

ÜSKÜDAR AS THE SITE FOR THE MOSQUE COMPLEXES OF ROYAL WOMEN
IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

by
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Sevgi, Ahmet, Doğan, Hüsnü,
bu size..

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Abstract

In popular literature, it is not uncommon to refer to Üsküdar as the town of the mosques of queen mothers and princesses. The interest that stimulated the present study was derived from this simple observation. Üsküdar is in fact the town that had the highest number of buildings that were commissioned by Ottoman royal women. These are palaces, mosques or mosque complexes, or other buildings that are smaller in scale. The fact that there is a conglomeration of royal women's buildings suggests that by the eighteenth century, a tradition was established for court-affiliated women to build in Üsküdar. This present study examines the primary buildings that initiated this process. These are the mosque complexes of Gülfem Hatun, Mihrimah Sultan, and Nurbanu Sultan, all built in the sixteenth century. The initial question of why the *külliyes* of Gülfem, Mihrimah, and Nurbanu were successively built in Üsküdar is considered as a problem involving a number of different variables. These include the patron and her relationship with the sultan and other members of the court. The investment made for the mosque complexes of Gülfem and Mihrimah anticipate that the town came to be considered as a strategic location for the court in mid-sixteenth century. Then, only after three decades, the construction of Nurbanu Sultan's massive complex not only marked the beginning of a tradition for royal women to build in Üsküdar but more obviously than its two precedents, undoubtedly marked the incorporation of the town into the royal architectural agenda.

ÖZET

Popüler edebiyatta Üsküdar'dan valide sultan ve prense camileri merkezi olarak bahsedilir. Bu çalışmayı tetikleyen de bu basit gözlemdir. Üsküdar gerçekten de Osmanlı saray kadınlarının yaptırdığı binaların en çok olduğu bölgedir. Bu binalar saraylar, camiler, külliye ve diğer küçük ölçekli yapılardır. Bu binaların burada toplanmasının nedeni 18. yüzyılda yerleşmiş bir geleneği işaret eder. Bu araştırma, bu geleneği başlatan ilk yapıları incelemektedir: tamamı 16. yüzyılda yaptırılan Gülfem hatun, Nurbanu Sultan ve Mihrimah Sultan camileri. Bu külliye'nin neden Üsküdar'da yapıldığı sorusu çok sayıda değişkeni olan bir problemdir. Bu değişkenler arasında camiyi yaptıran şahıs, onun Padişahla ve diğer saray mensuplarıyla ilişkisi sayılabilir. Gülfem Hatun ve Mihrimah Sultan cami külliye'leri için yapılan yatırım Üsküdar'ın 16. yüzyılın ortalarında saray için stratejik önem taşıdığını belirtisidir. Yaklaşık 30 yıl sonra yaptırılan Nurbanu Sultan külliyesi ise sadece Üsküdar'ı saray kadınları için geleneksel hale getirmekle kalmamış, aynı zamanda buranın sarayın mimari ajandasına eklenmesini sağlamıştır.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1	
From Üsküdar to Constantinople and from Constantinople to Üsküdar: the creation of an urban space.....	5
1.1 Üsküdar before the conquest.....	5
1.2 The new city.....	7
1.2.1 The first commercial centers.....	10
1.3 Üsküdar in the sixteenth century	13
1.3.1 Üsküdar in the Imperial Visual Imagery.....	19
Chapter 2	
Patterns of architectural patronage and the <i>külliye</i> of Gülfem Hatun.....	24
2.1 Women in the Ottoman court and their architectural patronage.....	24
2.2 The first mosque complex in Üsküdar built by a court-affiliated woman.....	29
Chapter 3	
The imperial mosque complexes of Mihrimah and Nurbanu Sultans	31
3.1 Mihrimah Sultan Külliyesi: a choice conscious or random?	31
3.1.1 The identity of an influential princess	31
3.1.2 The Rüstem Paşa Connection	34
3.1.3 The Mosque Complex of Mihrimah	39
3.1.3.1 The Vakfiye of Mihrimah Sultan.....	43
3.2 A massive <i>külliye</i> in Üsküdar: The Atik Valide Mosque Complex.....	47
3.2.1 Nurbanu Sultan	47
3.2.2 The architectural patronage of Nurbanu Sultan.....	52
3.2.3 The Atik Valide Complex.....	54
3.2.4 Elements of the <i>külliye</i>	55
3.2.5 The Waqf of the Atik Valide: a large socio-economic network	57
Conclusion	60
Bibliography	63

INTRODUCTION

In popular literature, it is not uncommon to refer to Üsküdar as the town of the mosques of queen mothers and princesses. The interest that stimulated the present study was derived from this simple observation. Üsküdar was in fact the town that had the highest number of buildings that were commissioned by Ottoman royal women. These were palaces, mosques or mosque complexes, or other buildings that were smaller in scale. From the eighteenth century on, for example, building single fountains became quite popular.

The primal question I had in mind was why there was a conglomeration of royal women's buildings in varying sizes in this town. Was the decision of building in Üsküdar made as a result of practical needs, so that the municipal and religious needs of the inhabitants were fulfilled, or was it the outcome of other considerations? In terms of architectural patronage, royal women have typically been seen as inferior, or restricted, when compared with the sultans. They were not seen as real power holders or sharers of the imperial authority. This was thought to have reflected on the size and location of their buildings. Until the sixteenth century, they did not or were not allowed to build in the capital. According to this line of thinking, even when they did begin to build in İstanbul, with the exception of Hürrem Sultan, they were only allowed to build in marginal, relatively less important locations of the city and this was indicative of their inferior position. This is an essentialist view that presupposed women's inferior position. The conclusion was already made at the very beginning. Moreover, Hürrem was not the only exception. There were other royal women whose buildings were at key cultural and commercial areas. The most obvious examples, as will be discussed below, are the mosques of Gülfem Hatun and Nurbanu Sultan in Üsküdar.

With regard to the town of Üsküdar in particular, no general paradigm has been offered. One of the aims of the present study is to try to do that. Covering a few centuries would take a doctorate thesis, or maybe theses. Therefore, out of practical reasons, the sixteenth century is selected here as the time period for our units of analysis. The center of attention will be the mosque complexes of Gülfem Hatun,

Mihrimah¹ Sultan and Nurbanu Sultan. Another reason to select these was the accessibility of primary documents that were manageable at this level. The *vakfiyes* of Gülfem Hatun, and of Mihrimah and Nurbanu sultans were studied.

In his late eighteenth-century manuscript *Hadikatü'l Cevami*, Hüseyin Ayvansarayi listed five mosques² commissioned by royal women out of some eighty contemporary mosques in the whole town. This data is quite significant because four of these mosques were built by Gülfem, Mihrimah, and Nurbanu. The fifth one is the Çinili Mosque of Kösem Sultan built in the seventeenth century. The three patrons and their mosques that will be discussed below are therefore true initiators of a tradition. By the eighteenth century, these mosques were already established as the buildings that dominated the physical appearance of the town. Henceforth, building in Üsküdar provided a direct link to these sixteenth century projects.

Although the mosque of Gülfem has generally been ignored, the mosques of both Mihrimah and Nurbanu have previously been observed and researched on. However, either they were studied with respect to their formal architectural features independently or as a subcategory under the heading of Sinan's buildings. The aim here is to consider these socio-religious complexes with respect to their location. The identity of the patron and her access to power will also be taken as an important factor that might have shaped one or both of these.

Coincidentally, for the Atik Valide Complex, I have come to know that people have wondered why it was built in Üsküdar, and how the patron provided the necessary resources for its construction. Two stories, or rather myths, were told to me by a member of the Atik Valide Sultan Cami Koruma Derneği³. According to one of these traditions, Murad III, his mother Nurbanu Sultan, and his wife Safiye Sultan had their meals together. While they ate, Nurbanu Sultan liked to collect the little bits of bread that spilled on the table in her hand and to put them into her mouth. Apparently, this habit of Nurbanu embarrassed Safiye Sultan, who complained about this to her husband.

¹ Alternatively referred to as Mihrümah, Mihrumah, MihrMah. Here "Mihrimah" as used in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* will be used.

² The Valide-i Cedid Mosque was built by Ahmed III and so I did not included it in this list.

³ I interviewed with Ramazan Soyaslan on May 8th 2004.

One day, while Murad and Nurbanu were having a meal together, Nurbanu began to collect the pieces of bread with her fingers. Just then, Murad grabbed his mother's hand and openly asked her what she was doing and why she was doing it. He scolded at her mother in the presence of others. When Nurbanu opened her hand, the pieces of bread had use turned into pearl. Murad felt ashamed of what he did and apologized to his mother. He then asked her what she wished he did for her to cover his mistake. Nurbanu told her that she wanted to have a large mosque complex, and evidently, her son agreed. The second tradition is about why the mosque was built in Üsküdar. One day, Nurbanu was having a walk somewhere in the historical peninsula. It was windy and accidentally her scarf flew off. Then, Murad declared that whoever found his mother's scarf would be rewarded. Wherever it was found, his mother's mosque would be built there. These stories convey the following message: people have concerned themselves with why the complex was built in Üsküdar; how Nurbanu built a mosque for herself and how she found the necessary financial means. Moreover, the fact that they are still being told, that they have been passed on for centuries, is also interesting. The person who told me these stories also told me that he and other members of the *dernek* told them to visitors, especially foreign tourists who came to the mosque. It seems that these stories constitute what an average visitor of the mosque knows about it.

This study will contribute to our knowledge of the history of Üsküdar and of the royal architectural practices of the sixteenth century due to a number a reasons. First of all, it is the first attempt to consider these three complexes together with respect to their location. The initial question of why the *külliyes* of Gülfem, Mihrimah, and Nurbanu were successively built in Üsküdar will be considered as a problem involving a number of different variables. These include the patron and her relationship with the sultan and other members of the court. The investment made for the mosque complexes of Gülfem and Mihrimah anticipate that the town came to be considered as a strategic location for the court in mid-sixteenth century. Then, only after three decades, the construction of Nurbanu's massive complex not only marked the beginning of a tradition for royal women to build in Üsküdar but more obviously than its two precedents, undoubtedly marked the incorporation of the town into the royal architectural agenda.

The primary sources that I use, in addition to the *vakfiyes*, are the accounts of foreigners –usually ambassadors–, travelers such as Evliya Çelebi, and Ottoman historians such as Selaniki and Peçevi. In addition, Hüseyin Ayvansarayı's *Hadikatü'l Cevami* is another basic resource about the mosques at hand but also for other mosques

in Üsküdar. As visual material, miniatures from *sahnames*, and the maps of İstanbul of Matrakçı Nasuh and Piri Reis are used. For the history of Üsküdar, İbrahim Hakkı Konyali's work on the history of the town in which he listed and discussed all buildings of the town in alphabetical order, and Mehmet Nermi Haskan's *Yüzyıllar Boyunca Üsküdar*, which is an extended version of the former, are used. For royal Ottoman women and their cultural and architectural patronage, Leslie Peirce's *The Imperial Harem*, and a number of works by Çağatay Uluçay are most useful. Also, the relevant entries in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, *Islam Ansiklopedisi*, and *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* are helpful in acquiring general knowledge and in learning about sources that I had previously not been familiar with. As general references for Ottoman architecture, I make use of Godfrey Goodwin's *Ottoman Architecture*, Aptullah Kur'an's *Sinan: the grand old master of Ottoman architecture*.

There are three chapters in this study. One is devoted to studying the history and understanding the geographical, economic, and cultural importance of Üsküdar especially in the sixteenth century. Üsküdar will be considered against the background of the development of the capital from the time of Fatih onwards. I try to track Üsküdar's changing image in the sixteenth century from contemporary visual material.

In the second chapter I discuss the “Ottoman royal women” and their architectural patronage, and introduce the mosque complex of Gülfem Hatun. The third chapter is about the Mihrimah and the Atik Valide Mosque Complexes. For both, I first look at the identity of the patron and then to the characteristics of each mosque complex and *waqf*.

CHAPTER 1

FROM ÜSKÜDAR TO CONSTANTINOPLE AND FROM CONSTANTINOPLE TO ÜSKÜDAR: THE CREATION OF AN URBAN SPACE

1.1 Üsküdar before the conquest

Pertaining to the social life in Üsküdar in the sixteenth century, the available sources are quite limited. Our knowledge about this issue for the period prior to that is even more incomplete. The town is only made note of in the Ottoman sources as a strategic place that needed to be controlled. Furthermore, Ottoman sources tend to favor one view regarding the urbanization of Üsküdar, facilitating the conquest of Constantinople. Presenting this as a great achievement is a common tendency in the narratives of Ottoman historians. In light of that, to provide evidence about previous Muslim presence on Üsküdar, Evliya Çelebi reported that the town had been occupied by the Abbasid ruler Harun Reşid and one of his commanders, Seyyid Battal Gazi, long before Ottomans came into existence. Evliya provided a lengthy account about Battal's presence and activities in the town. The difficulty of conquering Constantinople was a central theme. In this scheme, Üsküdar was always an important target location because it was the closest piece of earth across the historical peninsula on the Asian side.

Topographically, the town of Üsküdar is situated on a number of hills. Together with this aspect, the short but uninterrupted distance from Constantinople made Üsküdar an ideal place to settle to watch over the Byzantine capital. The visual transparency was, in fact, mutual. A large part of Üsküdar is clearly observable from the Constantinopolitan side. Settling in Üsküdar would guarantee that the other side would be constantly aware of the activities in Üsküdar, and of possible dangers of attack. The Byzantines would continuously feel this pressure.

Before the conquest, the Ottomans also knew that as long as they were present in Üsküdar, they could keep Constantinople under observation. To this end, as early as the time of Orhan Bey, the Sufi dervishes were assigned the responsibility of watching and communicating with the Ottoman principality about the Byzantines. In fact, these dervishes considerably contributed to the establishment of the state at this early stage as informal local associates and as spreaders of the word of Islam. One such group was responsible to watch over the Byzantines in today's Gözcü Baba. It is also claimed that the name of Göztepe –literally meaning “watch-hill”— dates back to this period⁴. It is further claimed that the dervish lodge at Gözcü Baba had a number of watching points. One was around today's Tophanelioğlu⁵. Another point of inspection was the Gözcü Baba district itself. Yet another one was in today's İçerenköy.⁶

In examining the history of Üsküdar, our intention here is to understand how crucial the town was in the Ottoman political agenda. The account of Bertrandon de la Broquière confirms that prior to 1453, Üsküdar was under Turkish control. He reported that Turks inspected sea traffic here and they taxed incoming merchants.⁷ With regard to the lands falling behind the seashore, without giving reference to specific sources, Konyalı claims that the towns of Gebze, Darıca, Maltepe, and Bostancı kept going back and forth between the Ottomans and Byzantines⁸.

Early Ottoman rulers' visits to the town also contribute to our knowledge about the strategic locations in the town. On account of the familial relations, Orhan Bey

⁴ Mehmet Nermi Haskan, *Yüzylinder Boyunca Üsküdar*, İstanbul, 2001, p. 28.

⁵ Ibid, p. 30. Tophanelioğlu is located in between Çamlıca and Üsküdar. It is to the southeast of the Ermeni Mezarlığı in Bağlarbaşı.

⁶ Uzunçarşılı reported that these points communicated with each other by lighting a fire so that they could instantly inform İznik or Bursa about the happenings in Üsküdar and Constantinople.

⁷ “Ertesi günü bizim Saint-Georges kolu adını verdigimiz Boğaz üzerinde, Pera'nın karşısında yer alan ve Escutary adını taşıyan bir kasabaya geldim. Birlikte olduğum tüccarlar ve ben beraberce boğazı geçtik; burada geçişleri denetleyen ve ödenmesi gereken vergileri tahsil eden Türkler vardı.” *Bertrandon de la Broquière'in Denizaşırı Seyahati*, İstanbul, 2000, p. 206.

⁸ Konyalı, *Üsküdar Tarihi*, p.23.

resided in Doğancılar on the occasion of visiting his Byzantine father-in-law. We will later see that this district, together with At Pazarı, was used in the future as a posting place for horses (*menzilhane*)⁹. On another occasion, when Mehmed I came to Üsküdar, the imperial tent was placed on Doğancılar¹⁰. Doğancılar was used in the same way by subsequent sultans. Mehmed II, too, had his imperial tent built in this area in 1461 on the way to a campaign on Uzun Hasan.¹¹

Üsküdar is presented in the sources as a location that attracted a number of rulers in history whose true aim was to attack Constantinople. The Ottoman rulers, too, as they were expanding the borders of their principality, tried to find ways to move to the other side of the straits. Apparently, they saw Üsküdar as a strategic military location. However, since there was no permanent settlement, the municipal and socializing projects of the state had not yet started. We will see the implementation of these come into being beginning with the reign of Mehmed II.

1.2 The new city

The definitive Ottoman settlement in Üsküdar obviously took place after 1453, when Constantinople fell into the hands of Ottomans. Mehmed II took several measures to create a new city. The primary challenge to Mehmed the Conqueror was to discern the urban structure from all Byzantine elements and to redefine and rearrange the city space so that it would acquire a novel identity.

On the whole, in Halil İnalçık's words, "the city was denuded of its former inhabitants and the character which it had possessed in the Byzantine period was radically changed"¹². It is necessary to review the measures that Mehmed II and his followers undertook so as to understand the relatively more advanced level of

⁹ Konyalı, *Üskiidar Tarihi*, p. 4.

¹⁰ Uzunçarsılı, p. 434.

¹¹ Haskan, *Yüzyıllar Boyunca Üskidar*, p. 33.

¹² Halil İnalçık, "İstanbul" *Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 224.

urbanization project(s) for Istanbul in the sixteenth century. Several urban sociologists have likened the growth of cities to living mechanisms. Surely, every city has its own geographical, cultural, and historical specificities. However, if we consider 1453 as the birth-year of this Ottoman city, then at least for the period within a century or two, this simple model may be applicable to it. The “growth” is of course quite obvious, the difficult task will be to understand why major or small scale growths took place or were encouraged to take place where they did. Here, the spotlight will obviously be on Üsküdar.

Repopulation of the city was perhaps the policy that Mehmed II valued the most. Prior to the conquest, a considerable amount of the inhabitants had fled from Constantinople, leaving the residential areas vacant¹³. Furthermore, as the sultan was well aware of external threats to Istanbul, it was only natural that he sought to fill the city with people and replenish it with the necessary municipal elements to create liveable neighborhoods. Of course, these would have to be consistent with the social and cultural needs of the groups of people settled on each area. The bringing in of people would guarantee that the people associated with the Ottoman state in the new capital would increase in number and also the urban units in which they would be settled would be directly tied to the central authority, which would efficiently provide the means to control the city together with its outskirts.

Other than repopulation, the next crucial issue was to reshape the urban outlook so that the city would be furnished with an Islamic skyline and at the same time the new inhabitants would be provided with the means to practice their religions. Here, the most significant and visibly available symbol was the minarets of mosques. The construction of all kinds of religious buildings had both practical and ideological significance. Ottoman rulers were already experienced with Islamicizing newly conquered cities by way of building mosques. Before Istanbul, first Bursa and later Edirne were adorned with architectural projects of the rulers. In these cities, new mosques were built by the conqueror sultan, and by the mid fifteenth century it had already become a tradition for each new sultan to build a mosque in his name in the capital city.

¹³ Ibid, p. 225. Fatih immediately declared *amān*, which stated that “any fugitive who returned within a specified time should freely re-occupy his home and practice his religion”. He seems to have had the desire to present his city as an attractive place to settle for Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Mosques definitely served the religious needs of the Muslim community. In the Ottoman context, they were usually built together with several dependencies such as *han* (inn), *hamam* (bath), *zaviye* (dervish lodge), *dariüssifa* (hospital), *medrese* (college), *tabhane* (hospice), *imaret* (soup kitchen). With the inclusion and incorporation of such buildings around a mosque, it became a mosque complex. In this way, the mosques not only served the religious needs of the population, but they also came to fulfill municipal needs. The dependencies provided social and educational services which could as well be considered secular. In particular, the Sultans' Mosques (*cevami-i selatin*), were built in the form of such large complexes and they were intended to impress the people with their size, and with their presence they constantly reminded the inhabitants and bypassers of the contemporary rule over the city. The fact that the resources to build the mosque came from the booty won over the infidels was a further source of legitimization for the rulers who commissioned the complexes. Moreover, with their religious and secular services, they have also been considered as "town-planning device's" such that new settlements were typically formed around these mosque complexes.¹⁴

A critical overview of the more general models of the "Islamic City" or the "Middle Eastern City" will be left outside the reach of this discussion. One can easily find many examples to demonstrate such development. For example, the supposed discovery of the tomb of Abu Ayyub al- Ansari, who was a companion of the Prophet and who had died in an Arab siege of İstanbul¹⁵, or else the development of *mahalles* around *mescids*, or *nahiyes* around the Imperial Mosque and certain other major mosque

¹⁴ Howard Crane, "The Ottoman Sultan's Mosques: Icons of Imperial Legitimacy," *The Ottoman City and its Parts: urban structure and social order*, Irene Bierman et al. (eds) New York, 1991, pp. 173-243.

¹⁵ Gülru Necipoğlu, "Dynastic Imprints on the Cityscape: The Collective Message of Imperial Funerary Mosque Complexes in Istanbul," *İslam Dünyasında Mezarlıklar ve Defin Gelenekleri*, Ankara, 1996, p.23. Necipoğlu suggested that this tomb was important in "link(ing) the city to an Islamic past with which its rulers could identify". According to a tradition, he was girded with the sword of Akşemseddin who had discovered the tomb. Perhaps this was the first occasion of girding of a sultan with the sword. A *türbe* was built for Ayyub al- Ansari in Eyüp, for which the area henceforth came to be considered a holy land.

complexes. On the other hand, it is likewise not difficult to demonstrate divergences from the classical norms of the “Islamic city”.¹⁶

1.2.1 The first commercial centers

The construction of commercial centers in Istanbul was carefully planned by the central authority and henceforth closely inspected and controlled. The commercial center of the city, *bedestan*, was consequently constructed as a single complex. The strict control of the import of basic foodstuffs to Istanbul and the fact that the state was involved in the construction of major commercial centers suggest the determination of the center to declare its role as the provider and controller of major commercial transactions in the city.

From the mid-fifteenth century onwards, the initial commercial urban growth took place around a number of major centers in the city, while the development of peripheral centers smaller in scale were also promoted. The major commercial centers were at first built around today’s Kapalıçarşı¹⁷, and the Tahtakale areas. Soon after, the Fatih Complex and the Sultan Pazarı were added to this list. The decision to construct a *bedestān* was made in 1456¹⁸. The *bedestān* accommodated the businesses of merchants and craftsmen; it was the heart of economic life. Valuable imported goods were sold and stored here. Moreover, the *bedestān* was also where resident merchants “organized their overland caravans and commercial sea voyages”. This area had also been used as

¹⁶ For a more detailed discussion of the “Islamic character” of the city, see Halil İnalçık’s “İstanbul” in *EI*, pp. 224-248 and “The Hub of the City: the Bedestan of Istanbul”, *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 1, (1978-79) pp. 1-17. For Islamic city and Middle Eastern Cities, see André Raymond’s *Artisans et Commerçants du Caire au XVIIIe Siècle*, and Ira Lapidus’s (ed) *Middle Eastern Cities*, and A. Hourani & S.M. Stern (eds) *The Islamic City*.

¹⁷ “Çarşı” was a more general term for the commercial area. It included the *bedestān*, where the resident merchants engaged in business, the *diikkans* of the craftsmen, where a separate row was reserved for each craft. And third, in close proximity to the *çarşı* were *caravansarays* for the traveling merchants to stay. İnalçık, “The Hub of the City”, pp. 1-3.

¹⁸ İnalçık, based on Critoboulus in “İstanbul”, *EI*, p. 227.

a commercial district in the Byzantine times. Therefore, making the arrangements to organize the area to be “the meeting place of the roads leading in from the city gates and the roads leading up from the commercial quays of the harbour”¹⁹ should relatively have been uncomplicated. According to the *waqf* register of 1489, the Bedestan contained 641 shops (*dükkān*), but the number kept increasing as this quantity ultimately reached over a thousand. The *bedestān* kept expanding with various attachments starting as early as Mehmed II’s reign, and it ultimately became today’s Kapalıçarşı. Nearby the old *bedestān* and the Great Bazaar, were other commercial centers. Bit-Pazarı and Mahmud Paşa Dükkanları were such centers.

The shop owners in the old *bedestān* were overwhelmingly Muslims, but there were also always non-Muslim merchants. İnalçık listed and discussed the identities of merchants associated with the *bedestān*. There were European as well as Persian and Arab merchants in considerable numbers. For our discussion, merchants from Damascus, Aleppo, and silk merchants of Iran are noteworthy because they used trade routes from the East leading to and from Istanbul, in their business. İnalçık also informs us that “from the time of the Conqueror on, the Ottomans strongly encouraged the settlement of foreign merchants in the capital”. One would expect, then, that if it was a state policy to attract foreign merchants, their social and residential conditions, in addition to economic and administrational, were made feasible.²⁰ The major commercial district was organized in a way so as to arrange economic activities, but also to make sure that social and religious needs were satisfied. At this point, the functions of socio-religious complexes come to mind, because they similarly appeal to religio-cultural necessities. This is significant because one question this study proposes is the need to understand how and for whom such needs were considered for the town of Üsküdar in the sixteenth century.

As mentioned earlier, this area constituted the major trade center, however, around the city there developed local *çarşıs*. Some of these were *çarşıs* of Aya Sofya

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ To fulfill the residential needs of the traveling merchants, in close proximity to the bazaar was the Süleyman Paşa Odaları, also known as *Esir Pazari*, and the Bodrum Kervansarayı. The Great Bazaar also encompassed “five small mosques, one school, seven fountains, one well, one running system, and one public fountain with a basin” İnalçık, “The Hub of the City”, pp. 6-9-12.

first and foremost, then the Yeni Dükkanlar at Kemer, Dikilitaş and Çemberlitaş on Divanyolu, Ustad Ayas Mahallesi and Kadıasker Dolabı to the west of Eski Odalar, and Karaman Pazarı, and another near Debbağlar Mahallesi to the west of Unkapanı up the Golden Horn²¹. This list is restricted to the historical peninsula. However, other local trade centers did develop in time at other urban areas attached to İstanbul. In Üsküdar, Sinan Paşa Çarşısı was such a local *çarşı*. The establishment of local *çarşıs* must have attracted some level of population, at least in the daytime.

In addition to market places, mosques, together with their dependencies which provided social services, were pivotal in creating new neighborhoods. Single *zaviyes* or tombs were other centers that facilitated the growth of *mahalles*.

An effective policy that Mehmed II implemented to promote urbanization in Kostantiniyye in quite a systematic manner was to encourage his high ranking officials to establish quarters (*mahalles*), which would be named after themselves. In these new *mahalles*, with the intention of meeting the basic needs of the inhabitants, a mosque, a *han*, a bath, and a market would be built by the founder *pashas*. These facilities would also serve as local magnets that would attract new population. A collection of *mahalles* made up *nahiyes*. Ayverdi and Barkan calculated that by the 1520s, a total of 13 *nahiyes* were established in İstanbul. This shows that urban settlement was promoted all around the peninsula, without focusing on a single area.²² Although every attempt was made to accommodate the new Muslim community, and to encourage conversions to this religion, there was a considerable non-Muslim population in the city. Regarding Üsküdar's urban configuration and population allocation, no definitive records have survived to our time. However, a set of important documents in the Başkanlığı Archives reveal that at the end of the sixteenth century the town had a considerable non-Muslim population.²³ Furthermore, the town was surrounded by fortifications (*sur*). As one of

²¹ İnalcık, “İstanbul, EI, p. 228. Ayverdi estimated the introduction of the *mahalles* around 1475, and noted 181 in sum in İstanbul, 8 in Eyüp, 60 (?) in Galata, and 3 in Üsküdar. pp. 5, 10-56.

²² İnalcık provided a map on which he marked all of these *nahiyes*. The ones numbered as I, II, VI, VII, IX, XII were established at the time of Mehmed II.

²³ *İstanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri 953 (1546) tarihli*, Ö. L. Barkan & E.H. Ayverdi (eds.) İstanbul, 1970, p. 134a-135a. I am indebted to Prof. Stefanos Yerasimos for drawing my attention to this source.

the three major districts of the capital, the fact that Üsküdar had fortification suggest that it was considered as a major part of the urban whole.²⁴

1.3 Üsküdar in the sixteenth century

As the significant question proposed here is the reason for choosing Üsküdar as the cite of the imperial *külliyes* of three royal women in the sixteenth century, it is useful to interrogate the contemporary socio-cultural structure of the town. Having looked at the formation of Istanbul as an Ottoman city and the first urban developments in Üsküdar in line with the larger project, we may now proceed to our actual center of attention, the social life in the sixteenth century in Üsküdar.

With regard to the administrative organization, Üsküdar was one of the *bilad-i selasa*. Eyüp, Galata, and Üsküdar were considered as “separate urban areas attached to İstanbul”²⁵. Each of these towns had a *kadi* of its own, meaning that they had some level of autonomy in judicial matters.

Üsküdar flourished most significantly culturally and commercially during the reign of Süleyman I. As mentioned before, this town continued to be used as a point of departure for the sultans going on campaigns. When going on campaign to Rodos, Süleyman and his entourage was recorded to have stopped in Üsküdar and stayed there for two days.²⁶

Surely, Üsküdar had lost the kind of military importance it had prior to the conquest of İstanbul. By the sixteenth century, there was no need to keep the garrisons that were formerly established. However, since it was the first stop, or actually the departing point when going to campaigns, “although foodstuffs and supplies were requisitioned en route, the militia began their marches with supplies in hand, each

²⁴ Stefanos Yerasimos, “Üsküdar”, *EI*

²⁵ Bernard Lewis, “Bilād-i Thalātha”, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 1214.

²⁶ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmancı Tarihi*, p. 314.

soldier bearing his own portions probably purchased from local markets and hawkers”²⁷.

Another major event organized on an annual basis that we may associate with Üsküdar is the pilgrimage. Üsküdar was again, the point of departure for all Muslims going to visit the holy lands of Islam. All Muslims, who are have the means to afford it, are obliged to go to Mecca for pilgrimage. Although merely a religious requirement on the surface, the pilgrimage also had social, economic, and communicative functions.²⁸ Moreover, in the Ottoman context, this religious duty also had a political aspect; as “the Ottoman state protected the pilgrimage... because this protection legitimized the Sultan”²⁹. To this end, large amounts of money was spent to organize the event and guarantee the safety of the pilgrims. Providing social and municipal services on the way to the Holy lands and in Mecca and Medina provided a similar legitimacy. Hürrem Sultan’s *hayrat* in Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem, for example, may be evaluated in this context.³⁰ In fact, Hürrem’s other buildings in Edirne, Ankara, and Cisr-i Mustafa Paşa are on travel routes used not only for pilgrimage but also for trade and imperial campaigns.

The town of Üsküdar was an important point on these routes. Pilgrimage travelers “from Anatolia and Rumelia journeyed by way of Damascus”. After the conquest of Hejaz, the Holy cities, and consequently the caravan routes to them from Istanbul came under better control. This route passed from Damascus. Therefore, from Üsküdar, the caravans passed near Gebze, Eskişehir, Akşehir, Konya, Adana, and from

²⁷ Seng, “The Üsküdar Estates,” p. 26-27. Based on Dernschwam. Also, Tahsin Yazıcı, “Üsküdar” in *Islam Ansiklopedisi*, İstanbul, 1981, p. 129.

²⁸ Suraiya Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans: the hajj under the Ottomans 1517-1683*, New York, 1994.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 9.

³⁰ Hürrem built *imarets* in all three cities. Also, she endowed distribution of 3000 golden coins to be distributed in Mecca and Medina every year. For further discussion, see Leslie Peirce, “Gender and Sexual Property in Ottoman Royal Women’s Patronage”, in D.Fairchild Ruggles (ed) *Women, Patronage, and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*, New York, 2000, pp. 53-69 and idem. *The Imperial Harem*, New York, 1993, pp. 199-204

northern Syria reached Damascus. From there, they moved south to the holy cities.³¹ Then, as a location on the entry to and departure from Istanbul, Üsküdar acquired a new duty, in the sixteenth century, of hosting the caravans going to pilgrimage to the East.

Another service that Üsküdar provided was a commercial one. Merchants unloaded the goods they brought from the East to İstanbul in Üsküdar because these goods needed to be reloaded to boats to pass to Istanbul. The Bosphorus as a natural border around İstanbul, which disallowed immediate access to the city, also gave the state an opportunity to inspect and tax the merchants in Üsküdar. The class of merchants that used Üsküdar the most included those who engaged in “internal or eastern international trade destined for Ottoman consumption, or more specifically, İstanbul consumption”.³² They are in that regard differentiated from European international traders. The latter group used just the opposite route. Their route went from Europe to İstanbul and backwards. Therefore this group settled in Galata and worked in the commercial district in İstanbul.³³

The routes of commerce did not only involve those that went through Anatolia on land. The continuous expansion and the increasing population of İstanbul, from the time of Mehmed II onwards, resulted in an ever-growing demand from the people to be

³¹ Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans*, pp.32-33. See also page xii. Here, Üsküdar is marked as the first point that was labeled, following İstanbul, on a map entitled “pilgrimage routes to Mecca and Medina”. Another caravan route was from Cairo to Hejaz. The naval transportation from İstanbul to Cairo was made easier with Süleyman’s conquest of Rhodes in 1522.

³² In fact, this route did not always end at İstanbul. Silk, cotton and hemp were imported from Anatolia, to the northern Black Sea ports of Caffa, Akkerman, and Kilia. From these places, animal and agricultural stuffs were exported to İstanbul. Therefore, Anatolian products were pivotal in “the north-south trade”. On this trade route, the Italian city-states were actively engaged in trade already in the Byzantine times, but Mehmed II first saw the need to abolish their autonomy and ultimately eliminate them from the Black Sea trade. Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman State: economy and society, 1300-1600*, pp. 271-311.

³³ Yvonne J. Seng, “The Üsküdar Estates (*tereke*) as records of everyday life in an Ottoman town, 1521-1524”, unpubl. PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 1991, pp.27. İnalçık noted that during the reign of Murad I, the Venetians wanted to have an area in Üsküdar as a trade colony, but they were not permitted. The Ottoman state wanted, from the beginning, to prevent the Italian maritime states to establish colonies. *The Ottoman State*, p. 273.

provided with the basic needs, especially with the foodstuffs. Mehmed II aimed to control the resources of the Black Sea region because wheat, meat, and salt coming from the northern Black Sea were cheap. İnalcık claimed that “without these inexpensive supplies, İstanbul could not have been the most populous city of Europe in the sixteenth century”.³⁴ The import of the needed goods and foodstuffs was not sufficient to satisfy İstanbul’s population. The prices were carefully determined and inspected by the central state. The grand vizier visited the bazaar regularly to “inspect grain supplies, bakeries, and the price and quality of bread”. In addition to grain and meat mentioned above, hides and lumber were also provided from the Black Sea region. These were carried in big ships from the Black Sea ports to İstanbul.

So, with regard to supplying İstanbul with meat and grain, Üsküdar had a relatively minor role. However, the town did play a part in providing milk and milk products to İstanbul from a number of dairy farms.³⁵ In Üsküdar, there were also vineyards where sweet grapes were grown.³⁶ These two aspects of the town suggest that only a part of Üsküdar, namely the seacoast carried urban traits, the rest of it apparently was more rural.

If, then, Üsküdar was partly rural, one wonders the level of urbanization in the town in the sixteenth century. In the second half of the fifteenth century, three initial Muslim *mahalles* were reportedly established here around mosques. We can only validate one of these to have been constructed in the assigned period.³⁷ Estimating the

³⁴ İnalcık, *The Ottoman State*, p. 273.

³⁵ Ibid, pp. 179, 186-187

³⁶ Ahmed Refik, *Onuncu Asr-ı Hicride İstanbul Hayatı*, Ankara, 2000, p.145. According to a decree from the sultan to the *kadi* of Üsküdar, the vineyards were in Maltepe, Kartal, Darıca. To the surprise of the contemporary İstanbullid, these areas were considered part of Üsküdar, at least administratively. The decree orders the *kadı* to go and check that people only made pickles (*turşu*) and syrup (*pekmez*) out of the grapes.

³⁷ Ayverdi, *Fatih Devri Sonlarında İstanbul Mahalleleri*, pp. 56, 57-69. Ayverdi suggested the first mosques of Üsküdar to be Salacak, Rum Mehmed Paşa, and Toygar Hamza. Rum Mehmed Paşa Mosque is the only one that was without doubt built in the late 15th century. Ayvansarayı lists a certain Salacak Mosque built in the 18th century. Ayvansarayı, *The Garden of the Mosques: Hafız Hüseyin al-Ayvansarayı's guide to the Muslim monuments of Ottoman İstanbul* Howard Crane (ed & tr) Leiden, 2000. As for

end-of-fifteenth-century neighborhoods and the distribution of population, therefore, is extremely problematic. The social investment, at least by way of building socio-religious centers might give us a clue.

The construction activities in Üsküdar started at the very beginning of the sixteenth century. The construction of at least six mosques, the Kaptan (Kapudan) Paşa Mosque, the Küçük Davud Paşa Mosque, the Demirci Mescid, the Selman Ağa Mosque, the Toygar Hamza Mosque, and the Kazgancı Mosque are indicative that the seacoast of Üsküdar was already becoming a popular site for architectural projects of accredited individuals.

Kapudan Paşa Mosque was built prior to 1499-1500. It is entitled kapudan because Kaymak Mustafa Paşa, the *kapudan-i derya* (grand admiral) in the 1720s, during the reign of Ahmed III, restored it. Ayvansarayı noted the original builder to be a certain Hamza Fakih who died in 1499-1500. An endowment deed dated 1499-1500 confirms this.³⁸ Küçük Davud Paşa Mosque, built prior to 1505-1506, had a *zaviye* and an *imaret* attached to it.³⁹ We learn about the Demirci Mescid in a roundabout way, but it is clear that it was completed prior to 1508.⁴⁰ The Selman Ağa Mosque, also known as Horhor Mosque, was built by the *babiüssaade ağası* in 1506 according to its inscription.⁴¹ The mosque of Hacı Hamza or Toygar Hamza was built prior to 1509-

Toygar Hamza, it seems that Ayverdi was mistaken about its date of construction; see note 39.

³⁸ Barkan & Ayverdi, *Istanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri*, p. 59. Âlşe binti Pîr Mehmed endows 10,000 *akçe* to be spent for the daily recitation of the Quran for her deceased husband Hazma Fakih. The endower indicates that she would like the reciters to be the imam and muezzin of her husband's mescid. This mescid, therefore, must have been completed prior to Hamza Fakih's death.

³⁹ “Vakfı-l merhum Davud Paşa b. Abdülhayyü’ş-şehir be-Küçük Davud Paşa,” ibid, p. 243.

⁴⁰ In the “Vakfı Fâtima Hatun binti Hâcî İbrâhîm” a certain amount of money is assigned to be paid to the imam of the Demirci Mescid (*mescid-i Demürci der nefsi Üsküdar*), ibid, p. 93. See also Haskan, *Yüzyıllar Boyunca Üskiðar*, p. 93-94.

⁴¹ Ayvansarayı, *The Garden of the Mosques*, p. 503.

1510.⁴² And finally, a certain Kazgancı Mosque must have been built in Üsküdar prior to 1523.⁴³ These were all mosques in small scale. Their construction indicate that a Muslim community, the exact size of which is impossible to predict, was taking form in Üsküdar at the beginning of the century.

The fact that there were royal gardens and summer palaces in Üsküdar also suggest that even though the town was integrated into the capital, it preserved its rural character. Pierre Gilles confirms this point in his account. He says, “Chrysopolis (Üsküdar) is not a city today, in fact it is a rural village and comprises few houses that are not side by side”⁴⁴ Süleyman the Magnificent built a palace in Üsküdar in 1555. He was depicted in a miniature painting in the *Hünernâme II* taking a rest in this palace. Rüstem Paşa, the grand vizier to Süleyman, also had a palace in Üsküdar. Starting with the reign of this sultan, especially the shores of Salacak hosted the summer houses of other high ranking officials. As for the gardens in the town, it was put forth that *Bağçe-i Üsküdar* ranked among the largest and most important gardens of the capital.⁴⁵ This garden was reportedly built by Mimar Sinan upon the request of the sultan.

⁴² “Vakf-ı Hâcî Hamza b. Kâsim”, ibid, p. 59. In this endowment deed, two properties associated with this mosque are located in the vicinity of the Davud Paşa mosque (“be nezd-i imâret-i Dâvud Paşa”). There is further evidence that Hamza Çelebi lived at the beginning of the 16th century. *Sicill-i Osmani*

⁴³ “Vakf-ı Şâhîhubân”, Barkan & Ayverdi, *İstanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri*, pp. 239. This *vakfiye* is dated 1523, and the benefactor here assigns a daily stipend for the mosque’s personnel. (“Ve kasaba-I Üsküdar’da Kazgancı mescidinün imâmına ve mü’zezzinine yevmî birer buçuk akçe virilüb günde birer cüz’ okiyalar”)

⁴⁴ Pierre Gilles, *de Bosporo Thracio libri III*, Lyon, 1561, p. 237. Prof. Stefanos Yerasimos kindly translated this part for me from Latin.

⁴⁵ Muzaffer Erdoğan, “Osmanlı Devrinde İstanbul Bahçeleri”, p. 171. Erdoğan and many other authors refer to the Üsküdar Sarayı as a summer palace built by Süleyman. Yerasimos, on the other hand, suggested that this sultan “restored the palace of Üsküdar”, implying that there was already a palace there. “Üsküdar,” *EI*, p. 924. Compliant with that, in the *Tezkiretü'l-Ebniye* this palace was recorded as a palace rebuilt, p. 119. If it was built on the remains of a former palace, was it formerly a Byzantine Palace. Furthermore, while Erdoğan suggested that Üsküdar sarayı was also known as Kavaksarayı, Yerasimos took the starting date of construction for the latter to be early seventeenth century.

To sum up, Üsküdar was already attached to the capital administratively and territorially at the beginning of the sixteenth century. By the 1550s, it acquired more rural characteristics than urban. Although it was not a particularly attractive location for ordinary people to settle, it was an essential location on trade routes arriving at and departing from Istanbul. Furthermore, the town was also an important location for courtly ceremonial and recreation. Royal women's interest in the town starting from mid to late sixteenth century need to be evaluated against this background.

1.3.1 Üsküdar in the imperial visual imagery

The visual material in Ottoman sources in which Üsküdar is depicted topographically is not abundant. The portrayal of the capital city itself was surely not in the agenda, systematically, of the Ottoman artistic tradition. As for Üsküdar, single representations are available only from later centuries.⁴⁶ From the sixteenth century, we will observe four illustrations.

The first of these is Matrakçı Nasuh's "map" of Istanbul in his *Beyān-i Menāzil-i Sefer-i Irākeyn*. Produced in 1537, it is a compilation of pictures that depict the places that Süleyman I passed by in his campaigns to the two Iraqs. The illustrations of cities and towns have some level of "topographical and architectural truthfulness"⁴⁷. The double-folio representation of Istanbul have received more attention from historians of art than any other city in the *mecmua*.⁴⁸ From among some 200 buildings, many of them are identifiable. Y. Seng argues that "the walled city of Istanbul and the suburbs of Galata and Eyub were depicted in great architectural detail. Üsküdar, however, ...was completely omitted". Based on this claim, she suggests that Üsküdar was left outside court culture. Since it belonged more to the everyday, the court historian did not see it

⁴⁶ One such Ottoman example is by Bozoklu Osman Şakir in the *Sefaretnâme-i İran*, a work similar to the *Menazil* in objective dated 1810. It is reproduced in Metin And, *Osmanlı Tasvir Sanatları: 1 Minyatür*, İstanbul, 2002, p. 103.

⁴⁷ H.D. Yurdaydin, *Beyān-i Menāzil-i Sefer-i Irākeyn*, Ankara, 1976, p. 161.

⁴⁸ Walter B. Denny, "A Sixteenth-Century Architectural Plan of Istanbul," *Ars Orientalis* 8, 1970, pp. 49-63.

worthy of keeping track of in a piece of official history.⁴⁹ In fact, only a very small part of Üsküdar's shores, and the Kızkulesi are displayed in the plan. W. Denny comments on the level of accuracy and analyzes the painting with regard to the artistic style of Matrakçı. One argument he proposes is that the artist used a kind of "architectural shorthand". On the whole, the depiction is not fully accurate. Some parts, for example the tip of the historical peninsula, is exaggerated in size, while others are compacted. Therefore, one may argue of a hierarchy about emphasizing certain parts or aspects of the city. Moreover, the shorthand that Matrakçı used was based on ideal-types of buildings and monuments such that the architectural specificities of single buildings were not always represented. Also in line with this practice, it is argued that "the artist of the Istanbul plan was primarily interested in *enumerating* the monuments of the city, with topographical accuracy very much a secondary consideration"⁵⁰.

Galata and Eyüp are, as Seng suggests, depicted in their entirety, which means that they were considered as part of court culture more than Üsküdar, which is incorporated only partially. However, one should also take into consideration that listing the types of buildings, especially the important, the most well-known ones were given more importance than geographical or architectural specifications. In the 1530s, Üsküdar hardly had any important buildings. However, the town was regarded as part of court culture. If the town was considered totally out of that, then the artist might as well not depict it at all. Small as it is, however, Üsküdar is there on the plan. The contemporary buildings on the territory were perhaps just not worthy of keeping track of based on the criteria of the artist. Therefore, it was one of those areas that was compressed by the artist.

The second illustration of Istanbul that comprises Üsküdar is by Piri Reis.⁵¹ It is probably based on the original version of the *Kitab-i Bahriye* produced in 1521. The production date of this topographic view of Istanbul is estimated to be sometime in the

⁴⁹ Seng, "The Üsküdar Estates," pp.23-24.

⁵⁰ Denny, "A Sixteenth-Century," p. 51. [italics from original text]

⁵¹ It is from a manuscript in the Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art.

seventeenth century.⁵² The plan shows the Istanbul proper, Galata, the Anatolian shores from Üsküdar to Bostancı, and the Princes' Islands.

In the illustration of the Asian side, Üsküdar and Kadıköy are somewhat compressed. Here, Kadıköy falls right across Istanbul. In reality, it is even far beyond, to the east, where Fenerbahçe is depicted on the plan. This was either a conscious choice to be able to incorporate Kadıköy, Fenerbağçası, and Bostancı into the map, or, since this is not an original copy, the reproducer did not imagine the place of Üsküdar with respect to Galata and Istanbul. Navigational exactness was in this way undervalued. In Üsküdar, the imperial gardens (*Üsküdar Bağçası*) to the east of Salacak, the Şemsi Paşa Mosque are shown and labeled as such. The Mihrimah Sultan mosque is also discernible, but it is not labeled. The inhabited areas are also clearly noticeable with the duplication of small rooftops, and minarets and domes of mosques scattered in between. This area is marked along the shoreline bounded by the imperial gardens on one side and the Mihrimah Sultan Sarayı on the other. Then, the area continues up the hill like a flawed triangle. This part of Üsküdar looks more like a continuation of the city across the Bosphorus. Kadıköy, Fenerbahçe and Bostancı are much less populated, with fewer mosques; they were suburban sites. The Külliyes of Gülfem and Nurbanu are absent in this plan. Since Mihrimah built after Gülfem and before Nurbanu, this cannot be a simple matter of chronology. Even if it was, meaning that this copy was produced sometime after 1548⁵³, Gülfem's *külliye* is still disregarded. Why was it not worthy of depicting in a map of the Ottoman capital? Other buildings in the map are all imperial ones and the artist did not align Gülfem's mosque with the others.

The next depiction of Istanbul comes from the *Hünernâme*, produced during the reign of Sultan Murad III in the 1580s⁵⁴. It is commonly attributed to Veli Can, a leading artist of Persian origin, in the court of the mentioned sultan. Here again, similar

⁵² This map, together with others in the manuscript was reproduced and discussed by Svat Soucek in his *Piri Reis and Turkish Mapmaking after Columbus: The Khalili Portolan Atlas*, London, 1996, p.110. The Sultan Ahmed (1616) and the Yeni Cami (1663), are both included in the illustration, therefore it was claimed that this version must have been produced sometime after the 1660s.

⁵³ At this time, Piri Reis could not have prepared this version since he produced the second version of the *Kitab-ı Bahriye* in 1526.

⁵⁴ Reproduced in *Hünernâme* ed. İstanbul, 1969

to Matrakçı's depiction, Üsküdar is shown simply to mark its existence. Only the tip of earth, probably where the Üsküdar İskelesi stands today, is seen. The unique style of the artist is at once noticeable with his depiction of houses and other monuments in geometrical shapes. In this plan on double-folio, the emphasis is on Istanbul proper, it does not have a more general perspective which includes the attached lands to the city as in Piri Reis. The Hünernâme is considered as a monumental work prepared in two volumes. The first comprises the deeds of the sultans from Osman Bey to Selim I and the second is reserved for Süleyman the Magnificent. Since this miniature comes from the first one, the negligence of Üsküdar may be explained by the town's relative unimportance as an urban settlement, not yet adorned by two imperial mosques.

The last miniature that we will observe here is from the *Şehinşâhnâme-i Murad-i Sâlis*. This illuminated manuscript also has two volumes, the first of which is dated 1581 and covers the reign of Murad III from 1574 to 1581. The second volume was completed in 1592 and presented to Mehmed III. In it the deeds of Murad III from 1581 to 1588 are described and illustrated.⁵⁵ In this miniature, the historical peninsula is portrayed in detail. The style of the artist is similar to Veli Can, perhaps Veli Can's plan of Istanbul was used here as a prototype. This plan, however, is drawn from a wider perspective, incorporating the whole town of Üsküdar. Istanbul, Galata, and Üsküdar as separate pieces of land⁵⁶ are given equal weight on the folio. Whereas the space between the important buildings and monuments are filled in with standard rooftops, representing houses, in Galata only a small part is represented in this way along the Golden Horn facing the Eminönü area. In Üsküdar, mainly the imperial architecture is portrayed; we see Üsküdar Sarayı, Mihrimah Mosque, Şemsi Paşa Mosque, and the Valide-i Atik Mosque. The Mihrimah Mosque is known to be at the shoreline⁵⁷,

⁵⁵ For further information on the *şehname* tradition, see Metin And's *Osmâni Tâsvir Sanatları*, *The Sultan's Portraits: picturing the House of Osman*, İstanbul, 2000 and Filiz Çağman's, "Ottoman Miniature Painting", *Ottoman Civilization 2*, H. İnalçık and G. Renda (eds.), Ankara, 2004, 892-931.

⁵⁶ They are labeled on the plan as: Kostantiniyye, Galata, and Üsküdar.

⁵⁷ In Mihrimah's vakfiye, the place of the mosque is referred to as (*leb-i deryada*).

however, it was drawn as if it had some distance from the sea.⁵⁸ Furthermore, in Üsküdar, the two labeled buildings are “Üsküdar Sarayı” and “Valide Sultan Cami”. The Gülfem complex is once again omitted. This manuscript was produced during the reign of Murad III, when Nurbanu was the *valide* sultan. Her influential personality could have been one determinant about the inclusion of her complex in such an artistic output sponsored by the court. However, as this study argues, all three complexes must be considered as imperial mosques as much as or perhaps more importantly than as royal women’s charitable activities. Their construction apparently increased the importance of Üsküdar to be a noteworthy location, which is evident in their (and consequently of the town’s) visual representation in this *sehname*.

After the construction of the Atik Valide Complex, Üsküdar fully entered the imperial artistic intellect. The question of why the Gülfem Hatun Complex is neglected in these discussed manuscripts remains an open question. It is clear however, that this *külliye* is grouped with other minor mosques in Üsküdar at the time rather than with the mosques of Mihrimah and Nurbanu whose imperial character was undoubted for the patrons and artists of these manuscripts.

⁵⁸ I have taken the other mosque to be Şemsi Paşa, although it was drawn away from the shore, similar to Mihrimah’s Mosque. Approximately at the place where it was drawn, there is the Rum Mehmed Paşa Mosque, but that could not have been the mosque on the plan. That was not a more important building than the former mosque because as mentioned above, the construction of Rum Mehmed Paşa, as a converted mosque, was crucial in the 15th century. By the end of the 16th century, it must have lost importance.

CHAPTER 2

PATTERNS OF ARCHITECTURAL PATRONAGE AND THE *KÜLLİYE* OF GÜLFEM HATUN

2.1 Women in the Ottoman court and their architectural patronage

“Ottoman royal women” is in all-encompassing category that needs further elaboration especially with respect to architectural patronage. Although it is practical to use when referring to women who were associated with the Ottoman court, the specific nature of this association is quite crucial in deciphering both the identity of a single woman or the quality of her architectural patronage. This is especially important for the present study since each patron of all three mosque complexes studied here fall into a different subcategory. The four major subcategories are the princesses, legal wives, *hasekis* (*kadinefendis*)⁵⁹, and *valide sultans*. Princesses were the reigning sultan’s (or a *şehzade*’s) daughters and sisters. They were referred to as XX Sultan, “hanım sultan”, and from the seventeenth century on as “sultanefendi”. A *haseki* was the favorite of the reigning sultan in his harem. *Valides* were the mothers of princes or Sultans. The title *valide sultan* was used first in the sixteenth century when the mothers started to enjoy considerable power in the court. Gülfem, Mihrimah, and Nurbanu all fall into different categories in the list. Gülfem built as a *haseki* (?), Mihrimah as a princess, and Nurbanu as a *haseki* and legal wife.

Architectural patronage has previously been taken up as a major research topic and has been studied in relation to ‘women in the Islamic world’ or in the Middle East.

⁵⁹ The title of *haseki* came to be used from the 16th century onwards. Çağatay Uluçay, *Harem II*, 1971, Ankara, p. 44.

This more general issue has in recent decades especially received the interest of Western historians and social scientists. Individual research falsified many of the Orientalist ideas Western scholars were raised with. Women who lived in an Islamic society were popularly imagined in Western societies to be forever inferior to all other men. In that case, the research that Western scholars have conducted on Islamic women in general and on Ottoman women in particular, as well as their findings are extremely valuable because they essentially challenged the former view. However, their methodology has a problem. It seems that disputing the Orientalist discourse came to be valued over getting closer to how societies functioned in the past. In this scheme, Ottoman women were presented as powerful and as having had legal, social, and economic rights, which all have true basis. Nonetheless, elaborating the “true” status of Ottoman women as opposed to both the dominant Western conceptions and the Turkish/Nationalistic/patriarchal models dominated their accounts. Right now, it seems necessary to compromise between these two extreme approaches.

Royal women and the extent to which they shared power attracted attention in a similar manner. For one thing, there were definitely more sources available for this group of women. I suggest that ‘royal women’s architectural patronage’ cannot be an independent category of analysis because it is doomed to be incomplete, which we see in the case of Üsküdar. Yet, we could at least have some data to discuss, if by any means, such deficient literature had even partially accumulated.

Four essays are specifically devoted to the issue of architectural patronage of royal Ottoman women⁶⁰. In addition, Leslie Peirce discussed the issue as part of a chapter in *The Imperial Harem*. To my knowledge, the works of Bates and Peirce are the most cited ones, especially in the literature published in the last two decades, whenever Ottoman women’s building activities are mentioned. The general tendency is that the arguments of these two scholars are repeated unchallenged. The references for

60 These are: Ülkü Bates, “Women as Patrons of Architecture in Turkey,” in *Women in the Muslim World*, L. Beck and N. Keddie (eds), Cambridge Mass., 1978, 245-60, and Ülkü Bates, “The Architectural Patronage of Ottoman Women,” *Asian Art* (Spring 1993): 50-65, and Leslie Peirce, “Gender and Sexual Propriety in Ottoman Royal Women’s Patronage,” in *Women, Patronage and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*, D. Fairchild Ruggles (ed), New York, 2000, 53-68. Also, Tülay Artan, “Periods and Problems of Ottoman (Women’s) Patronage on the Via Egnatia”, in *The Via Egnatia under Ottoman Rule 1380-1699*, E. Zachariadou (ed), Rethymnon, 1996, 19-43.

these studies were the accounts of chroniclers, foreigners, and what we might call a first wave of literature that include such historians as Çağatay Uluçay and İ.H. Konyalı. Tülay Artan studies the architectural patronage of Ottoman princesses in the eighteenth century in the Balkans in general and on Via Egnatia in particular. She studies the ramifications of the formation of a novel imperial culture on the power and patronage of princesses. Artan is also interested in the sources of the princesses' income and how they relate to the imperial landholding system because she underscores that the physical availability of resources is a fundamental determinant in patterns of imperial patronage.

Other than the works that aimed to discuss Ottoman royal women and their patronage as a general issue, there are essays that took a particular court-affiliated woman and her building, such as study of L. Thys-Şenocak⁶¹. These examined the architectural patronage of a Valide Sultan or a princess having taken into consideration the previous literature but considered their works separately without offering a different paradigm. A. Singer's essay⁶² is one rare documental study that looked at the imperial endowment of Hürrem and asked some crucial questions for future studies. Otherwise, women's buildings are discussed within the general headings of imperial mosques -as in H. Crane⁶³-, or in the extensive architectural history of the empire -G. Goodwin⁶⁴-.

⁶¹ Lucienne Thys-Şenocak wrote a PhD dissertation on the Yeni Valide Mosque Complex in Eminönü. She also published the articles, "The Yeni Valide Mosque Complex of Eminönü," *Muqarnas* 15 (1998) and "The Yeni Valide Mosque Complex of Eminönü, Istanbul (1597-1665)," in *Women, Patronage and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*, D. Fairchild Ruggles (ed), New York, 2000, 69-89. Also produced are studies that present general and very limited amount of information about a building or a complex together with the translation or the transliteration of its *vakfiyye* (endowment deed), *inşaat defteri* (construction book) and the inscriptions. See for example, Mücteba İlgürel, "Kösem Sultan'ın Bir Vakfiyesi," *Tarih Dergisi* 16.21 (1966): 86-92, or İbrahim Hakkı Konyalı, "Kanuni Sultan Süleyman'ın Annesi Hafsa Sultan'ın Vakfiyesi ve Manisa'daki Hayır Eserleri," *Vakıflar Dergisi* 8 (1969): 47-56, or Sadi Bayram and Bayram Tüzen, "İstanbul-Üsküdar Ayazma Cami ve Ayazma Cami İnşaat Defteri," *Vakıflar Dergisi* 199-288, or Nihat Yörükoglu, *Hafsa Sultan ve Külliyesi*, Ankara, 1993, or Çağatay Uluçay, *Manisa'daki Saray-i Amire ve Şehzadeler Türbesi*, İstanbul, 1941.

⁶² Amy Singer, "The *Mülknames* of Hürrem Sultan's Waqf in Jerusalem," *Muqarnas* 14 (1997): 96-102. In this essay, Singer discussed imperial decrees (*ferman*), which were twelve *mülknames* that Süleyman presented to Hürrem. With these, Süleyman gave his wife certain properties and assigned her as benefactress and patroness.

⁶³ Crane, "The Ottoman Sultan's Mosques".

Ottoman royal women in all categories as defined above began to commission architectural works as early as the fourteenth century. In looking for a pattern for who would build, on what scale and where, Leslie Peirce suggested that patronage was very much correlated with women's access to power and consequently to the resources. It was argued that "access to power and its prerogatives was determined in large part by the life-cycle stage of the individual and his or her sexual and reproductive status"⁶⁵. Therefore, it was the gender, age, and sexual status of the patron that shaped the patterns of her architectural patronage.

Up until the time of Süleyman, Peirce suggests that female patronage was practiced based on a certain principle, which was "political motherhood"⁶⁶. Because giving birth to a male child was determinant in achieving political status and power, slave concubines built if they bore sons to the Sultan while the official wives did not if they were not mothers to princes. Related to this rule, it was further suggested that being a royal mother also brought with it an elder identity to the woman. As the sexual activity of a concubine ended after giving birth to a son, she was then considered to have reached "postsexual status". In this senior phase of their lives, royal mothers could build, but only in the provinces.

Regarding the buildings of the princesses, they too were active patrons of buildings that served the public as early as the early fourteenth century. We know that Mehmed II and Bayezid II granted land to their wives and daughters in the form of *mülk* (freehold) or *başmaklık* (serjeanty) to be converted into *vakıf*.⁶⁷ Although it was not until the sixteenth century that princesses come to enjoy building in large scales, they did build in the capital city.⁶⁸ In this century, for example, Şah Sultan, Selim I's

⁶⁴ Godfrey Goodwin, *A History of Ottoman Architecture*, 1971, London.

⁶⁵ Peirce, "Gender and Sexual Propriety," p. 53.

⁶⁶ Ibid, pp. 55-56.

⁶⁷ Artan, "Periods and Problems", p. 33.

⁶⁸ See ibid, pp. 32-36. While Artan looked at the sources of income for princesses, Leslie Peirce , without having taken the case of Ottoman princesses as a separate category, claims in "Gender and Sexual Propriety" that as a general rule, "it was a requirement that the imperial patron of public projects be an elder", p. 55. However, we

daughter and Süleyman's sister, built charitable complexes in Eyüp, Yenikapı and Davudpaşa. Moreover, Mihrimah built in Edirnekapı and Üsküdar. For both princesses, lands in the Balkans were granted to them for the upkeep of their *vakıfs* by Süleyman. The fact that the princesses built in the capital city from fifteenth century onwards suggests that we can group them together with the sultan and his viziers in taking part in "the 'acts of presence' of the royal family over the landscape of İstanbul".⁶⁹ Until mid-sixteenth century, however, the options of location to build for *valides* were limited to Bursa, Edirne, and where their sons served provincial duty.

One other point that is worth mentioning is usually ignored in the secondary literature. The age of Süleyman has generally been exemplified as if all royal women enjoyed the opportunity to commission major architectural projects. However, when we look at the life story of Mahidevran Haseki of Süleyman, we see that this supposition did not always apply. Whatever the reasons, she was ultimately made to leave the palace and live with his son Şehzade Mustafa in Manisa and Amasya. Upon the death of her son, she was forced to move to Bursa in 1553. She was deprived of the financial resources made available to other women in Süleyman's court, such as Hürrem and Gülfem. Eventually, she was only able to build a mausoleum for her son in Bursa.⁷⁰ Being a *haseki* of Süleyman and having given birth to a prince did not guarantee access to power. In general, the architectural patronage of royal women, then, considerably depended on the consent of the Sultan. His support or opposition was without doubt a factor that shaped the various qualities of the building.⁷¹

will see below that Mihrimah was not an elder at the time of the construction of her complex in Üsküdar.

⁶⁹ Artan, "Periods and Problems", p. 38.

⁷⁰ Uluçay, *Padişahların Kadınları ve Kızları*, pp. 35-36.

⁷¹ Ülkü Bates arbitrarily argues that "[Ottoman royal women] had income from several sources and that they could act quite independently in terms of managing their own money" in "Women as Patrons of Architecture in Turkey", p. 257. We have seen that it has no substantial basis.

2.2 The First Mosque Complex in Üsküdar Built by a Court-affiliated Woman

The mosque of Gülfem Hatun has to date been underestimated. There is little but controversial information about this lady. She apparently lived in Sultan Süleyman's harem. As she was referred to in sources and on her tombstone as "Gülfem Khatun bint Abdurrahman" or "Gülfem Khatun", it is probable that she was of non-Muslim background.⁷² Leslie Peirce suggests that Gülfem was "the stewardess of the harem or some other high-ranking administrative official. One way or the other, her significantly high stipend shows that she must have had an imperative role in the harem".⁷³ When Yavuz Selim ascended the throne in 1512, Gülfem sent a letter to him to congratulate him and express her good wishes.⁷⁴ In this letter, she makes recommendations for the new sultan about knowing one's friend and enemy. Moreover, Uluçay also reports a reference to Gülfem in a *tuğra* (monogram) of Süleyman dated 1522. Süleyman refers to her as a "highly regarded woman".⁷⁵ Moreover, Hürrem mentions Gülfem in a letter of hers to Süleyman. It is interesting that Gülfem is referred to as the sultan's concubine and nurse.⁷⁶

The Gülfem Hatun Mosque complex in Üsküdar is near the Valide-i Cedid Mosque, close to the shoreline, and has a quarter around it. It was composed of a mosque, *imaret*, *medrese*, *mekteb*, mausoleum and caravanserai. The medrese and

⁷² In *Kadınlar Saltanatı*, Ahmet Refik Altınay, reports a story about Gülfem which is unsupported by historical evidence. Also, the story cannot be true simply because Gülfem was a concubine already in 1512.

⁷³ Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, pp. 302 no12, 133.

⁷⁴ Çağatay Uluçay, *Haremde Mektuplar*, İstanbul, pp. 59-60.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 59. It says, "seyyidet-ül-mukadderat ve tac-ül-mesturat Gülfem Hatun dâmet iffetüha..."

⁷⁶ Haskan, Haskan, *Yüzyıllar Boyunca Üsküdar*, p. 202-203. "Bayezid bendeniz, Cihangir bendeniz, Mihrimah cariyeniz, ayak topraklarınıza yüzlerini sürerler...Gülfem cariyeniz ve dayeniz mübarek ayağınız topraklarına yüz sürerler..."

mekteb are no longer extant. The medrese was possibly destroyed prior to the eighteenth century as Ayvansarayi does not mention it. The mekteb was torn down in 1940.⁷⁷

Gülfem's vakfiye is dated 949 (1542).⁷⁸ Her mosque complex was completed in 946 (1539-1540). Gülfem initially endows 360, 000 *akçe* in cash. In addition to her *hayrat* in Üsküdar, she also commissioned two fountains and one school in Manisa, for which she endowed a number of properties in İstanbul⁷⁹. She endowed 30 shops in Manisa to her mosque in Üsküdar. She also endowed 5 shops in Üsküdar near the caravanserai for her mosque complex.

According to her vakfiye, Gülfem Hatun appointed the aghas of the Old Palace to administer her waqf, after she passed away. For this reason, it is likely that she did not have any children (or none had survived till 1542).

There is an important issue that needs to be highlighted here. The Haseki Hürrem Mosque complex was also completed at the same time, in 1539-1540. That complex initially included a mosque, *medrese*, *mekteb*, and *imaret*. A hospital was added in 1550. The resources used for the construction and upkeep of Gülfem's *külliye* were relatively more dependent on her “personal property” (when compared with the complexes of Hürrem as well as with Mihrimah and Nurbanu). The fact that by this time Gülfem was a wealthy and highly respected woman in Süleyman's court made her available the imperial resources. Mimar Sinan was definitely involved in the construction of Gülfem's külliye as the Gülfem Hatun medrese is mentioned in the *Tezkiretü'l-Ebniye*. As the first significant complex for this study, the fact that Gülfem built in Üsküdar just when Hürrem had her complex is reminiscent of Gülfem's esteemed position in the court. It is unlikely that she was a *haseki* around 1540. Remembering that Gülfem wrote Selim I a letter in 1512, then in 1540, she must have been at least in her late 40s. The location of Gülfem's complex is suggestive of the initial interest of the court to build there, in Üsküdar.

⁷⁷ Haskan, *Yüzyıllar Boyunca Üsküdar*, p. 911.

⁷⁸ *İstanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri*, pp. 435-436.

⁷⁹ Haskan, *Yüzyıllar Boyunca Üsküdar*, p. 201. This might suggest us that Gülfem was in Süleyman's harem when he was the governor of Manisa.

CHAPTER 3

THE IMPERIAL MOSQUE COMPLEXES OF MIHRIMAH AND NURBANU SULTANS

3.1 Mihrimah Sultan Külliyesi: a choice conscious or random?

3.1.1 The Identity of an Influential Princess

Mihrimah Sultan was the single daughter of Süleyman the Magnificent. She is perhaps the most well known of all Ottoman princesses. The attention she received from contemporary and modern recorders of history alike is due to a number of reasons. As the daughter of the magnificent sultan, she was surely unique. Furthermore, she was the daughter of Hürrem Sultan, and the wife of Rüstem Paşa, which sometimes enhanced the prestige, but more often the criticism that she received. Her familial relationships and the way she used them certainly made her a controversial figure. It is how she might have used her connections and the level of power and access to resources these provided her is our primary concern with regard to absorbing her identity.

Very few of the single events of her lifetime have been recorded. She was well educated, which is evident in the letters she wrote.⁸⁰ In December 1539, she was married to Rüstem Paşa, who was at the time the *beylerbeyi* of Diyarbakır. They did not have an independent marriage ceremony; it was integrated into the circumcision festival

⁸⁰ Her letters currently at the Topkapı Palace archives were published by Çağatay Uluçay, *Haremde Mektuplar*, 1956, İstanbul.

organized for princes Bayezid and Cihangir.⁸¹ An exception made first for Mihrimah was to let her stay in Istanbul even after she got married. The tradition was that once princesses were married, they would move to wherever their husbands served their duty. Mihrimah, on the other hand, did not accompany her husband to Diyarbakır.

Shortly after they got married, Rüstem was assigned to the post of second vizierate in 1541. Eventually, in 1544, Rüstem Paşa was appointed grand vizier following Hadım Süleyman Paşa. The accusations for Mihrimah start with this appointment. She is said to have used her position to get her husband to this position, which lasted for nine years. In 1553, Rüstem was discredited and was dismissed from office due to the rumors that Hürrem, Mihrimah, and Rüstem were involved in the death of Süleyman's eldest son, Mustafa.

Mihrimah not only had a very close emotional relationship with her father, but she also had influence over him in political matters. The hints of such an influence are told especially for the latter part of the sultan's reign. Süleyman the Magnificent went on his last campaign in 1566. It is distinguishable from other campaigns of being the first after many years of no campaigns personally led by this sultan. Mihrimah persuaded her father, together with Şeyh Nûrûddîn, "that [he] had long been neglecting the requirement to campaign in person against the infidel"⁸². Although Mihrimah's

⁸¹ In fact, until the 18th century, it was customary to incorporate the marriage ceremonies of princesses and other royal ladies, for example sisters of sultans, into some other ceremony, usually being a royal circumcision festival. However, as Zeynep Yelçe noted, the former grand vizier, İbrahim Paşa and Süleyman's sister, Hatice Sultan, were married in 1524 and had their own ceremony, which lasted for two weeks. Moreover, this event is elucidated in detail in many contemporary sources. Yelçe interpreted this emphasis as an effort "to favor İbrahim Paşa and to legitimate his appointment as grand vizier by showing to all that he is very close to the sultan, that the sultan values him and moves him forward" in her "Evaluating three imperial festivals: 1524, 1530, 1539" unpubl. paper for HIST 622, Spring 2003, Sabancı University. Taking into consideration the extreme pompous nature of the 1524 festival, it may also be tied to the relatively more arrogant attitude of Süleyman in the early years of his reign. On the other hand, the wedding of Rüstem and Mihrimah was not mentioned, for example by Celalzade, Solakzade, or Peçevi. Only Selaniki mentioned that on the day of the wedding, Mihrimah left the *Sarây-i Atîk*, p.170-171. Uluçay listed Mihrimah under the title "Osmanlı tarihinde düğünleri dillerde dolaşan sultanlar" in *Harem II*, p. 95, although no further detail is put forth.

⁸² Alan Fisher, "The Life and Family of Süleymân I" in *Süleymân the Second and his time*, H. İnalçık and C. Kafadar (eds) İstanbul, 1993, pp. 6, 9-10. Şeyh Nûrûddîn was recorded as Mihrimah's religious confident. I was not able to track him in *Sicill-i Osmani*. Babinger claimed that she was so ambitious that for the campaign on Malta she

efforts, whether presumed or real, cannot be considered as the single reason for the sultan's decision, the fact that she was recorded as an influential figure in this situation is worth mentioning. This is one important manifestation that she was remembered as a person who could have such an influence on Süleyman.

Mihrimah Sultan also received much attention for the personal possessions she had acquired. By the time her father died, Mihrimah had become a very wealthy woman. Part of her wealth came from her father. However, as we also know that Rüstem Paşa was a very rich man, he possibly shared his wealth with his wife. When her brother Selim ascended the throne, she offered to give him from her own savings 50,000 gold coins to be distributed as *cü'lüs bahşisi* to the janissaries.⁸³ It seems only natural that the daughter of a sultan like Süleyman should be rich. But again, the fact that the level of her affluence was speculated about, even by foreign observers, indicates that this was yet another issue in which she was exceptional.

Mihrimah Sultan must in fact have caught much attention from Western power holders. She is one rare princess of whom abundant visual representations have survived to our time. The portraits of Mihrimah began to be produced as early as the sixteenth century. In fact, later works are considered to be copies of an original. Portraits of Hürrem and Mihrimah attributed to the Italian artist Tiziano, by Vasari the historian, are unfortunately lost. These are thought of as the prototypes of the many copies of Hürrem and Mihrimah portraits that are today spread all over the world.⁸⁴

had “offered to equip 400 galleys for this campaign at her own expense”, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 6.

⁸³ Selaniki Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selânikî* M. İpşirli (ed), 1989, İstanbul, p. 43. Selaniki wrote, “Ve serîr-i sultanat-ı cihân-bâniye cülûs eylediklerinde cümleden mukaddem selâtîn-i mu‘azzama vü mükerremeden Mihrümâh Sultân hazretleri gelüp mülâkât eyleyüp, âteş-i hasret ü firkat ile yanup yakılıp giryân u sûzân olmuşlar ve Hazîne-i Âmire’yi açdırımayup, Sultân hazretlerinden elli bir altun karz almışlar...” Since the secondary sources reasonably all take the amount as fifty thousand, I assume the “elli bir” in the transcription to be a typographical error.

⁸⁴ “Çağlarboyu Anadolu’daki Kadın: Anadolu kadının 9000 yılı”, 1993, Ankara, no. C50. This entry gives further examples of the portraits that were based on Tiziano. They are in various museums and private collections. Some of these are, the 17th century copy in Rahmi Koç private collection, 16th century copy commissioned by the Medicis in the Uffizi in Florence, and the 16th century copy at the Courtauld Institute in London. The copies in the Medici collection have recently been exhibited in İstanbul at the Sakıp Sabancı Museum.

The princess is commonly accepted to have passed away in 1578. She was buried beside her father inside his mausoleum. The fact that she was not buried in one of her mosques is noteworthy. This was perhaps the last source of prestige she was awarded. For more than a century, nobody else was buried here. In fact, it was not customary for princesses to be buried next to their fathers until the age of Murad III.

3.1.2 The Rüstem Paşa Connection

As we have noted that Mihrimah's power and prestige did not only come from her father, it will be necessary to look at the other sources of prestige and income to the princess. In this case, Rüstem will be considered because he might have a direct or indirect influence on the decision to build Mihrimah's mosque in Üsküdar.

Rüstem Paşa was of slave origin. Being the grand vizier conferred him to be an active and direct participant to politics at the highest level. But he also availed himself of being the royal son-in-law. He was dismissed from office after the death of Prince Mustafa. Until he regained his position, he and Mihrimah reportedly stayed in their palace in Üsküdar. The construction of this palace is usually mentioned together with Mihrimah's mosque in the town. Dernschwam notes that he visited Rüstem and Mihrimah in their palace. He also notes that "with the money Rüstem acquired through unlawful means large gardens, kiosks, a caravanserai, a mosque, and an imaret in Üsküdar".⁸⁵ Dernschwam mentions twice that the mosque complex of Mihrimah was commissioned by Rüstem. This claim indicates that Rüstem was associated with the complex in popular memory, which reinforces the hypothesis that he was involved in the choice of building it in Üsküdar.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Hans Dernschwam, *İstanbul ve Anadolu'ya Seyahat Günlüğü*, Ankara, 1987, p. 53.

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 84. "Across İstanbul, in Üsküdar, [Rüstem Paşa] built a mosque. Next to the mosque, he built a caravanserai which he endowed to the mosque. Here, people stay in exchange for money, and the homeless eat. In addition, Rüstem Paşa built a villa (*konak*) inside a large garden in Üsküdar".

The efforts of Hürrem and Mihrimah must have contributed Süleyman's decision to give Rüstem his former position and powers associated with it. However, the sultan also must have believed to some level that he would be a good grand vizier. Süleyman had trusted him and caught sight of his qualities long before he married Mihrimah.⁸⁷ Peçevi Efendi's claims about him likewise allude to this conclusion. He said that Rüstem "won the love and respect of the sultan with his brilliance, ideas and services, maturity, decorum, religiosity, and honesty"⁸⁸. The same historian further informs us that thanks to Rüstem's abilities and the monetary policies he implemented, the treasury was filled. Although he won the trust of the sultan, whether he enjoyed public popularity is rather doubtful. He initiated "the granting of state sources of income to officials as tax farms (*iltizam*) rather than the traditional usufruct land grants (*timar*), and the attachment of what might be called a 'bestowal tax' (bribery to its critics) to the grant of high office"⁸⁹. He also reportedly found alternative ways to generate more wealth for the treasury. His policy included the instigation of selling the flowers and vegetables raised in the imperial gardens.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ De'Ludovici noted, in 1534, the tension raised by İbrahim Paşa when he heard that "the sultan often sought the advice of Rüstem (who at the time held the outer palace office of Master of the Stable), İbrahim jealously dispatched the new favorite to a distant provincial governorate (Diyarbakır)" in Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, p. 76. See Peirce for other contemporary foreigners who commented on Rüstem.

⁸⁸ Peçevi, *Peçevi Tarihi I*, p. 17.

⁸⁹ Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, p. 77. Peçevi confirms these claims. Nonetheless, his tone is a positive one as he explains the policies of Rüstem. Rather than emphasizing public discontent during his office, Peçevi recorded just the opposite. He noted, "onun sadrazamlık dönemi alemin mutlu günleri olmuştu öyle ki ortalıkta güvenlik ve asayıf ile herkes işinde gücünde safra sürmekten geri kalmadı. Uç boylarında tek bir köy, hatta tek bir ev bile talan olunmadı", p. 17. Conversely, ambassador Navagero's successor commented that nobody liked him because of his greediness. Cited in Peirce, ibid. In contrast to the Italian ambassadors, the Austrian ambassador Busbecq admired Rüstem Paşa very much and he hoped that he return to his previous position. Interestingly, the only defect he saw in Rüstem was his greediness. M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, "Rüstem Paşa ve Hakkındaki İthamlar" *Tarih Dergisi*, 1956, İstanbul, p. 11.

⁹⁰ Gökbilgin, "Rüstem Paşa", p. 11. Although Gökbilgin does not note his reference for this piece of information, the entry of "Rüstem Paşa" in *Islam Ansiklopedisi* repeats it but gives Busbecq as its reference. I think we should have archival evidence about whether the products of imperial gardens were sold to provide income. Gülrü Necipoğlu, in her "The Suburban Landscape of Sixteenth Century İstanbul", in *Gardens*

We get the sense that Rüstem Paşa was both liked and admired by some and hated by others. One thing that is certain is that, whatever his true methods were, he knew how to make money. With these methods, he made the state, as well as himself, rich. At this point, it is more crucial for us to look at his connections with issues related to trade and trade routes. Formerly we have seen that the supply of basic foodstuffs for İstanbul was one thing the state valued for the sake of the people and itself from the time of Mehmed II on. Gökbilgin notes that in the sixteenth century there were several occasions of food shortages in İstanbul. This was caused by an excessive and most of the time ambiguous exportation of foodstuffs. Moreover, a lot of the transactions stayed out of the record, and therefore were uncontrolled. Rüstem Paşa realized that some high ranking officials not only sold food crops from the lands they had control over, but they also bought more amounts from others and sold them for higher prices to foreign traders. He informed the sultan about the situation to avoid internal shortages. Another issue Rüstem raised to the sultan along with this was about the “traders in Galata”. Rüstem Paşa accused them of previously having sold textiles illegally to the treasury. When they were banned, they tried to enter into the business of buying and selling foodstuffs.⁹¹

Rüstem was definitely involved in matters of trade. Apparently, he wished to take the initiative to regulate trade when he saw certain defective practices supposedly for the sake of the state. We have knowledge of how Rüstem Paşa used his wealth. He owned silk workshops in Bursa and tuzlas in Clissa. He also commissioned in İstanbul and in other parts of the empire a number of mosques, caravanserais, baths, *imarets*. Moreover, he had a library that contained some 5,000 books.⁹² Certainly, as an architectural patron, he is most famous for his mosque in Tahtakale. The Tahtakale area was established as one of the first commercial centers thanks to the easiness to do so with the already established commercial history of the area. Italian colonies had used

in the Time of Great Muslim Empires A. Petruccioli (ed) (Leiden, New York, Köln) states that these were sold but it was considered as a symbolic act. Perhaps Busbecq was not aware of this tradition.

⁹¹ Gökbilgin, “Rüstem Paşa”, pp. 12-15.

⁹² Mustafa Âli, cited in Altundağ et. al., *IA*, p. 802. Peçevi confirms that Rüstem Paşa left 5,000 books when he died.

Tahtakale as a commercial district, although they eventually left, it continued to be a commercial center. As an area that was already populated prior to Ottoman rule in the city, it must have been one of the areas that the new comers preferred to settle, or else were settled by the state. Furthermore, by the mid-sixteenth century Tahtakale had already become a congested region. Not surprisingly, then, the site of the Rüstem Paşa mosque was not unoccupied. In its place there used to be the *mescid* of Hacı Halil⁹³. There are diverse views about the construction date of this mosque. The absence of an inscription have resulted in the confusion. Özkoçak suggests that it must have been completed after Rüstem Paşa was deceased.⁹⁴ In that case, Mihrimah must have taken the responsibility to finish the project of Rüstem Paşa⁹⁵.

His identity and commercial interests goes well with the choice for his mosque. He had the prestige and had access to the means and power mechanisms to eliminate a former endower, and substitute his mosque with a somewhat larger complex (*istibdal*).⁹⁶ Taking into consideration the amount of time and money required to finish the project,

⁹³ Ayvansarayı, *The Garden of the Mosques*, p. 129. Also, Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, v.5, Nuri Akbayar (ed), İstanbul, 1996, p.1402.

⁹⁴ Özkoçak, “The Reasons for Building”, pp. 267-268. Özkoçak argues, in contrast to Zeren Tanındı’s claim that the mosque was built between 1549 and 1562, that the complex might have been completed even later than 1562. She showed that a *ferman* dated 1562 said that the mosque was completed after the death of Rüstem Paşa. This ferman was published in the exhibition catalogue “Osmanlı Padişah Fermanları”, Ayşegül Nadir (ed). no. 16 p. 57. It was addressed from the trustee (*mütevelli*) of his waqf to the kadi of İstanbul to “ask for permission to carry out the wishes of the late Grand Vezir”. Perhaps the mosque was not even near completion at this date since here, permission was asked to appropriate certain shops that were registered under the *evkaf* of Ayasofya.

⁹⁵ Hasanbeyzade confirms this point: “...ve zevci Rğstem Paşa rûhiyçün Tahte'l-kala'da bir musanna câmi-i latif ve medrese-i nazif bina idüp..” *Hasanbeyzade Tarihi*, Ankara, 2004, p. 165.

⁹⁶ This was definitely not a simple task. First, a *fetva* was taken from the şeyhülislam substantiating that the former *mescid* was no longer sufficient to fulfill the religious needs of the Muslim population. Obviously, this could only have been a reason on the surface, only a bureaucratic stipulation. To achieve the desired amount of space, some of the neighboring properties were purchased from individuals and foundations. The Hacı Halil Mescid was also rebuilt in Yenibahçe. Moreover, it should be no wonder that a fire broke out, which usually did in such cases. Aptullah Kuran, *Sinan: the grand old master of Ottoman architecture*, Washington, 1985, p.138.

one wonders, why bother to take so much trouble? It must have been rather imperative for Rüstem Paşa to have his complex exactly around this region. By having a mosque complex at this region not only would provide him physical access to the heart of the commercial activities, but even when he was not there, the visual presence, with its elevated position, of his mosque would constantly manifest the tradespeople of him and his desire to be forever involved in and associated with commercial matters.

Among the other architectural works constructed under the auspices of Rüstem Paşa are six “intercity caravanserais”. They were located in Akbıyık (Yenişehir), Karışdırın, Samanlı, Ereğli (Konya), Sapanca, and Tekirdağ.⁹⁷ Especially the number of caravanserais of Rüstem is noteworthy. Among the 19 caravanserais recorded in the *Tezkiretü'l-Ebniye*, nine are named after Rüstem Paşa. In this list, his urban *hans* are included.⁹⁸ Two of these, the Kurşunlu Han in Galata and the Kebeciler Han in Kapalıçarşı, are in İstanbul and the other is in Edirne.

The architectural patronage of Rüstem Paşa was obviously in support of commercial buildings. They were situated both at the heart of urban commercial centers and on points along trade routes. Although there is no evidence in state documents about a direct relation between Mihrimah’s mosque in Üsküdar and her husband, having observed the character and interests of this highly controversial grand vizier, along with Dernschwam’s account, it seems that Rüstem was instrumental in the construction of the complex in Üsküdar.

Moreover, in mid sixteenth century, the vizierial mosques had a wide list of purposes. They would serve the court more effectively if they built their mosques, for example, along routes used to go to campaigns. Yerasimos has shown that Sokollu, Kılıç Ali Paşa, and Sinan Paşa, as “three great admirals of the empire, ...established their mosques in districts where sailors lived when the fleet was at anchor in the capital” so that “these mosques served for their great collective prayers prior to the fleet’s

⁹⁷ In the *Tezkiretü'l-Ebniye*, Rüstem Paşa was recorded to have mosques in these locations. Rüstem Paşa has also a mosque in Bolvadin. Sâî Mustafa Çelebi *Book of Buildings: Tezkiretü'l-Bünyan and Tezkiretü'l-Ebniye (Memoirs of Sinan the Architect)* Hayati Develi (ed) Priscilla Mary İşin (tr) İstanbul, 2002, pp. 110-112.

⁹⁸ Kuran, *Sinan*, pp. 155-156.

departure”⁹⁹. From this utility perspective, why would Rüstem not suggest an investment that in the end he could benefit from?

3.1.3 The Mosque Complex of Mihrimah

This mosque is also known as İskele Cami. The complex used to be located on the seashore of Üsküdar. Today, the mosque is approximately fifty meters behind the shoreline, across today’s Üsküdar İskelesi. The dependencies of the mosque included an *imaret*¹⁰⁰, a *tabhane*, a *medrese*, and a *sibyan mektebi* (primary school). The kitchen and the *tabhane* are no longer extant.¹⁰¹ The *medrese* is today used as a health center and especially the interior has lost its original character as it was renovated to suit its present function. The *sibyan mektebi* has been converted into a children’s library. This small building has a rectangular shape and is covered by two domes.

The partitioning of the mosque from the sea dates to the beginning of the 18th century. When the Yeni Valide Mosque was being built, the seaside was filled with earth and the İskele Meydanı was rearranged with the addition of the fountain of Ahmed III.¹⁰² The nonexistent *tabhane* must have been around the place of this fountain. The *imaret* as a whole was estimated to have been positioned to the west of the *sibyan mektebi*, where the İskele Hamamı was later erected.¹⁰³

Together with the construction of this mosque, a major waterway in Üsküdar was also built. Two fresh waterways were designated as part of Mihrimah’s waqf. They

⁹⁹ Stefanos Yerasimos, “Sinan and His Patrons: program and location,” *Environmental Design* 1-2, pp. 126-127.

¹⁰⁰ Kuran noted that then the word *imaret* connoted a kitchen, *tabhane*, and caravanserai.

¹⁰¹ These demolished in a fire in 1722, Ibid. Also, Reha Günay, *Sinan: the architect and his works*, İstanbul, 1998, p.45.

¹⁰² Haksan, *Yüzyıllar Boyunca Üsküdar*, p. 264.

¹⁰³ Kuran, “Üsküdar’da Mihrimah Sultan Külliyesi,” p. 43.

originated from Kuzguncuk and somewhere near the Bağlarbaşı Caddesi, near the graveyards. One of these ran from a fountain below the *medrese*, and the other from near the ablution fountain (*sadirvan*) in the mosque. The inscription on the fountain was placed in 1681.¹⁰⁴ The construction of these waterways was crucial for the inhabitants of the town because this was the first project in Ottoman times to carry water flowing water from elsewhere in Üsküdar. Before, the Ayazma Deresi must have been sufficient to meet the water demands.

The overall Mihrimah complex is raised on a platform. This was done probably in order to achieve a straight piece of ground beside the sea against the steep hill rising up right behind the complex. The mosque is entered through the stairs near the flamboyant fountain of Ahmed III. The rectangular prayer hall is covered by a central dome and three semi domes.

The mosques encompasses two porticoes, because of a lack of space for a courtyard according to one view.¹⁰⁵ This characteristic apparently is not very common in Ottoman architecture. However, Mihrimah's other mosque in Edirnekapı and Rüstem Paşa's mosques in Tahtakale and Tekirdağ similarly had wide porticoes. Yerasimos has studied imperial and vizierial mosques built by Sinan and analyzed the need for "a vast covered space" in three vizierial mosques. The porticoes in the Mihrimah mosque similarly provided a large space just outside the mosque proper. The vast covered space in the mosques of Sinan, Piyale, and Kılıç Ali Paşa were proposed to meet the religious and perhaps the ceremonial needs of the fleet ready to depart. The Mihrimah might have been thought to serve a similar function.

In terms of imperial needs, we have mentioned that Üsküdar was occasionally used as the court protocol along with a large group of people as a first stop when departing for a campaign, sending a prince for provincial duty, and for pilgrimage. Furthermore, Üsküdar was not only considered as merely a passing point for the sultan

¹⁰⁴ The inscription was written in Arabic. It said: "Bu ab-ı hayat menbâi ne güzeldir/ Gönülleri susayanlar her zaman suyunu içsinler/ Belkis meşreblî Mihr-ü Mah Sultan bunun su yolunu yapmışdı/ Allah bu tarihte ona bu ab-ı hayat çeşmesini akitmağı nasib etti" Konyalı, Üsküdar Tarihi II. pp. 71-72. The waterways were discussed in Kazım Çeçen, *İstanbul'un Vakıf Sularından Üsküdar Suları*, İstanbul, 1991. Çeçen claimed that the waterways were both constructed in 1547. Konyalı confirmed this and added that the fountains were built afetr a few years.

¹⁰⁵ Goodwin, *Ottoman Architecture*, p. 213.

to stop for a few hours. There was an imperial summer palace and garden in Üsküdar, which means that for the sultan the town was considered as a seasonal recreational place and to rest for a few days upon leaving İstanbul and just before arriving it. More frequently, however, the trades people would be in town. 1540s when this mosque was being constructed, there were several other mosques in town but all were much smaller in scale. Even if those smaller mosques could provide enough space to accommodate the royal protocol, the presence of a larger mosque built by a member of the royal family would manifest imperial presence in Üsküdar all year long. Moreover, the caravanserai of the mosque would be a perfect location for merchants to stay temporarily.

The most important sign¹⁰⁶, which demonstrated that it was an imperial mosque was the presence of two minarets, a right reserved for the *cevami-i selatin* prior to the sixteenth century. The first mosque of a royal lady that had this characteristic was Hafsa Sultan's mosque in Manisa. The parameter of a wide dome –namely with a diameter ranging from 18 to 30 meters- does not apply here. The diameter of Mihrimah's mosque measures 11.4 meters, more similar to vizierial mosques. The identity of Mihrimah as a princess does not explain the restriction in the size of the dome. Her mosque in Edirnekapı had a much wider dome. It is true that Ottoman sultans, most notably Fatih and Süleyman, and sometimes the architects alike had an obsession with the dome size of imperial mosques. However, a grander dome was a crucial symbolic demonstration of superiority more for the sultan and his mosque. On the whole, this complex was not meant to be very grand in scale, the size of the dome must have been a natural consequence of this agenda. The technical difficulties of erecting a complex in between the sea and a steep hill might also be taken as a factor. The presence of two minarets is a more significant manifestation that it is an imperial mosque, because it is a symbol visually legible by a wider group of people viewing the mosque from both sides of the Bosphorus.

Although the completion date of construction is known, there is controversy over when the project was ordered and finished starting date. According to the inscriptions on the gate of Mihrimah's mosque, it was completed in Zilhicce 954 (July, 1548). The inscription said:

¹⁰⁶ The existence of a *mahfel-i şerif* is another one, mentioned in the *vakfiye* below.

The foundation was laid for the construction of this lofty-columned congregational mosque by the mistress of good deeds and benefactions, impeccable in matters secular and religious, Hanım Sultan –may God, the Exalted, distinguish her with the utmost beneficence- the daughter of the sovereign of sovereigns of the East and West, the sultan of sultans of the Orient and the Occident, who causes the world to prosper with justice and benevolence, who lays the foundations of safety and security for those of the Faith, the Sultan, son of the Sultan, Sultan Süleyman Khan ibn Sultan Selim Khan –may his caliphate be eternal! It was completed by the grace of the God in the sacred month of Zilhicce in the year nine hundred fifty-four [1548]¹⁰⁷

Aptullah Kuran argued that the date when the construction of this mosque began cannot be estimated with certainty. However, the date of completion coincided with that of Şehzade Mosque, which was built in honor of Şehzade Mehmed, the deceased son of Süleyman. As the prince died in 1543, the construction must have started around that time and lasted for five years.¹⁰⁸ By studying the formal architectural qualities of Mihrimah complex and comparing it with Şehzade Mosque, Kuran argued that the architecture of Mihrimah resembled more to the architecture of Bayezid II's time than to Şehzade.¹⁰⁹ Bearing in mind that Sinan completed the Haseki complex in 1539 or 1540, it is highly possible that Sinan was given Mihrimah's project between this time and 1543. Other architectural indicators were designated as well, which are about the minarets and interior organization of the complex in Üsküdar, in order to support the point that the construction of Mihrimah's mosque was interrupted to build the Şehzade Mosque, and completed after the latter project was finished.¹¹⁰

If the construction of the mosque in Üsküdar was in fact interrupted in order to be able to complete the Şehzade Mosque, this might suggest us a number of

¹⁰⁷ Ayvansarayi, *The Garden of the Mosques*, p. 492.

¹⁰⁸ There is also evidence that the construction of this mosque had already begun when the prince died. Had the prince not died, the Şehzade Mosque could have been Süleymaniye. Stefanos Yerasimos, *Süleymaniye*, İstanbul, 2002, pp. 45-46. Doğan Kuban also observed that “the foundations of the mosque had reached ground level when the prince died,” *Istanbul: an urban history*, İstanbul, 1996, p. 256.

¹⁰⁹ Kuran, “Üsküdar’da Mihrimah Sultan Külliyesi,” pp. 46-48.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

possibilities. Although Mihrimah had fixed income, her public architectural project was prone to manipulations dictated by more privileged members of the family, namely the Sultan. The imperial building projects depended on a network of resources and workers. Royal patrons did not have a variety of options to choose from in terms of, for example, architects. The *mimarbaşı* and his team, who worked like a workshop, would usually be automatically appointed when a building was planned to be built by royal family members and high ranking officials. The resources this team used also belonged to the Sultan.¹¹¹

3.13.1 The Vakfiye of Mihrimah Sultan

Two endowment deeds (*vakfiye*) of Mihrimah Sultan exist. One of these is used in this study.¹¹² The deed was prepared in Rebi'ülevvel 957 (1550), about three years after the mosque in Üsküdar was completed. A small piece of text was later attached, perhaps gradually, to the beginning. The last attachment must have been made in 1219.¹¹³

In a nutshell, the *vakfiye* identifies the founder, describes the foundation established with the identification of its charitable buildings established in Üsküdar, the properties endowed, and the conditions on how to run the waqf as determined by the founder. In addition, the employees together with their salaries and the amount of ingredients and type of food that will be cooked in the kitchen are identified.

¹¹¹ My thanks to Tülay Artan for her lectures on Ottoman Architecture in HUM 203 and HIST 625.

¹¹² Konyalı reported that there exist two *vakfiyes* of Mihrimah Sultan. They are at the Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi in Ankara and are both written in Ottoman Turkish. I did not have access to the second version because the archives were closed for the changes in the databases. The *vakfiye* that will be used here is in Defter 635 pp. 1-32.

¹¹³ It says that based on the *ferman* dated Zi'l-hicce 1219, the deed was recorded in the Accountbook of Anatolia (Anadolu Muhasebesi).

The vakfiye identified the superintendent (*vekil*) of Mihrimah Sultan as Mahmud Ağa bin Abdulmuin.¹¹⁴ The *şahids* were Cevher Ağa Bin Abdullah and Mercan Bin Abdurrahman.¹¹⁵ The kadı of İstanbul, Mehmed Bin Mehmed validated (*tasdik*) the vakfiye. Then, the endowment deed was registered first in Zilhicce 965 by Hamid Efendi and Mehmed Efendi.¹¹⁶

The vakfiye starts with a praise to God, the prophet and the reigning sultan. It also includes many expressions and prayers in Arabic. The transitory nature of this world, and the existence of an afterworld is emphasized.¹¹⁷ In eulogizing Mihrimah Sultan, various references to the most famous and respected women in Islamic are made. Mihrimah sultan is described as “the most valuable of the sovereignty, the exalted holder of perfection, of the innocence of Fatma, the purity of Hatice, the acumen of Ayşe, the nature of Belkis, the (female) sovereign of sovereigns, the pure being, equal to blessing, the crown and the exalted of benefactresses. She made the waterways abundant to acquire God’s merit, for beneficence she built public works. She is the holder of a beautiful lady’s characteristics, the favorite of the most honorable women, daughter of the sovereign with brilliant eyes, Rabia and Zübeyde of her time, holder of the perfection, and highest generosity and nobility of a sultan’s daughter may have”.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Although not specified in the *vakfiye*, he might have been the *babüssaade ağası*, the *su bendleri bina emini* of the time. *Sicill-i Osmani*, v.3 pp. 907-908. The *darıssaade ağası*, who was usually assigned to do the deeds outside the palace of royal women, would be a more predictable position for this ağa. See Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, pp. 132-134. Mahmud Ağa specified a further superintendent for himself, Hasan bin Abdulmuhsin. The witnesses for this supervision were Mahmud bin Veliyyülhatib and Musa bin Hacı.

¹¹⁵ I could not track the names of these two people in the *Sicill-i Osmani*. In the *vakfiye* they are only accredited as *zubdetu'l-akran* Cevher Ağa bin Abdullah and *umdetu'l-a'yan* Mercan bin Abdurrahman.

¹¹⁶ Hamid Efendi was the Rumeli kazaskeri and Mehmed Efendi was the Anadolu kazaskeri at that time. *Sicill-i Osmani*, v.2 p. 596 and v.3 p. 970.

¹¹⁷ In fact, parts from the Quran is spread throughout the vakfiye.

¹¹⁸ Mihrimah Sultan Vakfiyesi, p. 4.

With regard to the town of Üsküdar, the vakfiye says that “in a place which seems pleasant to hearts, to provide public service in a nice place by the sea (*sahil-i deryada bir mahall-i zîbada*) lofty *imaret* buildings were built based on sultanic order (*bervaz'-i ? sade-i sultani*)”. The mosque is described as “one that possesses happiness and that which is ornamented with nice words and stories, the ceiling of which is raised to brightness and skylight and very much resembles the ceiling of the God’s home¹¹⁹, the illuminated roof of which is full of joy quite akin to the rotating sky...”. Curiously, the minarets are not mentioned in plural form. It says, “the ornamented minaret is more beautiful than the tree of Tuba”.¹²⁰

For the waqf, the mosque in Üsküdar, a *medrese* consisting of 16 rooms (*hücre*) and a classroom (*dershane*), a guesthouse with eight partitions (*sekiz bab misafirhane*), a barn (*istabl*), a storehouse (*anbar*), a *kiler*, and an inn (*han*) were endowed. Other than these, Mihrimah sultan endowed 17 villages in Rumelia and one village and one meadow (*cayır*) in Anatolia. The exact location and the boundaries of all of these were noted down in detail.

With the proclamation of several imperial decrees (*mülknâme-i nami ve temliknâme-i sami*), the property rights of these lands were transferred to the princess. The issuing dates of these mülknames ranged between the years 952 and 959. The mosque was completed in 954. Therefore, when the sultan began to give his daughter the property rights of these villages, the ground for the complex was already broken. However, most of the grants were made in 954 or after.¹²¹ After the completion of the mosque, then, the *mülks* would immediately be used for the maintenance of the complex.

¹¹⁹ “beyt-i şerif”, the Kabe.

¹²⁰ Perhaps there was a typo in the transcription, but the adjectives are also in singular form. Mihrimah Sultan Vakfiyesi, p.5. Tuba: according to Quranic tradition, a tree whose branches cover the whole paradise

¹²¹ With a ferman dated 965 (1558), Süleyman granted two meadows in Üsküdar, and Tekfur Çayırlı in the *sancak* of Kocaeli, in the *nahiye* of Gebze to his daughter. Although not stated in the document, especially the *temlik* of lands in Üsküdar suggests that these might have been for Mihrimah to endow to her waqf. Nadir (ed), “Osmanlı Padişah Fermanları” no. 15, p. 55. If that is correct, then we may argue that *temlik*s continued beyond the latest date of issue of *mülknames* mentioned in the *vakfiye*, 959.

The sources of income for a waqf are in totality called “*mevkuf*”¹²². The *mevkuf* provide the resources for the maintenance of charitable institutions. Unfortunately, in the vakfiye, there is no information about how much income the villages would supply. We get some idea about the expenditures of the charitable institutions but a lot of data is also missing. As another source of income for the waqf, “*dekkâñ*” (shops) in Üsküdar were mentioned but the exact place and number of these was not specified. These must have been shops to be rented off in order to generate income.

After indicating the endowed properties, the expenditures for each part of the complex and other expenses are listed in detail. The qualifications and requirements for each member of staff are also explained in detail. In the *medrese*, the teacher (*müdderîs*) is assigned 50 *akçe* per day. This shows that it was a relatively large medrese. He was supposed to be an expert, dedicated to his work, and be present everyday at the school. The *medrese* is ordered to have 15 students (*talib’u-l ilm*), “eager to study sciences” and who would study and attend everyday to their courses, were supposed to be offered education at the *medrese*. Each student would be paid 2 akçes per day.

Vakife Mihrimah Sultan also designated how the waqf would be run. The *mütevelli* gathered all the monetary returns and counted them every year.¹²³ A *katib-i evkaf*, with 10 akçes of daily income, was responsible of noting down all calculations. Three *cabis* collected taxes and rents, and 2 *cibayet katibi* kept note of them.

According to my calculations, 59 different types of occupations are defined in the mosque. Thirty-eight are outlined for the *imaret*. The *imaret seyhi* was the manager. The food to be cooked at the kitchen, together with the ingredients, as well as the amount of heating material for the oven, were specified by the princess. The obligation of each worker together with the stipend for each are spelled out in detail.

A mechanism of inspection is also established with the vakfiye. For example, if an employee of the waqf did not perform his daily duties, his payment for that day would not be made. Furthermore, if the negligence of duty continues, this person would get a warning, but if the misbehavior is observed for the third time, then he will lose his job. At the end of the vakfiye, the necessary qualifications of mütevelli and his assistants were explained in detail. They were asked to perform their duties in the most

¹²² Yediyıldız, “Vakif”, IA, p. 156.

¹²³ The amount of his daily wage (*yevmiye*) was not legible in the vakfiye.

responsible and honest way. For the ones who would not, the worst of wishes (*beddua*) were pronounced.

It is clear that as a princess Mihrimah Sultan was very powerful, but there were still other factors about herself and her familial relationships that made her even more powerful and contentious. Clearly, she was the patron of the İskel Cami in Üsküdar.¹²⁴ But at the same time, when this complex is considered in relation to the building boom of the Süleymanic era then the general picture suggests that Mihrimah's mosque was a single piece in a grand puzzle. Also considering the commercial and occasional ceremonial needs of Üsküdar, a relatively larger mosque in the town was in mid sixteenth century a good investment for the court. Gülfem's mosque already was a sign of this. But Mihrimah's mosque was a more open manifestation of imperial presence in Üsküdar.

3.2 A Massive *Külliye* in Üsküdar: The Atik Valide Mosque Complex

3.2.1 Nurbanu Sultan

Nurbanu Sultan was the *haseki* of Sultan Selim II, and the mother of the next reigning sultan, Murad III. She practiced an unusual degree of power and prestige especially during the reign of her son as the *valide* sultan. When she was captured, probably by Barbaros Hayreddin in 1537, and brought to the Ottoman capital, she was still a child.¹²⁵ There is surely more ample evidence pertaining to Nurbanu after she entered the Harem.

¹²⁴ Hasanbeyzade also confirms this point: “Ve kerîme-i muhtereme-i pâdişâhî Mîhrûmâh Sultân, Üsküdar'da, leb-i deryâda, câmi-i şerif ve medrese ve imaret mekteb binâ buyurmuşlardır”, p. 165.

¹²⁵ Benjamin Arbel, “Nûr Bânû (c.1530-1583): A Venetian Sultana?,” *Turcica* 24, pp. 241-259. Arbel also discussed the prolonged confusion among historians of Nurbanu with Safiye, her daughter-in-law. With regard to his doubts about Spagni's conclusions, he pointed to the dubious identity of a certain Hasan, who presented himself as a secret agent of Selim, who was then competing with his brother Bayezid for the throne. L. Peirce and S.A. Skilliter accepted Nurbanu to be a Venetian. *The Imperial Harem*, 308 no.2

When Selim came to the capital to take over the rule, he was accompanied by Nurbanu who would be the new leader of the Harem as the much loved haseki of the sultan. Reminiscent of her predecessor Hürrem, who died in 1558, she did not leave the palace with her son to his provincial duty. Even before the tradition of princely governorate ended, which awarded the mother of the reigning sultan with a new position as the queen mother (*valide*), Hürrem and Nurbanu already began enjoying the power and prestige of being the haseki and legal wife of the sultan.

Selim and Nurbanu were married in 1571, on the fifth year of his reign, and the bride received a dowry of 110,000 ducats.¹²⁶ The love of the sultan caught also the attention of foreign ambassadors like Jacopo Saronzo who noted that “the *Chassecki* ...is said to be extremely well loved and honored by His Majesty both for her great beauty and for being unusually intelligent”¹²⁷.

The power of Nurbanu as haseki did not diminish when the sultan died. Since Hürrem had predeceased Süleyman, and therefore could not see her son become the sultan, she did not set a model to Nurbanu. She was the first *haseki*-wife and valide sultan. Moreover, before Nurbanu, the harem of the deceased sultan would move to the Old Palace. During and after the death of Selim, however, Nurbanu’s influential role in politics and in other matters at the palace did not decline but increased all the more. For this reason, she has been considered as the first of a number of subsequent powerful queen mothers.

When her husband died, upon Nurbanu’s command, his body was stored on ice (*buzlukda*). Then, the grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed Paşa took the initiative to secretly send the message to prince Murad, who was in Manisa serving his provincial duty. In describing the events, Selaniki referred to Nurbanu neither with her name nor as Selim’s wife.¹²⁸ As soon as he died, she acquired the title “valide”. In fact, the title “valide

¹²⁶ Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, p. 94. Based on the account of ambassador Jacopo Ragazzoni who said, "...bestowed upon her a dowry of 110,000 ducats, wishing to outdo his father, who had bestowed a dowry of only 100,000 ducats on the mother of Selim".

¹²⁷ Ibid, p. 93.

¹²⁸ Selaniki wrote: “A’yân-ı devlet ü sultanat kemâ-kân dîvân-ı adâlet-unvânda mesâlihi Müslimîn ve kazâ-yâ-ı dîn ü devlet görülmekde ve gurre-i ramazân-ı şerîfde vakt-ı

sultan” alone came to be used henceforth instead of “mother of Sultan X”¹²⁹. In the vakfiye of Nurbanu, too, she is referred to as “valide sultan”.

One manifestation of the enhanced position of the *valide sultan* was her augmented participation in imperial ceremonial. In this way, she was also more visible to the public. After Murad III ascended the throne in 1574, Nurbanu moved from the Old Palace to the harem at the Topkapı Palace. This travel of the new sultan’s harem headed by his valide became a standard practice in time and came to be known as the *valide alayı*. The participation of the *askeri* class, with the top religious and military authorities, made it a complete royal ceremony. On this occasion, the inhabitants of İstanbul had a chance to see another imperial procession with the queen mother, although she was not actually visible. As the procession moved, “the *valide sultan* received the obeisance of the agha of the Janissaries and in turn distributed bonuses to his troops”¹³⁰. Murad III received his mother at the palace on foot, which was a unique way of salutation for the sultans. Furthermore, she communicated her arrival to the grand vizier by sending him a robe of honor and a dagger.¹³¹

During the sultanate of Murad III, the female population of the harem increased quite significantly when compared with his father’s harem. Moreover, in the latter years of Murad’s reign, the sultan’s private quarters moved from the third courtyard into the harem. Nurbanu’s increased responsibilities reflected in her daily stipend. As the valide sultan, she received 2,000 aspers, nearly twice the amount she received during the reign of her husband. If income was indicative of the power of her position, she did have substantial power. The *seyhülislam* received 750 aspers, the agha of the Janissaries

tulû’da dünyâ-yı pür-anâdan rihlet idüp sarây-ı pür-safâ-yı âhirete gitdi. Kimesne bu sırra âgâh olmayup, Vâlide-i sa’âdet-penâh-ı Sultân Murad Han re’yiyle buzlukda mübarek cesedi hîfz olundı. Vezîria’zam-ı pür hazm u re’y ma’rifetiyle mektûb-ı mergûb-ı müş’ir-ı saltanat yine sâbikâ giden hasan Çavuş eliyle Manisa’ya gitdi. *Tarih-i Selânikî I*, p. 98.

¹²⁹ Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, p. 188. Other titles used for the mothers of sultans were “the great cradle” (*medh-i ulya*), and “the nacre of the pearl of the sultanate” (*sedef-i dürr-i sultanat*)

¹³⁰ Ibid, 188. Peirce likened this practice to the distribution of *cülaus bahşisi*.

¹³¹ Ibid. This was the standard practice for the procession of the valide. No precise evidence was encountered for the specific case of Nurbanu.

received 500, Murad's haseki Safiye received 700, and Mihrimah used to receive 600 aspers daily.¹³²

This power also reflected on her interest and occupation with political affairs. For example, she contacted the Venetian authorities to exchange gifts and ask for minor political favors. She also communicated with Catherine de Medicis to help establish good relations with the French court. To this end, she encouraged Catherine to send an embassy to Istanbul.¹³³ Nurbanu was also an advisor to her son in matters pertaining to the administration of the state. We learn from ambassadorial reports that the sultan consulted his mother, whom he trusted dearly. Before her death, Nurbanu especially advised her son to be rule justly, to avoid greediness, and to take good care of his son.¹³⁴

The valide sultan also began to appear more often in public than the sultan. This usually took place by way of imperial processions that traveled from one location to another in Istanbul. Additionally, her reputation spread by way of the charitable deeds that she was said to have done.

From a macro perspective, Leslie Peirce connected the increased visibility of the valide, actually the royal women in general, to two major changes that took place in the post-Süleymanic period. These were, "the greater physical proximity of royal women to the sultan, ...and changes in the system of succession to the throne, which resulted in a more vital role for royal mothers".¹³⁵ The abandonment of the tradition of sending the princes to the provinces resulted in the centralization, or sedentarization, of the extended dynastic family. When the royal family was decentralized, women contributed less to court politics, or they were less visible in these matters. Sultans hesitated to leave the capital for military campaigns because their hopes of conquering more lands seemed unlikely. In addition to that, they feared that a rebellious prince might claim the throne. Both this hesitation and fear contributed to the process of centralization. From the establishment of the Ottoman principality, however, the military victories had provided

¹³² Ibid, pp. 122, 126-127.

¹³³ Ibid, pp. 226-227.

¹³⁴ Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, p. 238.

¹³⁵ Leslie Peirce, "Shifting Boundaries : Images of Ottoman Royal Women in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Critical Matrix* 4, 1988, p. 45.

the basis for sultanic legitimacy. Without the victories, “the sultan’s charismatic appeal was based increasingly on displays of courtly magnificence and on non-military demonstrations of religious devotion, such as the construction of mosques and the refurbishment of the holy places of Islam”.¹³⁶ Royal women were also allowed to share the power of the sultan as they were permitted from mid-sixteenth century onwards to build in the capital and in greater scales than ever before.¹³⁷ We should also consider the construction activities of the vizierial mosques built both in and around Istanbul and along the main routes from the east to the west of the empire.

Before examining Nurbanu Sultan’s architectural patronage in general and the Atik Valide Complex in particular, the last issue pertaining to the specificity of Nurbanu’s identity is her funeral. She died in 991 (1583)¹³⁸ Typically, sultans would not leave the palace to attend funerals. In contrast to this tradition, Murad III walked all the way from the Topkapı Palace to the mosque of Fatih, where the funeral took place. The choice of this mosque for this particular ceremonial provided that the funeral procession moved for a fairly long way from the Topkapı Palace and back. In this way, the ceremonial itself and the contact with the commoners was ensured to take quite long. Nurbanu was buried beside her husband in the courtyard of Hagia Sophia. She was the first haseki who was buried with the sultans. Similar to the *valide alayı*, Nurbanu’s funeral was also attended by the court elite¹³⁹. The funeral is also known with a single miniature in the *Şehinşâhname*. It is like a snapshot representing the entire event.

This exceptional funeral was also recorded by the historian Selaniki. In referring to the valide sultan, he emphasized her association with pious deeds (*sâhibetü'l-hayrât ve'l-hasenât*). He further mentioned that after she was buried, “the wealth of a Pharaoh

¹³⁶ Ibid, pp.49-50.

¹³⁷ For a discussion of other categories of women’s participation in imperial manifestations of power, see Peirce.

¹³⁸ Selaniki, *Tarih-i Selânikî*, p. 141.

¹³⁹ Selaniki wrote, “cümle ulemâ-i izâm ve meşâiyih-i kirâm, erkân-ı sultanat tamâmen cenâze yanında yayan gidüp...”, p. 141.

and countless gifts of benefaction were distributed as alms to the poor and wretched”¹⁴⁰. It is also observed in the miniature from the *şehname*. The crowd waits for the janissaries to distribute the coins they hold in their hands in large bags.

3.2.2 The architectural patronage of Nurbanu Sultan

Nurbanu might have begun practicing royal power as an architectural patron already as the favorite of prince Selim in Konya. She co-built a mosque complex with Selim.¹⁴¹ Also, based on the vakfiye of Nurbanu, we know that she built a mosque with a *mekteb* and an *imaret* in Lapseki, for which shared the incomes planned to be generated for the complex in Üsküdar. Nurbanu Sultan is most well known as an architectural patron, with the Atik Valide complex. The ground for the construction of this complex was broken prior to 978 (1570-71). According to a document that survived from this date, Sultan Selim II ordered the *kadı*s of Sapanca and İzmit to see to it that marble and other construction materials found in their area of duty would be delivered.¹⁴² Based on the inscription above the entrance of the mosque, we know that the mosque complex as a whole was completed in 991 (1582-83).

The construction date of the mosque is not only relevant as a single piece of information pertaining to the mosque complex. These dates need to be considered also with respect to Nurbanu Sultan’s status. If an instruction for the delivery of construction materials was given as early as the year 1570, then we may say that the discussions to plan the location and the dimensions of the complex started sometime earlier. At that time, Selim II still was the reigning sultan. Another important issue is that the

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. “Hatemât-ı Kur’-ân-ı azîm ile salevât ve zikr-i tesbîh olunup, sadakât-ı fukarâ vü mesâkîn için mâm-i ferâvân ve ni’met-i bî-pâyân bezl olundı” Translation by Peirce, “Shifting Boundaries,” p. 60.

¹⁴¹ Nina Cichocki, "The Life Story of the Çemberlitaş Hamam, Istanbul: From Bath to Tourist Attraction," unpubl. PhD Diss., University of Minnesota (in progress). The abovementioned complex, with a mosque, han, *imaret*, hamam, and fountain, is in Karapınar, a location between Konya and Adana.

¹⁴² Altınay, *Onuncu Asr-ı Hicride İstanbul Hayatı*, pp. 39-40.

construction of the mosque complex of Selim II in Edirne started in 976 (1568), and ended in 982 (1574-75)¹⁴³. Then, subsequent to the resolution of the issues about the building of Selimiye, the issues about the construction of the mosque of Nurbanu in Üsküdar came to be considered. The document sent by Selim II to make sure marble and other materials were provided mention that he made the order for “Nurbanu’s mosque” (*ercümend oğlum Murâd-tâle bekâhu-validesi seyyidetü'l-muhaddarât ilâ âhirihi-dâmet i'smetüha cânibinden üsküdarda bina olunan câmi mahalli içün*). Furthermore, this document also substantiates that the imperial networks and accessibilities in architecture were extensively utilized in the service of this mosque complex.

The fact that Selim II was alive when Nurbanu’s complex was initiated means that at the time she had not yet achieved her position of *valide sultan*. Leslie Peirce suggests the following pattern for the building habits of royal women:

With the exception of Ahmed I, who built a magnificent mosque bearing his name on the Hippodrome, the sultans of the late sixteenth, the seventeenth, and the early eighteenth centuries observed the precedent established in Murad III’s reign, whereby the imperial mosques constructed in Istanbul were built by or for the sultan’s mother. The mosque of Nurbanu Sultan was the first of these.¹⁴⁴

Murad III became the sultan in 1574 after his father died. Had Selim lived five years longer, Nurbanu’s mosque would have been completed as a *haseki* mosque just like Hürrem. Therefore, it would be erroneous to consider the mosque as a demonstration of the powers of a *valide* sultan. This should be considered as a *haseki* complex.

The proposition that the Atik Valide was “the greatest social complex after Süleymaniye and Fatih” can be misleading¹⁴⁵. However, the rural characteristics of Üsküdar at this time should not be underestimated. To the modern mind, it is tempting to think of Üsküdar to be quite close to the heart of the city. Nonetheless, the cultural context in general and the urban characteristics of the surrounding area in particular around the period under consideration should definitely be incorporated into such an

¹⁴³ Kuran, *Sinan*, p. 178.

¹⁴⁴ Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, p. 206.

¹⁴⁵ Kuban, *Istanbul: an urban history*, p. 278.

analysis. If the Atik Valide Complex along with the cemetery of Karacaahmet marked the gateway into Üsküdar until the nineteenth century¹⁴⁶, then it was significant in terms of its location because it was on the route leading to or out from İstanbul. Considered from that perspective, it is closer in importance to, for example, the Çoban Mustafa Paşa Mosque in Gebze or the Cisr-i Mustafa Paşa Mosque of Hürrem Sultan. The Atik Valide was, however, distinguishable from other mosque complexes on major routes in the symbolic sense. The mosque was always accessible visually to the onlookers from the other side of the Bosphorus, most notably to the royal family at the historical peninsula.

3.2.3 The Atik Valide Complex

The complex is located in the Yeni Mahalle at the Toptaşı area of Üsküdar. Around the time of its construction, it was referred to simply as the Valide Mosque. Later, when other valide sultan mosques were constructed in Üsküdar, it had to be distinguished from those. First, Kösem Sultan built a mosque in close proximity to Nurbanu's complex in the 17th century, and then Ahmed III built a mosque in honor of his mother in the İskeli Meydanı in early 18th century. Henceforth, our mosque came to be named as the Valide-i Atik Mosque.

The complex comprised of a number of buildings that were listed in the vakfiye of Nurbanu Sultan. These were: a mosque, a *medrese*, a *sibyan mektebi*, a school for reciters of the Quran (*darı'l-kurra*), a *darı'l-hadis* (school that taught traditions of the prophet), an *imaret*, a dervish convent (*hankah*), a *han*, a hospital (*darı'ş-şifa*).¹⁴⁷ Two double bathhouses one round the street, and the next down the hill in walking distance to the Mihrimah Mosque were also components of the complex.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ In the Tezkiretü'l-Ebniye, only the mosque, the *darı'l-kurra*, the *darı'ş-şifa*, the hamam, and the *imaret* were noted down. Sai Çelebi, *Book of Buildings*, pp. 111-121.

¹⁴⁸ The one in the İskeli Meydanı is today used as a small shopping center. In the *vakfiye*, these buildings are mentioned among the list of endowed properties that provide income, not as part of the mosque complex.

Considered in its totality, the complex has a geometrical planning. The area was at the time sparsely populated. This might have provided the architect, Mimar Sinan, with the opportunity to distribute the different parts of the complex without major restraints. We come to this conclusion by simply observing the rational layout. In addition, that the complex was established in Yeni Mahalle (new quarter), also hints that the complex initiated the formation of a new neighborhood surrounding it. Neither the *Tezkiretü'l-Bünyan*, nor the *vakfiye* gives any information regarding the previous inhabitants at the site of the complex, or about any confiscations.

3.2.4 Elements of the *Külliye*

We know relatively more about the different parts of the complex, each serving a different function in accordance. As the center of this huge *külliye*, the mosque is of medium size. It originally had a hexagonal shape, with two minarets situated on two facing corners of it. A central dome is supported by five half domes around it, four of them on the sides of the minarets, and an additional one covers the *mihrab*. There were also four smaller domes on either side of the mosque in the east-west direction. The diameter of the central dome was measured as 12.7 meters,¹⁴⁹ only slightly larger than the dome of Mihrimah's Mosque. Similarly, then, the size of the mosque resembles more to the vizierial mosques than the *cevami-i selatin*. Yet, again, the presence of two minarets confirmed that it was an imperial mosque just like the İskale Cami.

The mosque has an outsized courtyard with a fountain. It covers an area of nearly 2500 m².¹⁵⁰ Galleries surround the mosque on three sides. It also has a double portico just like the mosque of Mihrimah. The inner portico is the *son cemaat yeri*. Above the windows on the wall overlooking the courtyard are nine large pieces of İznik tiles. Unfortunately, there used to be ten of these, but the one on the left has recently been stolen. The stolen one was the one at the very left.

¹⁴⁹ Kuran, *Sinan*, p. 190.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 189. Kuran gave the exact measures to be 56.2 m by 43.7 m.

The inner area of the mosque is surrounded along three sides by galleries. Inlaid ivory and mother-of-pearl are elements that were used to decorate the windows. Around the *mihrab*, the *Besmele* and *Ayet-el-kürsi* are written in white letters of dark blue plates. There are also tile panels in this area that are decorated with numerous flowers.¹⁵¹ Identical panels stand facing each other in the mihrab niche. At the bottom is a vase from which flowers spring up in a way that they gather in the middle, and then up they go to the top of the panel making another but smaller gathering. The verses from the Quran and these flowers create a symbolic message about the obligation to fulfill the requirements of the religion and to remind them about the afterlife. The tile panels with flowers at the Rüstem Paşa mosque symbolized paradise. These may be considered in a similar fashion. Certain inscriptions such as the *besmele* might have been recognizable to the average Ottoman person, but it is less likely that all verses from the Quran were easily decipherable. It was the overall feeling and the knowledge, that one was surrounded by Quranic verses matched with the symbols that connoted the award one would be granted when those directions were abided by, that was fundamental.

The inscription at the main entrance of the mosque on a wooden panel. On it, the following were written:

Nurbânu o zât-ı pür ismet
Tarafl-ı hayra eyleyüb niyyet
Etti bu ma’bed-i lâtifi bina
Habbeza re’y-i ahsen-ü-zîbâ
Eser-i hâssıdır bu hayr-ı güzin
Oldu târîh bihişt-i berin
991¹⁵²

There is a *hünkar mahfili* but it was there in the sixteenth. The sultan’s prayer gallery was erected in the nineteenth century. Could this have meant that Murad III did not visit this mosque? We know that he did not leave the capital to go on campaigns. If Murad and the sultans following him did not visit this külliye, the reason might be that they preferred to pray at the Mihrimah mosque which was not too far, and the journey downhill was not a tiring one. The sultans surely were present occasionally in Üsküdar

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 191-192.

¹⁵² Konyalı, *Üsküdar Tarihi*, p. 145.

from late sixteenth century until the nineteenth century, and the Mihrimah mosque already had a *hünkar mahfili*. Apart from that practical explanation, we may say that the mosque of Mihrimah was perhaps viewed as a more prestigious mosque to attend prayers as it was known to have been visited by Süleyman the Magnificent.

The Nurbanu Complex provided various kinds of social services to a large group of people from both the inhabitants of its neighborhood and short-term visitors. The fact that its location had not yet been incorporated into the city space of İstanbul made it a marginal külliye. When the relatively small space of the mosque proper alongside its large courtyard with a double portico is taken into consideration with its location on the outskirts of the city, we can say that it fit better into the category of a *menzil* külliye along the routes connecting Edirne to Damascus.¹⁵³

As for the dependencies of the complex, the *medrese* is attached to the mosque adjacent to its courtyard to the north. To the south of the mosque, across the street as a small single unit was the *mekteb*. The *darii'l-hadis*, the *darii'l-kurra*, the kitchen, the *tabhane*, the *darii's-şifa*, and the caravanserai were all gathered as adjacent set of units attached to each other inside the walls of a substantial independent building. To the east of the mosque, as an independent building stood the *hankah*. The *hamam* is outlying on the street leading up to the Atik Valide.

The hamam is still used as a bathhouse today. The caravanserai was delegated to Marmara University and is today used as the university's Güzel Sanatlar Kültür ve Sanat Merkezi. The buildings of the *darii'l-hadis* and the *darii'l-kurra* are unfortunately left to ruin. The *sibyan mektebi* is used as a private residence. The mosque itself is surprisingly in good condition thanks to the Atik Valide Sultan Camii Koruma Derneği. They have a small office that is located at the left when the mosque is entered from the gate across the mekteb. Facing that office is a somewhat large cemetery.

3.2.5 The Waqf of the Atik Valide: a large socio-economic network

We get the most detailed information about this pious foundation from the vakfiye of Nurbanu Sultan. The endowed properties of the waqf provided income to

¹⁵³ Yerasimos, *Sinan and His Patrons*, p. 128.

meet the expenses of the Atik Valide külliye and the small mosque and its *mekteb* and *imaret* in Lapseki.

Properties both in and outside the capital were endowed for the pious foundation. In Yeni Mahalle, the surrounding district of the complex, the endowed properties were: a *han* with 22 rooms, 14 shops, a double hamam, 16 shops facing that hamam, a small house along with three shops, a house to be used as the *şemhane* to produce candles, 17 shops each with a *hücre* and a backyard, a caravanserai, a workshop to slaughter cattle with 29 shops, 6 houses to be used as tannery (*debbaghane*)¹⁵⁴, and *hücres* to be rented out to families, and a slaughterhouse. The properties in İstanbul were: a double hamam in Dikilitaş, 65 *hücres*, a single hamam near Aya Kapu, near that hamam 4 *odas*, a *serhane*, a shop, 4 *hücres*, near the hamam in Yeni Kapu 2 *hücres*, plots of 2 shops, 2 shops in Aya Kapu, 27 *hücres* in ? for married couples to live in. Other properties in and outside İstanbul include farms¹⁵⁵, *menzils*, fields, vineyards, pastures, bread ovens –in Bursa–, in Üsküdar a field on which horse market was held¹⁵⁶. The *cizye* tax collected from the non-Muslim inhabitants of the Yeni Mahalle would also be transferred to the waqf. The waqf also owned and accumulated income from over 10,000 sheep annually. The milk and the wool of these sheep were endowed.¹⁵⁷ Nineteen *karyes* whose entire incomes were endowed for the

¹⁵⁴ These were planned to provide considerable income for the waqf. With an imperial decree, the tenants of those six houses were guaranteed to be the only purchasers of the hides of sheep, goats, and cows from the slaughterhouses in Çatlıdı Kapu, Yeni Mahalle in Üsküdar, from the shops of Süleyman the butcher in Karaköy and Üsküdar, and shops of Mehmet Ağa in Karaköy and Emin İskeli, the shop in Kasımpaşa, the slaughterhouses in Galata (Yenihisar, Tarabya, Sarıyer, Büyükdere) and slaughterhouses in Üsküdar (Beykoz, Yoros, Kanlıca, İstavros, and Çengar).

¹⁵⁵ In the vakfiye, the properties and the dependencies that make them up were explained in detail. Also, names of the people these were bought from are also mentioned.

¹⁵⁶ With an imperial decree, it was declared that in Üsküdar this was the only place where a horse market could be held. Also, the tax income from each transaction had to be collected by the *mütevelli* of the waqf.

¹⁵⁷ Murad III identified the meadows reserved for these sheep. The ones located in the dependencies of Üsküdar were Azarlar, Çekudlen, Haveşlu, Gürgenpinar, Divane Bellük, Çınık, Doğanlu, and Ördekli. The meadows (*eğrek*) that were in the dependencies of Şile and Kandıra were, Kayırca, Büyükdere, one near Akçakenise, one near Yenice, one near Ordakan, and meadows in Değirmenderesi.

waqf had previously been given as *temlik* by Sultan Murad to the valide sultan. They were totally known as the “Yeni İl Hasları”.

Apparently, the resources that were needed for the maintenance of this complex amounted to a huge sum. The total income of the waqf was not pronounced in the vakfiye. Nina Cichocki found this information in the accounting books (*muhasebe defterleri*) that are kept in the Prime Ministry’s Archives and the Topkapı Palace Archives. The annual incomes of the waqf were found to range between 2,985,596 *akçe* and to 4,561,310 *akçe* depending on the profitability of a given year.¹⁵⁸

The social services provided by the waqf included distribution of free food to the people twice a day. The employees of the whole *külliye* and the inhabitants of the *hankah* were also fed from the Atik Valide kitchen. On *bayram* days, clothing, turbans, and shoes and from the *imaret dane* and *zerde* would be distributed. Nurbanu sultan also favored widows, the poor, and freed slaves by setting the conditions to pay them cash and food.

The complex as a whole needed management comparable to a large scale modern firm. When compared with the Mihrimah complex, a larger number of jobs were defined for this complex. Only in the mosque, twice as much work was needed in Atik Valide. For this reason, a much higher source of income supported this mosque. It would have been impossible to meet the daily expenses of the complex without the support of the sultan. This is one other indication that this was an imperial complex.

¹⁵⁸ Cichocki, "The Life Story of the Çemberlitaş Hamam". These figures were both taken from the first half of the 17th century.

CONCLUSION

Although Ottoman historians and chroniclers did not have much historical evidence about the history of Üsküdar, they always mentioned it when describing the process of conquering İstanbul, which interested all sultans following Orhan Bey. The town was under Turkish control already before the conquest. After the declaration of the city as the new capital, Üsküdar took its place within the general project of establishing an Ottoman city out of Constantinople. Back in the fifteenth century a few neighborhoods were established as a result.

During the sixteenth century, our focal time period, very few direct references to the town of Üsküdar and its urban development have survived to our time. Therefore, we have tried to bring bits and pieces of direct and indirect references to be able to get at least a general picture, although a lot of questions still remain unanswered. Major commercial centers were already established on the other side of the Bosphorus. However, Üsküdar had to have at least a small market area. The town was the first point when departing for military campaigns, and for the *Surre Alayı* going on pilgrimage. Both of these activities were under state protection. Since the Ottoman sultans gave great importance to acquiring the title of *khalifa*, who claim the protection of all Muslims, they felt that they had to protect the pilgrims. They also wished to provide a comfortable pilgrimage journey. This was one reason why the route that went from Edirne to Damascus was filled with mosques and caravanserais. We have seen that viziers and royal women of different categories were encouraged to build on these routes as well.

Üsküdar was also a vital town for merchants. The merchants that engaged in internal or eastern international trade used Üsküdar as a stop on the way to transferring their goods to İstanbul. The ships that came from the Black Sea region provided meat and grain directly went to İstanbul, but Üsküdar was itself a source for the basic foodstuffs to İstanbul. In the pastures of Üsküdar sheep were raised. It is evident from the endowed fields in Üsküdar mentioned in Nurbanu's *vakfiye* that this rural character of the town continued into the time when Valide-i Atik Mosque was built.

The seashore and the places near the shore area must have had a somewhat populated urban character while the outskirts of the town used as pastures and vineyards remained rural. There was a large imperial palace and an imperial garden in Üsküdar. Together with these, the summer waterfront palaces of high ranking officials in Üsküdar

suggest that Üsküdar was conceived of as a rural area by the court. The development of how Üsküdar was observed and its place in court culture is seen in miniatures and maps. While at the beginning of the sixteenth century, only a small part of the shores of Üsküdar was depicted, by the end of the century, Üsküdar was shown as a town with its two imperial *külliyes* in illustrations of İstanbul.

The mosque complexes of Gülfem Hatun, Mihrimah Sultan and Nurbanu Sultan have been considered from a number of viewpoints, the most significant being their location. These were the first mosque complexes built subsequently by women affiliated with the court. The mosque complex of Gülfem was built simultaneously with the *külliye* of Hürrem Sultan. She was a wealthy and highly esteemed lady in the harem; the choice of Üsküdar for her complex was more than simply personal preference. It shows the initial courtly interest to invest in religious and social services in the town. Mihrimah and Nurbanu followed her example but theirs were imperial mosque complexes. Although the patrons provided the resources for construction, the maintenance of these huge public organizations were maintained by the properties granted to the patrons by the reigning sultan.

Mihrimah derived prestige due to her familial relationships. She was the beloved daughter of Süleyman the Magnificent, but Hürrem and Rüstem also made certain political and financial avenues available for her use. And she seems to have made much use of these. She was surely an important personality with her extraordinary wealth and image. Mihrimah had good reason to volunteer to have a mosque in Üsküdar. Rüstem Paşa must have valued and possibly wanted to have some presence in this area as he was a tradesman himself, and a grand vizier who was especially interested in implementing policies with regard to commercial issues.

The İskale Cami was clearly an imperial mosque complex. Its caravanserai is no longer extant. The shoreline of the town was a populated area at least in the day time or temporarily by merchants. Anyone coming from the East and heading towards the Ottoman capital, would see this as the first grand mosque complex in the area. The mosque and its dependencies served both religious and social services for these people. The pilgrims and the army on the way to the East also must have used this mosque at least to perform prayers. The presence of a *hünkar mahfili* in the mosque, which was mentioned in the *vakfiye*, also suggests that it was an imperial mosque. The state had good reason to have a large scale mosque in this area.

Nurbanu Sultan was likewise a woman who had the chance to exercise extraordinary wealth and prestige. She was not born into a royal family, but became the *haseki* and the legal wife of Selim II. After that sultan, when Murad III came to power she continued to have a central place at the court. The literature emphasizes that she built the first massive mosque complex at the capital at a time when the sultans refrained themselves from building in İstanbul. The construction began while Selim II was still the reigning sultan; it was only when the complex was completed that Nurbanu had become *valide sultan*. Had Selim not died in 1574, we would refer to the Valide-i Atik as another *haseki* complex.

All three patrons had access to the imperial architectural organization. Needless to say, this was more obvious for the latter two. Mihrimah and Nurbanu were exceptional royal women. However, this alone does not allow them the opportunity to be architectural patrons of major socio-religious complexes. It would not have been possible to build these imperial complexes had these women not gained the support of the sultan and the resources of the state were made available to them. These three complexes demonstrate the primary courtly interest to invest in the town of Üsküdar. But their presence also initiated a tradition to build in this town for royal women in future generations. Kösem Sultan's mosque is the first of these, which sought to derive legitimization and prestige with its closeness to the Atik Valide Mosque.

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