FORMS AND FORUMS OF EXPRESSION

Istanbul and beyond, 1600–1800

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Late eighteenth-century Ottoman history has conventionally portrayed Selim III (1789–1807) as *the* reforming sultan who undertook to modernize – or Europeanize – all military, administrative and economic affairs. Paradoxically, however, new research shows him to have been surrounded and guided by reformers of Islam, in particular by followers of the Nakşibendiyye–Müceddidiyye sufi order, which stood for strict adherence to the sharia and the tenets of Sunni Islam, as well as their quite controversial Mevlevi or Melâmi allies.[1] During the eighteenth century a serious agenda of renewal and reform in Islamic thought seems to have emerged both at the centre and in the provinces, extending to attempts at coming to terms with modern state formation.[2]

Much has been written about how, in traditional agrarian societies, virtually all social and political conflicts tended to be played out through religion.[3] Ottomanists, too, have noted how, when economic, military and political disasters tended to dovetail into a cultural crisis and hence a crisis of the elite, the Ottoman solution was always sought in piety or calls for a return to a 'pure' religion.[4] How then are we to interpret the influence of reformers of Islam upon Selim III's new political order?

Behind the contentious history of eighteenth-century reformists in Istanbul, there lurks the prolonged seventeenth-century conflict between sufis and the radical, often violently puritan, preachers inspired by a certain Kadızadeli Mehmed (d. 1635), a group characterized as a major component of the 'long seventeenth century' Ottoman crisis. From the 1630s to the 1680s there were fierce quarrels between the fundamentalists and their adversaries, fuelled especially by the Kadızadelis' hostility to what they regarded as anti-sharia innovations such as smoking, or drinking coffee or wine, and to sufi rituals.[5] The aftermath of this confrontation continued into the eighteenth century. Yet, it did not amount to a complete polarization between two mutually exclusive parties, for, while sufis did defend their rites and ways, at least some of them also nurtured a certain degree of admiration for their opponents' strength of faith. In campaigning to restore Islam to its uncorrupted form as in the age of the Prophet, the Kadızadelis had turned to Birgivî Mehmed Efendi (d. 1573) and his *Tarîkat-ı Muhammediyye*. Among those who penned positive commentaries on Birgivî's

Tarîkat were prominent sufîs such as 'Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi (d. 1731) of Damascus, Muhammed Emin et-Tokadî (d. 1745) of Istanbul and Ebu Said el-Hadimî (d. 1762) of Konya, all of whom followed the Nakşibendi sufi path, and might therefore be ranked as among the predecessors of late eighteenth-century reformers. Birgivî's *Tarîkat* was also recommended to Selim III's *nizâm-ı cedid* ('new order') soldiers in the 1790s, and with new commentaries was regularly published at the Mühendishane printing house after 1803.[6]

There was a considerable degree of conservatism in even the most liberal Muslim and sufi thinkers of the eighteenth century. Just as it was hardly possible for Ottoman policymakers to think wholly outside or without reference to the sharia, equally no Islamic intellectual could uphold any idea of change except by representing himself as a staunch defender of the faith. A case in point concerns the considerable legacy within the Ottoman reform party of the Indian scholar Şeyh Ahmed al-Sirhindî (d. 1624) – a contemporary of Kadızadeli Mehmed. For his emphasis on rejuvenating Islam and opposing heterodoxy, Sirhindî was proclaimed 'renewer [*müceddid*] of the second [Islamic] millennium'; his followers, known as *müceddidî*s ('renewers'), were committed to the orthodox canon.[7] Sirhindî's Ottoman followers, the Nakşibendiyye–Müceddidiyye mentioned above, began to acquire political influence both at court and in the provinces in the later seventeenth century.[8] Muhammed Murad Buharî (d. 1720), a disciple of Sirhindî's son and successor Muhammad Ma'sum (d. 1668), introduced the order from Damascus to Istanbul through visits of varying duration to the capital between 1681 and 1720; other branches of Sirhindî's disciples also carried his teachings from Mecca to Anatolia and then to Istanbul.

Buharî (also known as Muradî) made the greatest impact, being favourably received among the upper classes, including by the foremost representatives of the later Kadızadelis, among them Mustafa II's notorious *şeyhülislam* Feyzullah Efendi (d. 1703). The eighteenth-century chronicler Uşşakîzâde even reports that Feyzullah regarded Mustafa II (1695-1703) himself as a *müceddidi* and praised him for turning away from frivolity, leisure and pleasure.[9] Support probably also came from Ahmed III (1703–30), for, despite Feyzullah Efendi's execution in 1703, the order was able to secure a permanent presence at the Ottoman court.[10] With Buharî's first visit to the capital, a convent frequented by his adherents emerged in the Nişanca quarter of Eyüb, a popular settlement among the Nakşibendis.[11] Not only centrally positioned *ulema* but also prominent sufîs in the provinces (such as al-Nabulusi) were well connected to these *müceddidi* pioneers.[12]

Sirhindî's followers in Istanbul became involved in political strife as early as 1708.[13] Although Buharî's growing influence at court incurred the emnity of the grand vezir Çorlulu Ali Paşa and resulted in exile in Bursa between 1711 and 1717, he also came to count Şeyhülislâm Paşmakçızâde Seyyid Ali Efendi (in office 1703, 1704–7 and 1710–12) among his disciples.[14] The reigning sultan, Ahmed III, in contrast to his subsequent image as *the* decadent ruler, was often blamed by his contemporaries for blindly following the religious zealotry of his entourage. He had been surrounded by orthodox (and mostly explicitly Kadızadeli) *ulema* since early childhood. Buharî's adherents and other disciples of Sirhindî continued to exercise influence among grand vezirs, bureaucrats and palace officials throughout the eighteenth century. By this time the Kadızadelis had retreated in court circles. Although they were still a significant

force in the provinces, here, too, the centre reasserted its influence mostly through its Nakşibendiyye–Müceddidiyye adherents.[15]

In the later eighteenth century both sufis and *ulema* seem to have been using Sirhindî's ideas to underpin their initiatives.[16] Included in their agenda were elements pointing towards land privatization, a locally commercialized and monetized economy, the formation of a new and more capitalistic urban elite, and the progressive reintegration of the provinces into a recentralized political order. The paradox is that, while supporting measures of adaptation to the challenges of modernity, together or overlapping with the Kadızadelis, Sirhindî's followers, too, attacked many practices among Muslims as un-Islamic. Together with their modernizing proclivities, the Ottoman Müceddidiyye remained opposed to innovation in religion, as well as to indulging in worldly pleasures.

In this uncertain context, forms and forums of social, political and cultural expression came to frame and embody a prolonged struggle over control of the public sphere. They were manifested in often unprecedented ways and left diverse records, in spheres ranging from court rituals through fashion to the arts.[17] Particularly significant is the occurrence of first-person narratives, a rarity in Ottoman culture.[18] Leading sufis' personal journals, letters, diaries and dreamlogs, reflecting their hopes, enmities or social concerns, become especially noteworthy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[19] Muslim and non-Muslim authors who wrote for themselves may have been driven to record local events by a sense of living in insecure times.[20] Recent studies on poetry and music also suggest that at this time important changes were taking place in the cultural identity of the elite. Likewise, visual documentation, marked by a shift from dynastic representations to genre painting, is exceptionally abundant for this period, and presents a wealth of information also about the daily lives of commoners.

There are, of course, serious questions about how this material should be interpreted. Often, the same piece of information appears to cut both (or more) ways; there emerge nearly as many histories as historians. Moreover, a certain source can provide information on not just one but many things, as a result of which the same sources keep cutting across (discussions of) various spheres of life. In some cases, undue attention has been paid to just a single piece of evidence. All these factors lead to difficulties of organization, in presenting combined, intertwining and interacting processes. In what follows, I shall begin with space and concepts of privacy; try to find my way through different forms of Ottoman urban space in this period, reserving early judgement on the extent to which they may be qualified as public or not; and conclude with the question of women.

APPROACHES TO PUBLIC SPACE: FROM THEORIES TO UNEASY COUNTERPARTS

A lively interest in the Habermasian concept of public space has led Ottomanists to inquire into the collective urban experience, with particular reference to coffee-houses and public gardens. Public and private lives, the limits of which are often defined through architectural terminology such as thresholds, ceilings or walls, have always been regarded as attached to and anchored in space. In the Ottoman context, as a first approximation, 'indoors' has come to stand for private activities (including women)

and 'outdoors' for activities in public space (excluding women), though these should be taken not as opposite poles but as positions on a continuous scale.

In an earlier study on the new genre painting of early eighteenth-century Istanbul, I attempted to elaborate the boundaries between the individual and the society of which he or she is part.[21] Identifying *'amm(e)* and *hass(a)*, terms used in the court registers (*sicil*s) of the period, as referring respectively to the public and non-public (i.e., formal or authorized, and referring mostly to the privileged and therefore restricted), I suggested that the intimate physical and emotional space into which civil or religious authorities could not intrude should be regarded as private. I became aware of the possibility of such privacies occurring within the public sphere and, simultaneously, about violations of privacy in non-public zones. Examples of the latter are closes or blind alleys, where neighbours' paths would frequently cross and familiarity would make inroads into privacy. I therefore hypothesized a third area between the public and the private, an intermediate sphere where boundaries between the individual and society tended to blur.

Several historians who have used court registers to examine the lives of provincial men and women from an Ottoman legal perspective have attempted to define privacy as framed by a given social order and by reference to social class.[22] Most recently, a gendered reading of the problem has been provided, arguing that the boundary between public and private depended on, and shifted with, gender status instead of applying equally to all individuals.[23] Hence privacy, a concept for which no specific term exists in Arabic (the language of Islamic-Ottoman legal texts), has come to be defined by female chastity and seclusion from non-family men, as well as by inclusion in or exclusion from the family as a means of social control.

One point emphasized immediately by these debates is that we cannot simply apply modern (or European/western) notions of public and private to Ottoman (or Islamic, or perhaps any non-western, pre-modern) society. The search for correspondences between theoretical notions and practical examples has led historians to consider a series of Ottoman spaces which, seen up close, blur into ambiguous zones where the public and the private overlap. In addition to coffee-houses and so-called public gardens, key examples are public baths, where men and women did not meet, but which yet represented some kind of crossover for each sex; barber-shops doubling as medical shops; and marketplaces and a variety of places for eating out. To what extent did these constitute forms and manifestations of a public space that was genuinely increasing and expanding in a fashion comparable to European developments?

It is crucial to note that, in the West, public spaces were meant not only to accommodate a politicized community and its collective decisions, reason and rationality,[24] but also a sphere of fluid and polymorphous sociability, play and ritual.[25] Did comparable Ottoman spaces of heterogeneous coexistence embody a new kind of social conduct and a new civility towards strangers? Were they recognized as markers of publicness? Furthermore, to what extent were women and non-Muslims present – or mixed-sex encounters and interconfessional mingling encouraged – in such places? One way to understand 'new' styles of interaction and dialogue would be to look into the definition of the uncivilized ways (or deviations from the norm) which came to be recorded in this period.[26]

COFFEE-HOUSES, SPECIALIZATION, GENTRIFICATION

Following the European voyages of discovery, hugely increased flows of tea, coffee, cocoa and sugar became key components of the new Atlantic economy, resulting in the appeareance of tea- and coffee-houses, spreading from west to east across Europe. In the Ottoman empire, coffee came from Yemen, and was welcomed first and foremost by sufis. Coffee-houses showed up first in Egypt before making their appearance in Istanbul from the 1550s onwards and really beginning to flourish in the seventeenth century.[27]

Since Hattox, most scholars have focused on the reaction of the state to this new phenomenon in social and cultural interaction, and on its attempts to control the resulting increased circulation of information. This applied to many other venues, too, with or without coffee. For example, sailors' gatherings (*oda sohbetleri*) are mentioned by Evliya Çelebi at Galata,[28] and also begin to appear in the late seventeenth-century court records of coastal towns as modest as Edremit.[29] These and other gatherings where participants were likely to spend their time discussing daily burdens as well as affairs of state and society, criticizing the great and disparaging the authorities, were always suspect, and periodically vulnerable to harsh repression.[30] Official discourse accused coffee-house goers of spreading rumours about state affairs, on which grounds the proprietors could see their establishments wrecked overnight.[31] In the 1630s, the first generation of Kadızadeli fundamentalists targeted coffee-houses and sufi convents alike; in 1662 they tried again to have all coffee-houses in the capital closed.[32] In the aftermath of the 1703 revolt, other measures were introduced. New taxes imposed on coffee in the first half of the eighteenth century, as well as more effective policing, including institutional changes after 1760 for detecting and punishing unruly behaviour, led coffee-house goers to turn to venues more in line with their social rank and status – hence the development from one to many kinds of coffee-house. Meanwhile, some coffee-house owners, accused of gathering the most despicable characters in their establishments and allowing them to commit shameful acts, continued to be severely punished.[33]

An already extensive secondary literature abounds in such examples. Yet it is clear that laws intended to prohibit coffee-shops were never enforced with any great degree of success in the medium and long term. Eventually, repression was always relaxed, whereupon new coffee-houses sprang up. One reason may have been that even the elite harboured tolerant as well as repressive attitudes. For example, in 1664, at the time of the second Kadızadeli wave, the celebrated Damascene sufi al-Nabulusi, mentioned above as appreciating Birgivî's work, used an ingenious trope in a poem praising the Prophet Muhammad – a cryptogram hiding the word for coffee. Shortly thereafter, he set out for Istanbul[34] but was not welcomed and had to turn back, probably because of the controversy his poems had triggered. He later claimed that singing and musical instruments were licit (1677), defended tobacco smoking (1682, 1698) and wrote in defence of the Mevlevi rite of the whirling dance (1685) and of male homosexual love.[35]

How court circles reacted to al-Nabulusi's writings remains to be studied. Earlier, two seventeenth-century *şeyhülislam*s clearly took an anti-repression stance. Zekeriyazade Yahya (1622–3, 1625–32, 1634–44) and Hocazade Bahai (1649–51, 1652–4) were both renowned for their allegorical poetry abounding in supposedly mystical

references to wine, feasts, taverns, cupbearers and beloveds. Yahya was overtly pro-sufi, while Bahai clashed with the Kadızadelis through his refusal to impose a tobacco ban. More obliquely, the works of prominent seventeenth-century literary figures such as Atayi, Nabi, Sabit, Veysi and Nergisi not only extol springtime, poetry, excursions and other pleasures – which hardly shows an ascetic, fanatical cast of mind – but also provide seemingly non-partisan yet subtly critical commentaries on contemporary social and political debates. Thus Nergisi, having relegated sufîs, Kadızadelis and riff-raff to coffee-houses, taverns or public gardens in provincial centres such as Elbasan and Saraybosna, presenting these as distant escapes, describes different types of men of religion: those who in their honesty and modesty mix and mingle with the common people, and those who are too proud and arrogant even to pass by a coffee-house, never mind exchange courtesies with their customers.[36] Ahmed III, brought up in the Kadızadeli circles, not only increased taxes on coffee, as noted earlier, but also tried occasionally to restrict coffee-houses, as well as street vendors and even public transportation, apparently out of a desire to limit public circulation of information. His protégé Nedim, however, wrote in very much the same vein as the earlier *müftü* poets Zekeriyazade Yahya and Hocazade Bahai.

Equally problematic was the sheer practical impossibility of banning something that many people enjoyed. Frequenting a coffee-shop was not in itself criminal. It did not entail intoxication or any masquerade or other form of behaviour at odds with normative conduct. In time, its liberating character, allowing for going out at night, and cutting across most social or religious boundaries, itself became a norm. But to what extent and when did the coffee-house become a fully fused, integrated, undivided public space? A well-known miniature painting, undated but generally attributed to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, showing an interior full of people reading, making music, or playing backgammon or mangala, also indicates the presence of judges, men of learning, or officials without a current post, along with commoners.[37] Hence Kafadar has suggested a 'democratization of hospitality' whereby dignitaries emerged from their secluded *selamlık*s to socialize in more mixed and visible coffee-house settings.[38]

Yet, on closer examination, this miniature seems subtly segregated into a series of sub-compartments, with musicians seated to one side, players in the foreground, young people in the middle of the room, and those who appear to be truly upper-class in a rear alcove of their own. This suggests that existing hierarchies could be carried over into the seemingly common setting of a crammed coffee-house.[39] Current research suggests that, even in the seventeenth century, coffee-house clienteles were specialized not only by district but also by profession, class, ethnic background or cultural interest, thereby coming not so much to cut across as to replicate social divides. A strong example, perhaps extreme, concerns the Janissaries.[40] Not only Istanbul but every provincial city had its contingent of Janissaries who over generations established their own closed community in a privileged neighbourhood. An Istanbul *kefalet defteri* (sureties register) for 1762 lists 122 coffee-shops in Galata alone, most of them frequented by Janissaries.[41] The register in question is itself a product of the new surveillance and policing measures that required artisans, shopkeepers and their employees to provide sponsors or guarantors. Instead of trying to ban outright, the authorities were beginning to look for ways of controlling the unruly. Thirty years later, a similar concentration of coffee-houses is found at Sipah Pazarı in Üsküdar.[42]

Direct involvement in politics produced particularly heated political discussion in the *yeniçeri kahvesi*. Judging by the decorative plaques and other memorabilia noted by late nineteenth-century observers, this distinctive identity survived long after the janissary order was suppressed in 1826.

Together with gradual social relaxation, a progressive gentrification is also apparent by 1800. While much work remains to be done on the architecture of coffee-houses and their locations throughout the city, it is clear that some were especially luxurious establishments.[43] In these, a spacious hall with high ceilings, delicately carved wood panels and wide windows that opened up to side rooms created a quality of semi-open space, further enhanced through centrally located interior fountains or pools as well as annexed courtyards or flower gardens.

Melling's engraving of a late eighteenth-century coffee-house in Tophane exemplifies several of these aspects (see figure 26.1). The attendants are noted in the text as Laz from the eastern Black Sea region. The customers sitting on benches running around the three outer sides of the central hall are identified by their headgear. At the upper end of the social scale, three are immediately identifiable as prominent men through their *selimî* turbans. Two others, carrying pen-cases, appear to be high-ranking bureaucrats, while a third (just entering from the right) is clearly an *ağa*, as indicated by the dagger in his sash. The first customer to the left is a Mevlevî smoking a water-pipe and conversing with one of the bureaucrats. Next come four sailors: two (probably an officer and a ship's clerk) are smoking pipes, while two are looking out of the window at the busy harbour. They are followed by two Armenians playing chess,
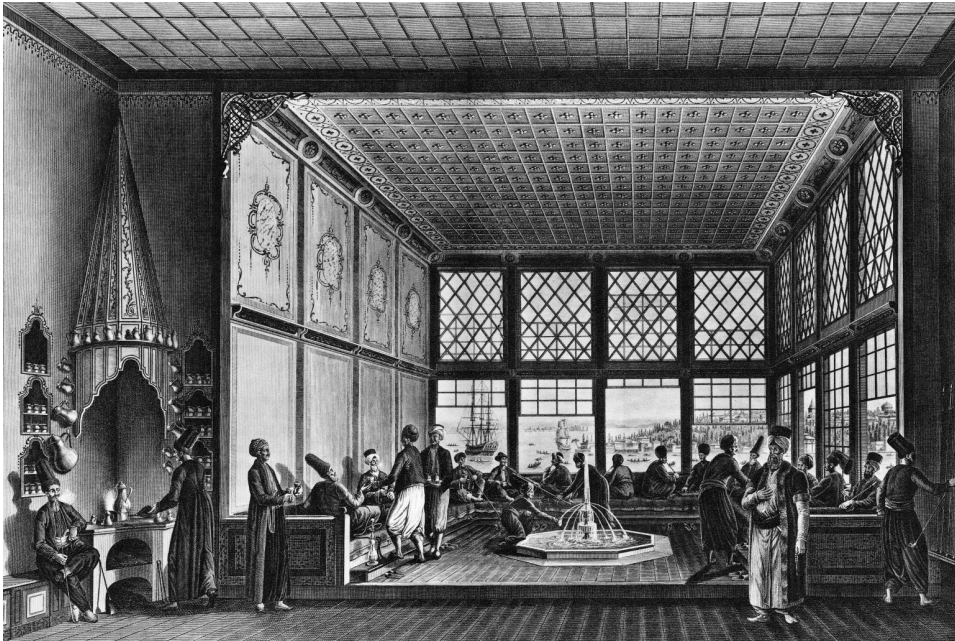

Figure 26.1 Engraving of a late eighteenth-century coffee-house in Tophane. Reproduced from Antoine-Ignace Melling, *Voyage pittoresque de Constantinople et des rives du Bosphore* (Paris, 1819).

with another Mevlevî dervish sitting next to them wearing a detached, disapproving expression. Also included are another sailor, a *bostancı* (with a baretta) and the second bureaucrat, who also wears a bored look.

Although some scholars have speculated that this might be a purely imaginary scene, this is very unlikely. Everything in Melling's work is based on empirical observation, with one proviso: nothing which he regards as unseemly – such as garbage, mud, dead birds, stray dogs, dilapidated houses or poor people – finds its way into his pictures. But neither does he add anything of his own imagination to create a beautified version of the real world. This engraving may not show a *typical* coffee-house but it is still an *actual* one, specially selected for its aesthetic values. Its architecture is not likely to have been invented, though it is perhaps accentuated. Melling depicts not an all-inclusive clientele but an open, cosmopolitan sub-community infused with a Nakşibendi–Müceddidi common denominator. In the years to come, artists such as Thomas Allom, William Henry Bartlett or Amadeo Preziosi would depict markers of politeness and refinement in similarly spacious, somewhat theatrical, yet sober and aestheticized coffee-houses in Istanbul, often located near the waterfront.

CIVILITY, WELL-BEING AND BOUNDARY TRANSGRESSION

In the early eighteenth century, and especially after the earthquake of May 1719, sea transport was improved and urban movement facilitated by rebuilding or upgrading piers and piazzas in the capital. Population increase and a new sensitivity towards public health led to a physical expansion reflected in new or reconstructed water-supply systems, including a growing number of fountains built or rebuilt, especially around landing-places. Perhaps resembling Renaissance sculpture in the round, such free-standing monumental fountains, as well as hamams and libraries, began to dominate the cityscape. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century public works were generally freed from the binding matrix of socio-religious complexes and situated in a novel urban context. Meant to be viewed from any angle, they invited motion all around them. In other major cities, too, such public fountains became objects of patronage by a new group of wealthy men and women.[44]

Access to new water sources also enabled an increase in the number of public baths in Istanbul. The provincial situation is unclear. Ibn Kannan records a similar growth of bath-building in Damascus at the beginning of the eighteenth century. But contemporary Cairo and Aleppo, which were considerably bigger than Damascus, did not have a proportionate number of bathing facilities.[45] Local custom, more than water or the supply of firewood, may have played a role in this. The presence or absence of pools, too, probably has to be explained by reference to legal teachings and practice.[46] Most schools of Islamic law held that water became impure through contact with an unclean body or vessel. To this, Malikis were the sole exception, which is consistent with the finding that, unlike Middle Eastern cities (and Cairo in particular), Istanbul's Ottoman baths never had plunge pools where people socialized and often transgressed on boundaries (see figure 26.2a). Even so, in 1768 Mustafa III issued a decree which forbade the building of new public baths in the capital. The pretext was to limit the consumption of water as well as of firewood.[47] It is around this time that private
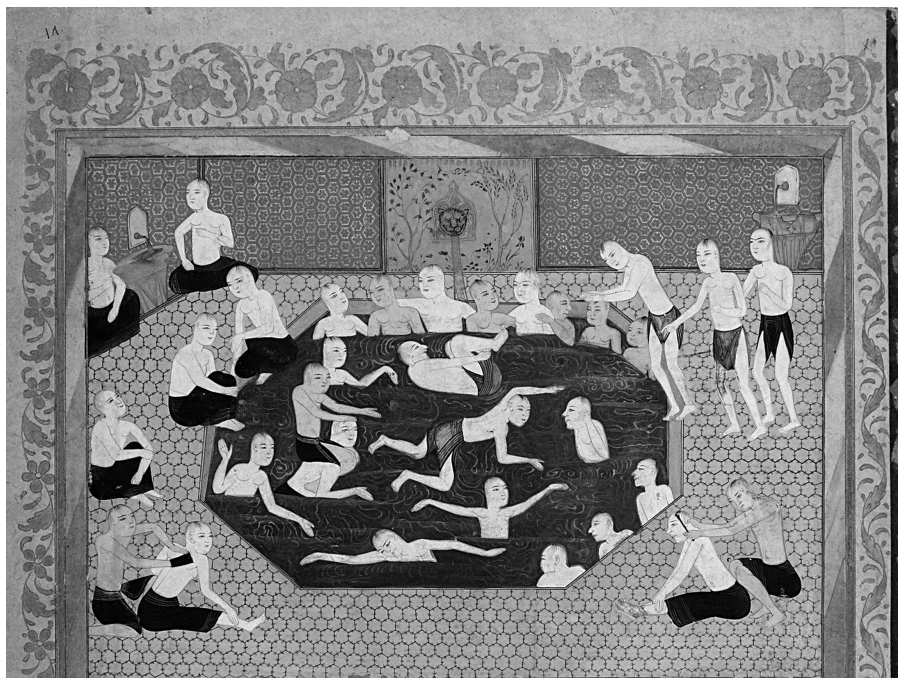
Figure 26.2a   A plunge pool: Ahmed I Album, Topkapı Palace Library B, 408, folio 18a.

bathing facilities became more commonly available. Especially in the newly growing neighbourhoods along the shores of the Bosphorus, in-house bathing was a marker of wealth and the desire for comfort and civility – but, for fun and sociability, even the most privileged continued to visit the public hamams. Whether there was also an attempt to gentrify the hamams is a question for the future.

In any case, baths offered both practical hygiene and sacred cleansing, which aimed to remove invisible dirt from a symbolically constructed body. Throughout the year numerous festive rituals would be staged in the hamams. Their centrally domed main halls also served as public forums. From the disrobing chamber to the tepid and hot chambers, there were many opportunities to mix and mingle, but news was exchanged especially around the marble platforms on which one could recline and receive an attendant's massage. The male quarters of hamams were especially busy on Thursday nights, with what was said and heard at the neighbourhood hamam being spread the next day among larger masses gathered in mosque courtyards for the Friday noon prayer.

In principle, most baths were open to all. But how was it in practice? Patrona Halil, the leader of the 1730 revolt, is said to have been a sailor-turned-attendant of the Bayezid hamam,[48] which according to Evliya Çelebi, writing half a century earlier, was 'allocated' to holy men (*veli*). Evliya also proposes connections between other hamams and specific groups. He associates the sick with the public bath at Eyüb, thieves with the Çengelköy hamam, the insane with Alaca hamam, atheists with Büyük Çukur hamam, and drunkards with the Tarabya hamam.[49] The list is extensive and includes people from many walks of life. At least some, maybe even much, of this may be satiri-

cally intended. Nevertheless, Evliya's claim that members of the learned class, palace attendants, artists and artisans, merchants or unruly elements of the lower classes met at the hamam of their choice suggests that (as, perhaps, with coffee-houses) public baths served as classified clubs. The names of some provincial hamams – Yahudi (for Jews), Paşa (for high dignitaries), Kadınlar (for women), Pazar (marketplace), Tuzcı (for salt-mongers) – also attest to special clienteles differentiated along gender, professional, class or congregational lines.[50] Non-Muslims often frequented their neighbourhood hamams – hence Rum Hamamı in Kütahya or Ermeni Batağı in Istanbul. Even then, some amount of mixing and mingling was inevitable.

In 1718 Lady Mary Wortley Montagu estimated that there were two hundred women in the hamam she visited in Edirne: ''tis the women's coffee-house, where all the news of the town is told, scandal invented, etc. They generally take this diversion once a week, and stay there at least four or five hours.'[51] Women who hardly left their houses otherwise were able to socialize at hamams with their peers, and sometimes with women not from their immediate social circle. Conversations extended from local news, such as wealth and poverty, circumcisions, marriage arrangements, sickness

Figure 26.2b   Women in a hamam, from Fazıl Enderûnî's *Hūbannâme ve Zenannâme*, Istanbul University T 5502, folio 145a. Reproduced from Metin And, *Osmanlı tasvir sanatları I: minyatür* (Istanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2002), 460.

and recovery, to more public gossip concerning promotions or dismissals. They sometimes feasted and made merry, dancing to music. The *Zenânnâme* (Book of Women) by the libertine poet Fazıl Enderuni (d. 1811), features a hamam scene showing a group of naked women and one conspicuously dressed woman, perhaps included to indicate the distinguished status of the bathers (see figure 26.2b). After all, it was a forum where the regulars followed correct bathing etiquette, with elaborate bathing equipment.

In contrast, urban baths and barber-shops were often associated with a wide range of criminal activity, ranging from theft, drunkenness and prostitution (operated out of back or upper rooms) to inner-city violence. Communities developed methods for policing themselves from within. Among the measures taken were the banning of decorative pictures displaying private body parts hung on the walls of hamams and of the long-standing practice of the washers giving a rubdown.[52] The stokeholes (*külhan*) of neighbourhood hamams were run by men sentenced to forced labour, often led by a bully character known as *külhanbeyi* (chief stoker). As with Anatolian *celali*s on a much larger scale, this local tough was allowed a certain authority in return for maintaining order in the neighbourhood.[53] Stokeholes also provided food, shelter, warmth and discipline for young orphans, tramps or potential riff-raff. Functioning as a mendicant order, the youngsters left the *külhan* everyday to beg for alms and food; the latter was cooked by the *külhanbeyi* and consumed communally.[54] As such, stokeholes became a kind of rehabilitation centre for drifters and the homeless, both Muslim and non-Muslim, while in times of unrest it was through them that social discontent spread, to the point of causing upheaval.

The Ottoman barber, shaving heads and trimming beards, was part of the cleaning process. Many also excelled in dental care, administered circumcision, applied leeches for bloodletting and vacuum cups for congestion relief; some became famous as herbalists.[55] As they competed with (overwhelmingly non-Muslim) certified practitioners, such barber shops were often shut down. Women working as physicians, surgeons and midwives visited their patients at home, while in Cairo some even had their own shops.[56] There were also female healers (mostly sufis) as well as magicians, astrologers and geomancers. Travellers' accounts confirm that female physicians and others did not provide medical care merely for women.[57] Most of them also served across religious divides. Meanwhile, increasing surveillance over physicians' shops in Edirne and Istanbul in the eighteenth century seems to suggest that the authorities also felt challenged by a new group of (European) health providers and their unconventional prescriptions.[58]

Some barber-shops were closed down on grounds of being used for sexual trysts. More generally, they were also centres for information and gossip. The barber and sufî Ahmad al-Budayri al-Hallaq compiled a detailed account of life in mid-eighteenth-century Damascus. Written in the name of the small people (*al-asagir*) and commoners (*al-ʿawamm*) as opposed to the big people (*al-akabir*), it is fraught with anxiety. Not only are the governors corrupt, the soldiers unruly, prices high, and public morality undermined by the decline in government authority, but also the incessant deaths, murders, suicides, natural disasters, uprisings and prostitutes all point to a stressed and distressed society. Al-Budayri here represents the voice of the common people raised aloud in an apocalyptic prophecy about imminent devastation in uncertain times.[59]

EATING OUT, INDULGING AND MORAL ANXIETIES

It has been argued that 'a considerable part of [the] condition of disorder' portrayed by al-Budayrî was what he viewed as 'transgressions of social codes by certain groups, whose violations he may have seen as infringements on his own few privileges as a Muslim male'. Included among such new social vogues were 'women going out on picnics and smoking in public [in Damascus], or Jews sitting on stools higher than those of Muslims in a coffeehouse'.[60]

In Ottoman Egypt, women in the marketplace were blamed for being more visible than their male counterparts. Similar concerns are evident in Istanbul. Solidarity within local quarters was crucial as a means of filling the intermediate gap or vacuum between authority and social interaction. Here, *kefalet* (standing surety for each other's behaviour) emerged as a form of collective responsibility.[61] Marcus has argued that Ottoman coercion from above was the motivating factor in community policing efforts in Aleppo. Rafeq, in contrast, has interpreted breaches of moral conduct in Damascus as characterizing a weak administration, which only periodically attempted to enforce law and order.[62] Both the 1762 and 1792 *kefalet* registers for Istanbul list all the traders and shopkeepers who were required to guarantee each other's behaviour, including the many *külhan*s providing shelter for homeless adults, porters, farm labourers or carpenters, including non-Muslims.[63] Needy women, too, found many opportunities in a variety of economic activities.[64]

Uprooted from their villages, a large portion of the urban workforce was sheltered and fed in the marketplace. The 1762 register, already mentioned for the evidence it provides on coffee-houses, enumerates several kinds of places for eating out, such as the *kebabcı, aşcı, cevrenci, hoşabcı, şerbetci* or *helvacı*. Particularly noteworthy are shops that attest to the sweet tooth of Ottoman society: *muhallebici, aşureci, salebci, kadayıfcı* and *şekerci*. At Üsküdar's Sipah Pazarı in 1792, nearly fifty *koltukçu*s (makeshift food shops with low stools to sit on) appear to have been situated right next to one another. The *sicil*s of Üsküdar and Yeniköy show more landings on the Bosphorus crowded with food- and cook-shops of all kinds.[65] In addition to the public kitchens of socio-religious complexes or sufî convents, as well as the inns, taverns and shops (*kebabcı*s and *aşcı*s) that catered mainly to the urban poor and labourers, there were specialized bakeries (*gözlemeci*s, *börekci*s, *çörekci*s and *simitci*s), at some of which one might even be seated for lunch.[66] Some were famous for the quality of their food. Even such a great and most refined dignitary as the grand vezir Nevşehirli İbrahim Paşa (in office 1718–30) routinely ordered pastries or offal from street kitchens.[67] Eating out was similarly popular in Baghdad, especially in the evenings in the wine-houses and taverns located along the banks of the Tigris, and among middle-class or upper middle-class families.[68]

In Cairo, in contrast, it was the poor and lower classes who frequently did not cook at home. But (at least until the sixteenth-century appearance of coffee-houses) neither did they eat out as a leisurely activity. Instead, and despite the poor to mediocre quality, they resorted to cook-shops or street-vendors for takeaways.[69] Evliya, who was among those surprised to see large numbers of women in this line of business in Cairo, often touches upon the culinary habits of the towns and cities that he visited, including Bursa, Kütahya and Belgrade. He also reported from the capital that 'at night many poor people assemble in the shops and eat tripe or trotter soup in order to

recover from heavy drinking' (see figure 26.3).[70] In times when kitchens were yet to be built into houses, such food shops offering only basic fare served as regular meeting places for local artisans and workers, old acquaintances and long-time residents of a neighbourhood, as well as for recent arrivals, sailors and merchants. Hence, too, they all provided opportunity to gather, to give and to get information, and to discuss religious or current affairs. Eating out often introduced into urban life new possibilities for, and increased anxieties about, social interaction.

Around the capital's eateries were some of the places where intoxicating substances could be consumed publicly (*duhani*, *çubukcu*, *bozacı*). Occasionally, tailors, grocers or barber-shops would be annexed to certain coffee- or tobacco-houses (or vice versa). Addicts sought opium, cannabis or other stimulating mixtures (*beng*, *berş*, *ma'cun*), pushers of which worked from the hamams.[71] Alehouses or taverns selling *boza* and even alcoholic drinks offered entertainment, feasting and drinking, music and dance, noisy merriment, costume and spectacle, plays and other performances. This world of upside-down behaviour contrasted sharply with the outward norms of everyday life.[72]

Istanbul in the eighteenth century was marked by moral anxieties, deeper than usual signs of change, conflict and discord. Military setbacks, economic disruption, and s

Figure 26.3   Tavern scene from Fazıl Enderûnî's *Hūbannâme* ve *Zenannâme*, Istanbul University Library, T 5502, folio 41a. Reproduced from Metin And, *Osmanlı tasvir sanatları I: minyatür* (Istanbul, İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2002), 382.

carcity and famine in the countryside combined with population increase to bring unemployment and poverty. Increased social mobility exacerbated problems of hygiene, provisioning and security. The migration of young and single, landless but armed men to the capital led to violent crimes, including arson, armed robbery, assault, rape and murder by day and night, in the streets as well as in gardens and vineyards. It is in this context that sexual licentiousness is said to have risen, as well as attempts to control it. For example, during the 1790s there is a curious jump in the number of reported cases of licentious activity by *kalyoncu*s residing at the bachelors' rooms at Üsküdar's Balaban İskelesi. In 1791, there was a public furore over the closing of all taverns, and the persecution of prostitutes and drunkards in the capital, which was said to have been triggered by a dream dreamt by a renowned Nakşi–Müceddidi sheikh from Turhal, a certain Mustafa Efendi, said to be a disciple of al-Muradi (of Damascus).[73] Thereafter, in addition to patrols in various disreputable districts, Jewish apartments or neighbourhoods and bachelors' rooms were routinely demolished.[74] Determined to clear Istanbul of all prostitutes, Selim III reissued dress regulations and banned Muslim women from boarding non-Muslim boats, or any boats in the company of men.[75]

Evidence for the complexity of social-sexual attitudes appears in a late eighteenth-century *bahnâme*, an Ottoman book of pornography. It depicts a 'members-only private club' where, in the comfortable *à la mode* interiors of an elite brothel, numerous young men are shown enjoying sex fantasies (see figure 26.4).[76] What is fascinating is that, as in Melling's Tophane coffee-house, they are all wearing characteristic, identifying headgear, ranging from the red berets of the *Nizâm-ı Cedid* to turbans typical of various bureaucrats, including the Mevlevî order. The careful depiction of headgear
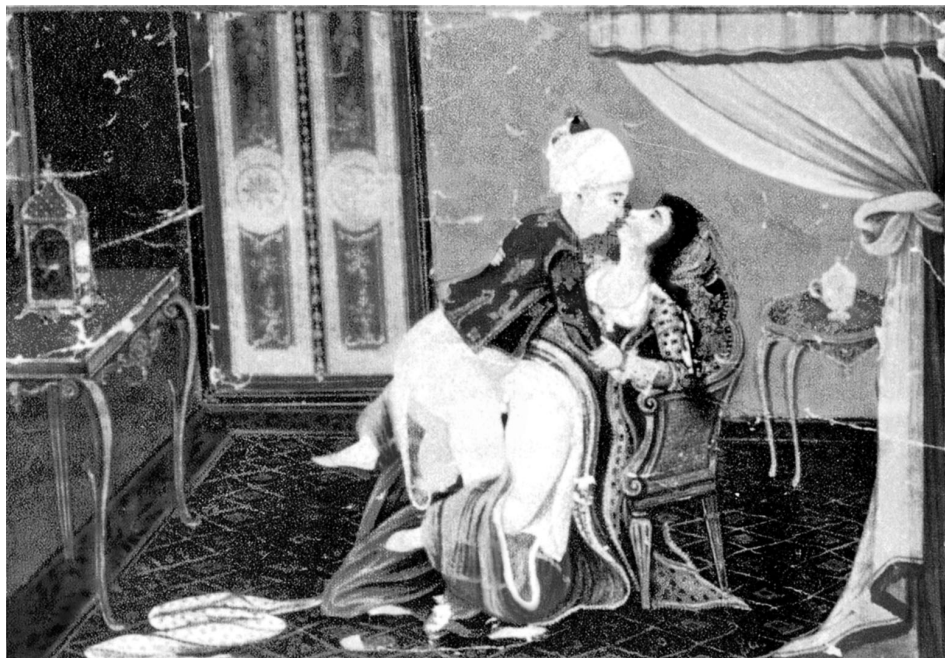

Figure 26.4　A brothel from the 1790s. Private collection.

seems to suggest that the miniatures in this *bahnâme* might have been intended as social criticism, as an exposure of decadence cutting across virtually the entire elite.

For men of status, such establishments may have served as second homes where they could relax and socialize with friends over coffee or other stimulants. Unfortunately, neither such elite men's clubs nor their lower-status equivalents are adequately described in narrative or archival sources. Not only those establishments referred to as *koltukçu*s, meaning clandestine, transient and low-class eateries, taverns or coffeehouses, but also the *ehl-i keyf*, the reckless hedonists in high circles, elude documentation except in poetry. As for 'women of pleasure', records provide their names, the punishments to which they were occasionally subjected, and the cyclical routine of official intimidation, provincial exile and quick return which they seem to have repeatedly endured. One contemporary document, a rare register of the personal belongings of imprisoned prostitutes, lists objects of considerable value (some of European origin), which may indicate that, like the *bahnâme* ladies, these particular women were not ordinary street-walkers.[77]

Never entirely legalized but always surviving in a twilight zone, prostitution was strictly banned in the vicinity of mosques. However, bachelors' rooms, taverns, hamams, coffee-houses and barber-shops, all located at the heart of residential neighbourhoods, served to varying degrees as secondary homes of (male or female) prostitution. Many lower-class prostitutes probably worked from their homes.[78] Public consumption of intoxicating substances and alcohol was seen as paralleling their overt sexuality. Ahmad al-Budayrî, the barber and storyteller, describes the prostitutes of Damascus in the 1740s as having a very noticeable presence, smoking and drinking coffee in public.[79] Mikhail al-Burayk, a contemporary Orthodox monk, also describes how Christian women in the same city, deceived by the devil, dressed provocatively and drank araq at public picnics: 'there is no evil nor any oppression for which women are not its cause'.[80]

Following the enthronement of Selim III, many of Istanbul's prostitutes were imprisoned or exiled to nearby Bursa, Iznik or some Aegean island. However, many returned to Istanbul, and in some cases the available documentation refers to the same women again and again. Because of the requirement for four suitable witnesses – adult male Muslims of good reputation – to testify to having seen the offenders *in flagrante delicto*, execution was rare.[81] Men, however, were lightly punished, probably because prostitutes' or brothels' customers were often members of the military-bureaucracy or even the *ulema*.

Unsurprisingly, some of those who tried to rid the public sphere of prostitution had vices of their own. The number of *medrese* students, mollas, imams or priests busted in the act at *medrese*s or mosques reveals the extent of 'sin' and 'sinners' in all-male circles, but the punishment for same-sex intercourse was 'in most cases left undetermined'.[82] Some were even busted at their homes. A period miniature, showing annoyed neighbours busting a house of sinners, suggests a certain 'quarter solidarity' (see figure 26.5). Rafeq refers to such groups policing city quarters in Damascus; Semerdjian has demonstrated how, in Aleppo, local communities, not the state, policed crimes involving women.[83]

The discrepancy between actual practice and the moral ideals set by theological works is also revealed in Ben-Naeh's study of Hebrew sources from Damascus, Jerusalem, Izmir, Salonica and Istanbul. These show a late eighteenth-century increase
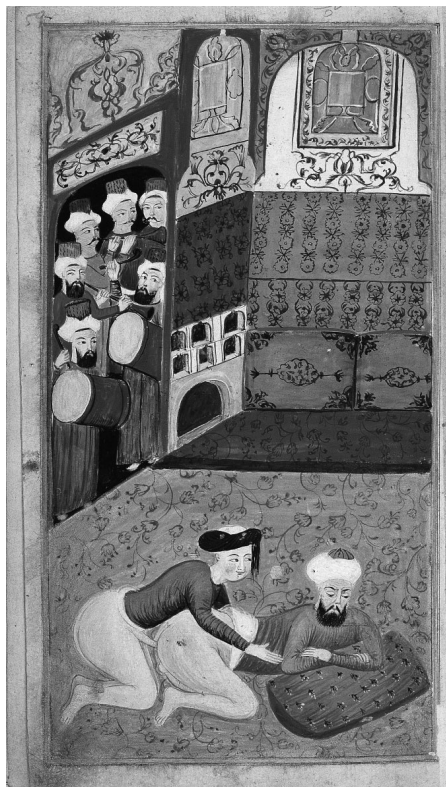
Figure 26.5   Neighbours busting a house of sinners, from Nevizâde Atayî's *Hamse*,
Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum Library no. 1969, folio 59a.

in the frequency of same-sex activity. Ben-Naeh initially proposed two explanations: first, the possibility of a genuine increase in the frequency of such cases as part of a growing breakdown of the boundaries of Jewish law and morality; second, the increase in the *reporting* of such events as an expression of a public reaction to changes in state and society, in response to a growing sense of too much freedom and a breakdown of tradition. He concludes that there was 'an attempt to re-determine and redefine the limits of what was permitted and what was forbidden'.[84]

ROYAL GARDENS AND PUBLIC OUTINGS

Ambiguities also surround yet another form of public space in the making. Istanbul's royal gardens are said to have become public gardens during the eighteenth century by being opened to the public, and thereby to have provided yet another venue for increased urban mobility and social interaction, even allowing for women to mix with men.[85]

As the court resettled in Istanbul in 1703 after a long sojourn in Edirne, and again after the 1719 earthquake, there were bursts of new construction, involving especially a new splendour of summer palaces and kiosks located in spacious gardens on the

shores of the Bosphorus and along the Golden Horn as far as the meadows upstream from where the Sweet Waters of Europe (the Kağıdhane stream) ran into the inlet. These waves of (re)building certainly went hand in hand with enhanced use of outdoor space. The Sa'dabad summer palace functioned as a stage for many royal parties designed to project dynastic grandeur in the presence and with the participation (and for the benefit) of the administrative elite, leading dignitaries and courtiers.

This complex represented a different concept from the suburban gardens and kiosks of earlier centuries, to which sultans had retreated to seek seclusion and meditation, and which had served to enhance the mysteries of a relatively less visible sultanate. In contrast, royal grandeur was very much on display at Sa'dabad (or elsewhere on the waterfronts), as the inhabitants of the early eighteenth-century capital were called upon to recollect, re-embrace and cherish the dynasty. The court wanted to become visible while still remaining a marvel admired from a distance. Palace walls no longer signalled exclusion and secrecy, but were meant both to reveal and to maintain social and cultural boundaries. Royal hunting parties, which had once served to showcase physical strength, well-being and quasi-martial valour, fell into neglect and were replaced by carefully designed urban spectacles.[86] This festive attitude seems to have been replicated by the upper classes in major Balkan and Middle Eastern cities, particularly Cairo, Aleppo or Damascus, all of which certainly aspired to things *Istanbullu*, but which also developed at their own pace and perhaps under different local dynamics.[87]

However, these 'new' gardens cannot be described as just 'becoming public'. Throughout the eighteenth century, the hills, open fields, meadows, vineyards, orchards and gardens, often surrounding royal palaces in Istanbul, were separated from imperial *vakıf* lands, and a new, very complicated system of ownership based on secondary or tertiary rights developed. It was a process which ended some traditional rights, such as mowing meadows for hay, or grazing livestock on land which was legally owned by the sultan and partially endowed to beneficiaries such as royal family members and dignitaries. Gradually their tenants, and the tenants of tenants, came to claim full property rights. We still know very little about this process, which was part of a complex phenomenon, one connected with other questions related to the supposed emergence of women into (supposedly fully) public space, and often complicated by sometimes thinly disguised conflicts between what was happening at the dynastic level, or among the courtly elite, and a much more subterranean sphere of popular beliefs and practices.

Such ambiguities involving both gardens and women (or gender and sexuality) may be traced back to the early seventeenth century, to the Ottoman culture of leisure outings and their connection with meditation and melancholy.[88] Evliya Çelebi provides a virtually encyclopaedic entry on Istanbul's gardens in the 1630s, noting the special significance for the sultan of those at Kasımpaşa and Beşiktaş, and commenting on the non-royal gardens at Salacak and Şemsi Paşa in Üsküdar, where, he says, beauties swam and lovers enjoyed boat rides. He informs us that outings (*teferrüc*) were made not only by the privileged to locations with kiosks, pools and fountains where they could enjoy hunting parties, horse races, polo, wrestling, archery or sight-seeing. Outings to the woods and meadows, or to any places of excursion (*teferrücgah*) outside the city, were also enjoyed by commoners. The Kağıdhane meadows had long been considered both as a royal garden or paradise (*has bahçe*, *irem bağı*) and as a commons (e.g., *mesire [gah]* or *nüzhetgah*). A terminology of 'gazing' (the Arabic *haddaka*),[89] from *hadika* to

temaşagah or *seyrangah*, strongly suggests that leisure and recreation mostly entailed stationary observation, contemplation or reflection on nature, as opposed to gazing at others or being gazed upon oneself. The meadows of Kağıdhane, blooming with tulips, were, Evliya emphasizes, meant to be viewed from a distance and probably served as a model for other gardens.[90] He uses no special term for a park or public promenade, which suggests that strolling did not come into this.[91] Meanwhile, not only the royal gardens in Edirne and Bursa but also distant ones such as the *hadika-i sultaniye* in Aleppo, in the vicinity of Gökmeydan, were closely monitored from Istanbul.[92]

Domestic crowding and its stifling impact on the individual also seems to have led many city-dwellers to seek solitude outdoors (see figure 26.6). In open spaces, including graveyards, one could enjoy tranquillity and seclusion. The countryside provided relief from physical problems and pain, reduced psychological stress, and strengthened a sense of well-being. Indeed, a recent study on Ottoman medicine highlights the concept of 'therapeutic landscape'.[93] Retreat and meditation, and other forms of withdrawal, evasion or escape, were also part of religious practice.[94] Sufî dervishes as well as

Figure 26.6   Dervishes in a forest on the Asian side of the Bosphorus (detail from a larger panorama). Oil on canvas, 204 × 443 cm. Orientalist Museum, Doha, Qatar, OM 39.

commoners in poor physical or psychological health found refuge in thick groves and meadows, in coming close to nature. Holy springs, fountains and pools were believed to add to the healing qualities of the scenery. The countryside also attracted anti-social brotherhoods or orders which turned their backs on society. Watenpaugh defines wilderness as the domain of the antinomian saint.[95]

Severe depression, or melancholy, appears frequently in biographical accounts of voluntary seclusion, or of wandering in search of peace. In Atayi's *Heft-han*, the friends of a maddened lover suggest that he visit the Göksu meadows, or alternatively the Kaba, the tomb of Karaca Ahmed, or the shrines of Sarı Saltuk Baba or Kızıl Deli Sultan.[96] However, withdrawals from society were not absolute. The Damascene mystic and jurist al-Nabulusi joined friends on numerous outings to gardens on the outskirts of his city during his seven-year retreat (1679–86). These gatherings, undertaken especially 'in the rose season', lasted for days, with the parties engaged in literary competitions.[97] It should be noted that the ostensible cause for al-Nabulusi's retreat was the harrassment he suffered for his defence of male love, including the practice of *nazar* (gazing) at handsome young men.[98]

INCREASED VISIBILITY FOR WOMEN?

In such garden settings some poets found inspiration to write about imaginary encounters between the sexes, while others made more mundane observations. These, together with the observations of contemporary European women travellers (increasing substantially at this time), have been subject to a variety of interpretations, including that of eighteenth-century Ottoman 'reform' necessarily extending to social matters and the status of women.

Much generalization has been based on visual evidence, which certainly offers significant clues to Ottoman socio-cultural developments. Consider, for example, the work of Jean-Baptiste Vanmour, an artist from Valenciennes who lived and worked in Istanbul between 1699 and 1737. One of his pictures shows a group of men and obviously loose women (with rather exposed bosoms) at a wine party, eating and drinking to musical accompaniment. The setting is a hilltop, possibly overlooking the Bosphorus. Sinister-looking guards are seated a short distance away from the group, enjoying their pipes.[99] Vanmour painted many such scenes, even depicting Ahmed III in the company of licentious females. However, when he chose to portray honourable women, the artist distinctly emphasized their social rank. A second work depicts an outing of the French ambassadress. The genteel ladies are highlighted in bright, cheerful colours, whereas those who prepare or serve food and drink, or who play music and dance, are left in the shadows, together with a few men who appear to be guards. In a third example, chaste and righteous middle-class women, veiled and dressed in sober gowns and accompanied by their children, are shown apart from other women wearing fashionable low-cut dresses, smoking and enjoying a leisurely time. In both paintings the setting is probably near the Sweet Waters of Europe at the far end of the Golden Horn. At first sight, the last scene suggests even more explicitly a clash of two social classes or cultures. However, Vanmour has women on both sides of the painting look up at a naked female figure in the sky, a hazy apparition recalling the Indian goddess Shiva. This was perhaps intended as a warning against immoral behaviour (see figure 26.7).

Figure 26.7   Women looking up at a female figure in the sky, by Jean-Baptiste Vanmour.
Oil on canvas, 44 × 58 cm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, SK-A-2006.

Vanmour's Ottoman contemporaries Musavvir Hüseyin, Levnî, İbrahim and Abdullah Buharî also painted 'sexy' women.[100] Early eighteenth-century representations of elite ladies imagined them predominantly as objects of sensual pleasure, picnicking leisurely on the Bosphorus, or enjoying swings, music, dance, food or fishing in the privacy of their gardens (see figure 26.8). Depictions of women from the 1790s show them in communal baths, giving birth in the privacy of their apartments, or as sex objects in brothels. In this corpus of miniatures, same-sex love and even sodomy also appear, as social criticism directed at the upper classes who indulge in wilful and decadent behaviour. Visual erotica featuring both men and women become significantly more plentiful from the early eighteenth century onwards.[101]

There can be no doubt that such miniatures were made for elite consumption, but the status of the women they portray must be separately explored. Middle-class women are depicted in a variety of public and private situations – filing for divorce before a law court, entertaining guests in their gardens, making love, or catching a husband coupling with a servant at home.[102] The view that the organized spectacles of Ahmed III's court were 'deliberate attempts to foster a climate of sexual immorality' derives largely from Şemdanizâde's personal prejudices.[103] This misogynist chronicler appears to have developed a specific hatred for Nevşehirli Ibrahim Paşa, the grand vezir who masterminded the capital's princely entertainments in the 1720s.
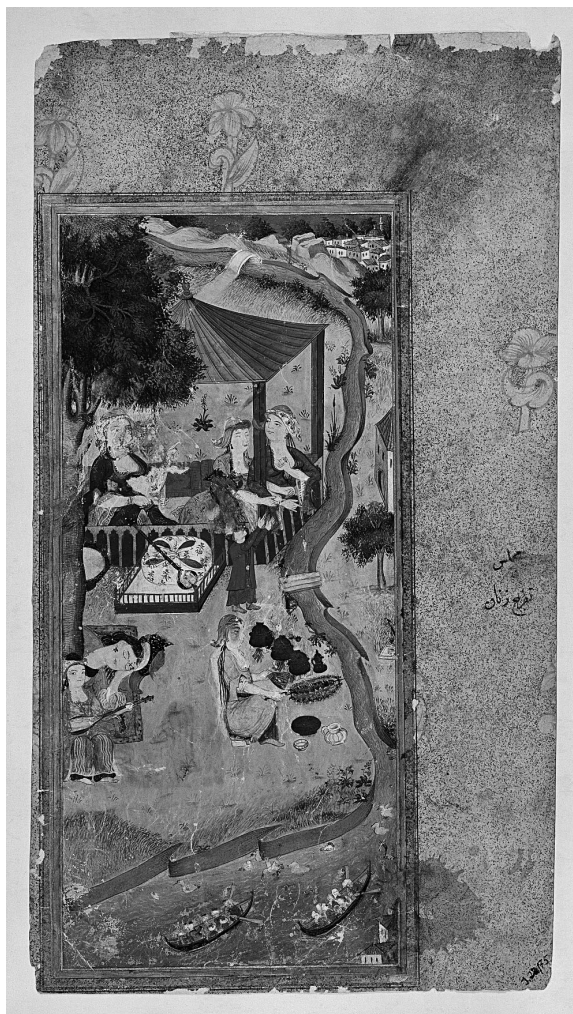
Figure 26.8   Ladies picnicking leisurely on the Bosphorus. Miniature painting, 32 × 17 cm.
Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz
env. no. J 28/75, pl. 4302. Photo © bpk / Museum für Islamische Kunst, SMB /
Georg Niedermeiser.

Neither art nor literature reflects social reality in a direct, photographic way. In fact, the two can be hugely divergent. When describing the private gardens and public parks of Damascus, al-Nabulusi highlights a social elite comprising members of notable families, government officials and eminent scholars. Although his memoirs testify to the total absence of women from those outings where sophisticated poetry exchanges outshone all other activities, his *divan* (collected poems) nevertheless abounds in references to female beauty on such occasions – i.e., not to women themselves but to the idea of them. Akkach argues that it was the very absence of women in social circles which 'was compensated by the romantic elegies and love poetry that often mapped

the feminine virtues of the beloved over the landscape. The appreciation of nature's beauty was thus mediated by poetic imageries celebrating femininity.'[104]

The celebrated court poet Nedim (1681–1730), a near-contemporary of al-Nabulusi in Istanbul, described regular princely gatherings in which he participated. His poems have regularly been taken as testimony to a 'spectacle of urban life' where, among other developments of the so-called Tulip Age, women of lesser fortune, too, are believed to have figured favourably.[105] Sılay has convincingly illustrated Nedim's radical changes in literary expression and his use of realistic images and metaphors; he has also dwelt on Nedim's blatantly homoerotic poems. But with regard to Nedim's cultural milieu, Sılay does not challenge the myths of the Ottoman eighteenth century and the related assumptions of increased female visibility.[106] His study of Nedim is illustrated with anachronistic visuals, including a 1793 miniature depicting noble women at the royal Sa'dâbâd complex on the Kağıdhane meadows, and other depictions of ladies taken from Fazıl Enderuni's *Zenanname*.[107] The association of such images is problematic. Not only was Fazıl an eccentric who was notorious for displaying socially unacceptable forms of behaviour,[108] but the late eighteenth-century illustrations of sensual women in his book were meant to portray a romanticized, not a realistic, view of public life in the 1720s, at least three-quarters of a century earlier.[109]

Women certainly did add some glitter to the portrayal of the new money, the new elite, and the new aspirations for an enhanced visibility associated with the eighteenth century. However, some revisions are due. First, the time-frame for cultural openings for women, allowing them to be seen in public space, together with men, needs elucidation.[110] Exactly when and how did this happen? The 1793 *Zenânnâme* miniature is the single Ottoman painting (in two versions) which has been repeatedly used as standard evidence for the 'opening up' of royal gardens to the public, and hence also for the 'emancipation' of women. Nineteenth-century European engravings depict more women in the open. Both genres are mis- or over-represented in the secondary literature to postulate an early eighteenth-century advance towards the partial emancipation of women.[111]

Secondly, a more nuanced understanding of social differentiation along class lines, particularly the position of women of the urban bourgeoisie and the urban poor, would help avoid the generalizations of simple classification into high, middle and lower social groups. Who were these women and in which public spaces (other than royal gardens) did they socialize? Ottoman society was class-conscious, and the preservation of social boundaries was of utmost importance. At Sa'dâbâd, initially a private resort of the sultan and a select group of dignitaries, even in the 1790s, when the *Zenânnâme* miniature was painted, the ladies portrayed sitting and relaxing were not representative of Istanbul women at large; they were the prosperous few who lived within the palace walls.

Thirdly, the extent of such outings, and the nature of contact between men and women, all need clarification in time and space. What circumstances, if any, point to emancipation as against a strictly controlled way of socializing? Artists were always careful to observe and indicate the barriers separating the *'amma* and *hassa* from the private realm of the ladies. They depicted women sitting on verdant lawns, gathering in small groups, and relaxing or dancing, but not strolling around or mixing with non-family members of the opposite sex. Outdoor clothing styles did become less restrictive and cumbersome, but women of status were never dressed up in practical fitted

garments, such as the riding coats of their European counterparts, which would have allowed them to move and act.

The increased and apparently unconventional representation of Istanbul women may well be explained not by the liberation of women themselves, but by the gradual liberation of local artists from court patronage.[112] Western artists, too, seem to have incorporated absentee women into their landscapes in order to satisfy the curiosity of their customers. Poetic accounts, expounding on lush greens, shades, flowers, pools and streams, and cool breezes have also been much used in this regard. But they pose many questions when no distinction is made between the real and the imagined.[113] All in all, it is difficult to accept that women's public presence was characteristic of the 1700s, instead of being very embryonic compared with developments in the *tanzimat* era.

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as attested by period *fetva*s, preachers kept denouncing women. Regulatory scriptures, from Birgivî to the Kadızadelis and others, banned them from leaving their homes – even to visit cemeteries. The position of late eighteenth-century Nakşi–Müceddidi reformists vis-à-vis the status of women appears even more complex, and virtually impossible to classify as pro-emancipation. Open expressions of sexuality in the courtly arts, and the shift from idealistic to realistic depictions of nature – regarded as transgressions against or departures from the artistic as well as from the religious canon – have been interpreted by some authors as a longing for secularization.[114] But, all along, men and women, Muslim and non-Muslim, sufi or orthodox, were often (and harshly) blamed for transgressing the barriers of profession, rank or status and for mixing in unacceptable ways. Like his immediate predecessors, Selim III enforced clothing laws by prohibiting sumptuous materials and daring, provocative designs in women's clothing.[115] He also banned free movement of women in general.[116] Scholars have tended to interpret efforts to control clothing as targeting ostentation and extravagance or conspicuous consumption (on the basis of Islamic teachings prohibiting wasteful expenditure). However, Quataert has argued that

> the clothing laws sought to assure Ottoman subjects and elites that the world was still an orderly place in which all retained their respective political and social positions. They worked to reinforce the existing social markers, stressing control of men over women, Muslims over non-Muslims, and elites over subject classes.[117]

Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century clothing laws had addressed violations by non-Muslims. In the eighteenth century the focus was on Muslims who dressed in European fashion, or on those of lower status who tried to dress like the higher classes.[118] After 1703, the need to re-establish dynastic continuity and to redefine the imperial image in Istanbul meant that expressions of the religious and social identities of Ottoman subjects needed to be carefully monitored. Hence, it was not a breakdown of boundaries but, on the contrary, a series of new regulations, whether in the form of palace protocol or clothing laws, which was at issue.

Finally, while there was a genuine increase in visual representation not just of any women, but of distinguished ladies in the early eighteenth century, this cannot by itself be taken to mean that they were beginning to participate (and were coming to be illustrated as participating) in princely events only at this time. Neither does it indicate

that their appearance in male company was always depicted in purely realistic terms – that is to say, without making any moral statements. Among all seventeenth-century sultans, Ahmed I (1603–17) and Mehmed IV (1648–87) had the highest hunting reputations. Both were known to have been accompanied by royal ladies not only during their local hunting parties in the royal gardens of Istanbul but also on their most ardous expeditions in the wild. Furthermore, it is out of early seventeenth-century depictions of hunting banquets that a whole iconography of outdoor entertainment develops in Ottoman painting.[119]

Such scenes incorporate distinguished ladies into settings featuring feasting and music. However, there is a darker and more critical side to these. Ottoman scholars, chroniclers and artists were ambivalent towards the royal hunt. On the one hand, they endorsed its manly, war-like aspect. On the other hand, they felt compelled to hint at their (and society's) disapproval of the aspects of luxury, pleasure-seeking, waste, extravagance or lust that such royal hunting parties entailed. This also extended to the inclusion of women, whose presence was associated with sin and the apocalypse; eighteenth-century Nakşi–Müceddidis offered their interpretation of Doomsday and apocalyptic omens.[120] Could this be the multi-layered cultural background to Vanmour's painting about two different groups of women watched by a Shiva-like apparition in the sky (see figure 26.7)?

In this respect we should also note *Cifru'l-câmi*, a classical book of apocalyptic omens (by Abdurrahman b. Ali el-Bistamî, *c.*1440),[121] which was translated into Ottoman as *Tercüme-i Miftâh-ı Cifru'l-câmi* and luxuriously illustrated in the 1590s.[122] Its eighteenth-century copy, dated to 1747, reproduces virtually all features of earlier copies, except for the fact that the human figures are shown with neither hands nor feet, while their heads are replaced by either rose motifs or headgear.[123] It thus embodies a rigorously orthodox anti-figural stand. This manuscript was presented to Prince Mustafa (III), the son of Ahmed III, the latter a sultan who is today stereotyped as an epicurean, a hedonist, a cultivated and sensous patron of arts and literature, and an ardent reformer in early pursuit of westernization. Selim III, who came to the throne more than fifty years later, has been surrounded by a similar reformist aura. What these clichéd views overlook is, first, the complicated ambiguity of the two centuries that preceded nineteenth-century reforms and, second, how even then, deep into the *tanzimat* era, women and non-Muslims, mixed-sex encounters and interconfessional mingling continued to be carefully monitored by the Nakşi–Müceddidis.

NOTES

1   Abu-Manneh 1982, 2001, 2003. While the Ottoman Müceddidiyye is explored extensively by Şimşek (2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2008a, 2008b, 2010) and several other theologians, among a number of recent PhD dissertations, Aysel Danacı Yıldız's *Vaka-yı Selimiye* (2007) reflects on the intriguing policies of the Islamic reformers in the 1790s. However, neither discussions on 'neo-sufism' and 'eighteenth century reform in Islam' (Rahman 1966; Voll 1982; Levtzion and Voll 1987; O'Fahey and Radtke 1993; Radtke 1994) nor Schultze's 1988 critique of the dominant historiographical paradigm of modernity in the Islamic world and the ensuing debate have made an impact on Ottoman studies. The 1970s notion of neo-sufism has now been discarded, but the controversy over Islamic modernity remains unsettled (Radtke 1996; Hofheinz 1996; Reichmuth 2002).

2   For 'post-classical' Arabo-Ottoman intellectual life in the provinces, see Kellner-Heinkele 1990; Von Schlegell 1997; El-Rouayheb 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008. See also Le Gall 2005.

3   Bak and Benecke 1984.

4   Zilfi 1986; Baer 2008.

5   On the Kadızadelis, in addition to several publications of both Zilfi and Ocak, see the dissertations by Öztürk (1981), Çavuşoğlu (1990) and Terzioğlu (1999).

6   Beydilli 1995: 143 n. Curiously, Imam Birgivî is either seen as having a long-lasting influence on those who resisted Ottoman modernization (Peters 1986) or as foreshadowing trends characteristic of modernity in religion (Hagen 2004).

7   Friedmann 1971; Ter Haar 1992; Buehler 1998.

8   Şimşek 2004.

9   Uşşakîzâde 2005: 750–56.

10 Le Gall 2003: 98.

11 Tanman 1994; Şimşek 2000.

12 Barbir 1980: 46.

13 Şimşek 2002.

14 Şimşek 2004.

15 In 1711, sufis in Cairo clashed with Janissaries who were reading aloud Birgivî's writings (Flemming 1976; Peters 1987). A letter sent to al-Nabulusi from Aleppo, dated 1730, explicitly mentions Kadızadelis, referring to Turkish students of *fiqh* and preachers (Von Schegell 1997: 94).

16 Buehler 2003: 320.

17 Artan 2010.

18 Dankoff 1991; Aksan 1995; Tamari 2001, 2004; Sajdi 2003.

19 Kafadar 1989, 1992; Terzioğlu 2002; Akkach 1990, 2005, 2007, 2010b; Ze'evi 2006.

20 Masters 1994. Recent research acknowledges a general socio-economic development, if not remarkable prosperity, from the 1690s to the 1760s, in Anatolia, Egypt and the Balkans.

21 Artan 1993b. For Europe-specific uses of the terms 'public' and 'private', contemporaneous with Habermas, see Sennett 1986; Duby 1988; Ariès 1989.

22 Marcus 1986, 1989; Abu Lughod 1987; Ze'evi 1995.

23 Agmon 2006; Thys-Şenocak 2008; Semerdjian 2009.

24 Habermas 1989.

25 Ariès 1989; Sennett 1986. For a critical treatment of these concepts in the Ottoman context, see Kömeçoğlu 2005.

26 Develi 1998.

27 Hattox [1985] 2000.

28 Evliya Çelebi 1999: I, 130a.

29 Yılmaz 2005.

30 Saraçgil 1997; Kırlı 2004.

31 BOA, C. Zaptiye 302, 27/Z /1212.

32 Zilfi 1986: 264.

33 Çaksu 2007; Rafeq 1990: 183.

34 Sirriyeh 2005: 14–15.

35 Von Schlegell 1997.

36 Selçuk 2009.

37 Chester Beatty Library, MS 439: fol. 9.

38 Kafadar 2002.

39 Evliya Çelebi refers to the most elegant and learned people as frequenting coffee-houses in Bursa in 1640 (1999: II, 18, fol. 228b). He estimated that there were seventy-five large and highly decorated coffee-houses,which had become popular when those in Istanbul were closed by Murad IV.

40 Çaksu 2007.

41 This register covers only the Galata and Kasımpaşa districts: Istanbul Municipality Library, Muallim Cevdet B. 10: fols. 5b–6b (Göl 1971).

42 BOA, A. DVN 881 (Ertuğ 1997).

43 Rıfat Osman (1931) noted a few basic types on the basis of some thirty coffee-houses that he visited, which had been built between the years 1680 and 1824 in Istanbul, Edirne, Selanik, Manastır and Serez (Numan 1981; David 1997). Özkoçak (2007) has published a coffee-house plan dated 1908: BOA Y.MTV. 310/25.

44 Aktepe 1976; Behrens-Abouseif 1992; Hamadeh 2002.

45 Meier 2011, where table 1 gives the number of public baths in a number of cities from 1500 to 2000.

46 Pools in thermal baths, like the Király bath of Budapest, are exceptions.

47 Ahmet Refik 1988b: 217.

48 Aktepe 1958.

49 Evliya Çelebi 1999: I, 96b–97b.

50 Kanetaki 2004.

51 Pick 1988: 97.

52 Işın 2002: 271. *Dellâk*s in male hamams were not just washers but young male prostitutes. The *Dellâknâme-i-Dilküşâ* of Dervish Ismail Agha (1686) records their names, physical features and national origins and explains their services and fees.

53 Demirtaş 2006.

54 Işın 2002: 270; Düzbakar 2007. Perhaps in figure 26.2a, the cell depicted below the plunge pool was also a part of the bath, intended to keep the insane warm and relaxed.

55 Sajdi 2003.

56 Gadelrab 2010.

57 Alpin 1980: 369–70.

58 Ahmet Refik 1988b: 28, 37, 106, 136, 214.

59 Pellitteri 1993; Yüksel 1995; Sajdi 2003; Tamari 2006.

60 Sajdi 2007; Akkach 2010a.

61 Saydam 1997; for community control in Sofia, Kayseri, Aleppo and Damascus, see Gradeva 1997; also Tok 2005.

62 Marcus 1986; Rafeq 1990.

63 Ertuğ 1997. For non-Muslim stokers in Muslim quarters, also see BOA C.SH 236 (19/Z /1219).

64 Zarinebaf-Shahr 2001.

65 In addition to numerous MA and PhD dissertations on the Üsküdar court records, multiple volume editions of sixteenth- to eighteenth-century *sicil*s have been published recently.

66 Aynural 2001; Demirtaş 2008.

67 Artan 2000. Nevertheless, in the secondary literature one can still find the repeated claim that eating out was rare in the Ottoman realm.

68 Lewicka 2005.

69 Ibid.

70 Evliya Çelebi 1999: I, 278, fol. 170b.

71 Sariyannis 2007. For a *beng*-pusher at the Bahçekapısı hamam who was exiled to the Molova fortress: BOA C.ZB 3613 (29/R /1179).

72 Sariyannis 2005.

73 Ahmed Cavid 1998: 219–22.

74 Jews were clearly targeted in this period. A Jewish woman accused of seducing young boys was exiled to Selanik: BOA C.ZB 3597 (9 B 1193); Jewish musicians were banned from performing for women in Jewish households in the absence of their husbands: BOA C.Adliye 1533 (11 R 1200).

75 BOA Hatt-ı Hümayun 9375 (1204).

76 Christie's 1998: 189.

77 BOA C. ZB 3534 (1205).

78   Kermeli 2002; Semerdjian 2003; Sariyannis 2008.

79   Sajdi 2003: 28.

80   Masters 1994: 358.

81   Sariyannis 2005–6: 253.

82   Ze'evi 2006: 55.

83   Rafeq 1990; Semerdjian 2009.

84   Ben-Naeh 2005: 88; cf. also Zarinebaf-Shahr 1998.

85   In line with the existing literature, Hamadeh (2007b) connects the phenomenon to an inten-
     sified search for leisure, entertainment and pleasure at the time. She also argues that the
     emergence of public gardens was a state-sponsored development which aimed to control and
     contain public life. This approach undermines the much complicated process of royal lands'
     dissolution into public and private property.

86   Artan 2011a.

87   Behrens-Abouseif 1985; Raymond 1995.

88   Meier 2004.

89   Akkach 2007: 3.

90   Evliya Çelebi 1999: I, 123b, 133a, 134b, 143b, 144b, 145a.

91   The closest are perhaps *geşt ü güzar* and *nüzhetgâh*. Hamadeh (2007b: 283) seems to use
     'promenade' indiscriminately.

92   When its water resources or produce were misused, state officials acted promptly: BOA C.
     Saray 5487; C. Saray 5484.

93   Shefer-Mossensohn 2009: 163.

94   Marcus 1986: 173.

95   Watenpaugh 2005: 536.

96   Karacan 1974: 21, 158–9, also 223, 315.

97   Von Schlegell 1997: 65–72.

98   Ibid.: 73–5. Rafeq (1990: 55–6) has noted boasting about homosexuality in Damascus.

99   Sint-Nicolaas *et al.* 2003.

100 Majer 1999b.

101 Artan and Schick 2011.

102 Renda 1980, 1981.

103 Zilfi 1996.

104 Akkach 2010a: 69. See also Akkach 2007: 122.

105 Hamadeh 2007b: 278.

106 Sılay 1994; but see Erimtan's later critique (2008) of Republican historiography on the reign
     of Ahmed III. The 'Tulip Age' is a misnomer intended to describe a cultural opening up
     to the West in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, accompanied by an intensified
     sense of leisure, entertainment and pleasure among the ruling elite as well as the public at
     large, displayed through courtly pageants in the parks, gardens, kiosks and palaces of the
     capital.

107 Sılay 1994: 78. Hamadeh (2007b), too, relies on the *Zenannâme* miniatures, as well as on the
     work of nineteenth-century European artists such as Melling (d. 1831), Allom (d. 1872) and
     Bartlett (1809–54) to delineate eighteenth-century gardens and public life. The styles of such
     artists, and what they were prepared to see and depict in the Ottoman capital, deserve more
     careful scrutiny. On realism in Ottoman poetry, see also Schmidt 1993a, 1993b.

108 Schick 1999; Kuru 2005.

109 Hamadeh 2002, 2004.

110 Studies on women's legal position and their active participation in social and economic
     activities are too many to cite here.

111 Zilfi 1996; Hamadeh 2007b.

112 Artan 2011b.

113 Andrews 2008.

114 Sılay 1994: 79; Zilfi 1996.

115 For clothing regulations issued in 1726, 1765 and 1792, see Ahmet Refik 1988b: 86–8, 174–5; 1988c: 4, 11–12.
116 Zilfi 2004.
117 Quataert 1997: 407. Finkel (2005: 370–71) has also interpreted Nevşehirli Ibrahim Paşa's 1726 attempt to curb the new vogue as a response to uncertainties.
118 Quataert 1997: 370–71; 2000: 140–49.
119 Artan 2008, 2011b.
120 Şimşek 2007. Period chroniclers carefully noted, albeit without any note of approval, that Mehmed IV's hunting entourage included the female members of his family. They saw this neither as promoting a new kind of social conduct, a new civility, nor as a marker of going public.
121 Fleischer 2001: 292–5.
122 Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi B. 373 and İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi T. 6624.
123 Chester Beatty Library 444.