheme of a Turkish bath, that is, a central *sofa* and four *eyvans* and the Roman type of baths, an eight-armed star layout.[135] On the four sides at right angles to each other there are the *eyvans* with two carved marble basins. On the corners of the hot chamber, behind narrow entrances there are four small chambers with three basins in each. Delicately planned, the hot room is an impressive one (Goodwin 1971, 249):[136]

> The impression left is of space and luxury, and doubtless this hamam was well frequented.

The design of the building in terms of mass organization was an innovative one. Playing with the location of the spatial units, Sinan achieved an interesting harmony of the masses as well as the domes which is interpreted as a "modern" work (Yenal, 2000, 64). The different layout of this bath is comparable with the harmony achieved with the masses. Yet, however, this sequential layout caused a great amount of heat loss and was not used in later baths.

This bath, located on the imperial axis, just across the great St. Sophia, required its own identity to become visible. The play of the masses along an axis gave the bath a unique

[135] For a detailed investigation on the Turkish baths, see Önge (1995), Aru (1949) and Haskan (1995). For a detailed study on the Turkish baths built in the main provinces of west Anatolia in between fifteenth and seventeenth centuries see Appendix A.

[136] According to Goodwin (1971, 248) these rooms were used for depilation and the entrances are narrow in order to be closed easily with towels when privacy needed.

character that announced its presence by architectural articulation.

The complex in Avratpazarı and the bath in Sultanahmet were among the two of the many pious endowments of Haseki Hürrem Sultan. Through the building activities she sponsored, *Hürrem* Sultan was able to insert her image next to the image of sovereignty to the *tebaa.* Such activities were not undertaken in this manner and scale until her period. Indeed her complex was the first commissioned and built by 'a woman not coming from an imperial lineage' during her life time (Peirce 1993, 205). Built away from the administrative center, the complex was located in such a region that Hürrem could channel her sources also to the not so well-off female *tebaa* including the female slaves of whom she was once a member. So the complex was not only frequented by men but also by women. Her other sponsored building however was located at the core of the administrative and imperial center of the capital possibly to reflect the extent of the power she assumed.

4.2. Mihrimah Sultan Complex in Üsküdar

Mihrimah Sultan, assuming great wealth and power as a widow sultan, endowed many big foundations. She was the first princess who had chosen a suburban site in the capital city to build a monumental complex.[137] Mihrimah Sultan had built two complexes in Istanbul.[138] One of them is located in the then suburban Üsküdar, near the jetty (figure 43), while the other is in Edirnekapı, near the Edirne Gate on the city walls.

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[137] Ottoman princesses did not commission monumental buildings till the sixteenth century: "Ottoman Princesses had been relatively minor patrons of architecture during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, when they were assigned more modest incomes…" (Necipoğlu 2005, 301).

[138] She also donated money for the building of a water channel in Mecca, the holy land of the Muslims.

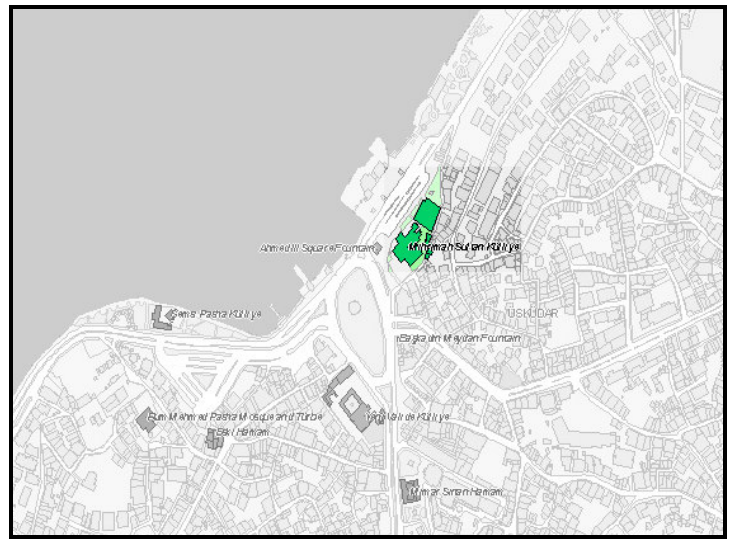

Figure 43: Mihrimah Sultan Complex, Üsküdar
from Architectural Guide of Istanbul – ***http://www.mimarist.org/guide***

Üsküdar, located on the Asian side of the Bosphorus was outside the political and administrative center of Istanbul in the sixteenth century. Yet the region was known to have been an active trade center, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The trade route which was passing through Asia Minor and going to Caucasia and Iran was actually beginning from Üsküdar and many tradesmen and merchants met and did business in this area. Üsküdar was also the starting point of the pilgrimage journey. Every year, the pilgrims were sent to Mecca with ceremonies from Üsküdar.[139]

The first complex (figure 44) built in Üsküdar under Mihrimah Sultan's patronage was located near the jetty (boat landing).[140]

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[139] There are even proverbs such as "*atı alan Üsküdar'ı geçti*" in modern Turkish which single out Üsküdar as a starting point for journeys (Deniz Mazlum, İstanbul Ansiklopedisi V:7, 344-345).

[140] The complex was built next to her garden palace (Necipoğlu 2005, 300).

The complex was built in between 1543–1548. On the Arabic inscription panel above the portal of the mosque, it was stated that the complex was completed in *Zilhicce* 954/July 1548 and was built by [141] "Hanım Sultan", the daughter of Süleyman I (Kuban 1998, 97).[142]

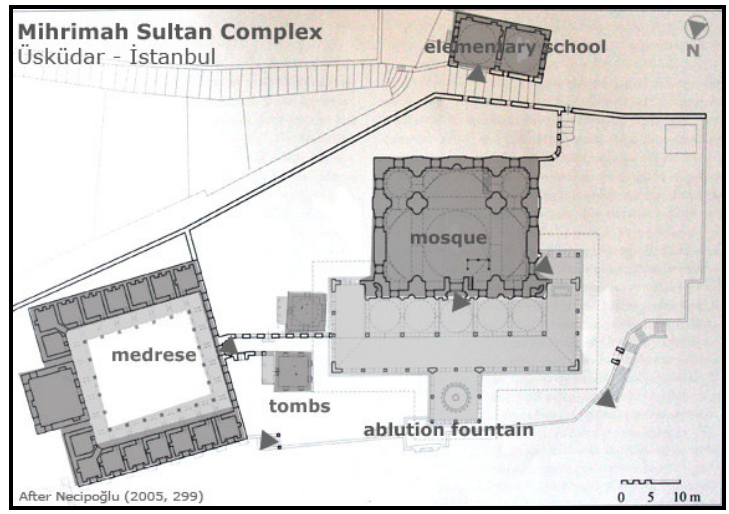

Figure 44: Plan, Mihrimah Sultan Complex, Üsküdar, *after Necipoğlu (2005, 299)*

According to several waqfiya records the buildings in the complex included a mosque, a *medrese*, a guest house, a caravanserai (*han)* functioning as a stable and a hospice (*imaret*) which consisted of a kitchen, a pantry and a storage

[141] The patronage of the complex is misattributed to Rüstem Paşa, the husband of Mihrimah and also to Süleyman I, her reigning father. The case about Rüstem Paşa might be related to the fact that he was involved in the construction process of the complex. The misattribution of the mosque to Süleyman I on the other hand was related with the twin minaret of the mosque, the sign of the sultanate and a privilege only for sultan mosques (Necipoğlu 2005, 301). In Süleyman I's period however the women of imperial lineage(the mother, sister and daughter of Süleyman I), were allowed to build mosques with twin minarets. However, Hürrem Sultan, the official wife of Süleyman I, did not built any mosque with twin minarets under her name. The limits were set through the "codes of decorum".

[142] Mihrimah was cited as "Hanım Sultan", whereas her mother Hürrem Sultan as "Haseki Sultan".

(Necipoğlu 2005, 302).[143] In another updated waqfiya of 1558, it is stated that Mihrimah Sultan endowed an elementary school (*sıbyan mektebi*) as well.[144]

The complex (figures 45-46) was built by Sinan and the plan shows his intelligence. The site was a difficult one for construction as it was an irregular plot stuck between the hillside and the seaside. Sinan however, ingeniously managed to plan the whole complex in a rather linear way by designing the mosque with a second porch added in front, instead of a court as there was not enough space for a "usual court" scheme (Goodwin 1971, 213).

The mosque and the *medrese* were built almost on the same horizontal axis between the hilltop behind and the once-shore in front.[145] They were both elevated on a terrace reached by two separate staircases. The elementary school is further separated by a lane at the north and clearly looks like a later addition. On the east of the ablution fountain, between the *medrese* and the mosque, there are tombs including that of Grand Admiral Sinan Paşa, brother of Rüstem Paşa, brother-in-law of Mihrimah.

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[143] Goodwin (1971, 212) lists the buildings as: the mosque with a *medrese*, a hospice (*imaret*) and an elementary school (*sıbyan mektebi*). The hospice, caravansaray (*han)* and the guesthouse are no longer present. Only the mosque, *medrese* and the hopice were listed in Sinan's autobiographies (Necipoğlu 2005, 303).

[144] After Mihrimah Sultan's death the income of the endowments was collected by her heirs who became the overseers of the foundation.

[145] Cansever (2005, 121) relates this layout of the complex to the concept of "moving being" (*hareketli varlık*) in the Islamic architecture. This concept generates from and operates in an architecture which is fully conceived only by moving around and inside. As such, an active involvement of men into architecture and life within is achieved.

Figure 45: Drawing, Louis – Francois Cassas, c.1786, Üsküdar Mihrimah Sultan Mosque, pencil on paper, *from Necipoğlu (2005, 301)*

The mosque of the complex, entered from two sides was a single-domed building supported with three half domes on all sides except for the main entrance side. The structural connection between the domes and the walls were done by pendentives at the central dome and by the triumphs decorated with muqarnas at the lateral half domes. The dome is also carried by two internal supports and not by the exterior walls. Erzen (1996, 42) claims that this is an indication of the care Sinan showed to the exterior view of the mass of the mosque. Erzen (1996, 56) states that, the whole interior of the mosque, except for the small domed spaces at the corners, was in a complete unity. This was also readable from the mass organization perceived from outside. The exterior walls were planar because the load bearing elements were taken inside. This view of the walls from outside supports the holistic attitude which was achieved through the structural system, the dome and the surrounding supportive half domes and the unified space underneath, from the very top to the ground. The roof over the portico also contributed to this almost pyramidal view of the whole mass.

The mosque of the complex, according to Kuban (1998, 98) was an opportunity for Sinan to devise a different solution for a single-space and domed structure. Sinan eliminated the half

dome on the entrance side which consequently enabled one to enter directly into the central domed area. This lack of the half dome above the entrance according to Kuban (İstanbul Ansiklopedisi V:5, 456) also provided the prayers a preferable horizontally stretching area.[146] Goodwin (1993, 49) however describes this interior as disappointing due to the lack of a preliminary entrance space.

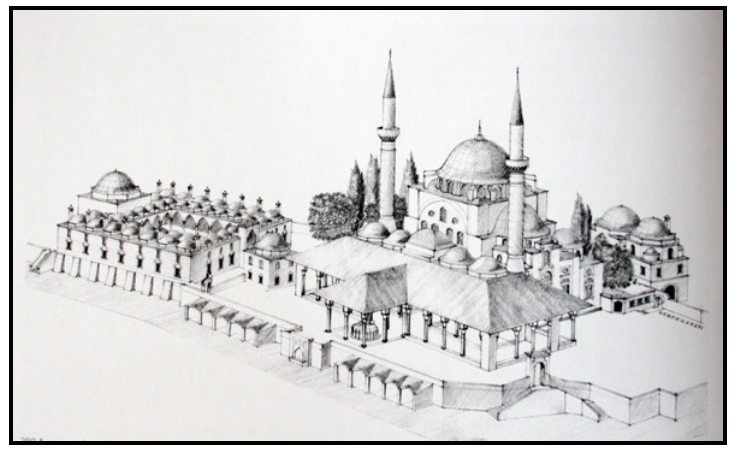

Figure 46: Axonometric drawing, Üsküdar Mihrimah Sultan Complex, *from Necipoğlu (2005, 300)*

In relation to the shaping of the mass of the prayer area this mosque has one of the simplest geometric forms among Sinan's other mosques. Goodwin describes the mass of the mosque designed by Sinan as "logical" and "elegant" and also "poetic" because of the play of light and shadows on the mass from outside (Goodwin 1971, 214).

Another interesting feature of this mosque is the second portico surrounding the first portico (*son cemaat yeri*) on three sides, and the kiosk with the ablution fountain

[146] Such a linear space provides an ease in making rows for prayers.

(*şadırvan)* in front (figure 47).[147] According to Erzen (1996, 78), this second portico balances the lack of a preliminary space and the sudden entrance into the central domed-space of the mosque. The first portico *(son cemaat yeri*) was a five domed space with lozenge capitals. The outer second portico however has stalactite capitals and reinforcement piers at the corners.

Figure 47: "Shore-like" ablution fountain, Üsküdar Mihrimah Sultan Complex *photographed by the author*

According to Necipoğlu (2005, 303) the mosque with this second porch and the kiosk-like ablution fountain in front, once looked like a shore pavilion from a distance; as back in its original situation the complex was very close to the shore. Due to the later artificial landfill, the complex is now located away from the shore.

The *medrese* building consisted of sixteen cells and a classroom with a courtyard in the middle. Similar to the *medrese* in

[147] It was not a new invention in Ottoman architecture; there was another double portico in Aleppo Adliye Mosque dated to 1517 (Goodwin 1971, 213). But it was the first one in the Ottoman capital.

Haseki Hürrem Complex, it did not have any cells on the entrance side. Today it is used as a medical center and many changes including the covering of the open air courtyard, made the building loose many of its original space qualities.

The location and the design of the Mihrimah Sultan Complex on the Bosphorus might be claimed to reflect an early version of the shore pavilions of Ottoman Princesses which were mostly built around the eighteenth century.[148] At the entrance or exit of the Bosphorus, visible from many points, both from the Bosphorus and the European side of Istanbul, the complex of Mihrimah was "on the stage". The complex therefore was built there not only for charity purposes but also to be seen and make its patron visible. As the beloved daughter of the reigning sultan, Mihrimah Sultan made her presence and power visible at the hearth of a commercial center outside the palace and the administrative area of the capital in a very dramatically handled architectural scheme.

The plan organization of the complex; with the main buildings lined up on the shore as opposed to the small, non-monumental ones hidden behind, reflects how the patron wanted her complex to be perceived as a monumental project "on stage".

The Mihrimah Sultan Complex in Üsküdar, although located away from the political and prestigious center of the capital, was built at one of the so-called "gates" of the city as well. It was built near a jetty, was also remembered as the *İskele Camii*, and serviced the tradesmen, the travelers and the pilgrims. Erzen (1996, 19) states that, besides its massive beauty and complex functionality, the *Külliye* of Mihrimah in Üsküdar, was a major component of the Ottoman urban planning;

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[148] For a detailed analysis on the shore pavilions of Bosphorus in eighteenth Century, see Artan (1992).

due to its location at the crossing point of the routes to and from Asia it had a major role in the operation of the land and sea transportation and trade, and in addition functioned as a charity institution for travelers. A similar attitude can also be recognized at the other complex of Mihrimah Sultan which was built at another gate of the city, the Edirne Gate. This was the gate from which the victorious sultans entered the city with ceremonies.

4.2.4. Mihrimah Sultan Complex in Edirnekapı

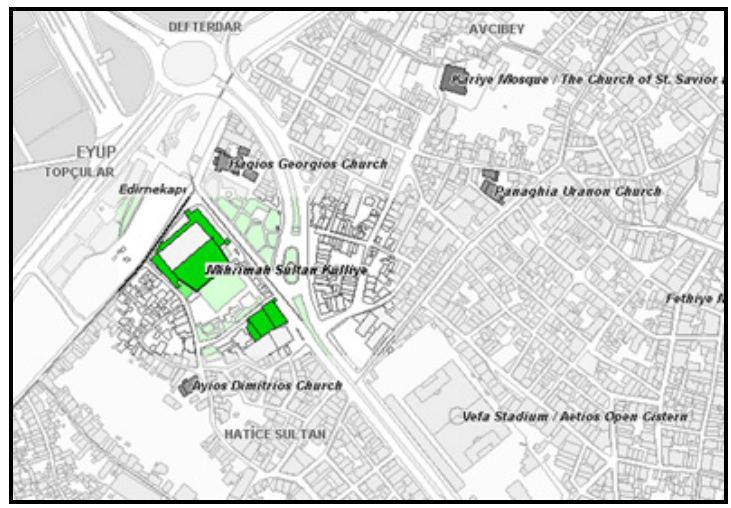


Figure 48: Mihrimah Sultan Complex, Edirnekapı
from Architectural Guide of Istanbul – ***http://www.mimarist.org/guide***

The second complex of Mihrimah is located in Edirnekapı (figures 48-49). Edirnekapı is the district, developed around the Edirne Gate (figure 50) on the Theodosius walls of Istanbul, called after the fact that it led Edirne.[149] The

[149] Byzantine Emperor Theodosius extended the last piece of the existing city walls around Istanbul in 413. The city walls of Istanbul were built several times. The first walls were built around the ancient city of Byzantion. The second one was built by Septimus Severus, the Roman Emperor in 196 AD, after he invaded the city of Byzantion. The third is the Constantinus walls (324-327 AD) and the fourth is the Theodosius Walls built in 413 AD. The walls of the Ottoman Imperial Palace of Topkapı might be considered as the last built walls.

Edirne gate was the ceremonial gate on the Mese of the Byzantine Era.[150] It was the imperial axis of the Byzantium which also coincided with the imperial axis of Ottomans, the *Divan Yolu.* It is a part of the old path "Via Egnatia" that connected Byzantium (the old city) to Thrace within the city walls. The Byzantine emperors left the city for military campaigns from this gate. The gate was also one of the ceremonial gates of the Ottoman Istanbul. It was the first gate that Mehmed II entered the city when he conquered Istanbul (Belge 2004, 59). In the later periods, the sultans coming back from victorious campaigns, the ambassadors coming from Europe, other important visitors to state (as well as the tradesmen) entered the city from this gate with a ceremony. This was also a busy commercial area as there had been many shops around the gate that sold the needs of travelers.

Figure 49: Mihrimah Sultan Complex in Edirnekapı, *after Günay (2002, 37)*

[150] Mese was the main road and was almost 25 m wide. Starting from the Augusteion (the forum in the center of the city; today's Sultanahmet square and was named after the mother of Constantine) the Mese led to the Theodosius Forum (today's Beyazit) where it was divided into two flanks. One flank went to the Golden Gate of the walls (today's Yedikule Gate) and the other to the Edirne Gate, named as Hadrianapolis Gate then. The main imperial buildings of the Byzantine capital were located along this road (İstanbul Ansiklopedisi V:3 404).

Figure 50: Edirne Gate, *photographed by the author*

Mihrimah Sultan ordered her second complex to be built in this district. She however had to overcome a dispute between herself and the endowment administrator of Kara Ahmed Paşa. She requested and already received permission from her father, Süleyman I to build a complex in this region at a period when the endowment administrator of Kara Ahmed Paşa, the late grand vizier, also bought a site from the same region and was about to order a mosque for Kara Ahmed Paşa. There had been a legal dispute between the representatives of Mihrimah Sultan and Kara Ahmed Paşa. As the building program of Kara Ahmed Pasha which included charity buildings for the travelers was more suitable to the site; M*ufti* Ebussuud Efendi (*mufti* is the head of the religious court, *Şeyhülislam*) gave a fatwa in support of Kara Ahmed Paşa.[151] Following this decision Mihrimah Sultan applied

[151] The project included spacious caravansarais (*sebilhanlar*) and lodgings (*meskenler*). It also was planned to bring water to the site as well (Necipoğlu 2005, 308).

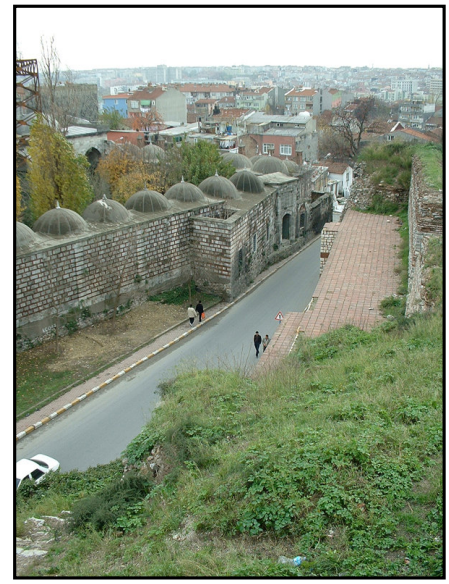
for the renewal of the permission given by her father Süleyman I who ignored the fatwa and renewed the request of his daughter whose building program included a Friday mosque combined with a *medrese* and a free of charge caravanserai, a fact which indicates the power of Mihrimah Sultan as well.

The exact building date of the complex is not certain as there are no inscription panels on any of the buildings. But Kuban states that (İstanbul Ansiklopedisi V:5 ,454) the complex including the mosque, *medrese*, the double bath, bazaar tomb (tomb of Güzelce Ahmed Paşa, the son-in-law of Mihrimah Sultan) and the elementary school (*sıbyan mektebi*) was built in 1560s but not at once.[152] The second permission letting Mihrimah to build a mosque was written by Süleyman I and dated to August 1563. According to Necipoğlu (2005, 307) there are archival sources that date the completion of the mosque to the period of Selim II.

The architect Sinan successfully inserted this complex into a difficult site as well. He heightened the platform on which the mosque and the *medrese* were placed, built a slender minaret, heightened the dome and made the mosque easily perceivable for the travelers coming from Edirne.

[152] Kuran (1986, 127) states that in the first phase either only the mosque or the mosque and the bath might have been built; the rest was built in a second phase.


Figures 51a – b: Main entrance from the imperial road, Mihrimah Sultan Complex, Edirnekapı *photographed by the author*

Figures 52a – b: Secondary entrance from the lane between the Theodosius walls and Edirnekapı Mihrimah Sultan Complex, *photographed by the author*

The main entrance of the complex is from the main road side (figures 51a-b). There are two more entrances from the lane in between the complex and the city walls (figures 52a-b). Those entrances led to the courtyard surrounded by the *medrese* and the mosque by staircases.

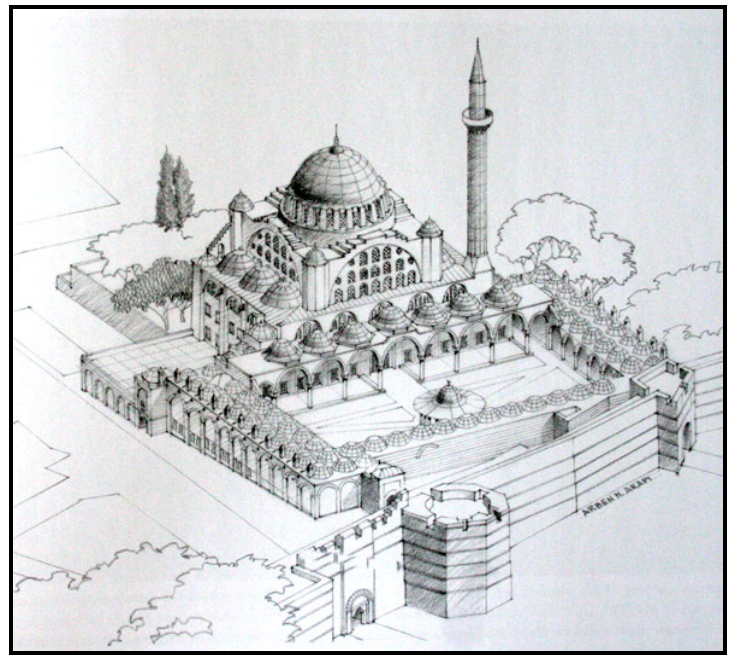


Figure 53: Axonometric projection, Mihrimah Sultan Complex, Edirnekapı *from Necipoğlu (2005, 307)*

The single-unit domed mosque of the complex (figure 53) is one of the significant mosque designs among Sinan's works. It is another interpretation of the creativity of Sinan in terms of mass organization. Kuban (1998, 129) describes the mosque as a significant example of the art of Sinan, almost a representation of his ingenuity. He adds that, the mosque in Edirnekapı reflects an innovative formal maturity that the Baroque mosques could achieve only in the nineteenth c., almost 300 years later than Sinan (Kuban 1998, 129).

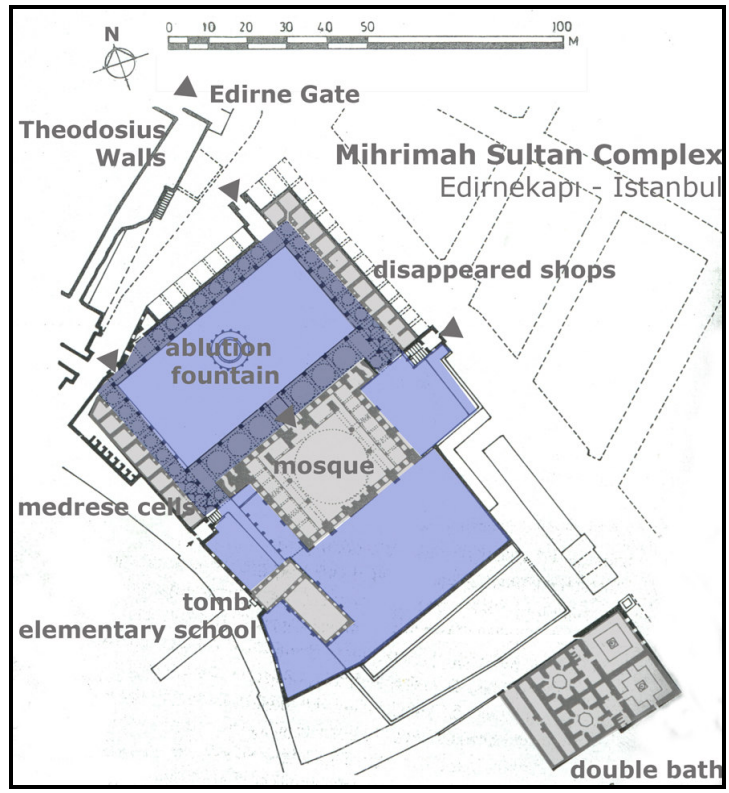


Figure 54: Plan, Edirnekapı Mihrimah Sultan Complex, *after Necipoğlu (2005, 306)*

In the Mihrimah Sultan mosque (figures 54–55) Sinan tried a different type of organization between the dome and the space underneath. In most of Sinan mosques there are similar space qualities; in this case however he made a "unique jump" (Kuban, İstanbul Ansiklopedisi V:5, 454) by adding the lateral domed spaces to the single-unit domed space. Those lateral spaces provided a more linear space layout which is more suitable for a prayer hall.

The main entrance of the mosque is from the courtyard between the mosque and the *medrese*. As in Üsküdar, there is no preliminary welcoming space after the entrance gate. One enters directly into the main space underneath the dome. Also similar to the Üsküdar complex there once was a second portico in front

of the first one. Although it did not survive, the traces of the sockets of the sloping roof of that portico could still be seen on the *medrese* walls.

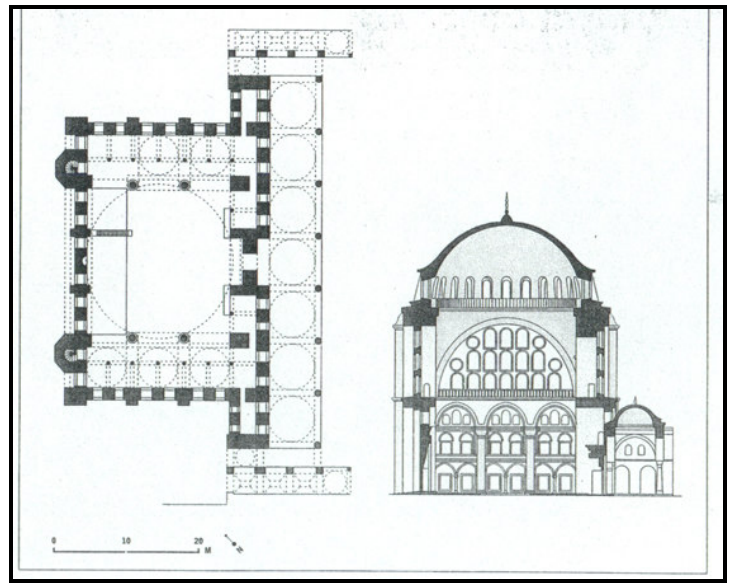


Figure 55: Plan and the section, Mihrimah Sultan Mosque, Edirnekapı Mihrimah Sultan Complex,*from Yerasimos (2000, 281)*

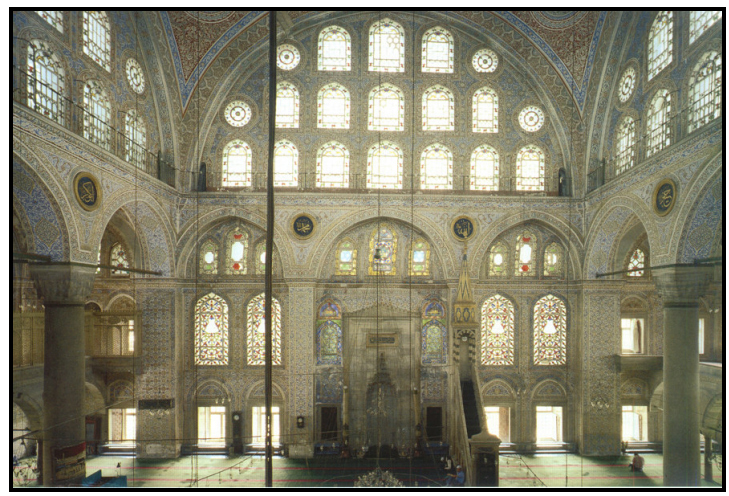


Figure 56 Interior, the *minber* and the *mihrab, Mihrimah Sultan* Mosque, Edirnekapı Mihrimah Sultan Complex, *from Günay (2002, 40)*

The dome of the complex is carried by four main arches supported by the turrets at the corners. The dome is carried by arches with the help of the structural system which Sinan successfully adopted from the aquaducts and bridges he built before.[153] Different from the previous mosques of Sinan, the structural hierarchy in this mosque is vertical rather than horizontal.

The walls of the mosque are not the only the load bearing elements in the structural system so that several window openings could be done and hence a very bright interior could be achieved (figure 56), a feature that would be achieved only in the mosques of the eighteenth and 20th centuries (Goodwin 1993, 49).

Each tympanum (the curtain walls underneath the arches) has fifteen arched and large, and four circular windows. According to Bates (1978, 254) the Mihrimah Mosque in Edirnekapı has the brightest interior space in the mosques of Istanbul. This can also be seen from outside as well. Sinan designed the dome as if it is hanging in air. The mosque is also mentioned as one of the revolutionary buildings (Bates 1978, 254) of the Ottoman Architecture (Necipoğlu 2005, 306):

> With its four colossal tympanum arches and walls perforated by rows of arched windows, the Edirnekapı mosque celebrated as a tour de force of structural lucidity and stylistic refinement...

The mosque did not have a lavish tile decoration in the interior but only modest painted ornaments which did not survive the 1894 earthquake. The mosque additionally had a beautiful pulpit (*minber)* that is claimed to be one of the best examples of Sinan's era. According to Necipoğlu (2005, 313)

[153] Sinan was also a genius engineer. He built many aquaducts and bridges all over the Ottoman Empire. Just before starting the construction of the Mihrimah Sultan mosque he was building the Mağlova Bridge in Alibey river valley.

this modesty of the decoration contradicted with the notion of female identity in the modern era. Yet through the structure and the luminosity of the mosque Sinan articulated the "female identity" of his royal patron in a differently expressed monumentality.

The mosque is seemed to be planned with two minarets. However, the second minaret was never built. The use of two minarets which was a privilege of the reigning sultans might have been avoided by Selim II, the reigning brother of Mihrimah, to underline or indicate the decreasing influence of Mihrimah. The later built mosques of İsmihan and Şahsultan, daughters of Selim II, also did not have two minarets. In this context, although not built as such the privilege of double minarets that Mihrimah assumed initially in her Üsküdar complex can be seen as the sign of her special position; the daughter of Süleyman I and Hürrem Sultan and the wife of Rüstem Paşa, the grand vizier.

The mosque suffered the earthquakes of 1719 and 1894. The minaret was demolished in the latter (Goodwin 1971, 253). Today's minaret is not the original one.[154]

The *medrese* (figure 57) of the complex is located on the two sides of the courtyard and was built of alternating courses of brick and stone. It had nineteen cells and two small *eyvan*s. The *medrese* rooms could only be placed on the two sides due to the lack of available land. Accordingly there are no cells on the side facing the city wall. The portico is also irregularly shaped. In addition the *medrese* did not have a classroom which is unusual for such a complex. It might be claimed that the classes were held in the mosque. At present the *medrese* building is highly restored.

[154] Nowadays this minaret is also demolished due to recent restoration works.

Figure 57: Restored exterior walls *with alternate courses of brick and stone, Medrese*, Edirnekapı Mihrimah Sultan Complex, *photographed by the author*

Figure 58: Ablution fountain, Mihrimah Sultan Complex, Edirnekapı *photographed by the author*

The sixteen-cornered ablution fountain (figure 58) in the middle of the courtyard formed an interesting pavilion. Mihrimah Sultan built a water channel from Küçükköy to Edirnekapı for this fountain. This channel was actually used till 1930s. In contrast to Üsküdar this ablution fountain was not visible from outside, one could only see it upon entering the courtyard. The single-unit elementary school is located just next to the tomb of Güzelce Ahmet Paşa. The double bath is designed as almost two identical units except for the difference in the entrances of each unit. No information is known about the mass organization of the bazaar. The only known fact is that it was composed of 63 cells, 23 of which were built around the *medrese* below the courtyard level.

This complex, together with the Complex of Mihrimah Sultan in Üsküdar is a part of the benevolence of Mihrimah Sultan. Especially after her husband's death, Mihrimah increased her building activities as a rich and powerful widow. Although located further away from the prestigious center of the capital, this complex is still located at a significant point within the city. Similar to the other complex of Mihrimah in Üsküdar this complex marked the beginning and end of a major road, it marked the entrance and the exit to the city, on the European side. It stood with all its monumentality yet at another gate of the city saluting the newcomers and offering services.

In addition, according to Necipoğlu (2005, 314), the complex of Mihrimah Sultan at Edirnekapı might have replaced a church which stood at the site of the complex. Although it is not certain whether it replaced a church or not, it certainly had a role in Islamizing this part of the Ottoman capital. A number of important Byzantine buildings like *Tekfur Sarayı* and *Kariye Camii* were actually in the close vicinity of the complex. It can be suggested that being the first religious building at the

European entrance of the city, the mosque had a significant place among the other mosques located within the city. It served for the sultans as well as the soldiers who prayed before leaving and returning back from the military campaigns in Europe.

The complex in Edirnekapı is an extraordinary project of its time due to its design and structure. With the luminous single-domed space, it became an example for the eighteenth and nineteenth century mosque designs. A further step from this mosque in terms of grandiosity and architectural ingenuity is perhaps the Selimiye Complex in Edirne, which is known to be the best work of Sinan (Necipoğlu 2005, 314). Beginning from the Imperial Palace, the imperial road passed along the Edirnegate and culminated at Edirne. The two complexes, Mihrimah Sultan in Edirnekapı and Selimiye at Edirne then became the two signifiers of power marking the significant points on the imperial path.

Both complexes of Mihrimah can be seen to have functioned as a landmark for the Asian and European entrances of Istanbul. The "codes of decorum" applied to both complexes differed so apparently that if the complex in Üsküdar was ordered by the "cherished daughter" of Süleyman I, the other seems to have been built as if by another patron, by the "not-so-beloved-sister" of Selim II. The fact that the mosque in the Mihrimah Sultan Complex in Edirnekapı only had one minaret might have been interpreted as a loss of power of Mihrimah on the reigning sultan or perhaps the will of the sultan to limit and reduce the increasing power assumed by the female members of the dynastic family which started with Hürrem Sultan. However, both complexes of Mihrimah Sultan definitely made her publicly visible and acknowledged her power. They were designed to be seen in a lucid way: either from various points along the Bosphorus almost as a 'shore pavilion', or as a monumental

gatekeeper's tower on the Imperial Gate of the city on the foremost European extension of the capital. As such they certainly marked the benevolence and the power of an Ottoman princess.

4.2.5. *Yeni Valide* Complex in Eminönü

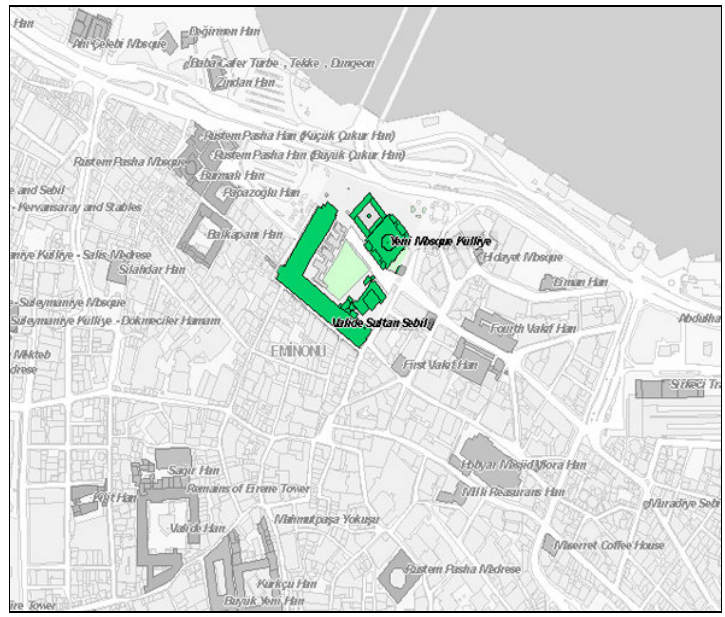


Figure 59: Yeni Valide Complex,
from Architectural Guide of Istanbul – **http://www.mimarist.org/guide**

The *Yeni Valide* Complex is built in *Emin İskele*, today's Eminönü (figure 59).[155] The construction began in 1597 by the order of Safiye Sultan, mother of Mehmed III (1595-1603).[156]

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[155] It was a tradition that every last imperial mosque was named as the New Mosque: *Cami-i Cedid*. However, no new monumental mosque in this scale had been built in Istanbul after the completion of this complex so this mosque preserved its title as the "New Mosque".

[156] Selim II (1566-1574), (the son of Süleyman I, the father of Murad III, the grandfather of Mehmed III; for a list of the Ottoman sultans and their wives see Appendices B and C) did not build himself a complex in the capital city. He, on the other hand commissioned a complex under his name to be built in Edirne. His heir, Murad III did not commission any complex for himself as well. However his wife (mother of his son, not from an officially married wife but

Yet, the construction was not finished because of the death of Mehmed III in 1603; Safiye was no more the queen mother (*valide sultan*) and hence lost her privilege of becoming a patron. Almost after 55-60 years, after a great fire in the Eminönü district, the project was restarted by the queen mother of the age, Hatice Turhan Sultan. Under her patronage, the complex was completed in 1665 with several side buildings such as a *hünkar kasrı* (royal pavilion) a *türbe* (tomb), a *sebilhane* (water distribution building), a *sıbyan mektebi* (primary school) and a *çarşı* (bazaar - *Mısır Çarşısı*).

Figure 60: Yeni Valide Complex seen from Karaköy, *photographed by the author*

The *Yeni Valide* Complex (figures 60 -61) is the most monumental complex of the Ottoman era on the *Haliç* (Golden Horn) waterfront. The complex became a landmark at the main port of the city. It spanned two centuries, had two female imperial patrons and more than three or four imperial architects and hence was a major urban project.

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from his favourite concubine) Safiye Sultan ordered a great mosque to be built during the reign of her son Mehmed III.

Figure 61: *Yeni Valide* Complex seen from Eminönü square with the royal pavilion on the left, *courtesy of Keith Ballantyne.*

The site of the complex is in the Eminönü district (figures 62-63) located at the entrance of the Golden Horn. It is located in between the Neorion Gate (*Bahçe Kapısı*) and the Porta Drungari (*Odun Kapısı*) of the city walls on the Golden Horn shore (figures 64-65). Eminönü was a commercial center of the city and both the port and the customs were located here. It constituted the core of the Istanbul harbour. There had been a jetty in this location since the first foundation of the city (The *Porta Hebraica*). As the sea was too deep at this part of the Golden Horn, big ships could easily land at this jetty. Accordingly lots of imported goods were landed here and taken to the bazaars found just behind the jetty.[157]

This port region of Istanbul had a dense population with the sailors, tradesmen and merchants. It was populated by non-muslims and mostly by Jews (Özkoçak 1999, 269). It was mostly the Karaite Jews who were settled at the location where the complex is now standing. The region was named after the customs

[157] The Grand Bazaar (*Kapalıçarşı*) near Eminönü functioned as the main entrance of the goods into the city.

trusty who was called *Gümrük Emini*, as *Emin İskele* (jetty of trusty). The name converted into Eminönü in time. On the shore was the port and the customs and the *hans* and the bazaar were located behind the port. The district is still a trade center today.

Figure 62: Eminönü in 1875, *after İstanbul Ansiklopedisi (V:3, 160)*

The *Yeni Valide* Complex was the most monumental and large scale urban development in this region. The site on which the complex was built was an extremely difficult one. It had a number of land restrictions and showed the determination and ambition of its first patron, Safiye Sultan to build a massive complex under her name. The site was located on the seashore of the Golden Horn and was a narrow artificial land fill. In regard to the decreasing power and the wealth of the Ottoman Empire, the completion of the complex was an extremely expensive financial undertaking when the technical problems such as the water seepage to the foundations that needed to be solved is also

taken into consideration.[158] Therefore it was highly criticized by the public.

Figure 63: Eminönü, 1980s, *after İstanbul Ansiklopedisi (V:3, 161)*

The selection of Eminönü as the building site is related to the commercial character and hence the economical advantages of the area. The proposed L-shaped market of the complex, which is a huge building, supports this view. Another intention behind the selection of this site on the other hand was to Islamize this commercial area and to crown the port with an Islamic landmark to impress the foreigners coming to and going from the city.

[158] Due to the technical problems, the difficulty of land expropriation and the amount of the money spent the complex was opposed by the public. Evliya Çelebi defined Safiye Sultan's project as *Zulmiye:* "act of oppression" (cited by: Thys-Şenocak 1998, 64)

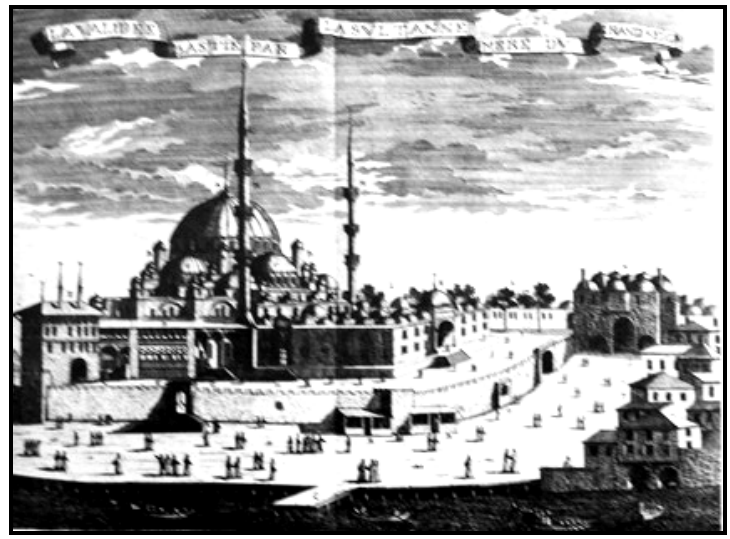

Figure 64: Yeni Valide Mosque, Grelot's engraving, *from Goodwin (1971, 339)*

Figure 65: *Yeni Valide* Mosque seen from seaside, *from İstanbul Ansiklopedisi (V*:7, 464)

The inhabitants of the area as stated before were mostly the Jewish merchants and there were few Muslim establishments. According to the contemporary Ottoman sources, there was already some dissatisfaction among the Muslim Ottoman merchants

who were uncomfortable from the increasing Jewish trade in the area.

The construction of the project was first started by Davud Ağa, the apprentice of Sinan in 1597.[159] The initial step was the expropriation of the Jewish properties. Then a raised platform carried by piles was built and the foundations were laid on this platform. The construction was carried on, after the death of Davud Ağa, by Dalgıç Mehmed. During his time, the mosque was raised till the windows of the ground floor but the construction stopped following the death of Mehmed III (1595-1603).[160] No more a *Valide* Sultan, Safiye Sultan was sent to the old palace for retirement and her complex was abandoned. Her grandson, Ahmed I (1603-1617), meanwhile had already ordered the construction of a great mosque known as Blue Mosque (*Sultanahmet Camii*) today. The foundation of the mosque in Eminönü remained untouched for fifty-eight years. After the fire of 1660, however, the imperial concern was redirected again towards the site. Hatice Turhan Sultan, mother of Mehmet IV (1648-1687), restarted the construction of the *Yeni Valide* Complex. The site however had to be re-expropriated as it was reoccupied by Jewish houses again. By restarting the Safiye Sultan's project, Hatice Turhan Sultan not only saved money to be spent on the expensive foundations but also restarted the Islamization of the district.

In 1660 Hatice Turhan commissioned Mustafa Ağa, the head architect to complete the earlier mosque and to build the other supplementary buildings.[161] This resuming of an already

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[159] It is not certain which of the imperial architects designed the final layout of the Yeni Valide Complex (Kuban, İstanbul Ansiklopedisi V:7, 464).

[160] According to Kuban (İstanbul Ansiklopedisi V:7, 464), it is not certain to what extent the building was completed in the first building phase.

[161] According to a contemporary historian, Silahtar, it was Mustafa Ağa who suggested Hatice Turhan Sultan to continue the abandoned project of Safiye Sultan (Thys-Şenocak 1994, 77)

initiated project provided certain advantages to Hatice Sultan as well as to her architect. First of all, the money and the material to be spent on the foundation of the mosque were saved.

It is not certain whether there were any similarities in between the two projects of *Yeni Valide* Mosque. Yet, Thys-Şenocak (1994, 98) asserts that, the main layout, the central dome with four half domes is common in both projects. The Ottoman architecture was planned from top to bottom and the upper structure of the mosque is often reflected in the foundation; as the foundation of the mosque was already completed and did not change, the upper structure of both mosques should be the same.

Whether the plan of Safiye Sultan's mosque was built or not the mosque resembled the preceding sultanate mosque of Ahmed I. In fact both mosques were the followers of Sinan's *Şehzade* Mosque built by Süleyman I for his prematurely died son *Şehzade* Mehmed.

4.2.5.1. The Complex

The complex (figure 66) did not have a similar layout with that of its predecessors, such as with Süleymaniye of Sinan. It doesn't have a similarly rectangular layout. It rather has a different plan scheme compared to the usual regular, rectangular or symmetrical plans of several complexes built until that time.

The non-symmetrical planning of complexes in the Ottoman architecture is claimed to have been a result of land restrictions. In the case of this complex however, the great fire just before the revival of the second building phase of the project dismisses this explanation as there was ample empty

land to build a “freely arranged ensemble” (Thys-Şenocak 2000, 71).

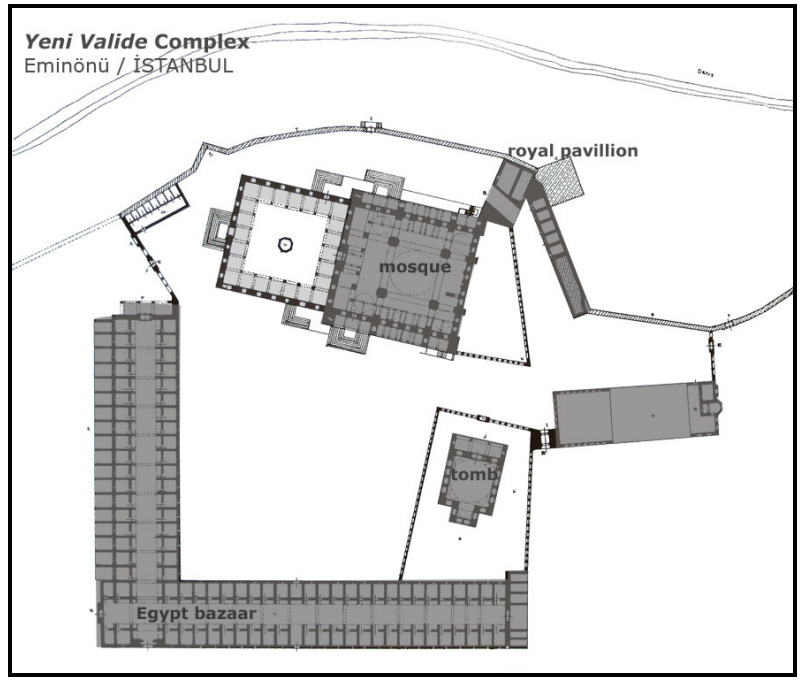


Figure 66: Site plan, *Yeni Valide* Complex, *after Istanbul Yeni Cami ve Hünkar Kasrı – Vakıflar Genel Müd. (1974, 265)*

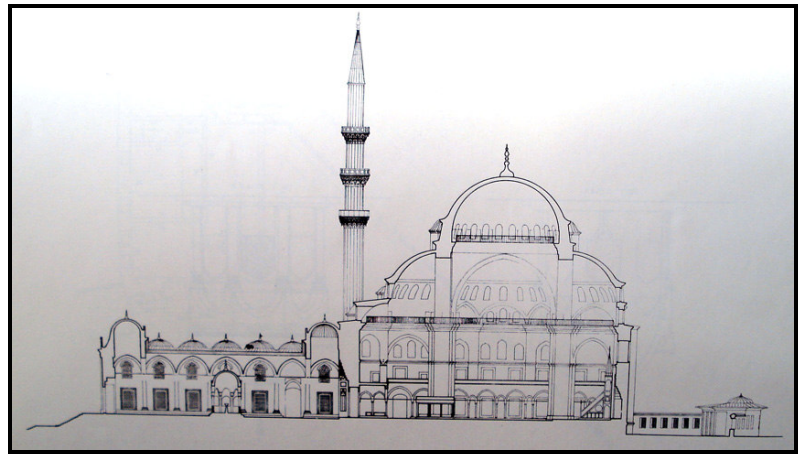
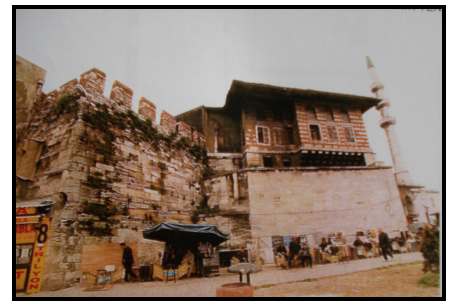


Figure 67: Section, *Yeni Valide* Mosque, Yeni Valide Complex *from Istanbul Yeni Cami ve Hünkar Kasrı- Vakıflar Genel Müd. (1974, 265)*

The mosque (figure 67) of the complex is a single-unit domed space supported with four half domes on four sides, and rises on a platform with a courtyard in front. The mosque made use of this elevation, although the leveling was necessary to solve the foundation problems. Though not built on a hill top, the mosque assumed a dominant position in the site due to its elevated placement (Thys-Şenocak 1994, 107). The courtyard reached by several steps can be entered from three sides and had a colonnaded portico uniting with the *son cemaat yeri* (portico) in front of the mosque. Entered from outside, connected to the west and east walls of the mosque, are two minarets with three balconies (*şerefe*) which showed that it was an imperial mosque.

Interior of the mosque is dim as not much fenestration is used on the exterior. The interior however is lavishly decorated with İznik tiles. In the interior of the mosque, there is a gallery floor surrounding three walls of the mosque except for the *kibla* wall. On this second floor, to the left of the *mihrab* there is the *hünkar mahfili* (the private prayer area for the sultan) and is connected to the *hünkar kasrı* (royal pavilion) (figures 68a-b) through a gate and a balcony located behind the south east corner of the mosque. *Hünkar mahfili* is surrounded by latticed grills but there are two windows to provide a view of the remaining parts of the mosque. *Hünkar mahfili* is also decorated with İznik tiles.[162] The gate to the *hünkar kasrı* was inlaid with mother-of-pearl and there is a calligraphic panel over it.

[162] Seventeenth century was the peak of the use of İznik tiles in decoration.

Figures 68 a–b: *Hünkar kasrı* on the Vasilius tower, Yeni Valide Complex,
courtesy of Hatice Karakaya


Figures 69 a–b: *Hünkar kasrı*, Sultanahmet Mosque, *photographed by the author*

The *hünkar kasrı*, attached to the mosque on the south-east corner is a newly emerged building type at that time.[163] Developed from the *hünkar mahfili*, it was first seen in Sultanahmet Mosque (figures 69a–b) as a separate building unit. Though one of the earliest, this complex incorporated one of the most significant royal pavilions in the Ottoman architecture. The pavilion was combined with the city walls on the shore and was built on one of the towers of the city walls.[164] The "*hünkar kasrı*" as a building type might have emerged from a need for a more ceremonial entrance for the

[163] The *hünkar kasrı* is now under restoration financed by the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce.

[164] The city walls in front of the mosque survived till the nineteenth century.

sultan and coincides with the period when the empire was beginning to loose its "ultimate power".[165] Thys-Şenocak (2000, 69-89) looks at the "*hünkar kasrı*" in *Yeni Valide* Mosque as a continuation of the "*kasırs*" along the Bosphorus shores. *Kasırs* were the residences of the Sultan and his harem outside the palace. The *İnci* Kiosk (Pearl Kiosk) (figure70) located on the city walls at the tip of the peninsula and which was known to have been frequented by Hatice Turhan Sultan was the most prominent and well-known example.

Figure 70: *İnci* (Pearl) Kiosk, *from Goodwin (1971, 366)*

The royal pavilion (figure 71) in the *Yeni Valide* complex and the *İnci* Kiosk indeed had many similarities in plan, location and alike. Both were built on the city walls, over an ancient Byzantine tower, and had a view of the sea.[166] The kiosk, although disappeared totally, is known to have been lavishly decorated with tiles, mother of pearl inlaid doors and calligraphic panels. Contemporary historians in addition, wrote about an interior dome not seen from the exterior just like the case in the *hünkar kasrı* in the *Yeni Valide* complex.

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[165] According to Thys-Şenocak the court ceremonials were codified much earlier than the construction of this complex (at the period of Mehmed II and Suleyman I) and thus this explanation cannot be taken as a valid one.

[166] Necipoğlu relates the attitude of Ottomans to build over the Byzantion buildings as an announcement of their imperialistic power over the Byzantion heritage (cited by: Thys - Şenocak 1994, 122)

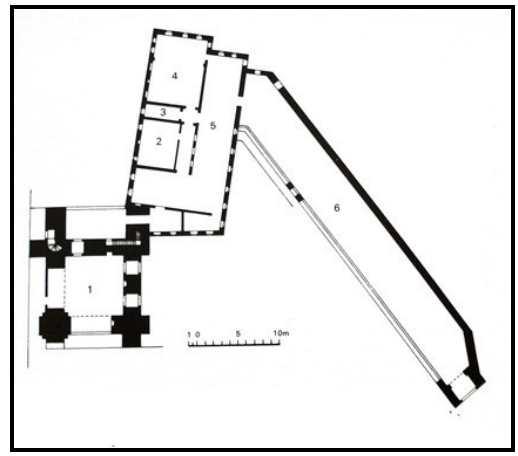


Figure 71: Plan, Royal pavilion, Yeni Valide Complex, *from Goodwin (1971, 357)*

Figure 72: *Hünkar Kasrı*, interior wall decoration, before restoration, Yeni Valide Complex, *courtesy of Hatice Karakaya*

The *hünkar kasrı* in the Yeni Valide Complex is a three leveled building and accessed by a long covered ramp (*taht-ı revan yolu*). On the first level underneath the ramp are the rooms used by the employees of the mosque (Thys-Şenocak 1994, 123). The second floor is reached from a gate and a balcony from the *taht-ı revan yolu*.[167] This level was to be used by the attendants of *Valide* Sultan (Thys-Şenocak 1994, 124). There is

[167] It is now used as the coordination office of the restoration team.

a staircase which connected the second floor to the third in this level. The third floor was reserved for the apartment of *Valide* Sultan (figure 72) and mainly accessed from the entrance hall at the end of the *taht-ı revan yolu*. On the right hand side of this entrance hall there is a small garden located on the Vasilius Tower (*Gömlekli Burç*). In one of the three rooms on the third floor, in the one closest to the sea, is the main imperial hall.[168] Although the *kasr* has a pitched roof, this space has a domed wooden ceiling (figure 73) signifying the importance of this room (Thys-Şenocak 1994, 126).[169]

Figure 73: Wooden dome of the main hall of *hünkar kasrı*, Yeni Valide Complex
courtesy of Hatice Karakaya

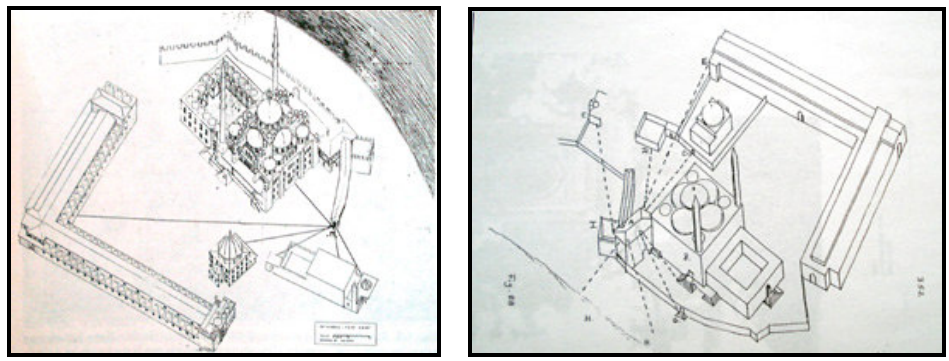
Just like the *İnci* Kiosk, the *hünkar kasrı* of *Yeni Valide* mosque is located at a dominant position both on the sea side and within the complex. Besides a wide perspective of the Golden Horn, the *kasr* had the view of the entrance of the adjoining bazaar, the tomb behind, the *sebil-müvekkithane* (fountain-time keeper), the once existing *sibyan mektebi*

[168] The decoration is raveled out due to the present restoration project.

[169] This dome is one of the features that Thys-Şenocak finds a similarity with the *İnci* Kiosk.

(elementary school) and the *sebil*-fountain. This feature of the *kasr* is also acknowledged in the calligraphic panels that describe "the *kasr* as a special viewing place" (Thys-Şenocak 1994, 127).

The royal pavilion, according to Thys-Şenocak, was located at the core of the complex and was the most unique element of the layout. What determined the orientation and the placement of the *hünkar kasrı* in the Yeni Valide mosque was the "cones of vision" (figures 74a-b) that the *kasır* offered to the spectator inside (Thys-Şenocak, 2000, 69 - 89). The *kasır* was built in such a manner that every other building in the complex could be seen from it and this provided an opportunity for a panoptical surveillance for the *Valide Sultan* inside.



Figures 74 a-b: Cones of vision from the Hünkar Kasrı, Yeni Valide Complex
from Thys-Şenocak (1994, 352) and (2000b, 81)

According to Ruggles (2000, 3), this is a break from the "traditional gaze" of men on women as an object to be viewed. Through the relationship between the viewer and the viewed, Ruggles refers to Thys-Şenocak's theory that relates the phenomenon of gaze of male for whom the subjects of gaze were women. Manipulation of the "royal gaze" in the *Yeni Valide* mosque on behalf of a female identity showed the presence of the power of the *Valide* Sultan.

This visual relationship also allowed *Valide* Sultan to access to every other part in the complex at least visually, which otherwise could not be easily or frequently visited. The *hünkar kasrı* and the mosque however could be visited more frequently.

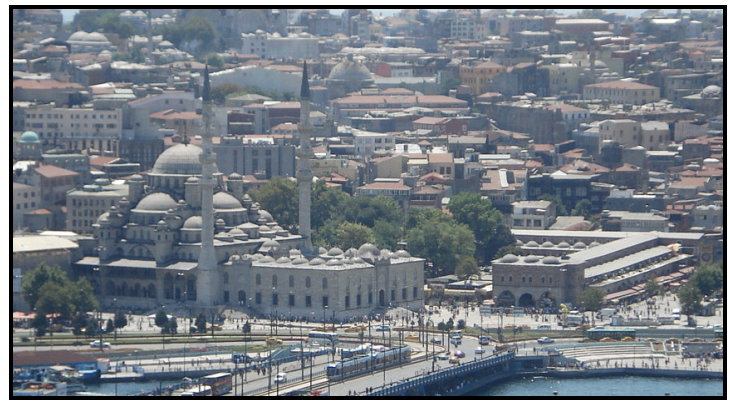


Figure 75: *Yeni Valide* Mosque, *hünkar kasrı* on the left, Egypt bazaar on the right, seen from Galata Tower, *Yeni Valide* Complex, *photographed by the author*

Another significant building of the *Yeni Valide* complex (figure 75) was the huge bazaar named as The Egyptian Bazaar and was built to provide selling units for the spices coming from Egypt. The L-shaped, closed bazaar is one other interesting building of the complex. It was made of brick and stone with a vaulted roof on top. The entrance is from the *Bahçekapı* on the seaside (figures 76a-b). Erkal (2001) states that, the Egypt bazaar, to some extent, is the restoration of the colonnaded bazaar of the Byzantine era which was once located in the same spot. The oriental "*suq*", the closed shopping arcade replaced this porticoed avenue. The inclusion of such a large bazaar into the complex illustrates the conscious choice of this site by both patrons of the complex. Being aware of the commercial potential of Eminönü, they, and especially Hatice Turhan chose to be associated not only to a Muslim oriented complex but also to a commercial one which addressed all nations and visitors.

Figures 76 a-b: Two of the four main entrances of the Egyptian Bazaar, Yeni Valide Complex, *photographed by the author*

The tomb (figures 77a-b) of the complex is located behind the mosque, across the entrance of the *hünkar kasrı* and *müvekkithane*. It is an important example of Ottoman tomb architecture. As Peirce (1993,) states, it is remarkable from the point of view of "dynastic politics." According to her, this tomb is a matriarchal one replacing the previous patriarchal tombs since the later sultans were all buried here rather than in the courts of their own mosques. The single-unit domed and square planned tomb like the mosque and the *hünkar kasrı* is richly decorated. Yet, only the tiles are original; the stained glass and the painted decoration are restored (Thys-Şenocak 1994, 131).

Figures 77 a-b: Exterior and interior views, the tomb, Yeni Valide Complex, *photographed by the author*

In this large complex, there was also a *muvakkithane* (time keeping place) commissioned by Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839) which was originally built as a *sebil* (fountain). Besides this fountain there is another bigger fountain in the complex (figures 78a-b).


Figures 78 a-b: *Sebil* (fountain) and the *müvekkithane* (timekeeper's place) Yeni Valide Complex, *photographed by the author*

The *sıbyan mektebi*, also mentioned in the waqfiye of the complex was located near the tomb but it is demolished to open a street.

The *darülkurra*, *darülhadis* and *medrese* are not mentioned in the waqfiye of the complex. Yet, there are later sources that mention the financial needs of those buildings (Thys-Şenocak 1994, 145). These buildings presumably were located next to the fountain where another building is now standing. As there is not any old visual source of the complex the presence of these buildings is debatable.

The *Yeni Valide* Complex, built under the patronage of two *valide* sultans and at least by three head architects is a massive project in terms of its construction history and endowment. The scale of the project, especially the mosque, the location and site where it was built and its architectural program and layout are some of its impressive qualities.

The patron of the complex, Hatice Turhan Sultan, had announced herself, her patronage and power on the inscription panels of the mosque (Thys-Şenocak 1994, 171). The epigraphic program of this complex indeed is worthy of note. It gives clues about the intentions and ambitions of its patron by which she openly announced her wish: to see her son becoming a successful and victorious sultan, following his ancestors.[170]

Hatice Turhan Sultan followed the tradition of the preceding Valide Sultans by commissioning a monumental complex to be built in the capital city (Thys-Şenocak, 1998, 59):

> By locating her foundation in the political center of the empire and announcing her patronage in the foundation inscription of the Eminönü mosque, Hatice Turhan linked herself to earlier Ottoman women patrons who had sponsored pious monuments in the Ottoman capital...

The *Yeni Valide* Complex, ambitiously built on a difficult seashore terrain served for a number of intentions: it reflected a commercial concern and introduced a new feature. The Egyptian bazaar of the complex marked the entrance of the goods to the port and functioned together with the *Valide Hanı* built by Kösem Mahpeyker Sultan (mother of İbrahim (1640-1648)) and the Grand bazaar. Inserting such a great complex also Islamized the region and marked the area with a Muslim landmark. Together with the royal pavilion, the mosque acted as the panoptic tower controlling the Golden Horn as well as the rest of the complex. Reminding the visitors as well as the inhabitants of the district that it was a muslim landmark reflecting the power of the omnipresent sultan; but in this

[170] Hatice Turhan announced herself as the patron of the complex in the foundation record (*waqfiye*) of the complex as well.

case that of the *valide sultan*. Here not the sultan but the *valide* sultan extended her gaze towards the capital.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Hürrem Sultan, Mihrimah Sultan, (Safiye Sultan) and Hatice Turhan Sultan are among the well-known and visible imperial women of the Ottoman era. Their social visibility and public acknowledgement represent the ultimate stage how that started with the earliest Islamic and Turkish cultures.

Women had a significant role in the continuation of the family and the state in the Islamic Ottoman culture. Certain codes of behavior however were imposed by the Islamic law that regulated the interaction of men and women. Marriage in particular provided some rights to women and also enabled them to change their status. Marriage could also provide a certain amount of wealth. The issues regarding marriage are also applicable to the Ottoman palace and the imperial family in which case some differences can be found. Quitting marriage and preferring concubinage for example was the major distinction of establishing a family in dynastic circles.

Until the fifteenth century, the Ottoman sultans are known to have married their partners. Some of those women came from the families of high ranking officials of the state while some others belonged to the families of nearby imperialistic powers. In order to sustain power alliances, Ottoman sultans felt the necessity to marry the princesses of the foreign states. These strategical marriages ended with the rise of the Ottoman state as the leading power of the area in the sixteenth century. The state did not need any more alliances established through inter-marriage. In fact marriage, in any case required the

payment of *mehr* to women which meant to give a large share to the future wife from the imperial treasury. By not marrying and preferring concubinage the Ottoman Sultans of the post 15th century also avoided this loss of state money.

On the other hand the head of the Ottoman state was the Ottoman dynasty and the sustainability of the Ottoman dynastic family was related to the sustainability of the state. The choice of partner of the Ottoman sultan therefore meant more than just a sexual preference. Having male children was an essential motive in the concubinage system for guaranteeing the succeeding sultan. This "politics of reproduction" controlled the operation of the partnership in between a sultan and a favorite concubine and implied more than a sexual desire as often reflected in the writings of Western travelers and scholars.

The main intention behind this policy was to maintain the continuity of the sultanate through a male child. Bearing a male child therefore was meant to bring a woman power, wealth and respect. The mother who gave birth to a male child would assume a high rank in the harem hierarchy, get an increased daily income and eventually, for some, would bring ultimate power as queen mother.

These intricate matters concerning the continuation of the Ottoman sultanate became more openly pronounced starting from the sixteenth century. The sixteenth century was a period of changes for the Ottoman state structure. It was the peak of the imperialistic power and the completion of a centralized, absolute monarchy. For the imperial women the sixteenth century was of utmost importance: it witnessed the unification of the sultan's own house with that of his family's. Before the sixteenth century, the family of the Sultan used to live in the Old Palace. In addition, the dynastic woman who had a male

child, a crown prince, was being sent to the *sancaks* to supervise the education of their son's political development.

As such women were not able to reside together with the sultan and hence were kept away from the state politics, administration and building activities.

The first woman to break this was Hürrem Sultan; she first managed to stay in the capital and later moved to the Topkapı Palace to live in the harem quarter thus breaking another tradition. Moreover by officially marrying Süleyman I, Hürrem, coming from a slave origin, became a revolutionary female figure in the Ottoman history.

The mothers of the *şehzades* following Hürrem Sultan continued to go to *sancaks*. Safiye Sultan, the mother of Mehmed III, was the last mother sent to a *Sancak* (Manisa). The *hasekis* of the Sultans meanwhile continued to live in the harem of Topkapı palace. They lived in the harem either as a *haseki* or a *valide* sultan of the reigning sultan. When the sultan died however she was sent back to the old palace for retirement.

The unification of the household with the administrative center provided the female members of the imperial family access to administrative information and hence involvement in politics that eventually brought power as well. Their seat in the palace, the harem quarter was the reflection of their social status and their place in hierarchy both in architectural and institutional terms. The architectural and social institutionalization of the harem together with the end of the tradition of sending *valide* sultans to *sancaks* with *şehzades*, brought both political and financial power to the imperial women.

If one stage of development in the history of Ottoman imperial women was to move to the harem in the Topkapı Palace, the other was to step outside the palace and to make them more publicly visible. By staying in the capital city, these women had the chance to comission the construction of public buildings under their patronage and hence to reach the latter stage. Architectural patronage in the capital city until the sixteenth century was a privilege of the Sultans. Starting with Hürrem Sultan however, imperial dynastic women started to share this privilege by more ambitious building programs.

Architectural patronage in this context is related to two significant issues: a religious obligation that advocated a philanthropic attitude in terms of providing public services, and a will to reflect political power and presence to the *tebaa*, especially to the female *tebaa* and foreign visitors and residents and in turn get their acknowledgement and appreciation which were once only claimed by the sultans (Necipoğlu 2005, 70):

> By commissioning ambitious Friday mosques, royal women could claim their access to a status symbol associated with the architectural patronage of the ruling elite.

Imperial women sponsored all sorts of buildings including large complexes which could comprise a mosque, *medrese*, *imaret (hospice-soup kitchen for the poor)*, *sibyan mektebi (elementary school for children), and* commercial units like *hans* and bazaars. Among the most significant examples are Sinan's works, dating to the classical period of the Ottoman architecture beginning with Süleyman I. The Haseki Complex and the Haseki Bath of Hürrem, the complexes of Mihrimah in Üsküdar and Edirnekapı, and the *Yeni Valide* Complex of Hatice Turhan Sultan in Eminönü are among such complexes discussed in this study in terms of how and in which ways female patrons utilized architecture to become visible also outside their harem quarter. Five case studies were chosen and examined in terms of

their location in the city, their site characteristics, and layout of the plan of the complex and some individual buildings together with some brief decorational notes.

First of all it should be stated that the choice and allocation of site for each case differed. Although mostly located away from the prestigious political and administrative center of the city, these complexes became significant urban nodes in the districts they were built. They became the means of channeling the imperial concern and revenues to the districts that were not developed adequately in social terms. The mosques built by the order of the imperial women were constructed in rather less preferred and underdeveloped areas in the capital and hence remained often as the only Friday Mosques in these regions (Peirce 1993, 201). As such they functioned to manifest the concern and power of imperial women to larger masses in the capital.

The complexes examined in this study are actually located also at the "gates" of the capital. Mihrimah Sultan Complex in Üsküdar and the *Yeni Valide* Complex in Eminönü are located at the sea gates while the Mihrimah Sultan complex in Edirnekapı is located at a land gate. As such they also served for the needs of the travelers, visitors and especially the tradesmen who used these gates to enter into the capital. The shore complexes in this context, such as *Yeni Valide* Complex in Eminönü served also for managing and improving the sea commerce and transport. The complex of Mihrimah Sultan in Üsküdar likewise, marked the crossing of sea transport with that of the land. Üsküdar was already a trade center and was the beginning point of the Anatolian trade routes leading towards the Middle East. Eminönü likewise was a trade center. Big commercial vessels landed in the Eminönü port brought goods to the bazaars located around the district. Edirnekapı, on the other hand, was the ceremonial land entrance of the capital. The sultan, the

ambassadors and other important foreign visitors were all welcomed with great ceremonies at this gate. Thus the Mihrimah Sultan complex here crowned this gate and brought further public service for those who both used this gate and lived around it.

Besides their public service and urban regeneration functions, these complexes crowned with imposing mosques became the tools and symbols of the Islamization of the areas they were built in. They became the signifiers of an Islamic presence and power to both the *tebaa* and non-muslims, in short, to the city itself.

Among these examples, the Haseki Bath in Sultanahmet and the complex of Hürrem in Avratpazarı are significant in some other respects as well. Located across the great Hagia Sophia church, the bath was constructed just at the beginning of the imperial axis and hence was very close to the entrance of the Topkapı Palace. Replacing a famous Byzantine bath, the Haseki bath marked the tenure of Hürrem as a Haseki. The complex of Hürrem in *Avratpazarı* on the other hand was also significant in terms of its location. Including a hospital and a hospice serving for women, the complex was located in an area frequented mostly by women. It therefore represented above all the concern of Hürrem Sultan about the well-being of her female *tebaa* which is presumably closely related also to her slave origin.

A second feature related to the choice of site is the nature and character of the land reserved for or given over to female patronage. The buildings sponsored by those three imperial women were all built in difficult sites in terms of land restrictions. That is why, the architects, mainly Sinan, had to

propose and devise some different and unique solutions.[171] The Mihrimah Sultan Complex in Üsküdar is a good example. The site was almost squeezed between a hilltop and the sea. As there was no room for a usual courtyard plan, Sinan designed the mosque with a second portico, surrounding the first one, instead of a usual preceding courtyard. The Hürrem Sultan complex likewise was also stuck between the buildings in the site. The most problematic site among the examples however is that of the *Yeni Valide* complex. The site where the complex was built was not far from the soft and loose ground of the Golden Horn and hence the foundation had to be built with a very heavy reinforcement. Recent studies done on the foundations of the mosque indicated that its foundation is similar to the bridge designs of Sinan.[172] According to Thys-Şenocak (1994, 43) it was more like "bridge pilings and a compressed rubble stone layer".

The buildings sponsored by imperial women in relation to land restrictions, seem to have been innovative in terms of structure as well. The foundation system of the *Yeni Valide* Sultan complex, mentioned above, is one example. Another is the Mihrimah Sultan's Edirnekapı complex. In this complex, architect Sinan, searched for a different architectural quality by using the structural system in the mosque. He maintained a brighter mass by taking the load of the dome from the walls to the pillars. Another building that displays the ingenuity of Sinan is the Haseki Bath. Playing with the organization of spaces and masses along a sequential layout, Sinan achieved an

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[171] Kuran (1995, 32) discusses the layout of the complexes designed by Sinan in a developmental scheme. Accordingly the later, symmetrically and geometrically organized complexes such as Süleymaniye represent the peak of both Sinan's architectural ability and the economical comfort of the empire. The earlier complexes of Mihrimah Sultan in Üsküdar and Haseki Complex in Avratpazarı in this sense are "disorganized" and are regarded as lacking this architectural ability and economical comfort. Kuban in this study, does not take into account the role of the patron on architecture as a parameter for analysis.

[172] Thys-Şenocak (1994, 43) refers to a 1978 dated geotechnical study done by H. Peynircioğlu, I. Aksoy and K.Özüdoğru.

interesting harmony of masses which is unique in comparison to the traditional Ottoman bath designs.

A third issue that emerges from the site and location is related to the building program and planning of the complexes.[173] The building programs were set according to the characteristics of the site. Although it is not clear who finalized the architectural program it might be claimed that the imperial women as patrons were influential. The function and location however were closely related. The *Yeni Valide* complex, built in a highly commercial district for example incorporated a great bazaar while the *Haseki* complex built in an area frequented by poor women had a hospital and hospice reserved only for the use of women.

The layout of complexes might show distinctive features as well. The *Yeni Valide* Complex is an illustrative example. Thys-Şenocak discusses that the whole complex was designed in reference to the *hünkar kasrı* building which was the most frequented building by *Valide Sultan*. *Valide* constructed the *kasr* and the complex in such a layout that the *kasr* became the center and focus of the complex although it was not placed at its geometrical center. Almost all of the remaining buildings in the complex could be seen from the *kasr,* providing the *Valide sultan* an opportunity to have a gaze on each building.

Some notes can be put forward about the relation between the patron and the architect. This is still a debated issue in Ottoman architecture. The contribution of male donors, let alone the female ones, to the planning and construction phases

[173] It is plausible to assume that the architects had a primary role in deciding for the building program and the application of the project. Yerasimos on the other hand mentions (2000, 280) that the role of the patron who endowed the money for the construction could have been more.

is not a much known topic.[174] It is, for instance, not clear from the written evidence at hand whether the imperial female patrons were free to choose the architectural style to be used in the buildings they sponsored (Bates 1978, 249–250):

> The structural and the ornamental peculiarities of these buildings are rather striking and indicate that, at the very least; women patrons interacted dynamically with the architects and builders.

By referring to Rycault, Thys-Şenocak (1994, 86) mentions an exchange of information between Hatice Turhan Sultan and the head architect through the grand vizier.[175] It is known that the head architect Mustafa Ağa actually suggested *Valide* Sultan to resume the abandoned project of Safiye Sultan rather than starting a new one. This is indicative of some communication and interaction between an architect and a *valide sultan,* at least in the case of the *Yeni Valide* complex.[176]

Recent studies showed that the Ottoman imperial women were visible through public charity and architectural patronage. As members of the royal family they had the financial means to sponsor buildings which in turn consolidated their presence and power. Sponsoring public monuments then became an important tool to manifest power for the Ottoman imperial women who as such penetrated beyond the walls of the harem. It is impossible to separate the political power from its symbolic expressions (Peirce 1993, 186) such as the ceremonials including the court rituals and various other representations of imperial imagery such as architecture. In the Ottoman context, where different forms of imagery such as painting, sculpture and coinage were only used in a limited fashion and for a very limited audience for imperial propaganda, architecture and building became the

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[174] Bates (1978, 250): "To what extent do such buildings architecturally reflect the sex or social status of their recipients?"

[175] The grand viziers also acted as the agents of Valide Sultans in the palace.

[176] Bates (1993, 62) notes that Hatice Turhan used the royal pavilion also to supervise the construction of the mosque.

most appealing and direct way of communicating the imperial power to large masses.

The buildings sponsored by women, seemed to have served for the very same purposes. They improved the public services in their districts and, in addition singled out the female power as well. The buildings examined here exhibit different plans in comparison to the other well known complexes. In all, there were either minor plan modifications due to the site restrictions, or in some cases the building programs included several such changes. There is no firm evidence to suggest that the female patrons could directly decide for or choose the exact location of their buildings. The selected examples show that there might have been some influential factors in the preference of sites. The female patrons could probably have chosen the location of their complexes but not the exact site.

The four complexes, those except the Haseki Bath in Sultanahmet, were rather located at the peripheral areas of the city with respect to the administrative center, the palace. Indeed, the seat of power and residence of their patrons, the Harem quarter, was also placed at a peripheral locality in the palace compound; it was not planned on the ceremonial and sequential axis passing through the gates. The three imperial women of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Hürrem Sultan, Mihrimah Sultan and Hatice Turhan Sultan in this respect, became visible in both the private and public contexts as patrons of architecture and beholders of power but rather in a peripheral context.

Yet, what made the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries significant in the history of Ottoman female patronage was the grandeur and scale of some of the monuments sponsored by the imperial women. Although most of them were located at the peripheries or less prestigious areas of the capital, the

complexes and buildings commissioned by female patrons, by all means, were no less impressive than the imperial building programs sponsored by the male members of the dynastic family, including the sultans themselves, in more central contexts. As in the case of *Yeni Valide* Complex, they might be even more impressive and monumental.

Once they firmly established their presence in the Topkapı Palace, both spatially and socially within the secluded walls of the Harem, the imperial women proceeded to establish their image, identity and power in the capital city by means of adorning foremost the less popular sites such as Avratpazarı or Üsküdar and also the well known prestigious areas such as the center of the city with large scale public buildings that were named and remembered after them.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: General Layout of *Hamams* in Fifteenth and Sixteenth C. Anatolia

Figure 79: Research: General Layout of Hammams in fifteenth sixteenth c. Anatolia, part 1
Middle East Technical University,
Department of Restoration,
2004 –2005 Spring Term Project:
Restoration of Yalınayak Hamam,
Team Leaders: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emre Madran, Dr. Nimet Özgönül

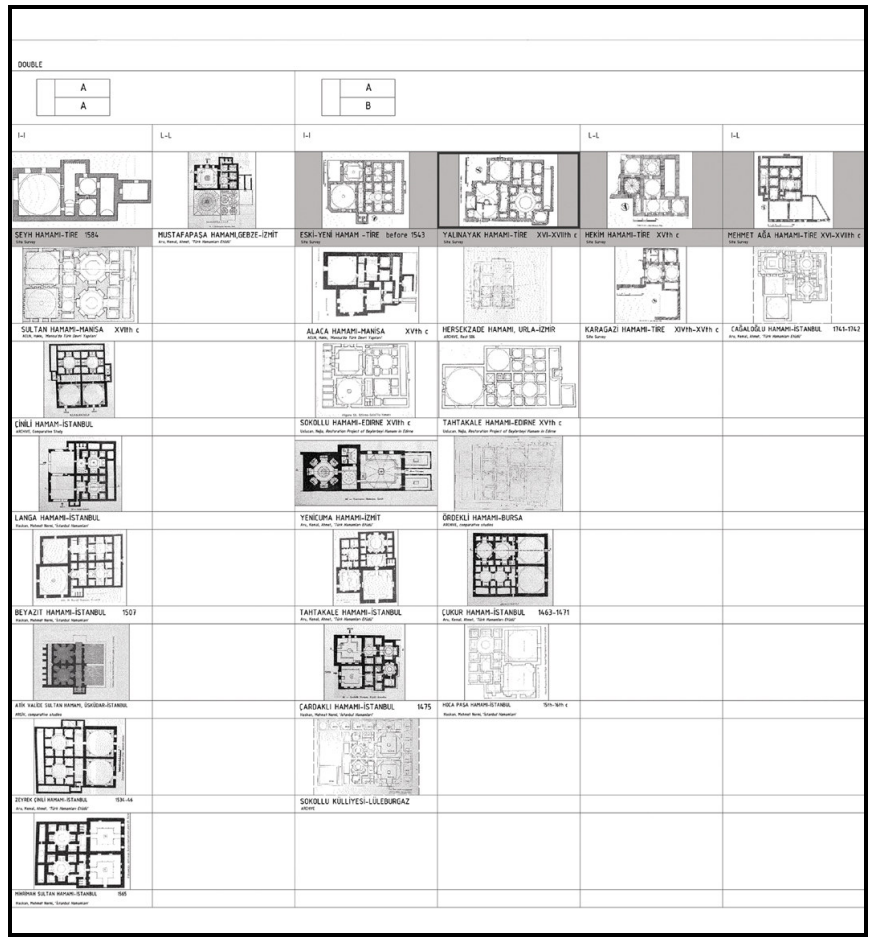


Figure 80: Research: General Layout of Hammams
in fifteenth sixteenth c. Anatolia, part 2
Middle East Technical University,
Department of Restoration,
2004 -2005 Spring Term Project:
Restoration of Yalınayak Hamam,
Team Leaders: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emre Madran, Dr. Nimet Özgönül

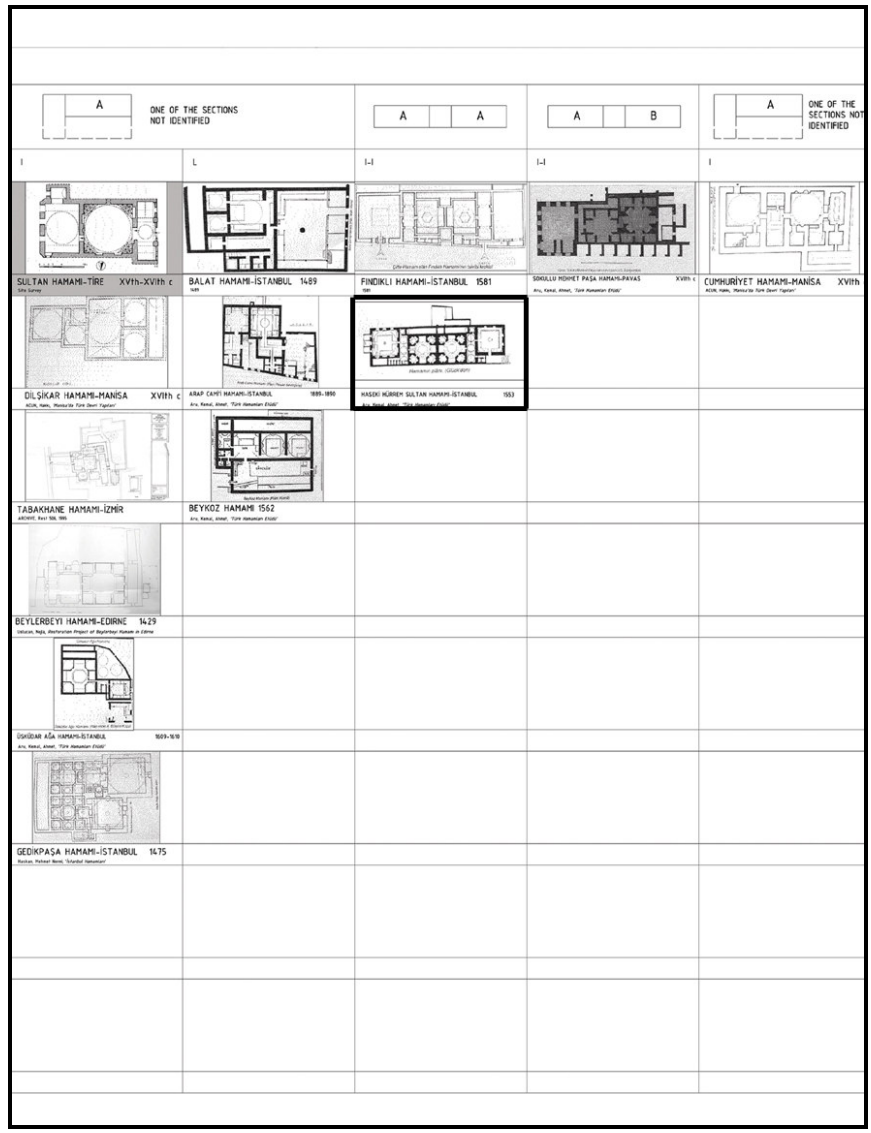
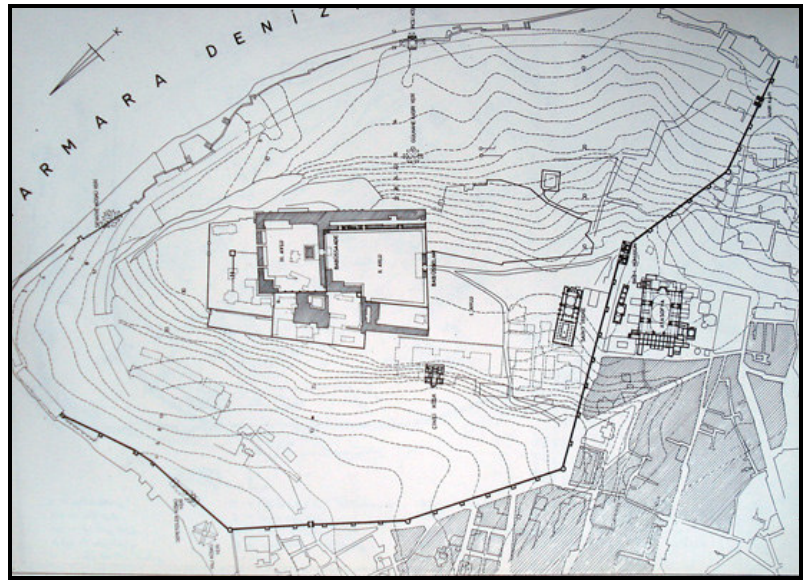
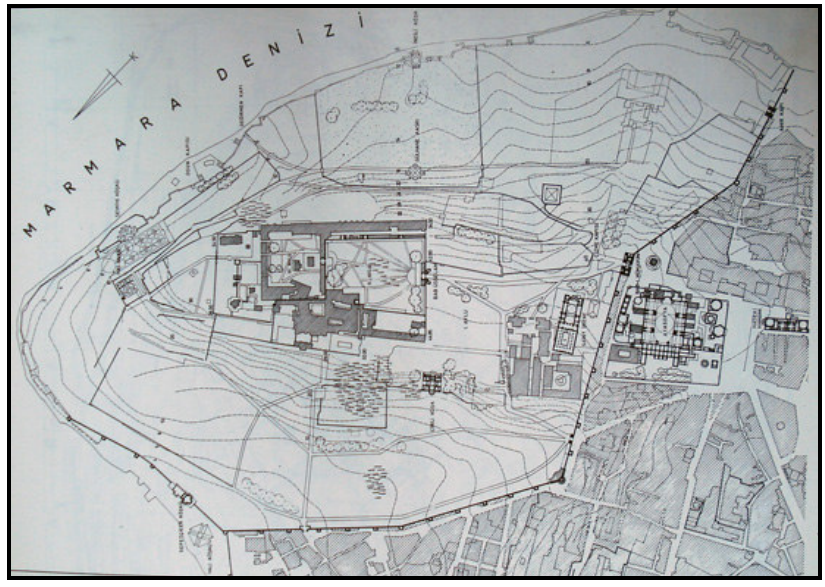


Figure 81: Research: General Layout of Hammams
in fifteenth sixteenth c. Anatolia, part 3
Middle East Technical University,
Department of Restoration,
2004 –2005 Spring Term Project:
Restoration of Yalınayak Hamam,
Team Leaders: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emre Madran, Dr. Nimet Özgönül

APPENDIX B: Site Plan of Topkapı Palace





Figures 82a–b: Site plan, Topkapı Palace in fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, *from Eldem and Akozan (1986)*

APPENDIX C: The Ottoman Sultan's Family Tree

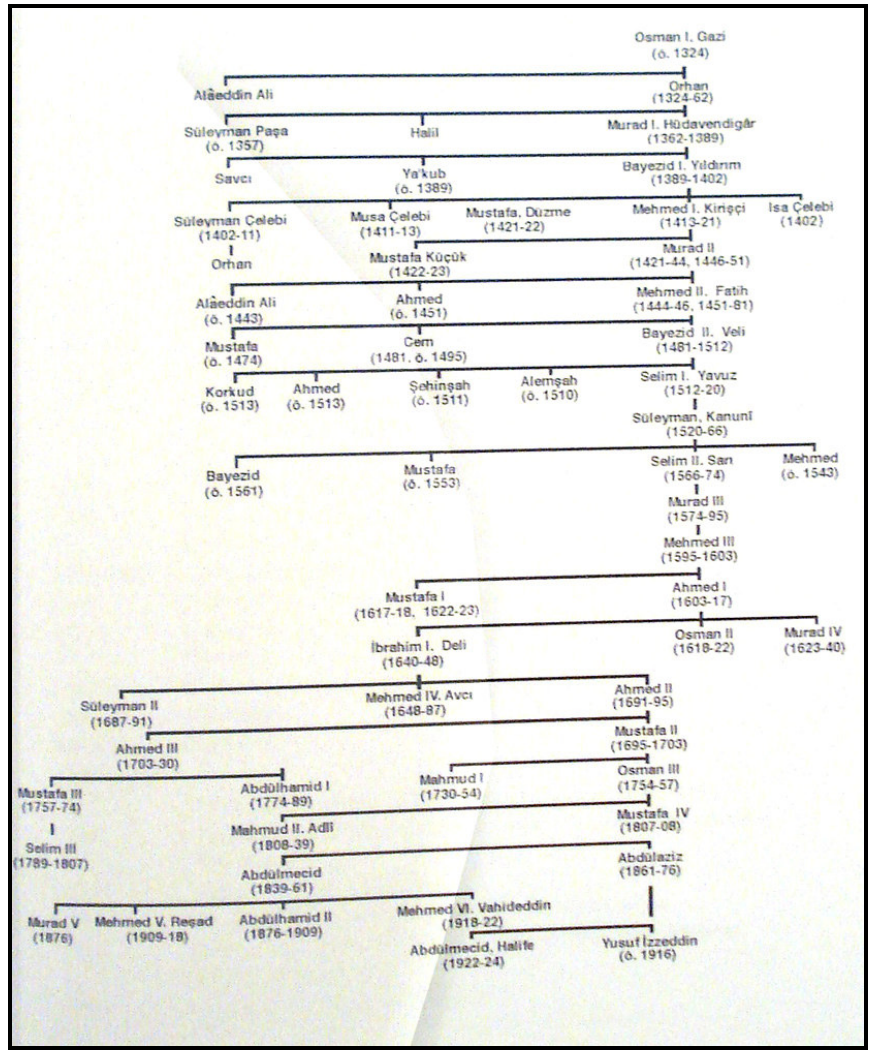


Figure 83: The Ottoman Sultan's Family Tree, *from İnalcık (1997, 17)*

APPENDIX D: Ottoman Sultans, Their Partners and Mothers

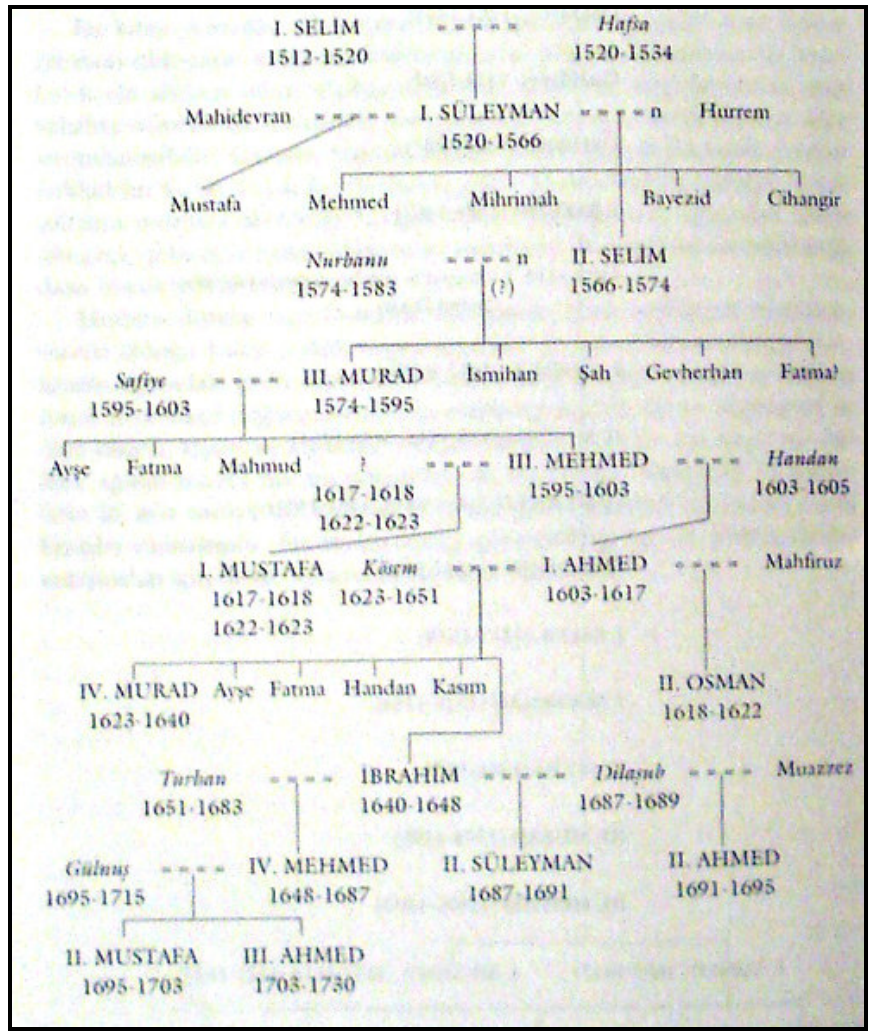


Figure 84: The Ottoman Sultans, their partners and mothers, *after Peirce (1993, 377)*