

**THE AKSARAY PERTEVNİYAL VALİDE SULTAN MOSQUE COMPLEX:  
REFLECTIONS ON THE PATRONAGE OF  
A NINETEENTH CENTURY VALİDE SULTAN**

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Bahar Bilgin Uşar

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Bahar Bilgin Uşar

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Committee Members:

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Assoc. Prof. Lucienne Thys-Şenocak

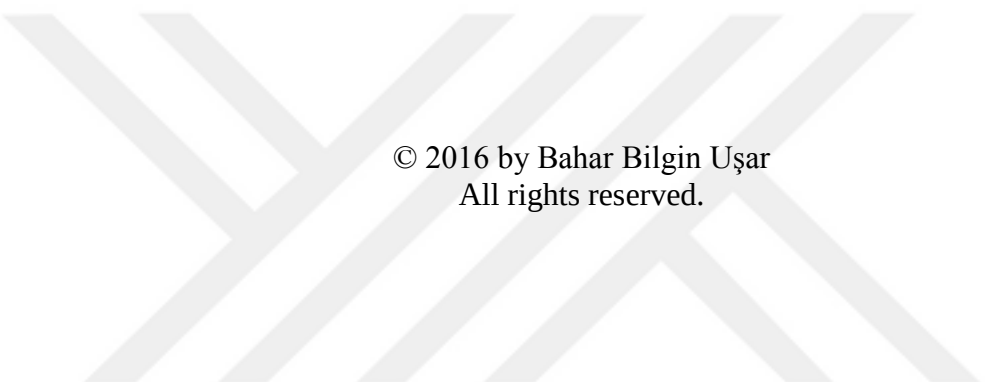
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Prof. Günsel Renda

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Assoc. Prof. Ahmet A. Ersoy

Date:



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**Lucienne Thys-Şenocak, Thesis Advisor**

**Bahar Bilgin Uşar**

## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE AKSARAY PERTEVNİYAL VALİDE SULTAN MOSQUE COMPLEX: REFLECTIONS ON THE PATRONAGE OF A NINETEENTH CENTURY VALİDE SULTAN**

Pertevniyal (1810-1884), the last queen-mother bearing the title of *valide* sultan in the empire's history, was a prominent figure in the nineteenth century Ottoman society and a significant patron of architecture. This thesis analyzes Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's architectural patronage and the symbolically-charged meanings embedded in her patronage by focusing on the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque Complex, the most significant commission undertaken by the *valide*, which was completed in 1871 and was located in the Aksaray district of Istanbul. This study investigates for the first time the *valide*'s life and patronage in detail and is based on many unpublished archival documents related to Pertevniyal.

For the analysis of the mosque, this thesis first looks at the historiography of scholarship about the complex since the building, particularly its architectural style, was received and interpreted in dramatically different ways by scholars assessing the structure since it was built. By examining the complex's archival records and other contemporary primary sources, the purpose of this thesis is to locate the building within its historical context and determine how it was shaped by the socio-political and cultural dynamics of the late Tanzimat era. It also investigates how this architectural project served as an embodiment of its patron's motivations and intentions. Given the few studies which focus on the symbolic analysis of the nineteenth century Ottoman architectural enterprise and its relationship with

gendered imperial patronage, this thesis contributes to current literature on Ottoman architectural history by exploring how a nineteenth century *valide* sultan exploited a diverse set of iconographies in the realization of her complex and cultivated specific imperial and dynastic identities through architectural patronage during the late Tanzimat era.



## ÖZET

### **AKSARAY PERTEVNİYAL VALİDE SULTAN CAMİİ VE KÜLLİYESİ: BİR ON DOKUZUNCU YÜZYIL VALİDE SULTANININ MİMARİ HAMİLİĞİNE DAİR YANSIMALAR**

İmparatorluk tarihinde valide sultan unvanına sahip son sultan annesi Pertevniyal (1810-1884), on dokuzuncu yüzyıl Osmanlı toplumunun önde gelen isimlerinden biri ve önemli bir mimari hamiydi. Bu tez, valide tarafından 1871 yılında Aksaray’da yaptırılmış Aksaray Valide Sultan Camii ve külliyesine odaklanarak, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan’ın mimari hamiliğini ve bu hamiliğin barındırdığı sembolik anlamları çözümlemektedir. Bu çalışma, daha önce yayınlanmamış arşiv belgelerini inceleyerek valide sultanın hayatını ve hamiliğini analiz eden ilk araştırmadır.

Bu tez Aksaray Valide Sultan Camii’ni mercek altına alırken öncelikle yapının tarih yazımcılığında nasıl yorumlandığını incelemektedir. Aksaray’daki cami, özellikle mimari tarzı, yapıldığı günden bugüne araştırmacılar tarafından çok farklı şekillerde ele alınmıştır. Bu tezin amacı, külliyeyle dair arşiv belgelerini ve birincil kaynakları inceleyerek, yapının tarihsel bağlamdaki yerini saptamak ve hayat bulduğu geç Tanzimat döneminin sosyo-politik, kültürel dinamiklerinden nasıl etkilendiğini analiz etmektir. Ayrıca, bu mimari projenin, hamisi Pertevniyal Valide Sultan’ın motivasyon ve hedeflerini bünyesinde nasıl barındırdığını araştırmak da bu tezin hedeflerinden biridir.

Bu çalışma, bir on dokuzuncu yüzyıl valide sultanının, külliyesini hayata geçirirken farklı ikonografilerden nasıl faydalandığını ve geç Tanzimat döneminde ihtiyaç duyulan hanedan ve imparatorluğa dair belirli kimlikleri, mimari hamiliği aracılığıyla nasıl desteklediğini araştırarak; on dokuzuncu yüzyıl Osmanlı

mimarisindeki simgesel anlamları ve kadın hamiliğini inceleyen arařtırmaların sınırlı sayıda olduđu mevcut literatüre katkı sađlamaktadır.



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## NOTE ON TRANSLATION AND TRANSLITERATION

Modern Turkish orthography has been used for all Ottoman Turkish (including the mosque's construction register books, the correspondences between the *valide* sultan and her *kethüda*), except for direct quotations transliterated according to the system used in the *İslam Ansiklopedisi*. Some Arabic words, such as sheikh, Quran, are used in their English forms, as are some Turkish words, such as pasha. Diacritical marks have been omitted from all Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish names appearing in the text. The Arabic transliterations of the endowment deed of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque are transliterated in conformity with the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* conventions (except for the profession names such as *imam*, *türbedar* for the sake of consistency). A more detailed study of the archival documents with their full transcriptions and translations will be appearing in a future publication.

All quotations from primary sources were translated into English by the author except for citations from published sources.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS<sup>1</sup>

|                                  |                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>başkâtip</i>                  | head clerk.                                                                                        |
| <i>bayram</i>                    | religious festival, Bairam.                                                                        |
| <i>bina emini</i>                | the official in charge of the construction.                                                        |
| <i>buhurdan</i>                  | censer, incense box.                                                                               |
| <i>daire-i hümayun</i>           | imperial suite.                                                                                    |
| <i>dergâh</i>                    | dervish convent.                                                                                   |
| <i>devrhan</i>                   | person whose duty is to keep on reciting the Quran.                                                |
| <i>Divan-ı Hümayun</i>           | Imperial Chancery of State.                                                                        |
| <i>Ebniye Meclisi</i>            | the Building Council.                                                                              |
| <i>Ebniye-i Hassa Müdürlüğü</i>  | the Directorate of Imperial Building.                                                              |
| <i>evkaf müfettişi</i>           | chief inspector of the pious foundation.                                                           |
| <i>gülabdan</i>                  | rose water flask.                                                                                  |
| <i>hafız-ı kütüb</i>             | librarian.                                                                                         |
| <i>harem ve selamlık</i>         | women's and men's apartments in a Muslim palace, house or mosque.                                  |
| <i>haseki</i>                    | the Sultan's favorite wife.                                                                        |
| <i>Hassa Mimarları Ocağı</i>     | the Imperial Architects' Office.                                                                   |
| <i>hatip</i>                     | preacher.                                                                                          |
| <i>imam</i>                      | prayer leader of a mosque.                                                                         |
| <i>Islahat-ı Turuk Komisyonu</i> | Commission for Road Improvements.                                                                  |
| <i>kadınefendi</i>               | wife of the Sultan.                                                                                |
| <i>kafes</i>                     | golden cage; apartment in which a prince was brought up in seclusion.                              |
| <i>kapudan pasha</i>             | High Admiral and Minister of Marine.                                                               |
| <i>kapudan</i>                   | captain or commander in the navy.                                                                  |
| <i>kayyim</i>                    | caretaker of a mosque.                                                                             |
| <i>kazasker</i>                  | chief military judge; high official in the hierarchy of the Muslim Judiciary.                      |
| <i>kese/kise</i>                 | a varying sum of money, an increment of money worth 50,000 akçe or 500 kuruş in later centuries.   |
| <i>kethüda</i>                   | a steward, attendant.                                                                              |
| <i>lâyiha</i>                    | memorandum expressing one's viewpoint on a subject.                                                |
| <i>mahfil</i>                    | private pew or gallery in a mosque.                                                                |
| <i>mahyacı</i>                   | one who takes care of the lights strung between minarets during Ramazan to form words or pictures. |
| <i>meşayih</i>                   | pl. of <i>şeyh</i> (sheikh).                                                                       |
| <i>mevlevihane</i>               | lodge of Mevlevi dervishes.                                                                        |
| <i>mevlid</i>                    | the Nativity Poem of the Prophet.                                                                  |
| <i>mihrap/mihrab</i>             | niche of a mosque indicating the direction of Mecca.                                               |
| <i>muallim</i>                   | school teacher.                                                                                    |
| <i>müezzin</i>                   | one who calls Muslims to prayer, muezzin.                                                          |
| <i>muvakkit</i>                  | timekeeper at a mosque.                                                                            |
| <i>muvakkithane</i>              | clock room of the muvakkit.                                                                        |
| <i>postnişin</i>                 | head of religious order.                                                                           |
| <i>sancak</i>                    | subdivision of a province.                                                                         |

<sup>1</sup> All from Sir James Redhouse, *New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary* (Istanbul: Redhouse Yayınevi, 1986).

|                      |                                                                  |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>semahane</i>      | dervish meeting-house for religious music and whirling.          |
| <i>serasker</i>      | Commander-in-chief; Minister of War.                             |
| <i>şehremaneti</i>   | municipality.                                                    |
| <i>şehremini</i>     | mayor; prefect of a large town.                                  |
| <i>tekye/tekke</i>   | dervish lodge.                                                   |
| <i>türbedar</i>      | keeper of the mausoleum.                                         |
| <i>ulema</i>         | pl. of <i>alim</i> (scholar); men learned in religious sciences. |
| <i>vaiz</i>          | one who admonishes; preacher.                                    |
| <i>vakfiye</i>       | deed of trust of a pious foundation.                             |
| <i>vakıf</i>         | pious foundation; wakf.                                          |
| <i>valide sultan</i> | the Ottoman queen mother, mother of the reigning sultan.         |
| <i>zaviye</i>        | cell (of a recluse); lodge of dervishes.                         |
| <i>zaviyedar</i>     | keeper of a cell.                                                |
| <i>zeyl vakfiye</i>  | appendix, addendum of a <i>vakfiye</i> .                         |

## INTRODUCTION

There is a remarkable body of literature on women's patronage in Islamic society prior to the nineteenth century. In contrast to the Orientalist discourse which offers provocative themes and brings forth the patriarchal relations associated with the seclusion/segregation of women, these recent works challenge the ingrained essentialist perspectives and acknowledge the active role of women in cultivating networks of influence and patronage.<sup>2</sup> One of the distinguished works dismantling these orientalist claims regarding Middle Eastern women is *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (1993) by Leslie Peirce.<sup>3</sup> In her inspiring book, Peirce argues that the women of the imperial harem were to expand

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<sup>2</sup> See the works of Ülkü Bates, "Women as Patrons of Architecture in Turkey," in *Women in the Muslim World*, ed. by Lois Beck and Nikki Keddie (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 245-260; and "Architectural Patronage of Ottoman Women," *Asian Art* 6 (1993): 50-65. See also Gabriel Baer, "Women and Waqf: An Analysis of the Istanbul *Tahrir* of 1546," *Asian and African Studies* 17 (1983): 9-27; the works of Leslie P. Peirce, "Beyond Harem Walls: Ottoman Royal Women and the Exercise of Power," in *Gendered Domains, Rethinking Public and Private in Women's History*, ed. Dorothy O. Helly and Susan M. Reverby, 40-55 (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992); *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); and "Gender and Sexual Property in Ottoman Royal Women's Patronage," in *Women, Patronage and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*, ed. D. Fairchild Ruggles, 53-68. Albany NY: SUNY, 2000). See also Esin Atıl, "Islamic Women as Rulers and Patrons," *Asian Art* 6 (1993): 3-12; Tülay Artan, "From Charismatic Leadership to Collective Rule: Introducing Materials on Wealth and Power of Ottoman Princesses in the Eighteenth Century," in *Düni ve Bugünüyle Toplum ve Ekonomi* 4 (1993): 53-94; Tülay Artan, "From Charismatic Leadership to Collective Rule: Introducing Materials on Wealth and Power of Ottoman Princesses in the Eighteenth Century," in *Düni ve Bugünüyle Toplum ve Ekonomi*, Vol. 4. (İstanbul: Bağlam, 1993), 53-94; Steven R. Humphreys, "Women as Patrons of Religious Architecture in Ayyubid Damascus," *Muqarnas* 11 (1994): 35-54; Margaret L Meriwether, "Women and Revisited: The Case of Aleppo, 1770-1840," in *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Madeline C. Zilfi. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997). Also see the works of Amy Singer, "The Mülknâmes of Hürrem Sultan's Waqf in Jerusalem," *Muqarnas*, Vol. 14 (1997): 96-102 and *Constructing Ottoman beneficence: an imperial soup kitchen in Jerusalem* (Albany : State University of New York Press, 2002); Fatima Mernissi, *Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in a Modern Muslim Society* (Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing Company, 1975); Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1991); Nilüfer Göle, *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, c1996); Lucienne Thys-Şenocak, "The Yeni Valide Mosque Complex of Eminönü, İstanbul (1597-1665): Gender and Vision in Ottoman Architecture," in *Women, Patronage and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*, ed. D. Fairchild Ruggles, 69-90 (Albany NY: SUNY, 2000); and *Ottoman Women Builders: The Architectural Patronage of Hadice Turhan Sultan* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006); Nazan Maksudyan, ed., *Women and the City, Women in the City* (Berghahn Books, New York, Oxford, 2014).

<sup>3</sup> See Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*.

their influence or exercise power in the empire's socio-political context due to the changes happening in the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Contrary to the allegedly subordinate roles contextualized within male/female, public/private dichotomies, the Ottoman royal women had active roles in the generation and exercise of power, creating diverse layers within the seemingly unitary power of the sultan.

Later studies contribute to the literature by exploring how these diverse layers of power were actually exercised by women through their artistic patronage and production.<sup>4</sup> These studies bring forth complex theories of vision and representational practice and argue that artistic production can be understood as a “deep-seated expression of ideological values”<sup>5</sup> or that a monument may encompass multiple layers of meaning, shaped by its endower.<sup>6</sup> Regarding vision, these studies explore how mosque complexes were designed specifically to accommodate or empower a female gaze and that their different typologies and locations were not a mere construction mistake or unintentional, but rather reflected the gendered vision of their patrons.<sup>7</sup> Works that address the issues of representational presence and power underlying women's architectural patronage have shown that the monuments commissioned by royal women play a significant role in reflecting and presenting their endowers' identities and legitimizing their political authorities. Pınar Kayaalp-Aktan's thesis on the Atik Valide Mosque Complex,<sup>8</sup> commissioned by Nurbanu

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<sup>4</sup> See Fairchild D. Ruggles, ed., *Women, Patronage, and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Oleg Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic art* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987, First pub. 1973), 63.

<sup>6</sup> Gülru Necipoglu-Kafadar, “The Süleymaniye Complex in Istanbul: An Interpretation,” *Muqarnas* 3 (1985): 92-117.

<sup>7</sup> Lucienne Thys-Şenocak, “The Yeni Valide Mosque Complex of Eminönü, İstanbul (1597-1665): Gender and Vision in Ottoman Architecture,” in *Women, Patronage and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*, ed., D. Fairchild Ruggles (Albany NY: SUNY, 2000), 69-90.

<sup>8</sup> Pınar Kayaalp-Aktan, “The Atik Valide Mosque Complex: A Testament of Nurbanu's Prestige, Power and Piety” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2005).

Sultan (1525-1583) and Lucienne Thys-Şenocak's book analyzing the architectural patronage of Hadice Turhan Sultan (1627-1683)<sup>9</sup> provide important insights about how the two *valide* sultans used architecture as a means to assert their sovereign power and represent themselves in the eyes of their subjects and others. In addition to these works, Nina Ergin's studies<sup>10</sup> which analyze the multi-sensory traditions in religious spaces, such as soundscape or olfactory practices, challenge the traditional discussions about gendered spaces in relation to the 'physical seclusion' of Ottoman royal women and show how Ottoman royal women's acoustic or olfactory methods of communication enabled them to exceed the limits of "visually bounded space."<sup>11</sup>

Despite the richness of these academic works concentrating on woman patronage in the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, the literature on imperial Ottoman women's patronage in the nineteenth century is very underdeveloped as stated by D. Fairchild Ruggles.<sup>12</sup> Though not directly examining architectural patronage, Duygu Köksal and Anastasia Falierou's recent book is very valuable for shedding light on the social history of Ottoman women in these later years of the empire's history.<sup>13</sup> This collection of recent scholarly work presents novel theoretical horizons concerning the historiography of late Ottoman women in the areas of economy, artistic production and education.

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<sup>9</sup> Lucienne Thys-Şenocak, *Ottoman Women Builders: The Architectural Patronage of Hadice Turhan Sultan* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

<sup>10</sup> See Nina Ergin, "The Soundscape of Sixteenth-Century Istanbul Mosques: Architecture and Qur'an Recital," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 67/2 (2008): 204-221; Nina Ergin, "The Fragrance of the Divine: Ottoman Incense Burners in Context," *The Art Bulletin* 96/1 (2014): 70-97; Nina Ergin, "Ottoman Royal Women's Spaces: The Acoustic Dimension," *Journal of Women's History* 26, (2014): 89-111.

<sup>11</sup> Ergin, "Ottoman Royal Women's Spaces," 89.

<sup>12</sup> D. Fairchild Ruggles, "Vision and Power: An Introduction," in *Women, Patronage and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*, ed., D. Fairchild Ruggles. (Albany NY: SUNY, 2000), 1-16.

<sup>13</sup> See Duygu Köksal and Anastasia Falierou, ed. *A social history of late Ottoman women: new perspectives* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

Given the scarcity of academic works examining the architectural patronage of the nineteenth century Ottoman women, it is no surprise that there is no academic work exploring the patronage of the last *valide*, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan in depth.<sup>14</sup> The only information pertaining to Pertevniyal appears in brief entries in encyclopedias and books related to the Ottoman sultanas.<sup>15</sup>

The most significant commission undertaken by the *valide*, the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque complex, and particularly its architectural style was received and interpreted in dramatically different ways by scholars assessing the structure. Despite their diverse interpretations of the complex, what all previous studies shared was their disregard for the archival records of the complex in assessing it. Although such written records, especially the *vakfiyes* of most of the Ottoman imperial mosques have been published, none of the written records pertaining to Pertevniyal's commission have been published before. In fact, these primary sources are among the most valuable sources for an art historian to locate a monument within its own particular historicity, to understand the patron's intentions underlying its creation along with its aesthetics, structural and functional qualities. For the assessment of such elements, in the case of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque complex, the following written records about the complex were examined: the *vakfiye* of the mosque complex, its construction register books, the correspondences between the *valide* sultan and her *kethüda* and other archival documents related to the *valide*

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<sup>14</sup> There is only one M.A Thesis by Orhan Meriç that presents a formalist analysis of the Aksaray Valide Mosque. See Orhan Meriç, "Aksaray Valide Sultan Camisi ve Külliyesi" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, 1997).

<sup>15</sup> See works of M. Çağatay Uluçay, *Harem*, vol. 2. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1971), *Padişahların Kadınları ve Kızları* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992); Also see works of Necdet Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Sultanları: 36 Osmanlı Padişahı* (İstanbul: Oğlak Bilimsel Kitaplar, 1999), *Bu Mülkün Kadın Sultanları: Valide Sultanlar, Hatunlar, Hasekiler, Kadınefendiler, Sultaneferendiler* (İstanbul: Oğlak Bilimsel Kitaplar, 2008).

sultan's patronage. A reading and analysis of this extensive corpus of archival materials is among the contributions of this M.A. thesis.

Secondly, this thesis also examines the contemporary sources of the time such as the chronicles of the nineteenth century court historians (table 1), Ahmed Cevdet and Ahmed Lütü in order to shed light on the cultural and political context of the era within which the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque complex came into being. Since the history-writing in the empire had been performed under the general framework constituted by the imperial ideology, the objectivity of the writings of the court historians, apart from a few cases, have been questioned.<sup>16</sup> However, as Cemal Kafadar and Hakan T. Karateke have emphasized, starting from the mid-nineteenth century, "a critical approach to the conventions of annal-writing had emerged" among the court historians and "historical writing evolved into a scholarly and investigative discipline."<sup>17</sup> Although the works of the nineteenth century annalists like Ahmed Cevdet or Ahmed Lütü "had various political tones, [their] defining trait was a demystification of earlier concerns and models of explanation. They no longer tolerated, for instance, a predestinarian historical approach or astrological explanations for events."<sup>18</sup> This acknowledgment of the change in nineteenth century history-writing is crucial for evaluating the references made in this thesis to these historical sources.

By bringing to light unpublished archival documents, and examining the contemporary primary sources and valuable secondary sources, this thesis aims to be

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<sup>16</sup> See, Cemal Kafadar and Hakan T. Karateke, "Late Ottoman and Early Republican Turkish Historical Writing," in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing* ed. Daniel Woolf, 559-578. Vol. 4, 1800-1945 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 559-561. "Before the nineteenth century, there was little hope for an historian to write professionally and survive financially other than by writing under the patronage of a court member in Istanbul." Ibid, 559.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 563- 564.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 571.

the first scholarly study on the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque complex and its prominent patron, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan. It takes a critical look at the historiography about the mosque and locates the building within its historical context and determines how it was shaped by the socio-political and cultural dynamics of the late Tanzimat era. This study also investigates how this architectural project served as an embodiment of its patron's motivations and intentions. Given the few studies which focus on the symbolic analysis of the nineteenth century Ottoman architectural enterprise and its relationship with gendered imperial patronage, this thesis contributes to current literature on Ottoman architectural history by exploring how a nineteenth century *valide* sultan exploited a diverse set of iconographies in the realization of her complex and cultivated specific imperial and dynastic identities through architectural patronage during the late Tanzimat era.

Chapter One looks at general aspects of Pertevniyal's life and her direct exercise of political power once she received the title of *valide* sultan. It discusses her cultivation of a considerable network, her pivotal role in the late Tanzimat political scene which led significant dignitaries of the time to address her directly, her creation and manipulation of domestic political factions, and her compelling contestations with other figures of the dynasty. It also analyzes how Pertevniyal's influence over her son, Abdülaziz, gave her access to sources of power and wealth. Besides her exercise of sovereignty in the 'political arena', this chapter seeks to understand how Pertevniyal controlled and used her wealth to undertake charitable religious endowments that would symbolize her piety and munificence. In order to shed light on her efforts in creating this image, excerpts from Pertevniyal's *vakfiyes* are presented.

Chapter Two begins by looking at Pertevniyal's major pious foundation, the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque. It first charts the changing attitudes towards the complex from 1873 until very recently by investigating the writings of different historians and scholars. Then the general framework of the complex is assessed through a textual analysis of several archival records pertaining to Pertevniyal's monument: the mosque's *vakfiye*, its construction registers and the correspondence between the *valide* sultan and her *kethüdas*. This part of the second chapter in fact links to the final chapter by bringing forth some of the symbolic meanings embedded in Pertevniyal's justification for the creation of her pious deed, the complex's functional qualities and the public ceremonial used by the patron.

Chapter Three continues with an analysis of the primary sources, and shows how Pertevniyal Valide Sultan, beyond the motivation of earning rewards in the next world, wanted to construct a nineteenth century 'prestige mosque' in accordance with her position as a *valide* sultan and benefited from a multiple number of iconographies for the conceptualization of her commission. Through her selection of the complex's location, its structural components, architectural style, interior decoration, and epigraphy, the *valide* had a clear agenda for her complex which aimed to promote her position in Ottoman society, and insure the legacy of her husband and son.

## CHAPTER I

### I. Pertevniyal's Life

Pertevniyal, wife of Sultan Mahmud II and mother of Sultan Abdülaziz was a prominent figure in the nineteenth century Ottoman society and the last queen-mother bearing the title of *valide* sultan in the empire's history.<sup>19</sup> Being of Circassian origin, she is presumed to have been born in 1810 since there are no archival records pertaining to her birth date.<sup>20</sup> She was the second favorite of Mahmud II (r. 1808-1839) when she gave birth to Abdülaziz in 1830.<sup>21</sup> (Fig. 1) With this incident, she was raised in the harem to the position of the fifth concubine of the sultan. When her son, Abdülaziz, became Padishah in 1861, Pertevniyal officially took on the title of Valide Sultan, or Queen Mother, holding the highest office of the imperial harem until the dethronement of Sultan Abdülaziz in 1876.<sup>22</sup> Following her son Abdülaziz's death in the same year, she secluded herself until her death on February 4, 1883.<sup>23</sup> She was buried in the tomb she commissioned in her mosque complex in Aksaray.

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<sup>19</sup> Although Şevkefza Sultan held the tenure of *valide* sultan between 30 May 1876- 31 August 1876, there is no official imperial document showing her name as the *valide* sultan. That is why Pertevniyal is regarded as the last *valide* sultan in many Ottoman sources. See Uluçay, *Harem*, 61.

<sup>20</sup> *The Eastern Express* (January 30, 1884): 53-54, in Ali Akyıldız, "Pertevniyal Valide Sultan," in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (2007) 34: 239. Necdet Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Sultanları*, 504, states that Pertevniyal was from the Circassian Şapsıh tribe of Caucasia. Douglas Scott Brookes' general statement about the ethnicity of concubines in the nineteenth century is in line with Sakaoğlu's assumption: "nearly all the female slaves in the imperial harem in the era of our memoirs were ethnically Circassian. Over the course of the nineteenth century the Russians had largely expelled the Circassian peoples, Muslims, from their native Caucasus. Most fled into to the Ottoman Empire, at the time an impoverished society hardly in a position to absorb the large numbers of refugees streaming into it. One way in which uprooted Circassian families could realize a large sum of money, however, was to sell their daughters into slavery in the harems of the Ottoman elite. For Circassian girls, especially if blonde, blue-eyed, and fair of complexion, were considered highly desirable beauties." When the Princess Ayşe, the daughter of Sultan Abdülhamid II, refers to Perestu Kadınefendi, she says "She was Circassian, as were all the ladies of my grandfather [Sultan Mahmud II], and from the Ubykh clan." See Douglas Brookes, ed. *The Concubine, the Princess, and the Teacher: Voices from the Ottoman Harem* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 7.

<sup>21</sup> Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Sultanları*, 462.

<sup>22</sup> Uluçay, *Padişahların Kadınları ve Kızları*, 124.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, 125.

There is no mention of Pertevniyal in Ottoman or foreign accounts before her position as a concubine of the sultan. The only account about Pertevniyal's earlier life is an article by the journalist and writer Sermet Muhtar Alus in the prominent history journal of the 1950s, *Tarih Hazinesi*.<sup>24</sup> In his column, Sermet Muhtar Alus presented some details about Pertevniyal's earlier life: where she was from, how she entered the palace. According to his account, Behram Efendi of Beylerbeyi bought two Circassian girls from the slave market, thirteen and ten years old respectively. He and his wife Hafize Hanım named the older girl Rana and the younger one Hasna. In time, Behram Efendi fell in love with the beautiful Hasna, an incident which led Hafize Hanım to take Hasna to the slave market and sell her to the palace. According to Sermet Muhtar Alus, that is how Hasna, the new Pertevniyal, entered the harem. Although there are references to Pertevniyal as 'Hasna' in the secondary sources, it is worth noting that there is no reference in the primary sources that would confirm Sermet Muhtar Alus's narration. In addition to that account, Necdet Sakaoğlu asserts that Pertevniyal was bought, taught by Mahmud II's sister Esma Sultan and she presented Pertevniyal to her brother Mahmud II in 1826.<sup>25</sup>

Pertevniyal became the fifth concubine of Sultan Mahmud II when she gave birth to Abdülaziz on February 9, 1830<sup>26</sup> at Esma Sultan's palace in Eyüp.<sup>27</sup> Even before receiving the title of *valide* sultan, her life-span witnessed many privileges that were rarely allowed to imperial women in the empire's history. When Mahmud

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<sup>24</sup> See Sermet Muhtar Alus. "Esir pazarından Beşiktaş Sarayı'na," *Tarih Hazinesi* 5 (1951): 232- 233. The journal's editor was İbrahim Hakkı Konyalı, who also served as the archive manager in the General Directorate of Pious Works Archives. The article was written by the journalist and writer Sermet Muhtar Alus (1887- 1852) who was the son of Mahmut Muhtar Pasha (1867- 1935), a high-ranking commander in the Ottoman army and diplomat who served important positions in the empire such as the Ministry of the Navy.

<sup>25</sup> Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Sultanları*, 504.

<sup>26</sup> Haluk Y. Şehsuvaroğlu, *Sultan Aziz: Hususi, Siyasi Hayatı, Devri ve Ölümü* (İstanbul, Hilmi Kitabevi, 1949), 5.

<sup>27</sup> Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1977), 7: 1.

II died in 1839, Pertevniyal and her nine-year old son Abdülaziz continued to live in the old Beşiktaş Palace, in contrast to the earlier succession practices of the dynasty.<sup>28</sup> Conventionally, Abdülaziz had to live in solitary confinement in the *kafes* (Golden Cage), an apartment in the Imperial Harem in which a prince was brought up in seclusion and from where potential rulers could not escape unless they inherited the throne and Pertevniyal had to lead a rather tranquil life in the old palace apart from her son.<sup>29</sup> Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, who was a prominent Ottoman scholar, court historian, and bureaucrat of the time, recounts this privilege as, “While originally the princes would be detained in the *kafes* and not go out even for a spin, His Excellency Abdülmecid Khan allocated a household for his stepbrother and permitted him going around freely.”<sup>30</sup> The English traveler Charles White also notes this privilege enjoyed by Sultan Abdülmecid’s family as follows:

Upon the death of Mahmoud, his young unmarried family were removed by their elder brother, Sultan Abdoul Medjid, to his palace, and were there carefully and tenderly educated. At the same time the four surviving kadins of Mahmoud were established in palaces on the Bosphorus, two near Beglerbey and two near Tcheraghan, where they enjoy full liberty.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, in contrast to earlier traditions, Pertevniyal and her son enjoyed a life together in the Beşiktaş Palace until Abdülaziz’s enthronement in 1861.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Kadın Sultanları*, 390.

<sup>29</sup> “In the second half of the sixteenth century a series of change occurred that had the result within three generations of completely divesting princes of power through repression of their political and sexual maturity.” For the transformation of the role of the princes in the Ottoman dynasty, see Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 20-22.

<sup>30</sup> Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1991), 2: 146. “Fi’l-asl şehzâdeler kafeste mevkuf olarak bir mahalle çıkıp gezemezler iken Abdülmecid Han hazretleri birâderine müstakillen dâire verip serbest olarak gezmesine ruhsat vermiş idi.”

<sup>31</sup> Charles White, *Three Years in Constantinople; Domestic Manners of Turks in 1844* (Kessinger Publishing, United States, 1845 [2008] printing), 3: 222.

<sup>32</sup> Roderic H. Davison states that Abdülaziz’s brother Sultan Abdülmecid had been suspicious of Abdülaziz in the last years of his reign; that is why he required him to live with his mother Pertevniyal. See Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876* (New York: Gordian Press, 1973): 109.

Another dynastic tradition obliged the princes to have sexual relations only with the ‘infertile’ concubines since they were not permitted to reproduce unless they would inherit the throne.<sup>33</sup> About three centuries after Safiye Sultan gave birth to her son prince Mehmed III, Pertevniyal and Abdülaziz also departed from the obliged norms and in 1857 Abdülaziz had a son from Dürrinev, an odalisque Pertevniyal had raised and presented to her son. However, Sultan Abdülmecid (r. 1839-1861) and his *valide* Bezmialem Sultan overlooked this incident and Pertevniyal’s grandchild, Abdülaziz’s first son, Yusuf İzzeddin Efendi, was kept as a secret until 1861.<sup>34</sup>

Ahmet Cevdet Pasha recounts the incident in his *Tezâkir*, as follows:<sup>35</sup>

[...] and unless the princes would get married, they would not have children. However, Abdülaziz Khan had the above-mentioned boy named Yusuf İzzeddin from his concubine. He hid him somewhere in Eyüp and disguising him as a slave, he brought him to the palace, and trained him in his room. Even the palace residents believed that he was a slave. Although Sultan Abdülmecid had a grasp of the truth, he acted as if he did not know anything. Once Abdülaziz Khan accessed to the throne, he presented Yusuf İzzeddin to his brother’s sons and explained the situation. Later he sent an imperial decree to the Sublime Porte, declaring the circumstance.

John Freely states that, “[this was] the first time in three centuries that the child of a non-reigning male of the Osmanlı was acknowledged and allowed to live.”<sup>36</sup> Along with having been allowed to have a son before succession, Abdülaziz had enjoyed more freedom in his confinement than any prince had had in two and a half centuries.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 21.

<sup>34</sup> Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Kadın Sultanları*, 390.

<sup>35</sup> “[...] ve şehzâdeler te’ehhul edemedikleri cihetle çocukları olamazdı. Hâlbuki Abdülaziz Han’ın efendiğilinde odalığından müşarün-ileyh Yusuf İzzeddin Efendi tevellüd edip eğerçi kendisi anı Eyyub tarafında gizleyip ve biraz vakit mürûrunda sarây-i hümayûna getirtip köle diyerek kendi dâiresinde terbiye eylerdi. Saray halkı dahi anı köle bilirdi. Lâkin Abdülmecid Han hazretleri hakikat-i hâle vâkıf olduğu hâlde tecâhül ederdi. Abdülaziz Han hazretleri bu kerre cülûsunda ber-minvâl-i meşrûh anı birâder-zâdelerine ibrâz eylemiştir. Ba’dehû Bâbîâlî’ye ana dâir bir kıt’a hatt-ı hümayun irsâliyle îlân-ı keyfiyyet buyurmuştur.” See Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir*, 2: 146-147.

<sup>36</sup> John Freely, *Istanbul: the imperial city* (London; New York: Viking, 1996), 278.

<sup>37</sup> Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 109.

## 1. Pertevniyal's Rise in the Political Arena

Before elaborating on Pertevniyal's political influence and power as a *valide* sultan, it is crucial to understand the socio-political context of the empire prior to Abdülaziz's enthronement and the chaotic last years of Abdülmecid's sultanate as this was a period of vital importance for Pertevniyal and her son since there was no absolute guarantee that Abdülaziz would inherit the throne. In fact, although there were no more "armed contests among princes for the succession," the system of seniority for sultanic succession was not smooth in the nineteenth century and had not been for centuries as Peirce notes:

... there was mutual distrust between the sultan and the prince...: the former feared dethronement and the latter execution... Princes continued to need protection... The most vital function of the prince's mother was to keep him alive.<sup>38</sup>

This instability of succession practices continued to the time of Abdülaziz's enthronement. First, Abdülmecid as a sultan feared that he would be overthrown and replaced by his younger half-brother Abdülaziz.<sup>39</sup> (Fig. 2) So, during his last years Sultan Abdülmecid perceived Abdülaziz as a threat to his throne and considered different precautionary measures to eliminate this threat. The second obstacle that would endanger Pertevniyal's son's enthronement was Abdülmecid's son Murad V from Şevkefza Sultan. Being the oldest son of the sultan, Murad V was promoted as the heir of the throne by different parties of the state. In the face of these threats, Pertevniyal was to take every precaution, along with her son, to ensure the succession of Abdülaziz to the throne.<sup>40</sup> Her avid efforts to realize this end show that

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<sup>38</sup> Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 230.

<sup>39</sup> "His brother Abdülmecid had been suspicious of him in the last few years, thought once of sending him away to Tripoli in Africa, and required him to live with his mother Pertevniyal." See Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 109.

<sup>40</sup> Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Kadın Sultanları*, 391.

she was fully aware that “the greatest source of authority and status for [her] ... [was] the role of mother of a male dynast.”<sup>41</sup>

According to the chroniclers of the time, the last years of Abdülmecid’s reign were perceived very negatively by the public due to the chaos and economic distress the empire was facing. Palace expenditures increased substantially in the sultan’s later years, high amounts were spent on the new palaces and other construction.<sup>42</sup> The empire could no longer pay its debts, leading the treasury to lose its prestige. In 1859, the laborers working in the palace construction surrounded the Dolmabahçe Palace and protested against the Sultan for not having received their salaries for a long time. Distressed by this incident, Sultan Abdülmecid postponed the construction and distributed four thousand *kese*, from his private treasury, to the laborers.<sup>43</sup> A year later a more troublesome event occurred. This time, the Christian artisans, having money owed to them from the palace, went to the Dolmabahçe Palace and wanted to present their requests to the Sultan themselves. Since the sultan was unwell, it was *Serasker* Rıza Pasha who faced the crowd and avoided conflict by telling them their requests would be looked after.<sup>44</sup> Not satisfied with this response, the group went to the French, British and Russian embassies and handed in complaint petitions regarding Sultan Abdülmecid and his court.<sup>45</sup>

Among the opponents of Abdülmecid’s reign, the most serious group of dissidents was associated with the *Kuleli Vak‘ası* (incident), a rebellion and assassination attempt that took place in 1859 against the sultan. The reasons for this

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<sup>41</sup> Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 230.

<sup>42</sup> Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 109.

<sup>43</sup> “Bu hareketten pek müteessir olan Sultan Mecid saraylar inşaatını tatil ettirdi ve kendisine ait dört bin keseyi alacaklılara dağıttırdı.” See Şehsuvaroğlu, *Sultan Aziz*, 9-10. *Kese* was a varying sum of money, 500 kuruş in later centuries. See Sir James Redhouse, *New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary* (Istanbul: Redhouse Yayınevi, 1986), 642.

<sup>44</sup> Şehsuvaroğlu, *Sultan Aziz*, 10.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 10.

revolt were many: the discontent that arose following the Tanzimat era implementations, the worsening financial situation of the empire after the Crimean war, and the luxurious European life styles adopted by the Palace and the Porte. Discontent with the status quo, a group of soldiers and civil employees along with a mufti and a mudarris formed a secret association to assassinate Abdülmecid and to bring Abdülaziz to the throne.<sup>46</sup> But the association's objective and activities were revealed to the state and all of them were caught in 1860 and stood trial in the Kuleli Military School, after which the incident was called.<sup>47</sup>

When Sultan Mecid learned about the incident, he was terrified.<sup>48</sup> Not only this event, but other provocative rumors such as 'a change in the sultanate' led to the uneasiness of the sultan. In that context, Abdülaziz's existence started to become a burden and disturbance for Sultan Abdülmecid. Hence, in his last years he considered many different ways to eliminate Abdülaziz. The first idea that he conceived was changing the Ottoman succession<sup>49</sup> from the oldest prince to the oldest son. At that point, the British ambassador Cadning's opinion was requested on the issue. His reply was clear and convincing, "You cannot keep the princes imprisoned once their rights to succession are dismissed. They would go around freely ever after. In this case there may appear those who make a claim for the sultanate. But one of the strengths of this state is that there is not an opposing contest for its authority."<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Zekeriya Türkmen, "Kuleli Va'kası," in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (2002) 26: 356.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 356.

<sup>48</sup> Şehsuvaroğlu, *Sultan Aziz*, 12.

<sup>49</sup> For a discussion of Ottoman succession policies, see Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 79-80.

<sup>50</sup> "Bu sûrette hakkı iskat olunan şehzadeleri mahbus gibi tutamazsınız. Anlar da artık serbest gezerler. Bu hâlde içlerinden müdde'î-i saltanat zuhûr edebilir. Hâlbuki bu devletin bir büyük kuvveti dahi kendisine mu'âriz bir müdde'î-i saltanat olmaması husûsudur." See Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir*, 1: 133.

Following his guidance, the idea was set aside. But Sultan Abdülmecid's worries continued. Second, he envisioned appointing Abdülaziz to the governorship of Trablusgarp (an Ottoman province in North Africa) so that he would be far away from the capital and not be involved in any direct link in the political network. While some members of the cabinet agreed to this idea, others rejected it. In the end, the idea was never realized. One day during the Grand Vizierate of Mehmed Ali Pasha, Abdülmecid mentioned to the vizier about his distress regarding Abdülaziz by saying that "Pasha, I got tired of him."<sup>51</sup> Mehmed Ali Pasha's response was too much even for Sultan Abdülmecid who wanted to set Abdülaziz aside: "Dear Master, the head court chamberlain is a fast and agile servant of yours. And I have a trustworthy man. They would change their garment and shoot the prince at night when he is coming from his farm."<sup>52</sup> As Abdülmecid did not like bloodshed, he was frightened to hear such a thing and afterwards kept his distance from Mehmed Ali Pasha. On the other hand, his suspicions regarding Abdülaziz were escalating and he tried to draw meanings out of the prince's simple actions. This paranoia is clearly manifested by the following incident, recounted by Ahmed Cevdet Pasha in his *Tezâkir*, regarding Abdülaziz's engraving order for his guns. Accordingly, two gold-embossed guns were newly made for Sultan Abdülmecid. As Abdülaziz also wanted engravings for his guns at the time, he took his guns to the jeweler. Hearing the jeweler say, "This engraving can be made by the best quality of silver. If Boğos gives me silver of high quality, I will do it,"<sup>53</sup> Abdülaziz sent his silver request to Boğos and Boğos prepared the silver. This incident was conveyed by Boğos to Reşid Pasha immediately and

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<sup>51</sup> "Paşa ben bundan sıkılır oldum." See Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir*, 2: 134.

<sup>52</sup> "Efendim Baş-mabeynci çabuk ve çevik bir bendenizdir. Benim de bir mu'temed âdemim vardır. Anlara tebdîl-i câme ettiriniz. Efendi gece çiftliğinden gelirken kurşun ile vururlar." Ibid, 2: 134.

<sup>53</sup> "Bu işleme gümüşün pek hâlis ve âlâsından olur. Düz-oğlu Boğos istediğim gümüşü bana verirse yaparım." Ibid, 2: 133.

when Reşid Pasha saw the sultan, he recounted the story. Abdülmecid was distraught. He called for Boğos and told him, “Until now, I knew you as benevolent and loyal to me. But you had made Aziz Efendi a couple of guns. He has them made to kill me, do you know that?”<sup>54</sup> Hearing the sultan’s words, Boğos was very much surprised, and could hardly save himself in the face of the sultan’s anger.

In time, the rumors about a change in the sultanate, favoring Abdülaziz, turned out to be true. Especially the desperate public, tired of the economic hardship caused by the increasing expenditure of the palace members, started to support the enthronement of Abdülaziz. At the same time, according to Cevdet Pasha, some rumors about the exile of Murad V emerged, “The exile of Murad Efendi is wanted. In fact, his mother is applying to some embassies.”<sup>55</sup>

Contrary to these rumors favoring Abdülaziz for the throne, some dignitaries wished Murat Efendi (Murad V) to become the sultan after his father. One such supporter, the head court chamberlain Ahmet Bey, brought up the subject of bringing Murad V to the throne, to the foreign affairs chamberlain Kamil Bey as they were taking a walk in the palace garden with the English Ali Bey. However, Kamil Bey decisively dropped the subject by saying, “Do not make such gossip. This is against canonical law. It would invite a big rebellion. It would not resemble indigence. Let’s pretend that you haven’t told me anything like this and I haven’t heard anything.”<sup>56</sup>

Nevertheless, these rumors setting forth Murad V as the rival of Abdülaziz for the throne increased during the final illness of Abdülmecid in 1861. They not

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<sup>54</sup> “Ben seni şimdiye kadar kendime sâdık ve hayr-hâh bilirdim. Sen ise Aziz Efendi’ye bir çift tabanca yaptırırvermişsin. Ol tabancaları o beni öldürmek için yaptırıyor biliyor musun?” Ibid, 2: 134.

<sup>55</sup> “Murad Efendi’nin iclâsı isteniliyormuş. Hattâ vâlidesi ba’z-ı sefâretlere mürâca’at ediyormuş.” Not only about him and his mother, but also with regard to *Serasker Rıza Pasha*, toward whom Abdülaziz was not favorably inclined, some people said, “There is a probability that even him, concerning this matter, may apply to the French embassy, on which his authority relies.” “O dahi bu babda kendisinin müstenedi olan Fransa sefâretine mürâca’ataa vâsita olmak ihtimâli vardır.” Ibid, 2: 134.

<sup>56</sup> “Sen böyle lâkırdı söyleme. Bu söz şerîate dokunur bir maddedir. Büyük ihtilâli dâvet eder. Bu parasızlığa dahi benzemez. Ne sen bana bunu söylemiş ol, ne de ben dinlemiş olayım.” Ibid, 2: 134.

only spread among the public, but also entered the domains of the imperial harem and caused Pertevniyal and her attendants a great deal of concern. Meanwhile, to gain prominence in the eyes of Abdülaziz, Mehmed Ali Pasha kept fueling the prince's anxiety with such rumors, "Some people like Rıza Pasha have the intention to enthrone Murad Efendi. Yet, I am fighting against it."<sup>57</sup> In the face of these provocative rumors, Abdülaziz became concerned. To investigate the truth of the matter, he secretly asked Rıza Pasha if the news was accurate. In reply to him, Rıza Pasha said,

You are my Master the same way your stepbrother is. The level of my devotion and loyalty to you is the same. What you say cannot cross one's mind. But since your mind is full of such seductive words, you should not trust my word. Yet, I beg you not to perceive such a gossip as the truth and have the matter investigated.<sup>58</sup>

Thereupon, Abdülaziz made the inquiry and found out that the hearsay was groundless. However, this was not enough for him to get rid of his worries. This time, he questioned the teacher of the princes, Kemal Efendi, who replied the prince as follows,

This rumor is only a baseless lie. Your Majesty should not lend an ear to such words. The throne is intended to be fully inherited by Your Majesty. No one can prevent this. Hopefully sometime soon Your Majesty will be sitting on the throne. You may be at ease. But you should not lose confidence in the cabinet. For the time being, it would be good to retain all of them in their posts. In case it would be necessary, then you may change or keep those you would like to.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> "Rıza Paşa gibi ba'zılar Murad Efendi'yi iclâs etmek dâ'iyesinde bulunuyorlar. Lâkin ben bu uğurda başımı koymuşumdur." See Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir*, 2: 135.

<sup>58</sup> "Birâderleri nasıl effendi-zâdem ise anlar dahi öyledir. Ana nasıl hulûs ve sadakatim varsa kendilerine hulûs ve sadakatim dahi ol mertebededir. Bu hâtıra gelir şey değildir. Fakat mâdâmki ilka'ât ile zihinleri dolmuş. Benim sözümü doğru deyu dinlemesinler. Lâkin recâ ederim ki ol ilka'âta dahi sahih nazariyle bakmayıp ikisi ortası bir itikâdda bulunarak bu maddeyi tahkik buyursunlar." Ibid, 2: 135.

<sup>59</sup> "Bu havâdis mahzâ erâcîf ü ekâzib kabûlindendir. Efendi hazretleri böyle sözlere kulak asmasın. Taht-ı saltanat bihakkin kendisine tevârüs eder. Ana kimse mâni' olamaz. İnşa'allâh karîben câlis-i taht olurlar. Müsterihü'l-bâl olsunlar. Fakat vükelâyâ emniyetsizlik göstermesinler. Cümlesini me'mûriyetlerinde ibka buyurup ba'dehû icâbına göre istediklerini istihdâm ve istemediklerini tebdîl ederler." Ibid, 2: 135-136.

With this last consultation Abdülaziz consoled himself, but as Cevdet Pasha recounts, “he was not able to convince his mother Pertevniyal.”<sup>60</sup> Abdülmecid’s plans to eliminate Pertevniyal’s son were followed by the rumors about enthroning Murad V instead of Abdülaziz and these created a great deal of anxiety for Pertevniyal in the years prior to the enthronement of her son. Although Sultan Mecid’s perception of Abdülaziz as a threat seems to have not generated Pertevniyal’s dislike for her step-son Abdülmecid, there are many references to her hatred for both Murad V and his mother Şevkefza Sultan, which will be elaborated shortly in this chapter.

While these different rumors increased over time, Abdülmecid’s health worsened. One day, he called Abdülaziz to the Dolmabahçe Palace, where the two had their final talk. Ahmet Cevdet Pasha recounted the sultan’s words to Abdülaziz as follows: “Dear brother, I am no good anymore. I attended this festive occasion to say goodbye to the cabinet and others. Here you are, all will be left to you. If God wills, you will be successful. I entrust my children to you. Do not let them suffer from poverty.”<sup>61</sup> Affected by these words, Abdülaziz started crying. Sultan Mecid expressed his regret for having perceived Abdülaziz as a threat and blamed the cabinet for inciting him against his half-brother, “Meanwhile my cabinet betrayed me. They did not let me live, value your brotherhood.”<sup>62</sup> After this last conversation, Ahmed Cevdet Pasha points out Abdülaziz’s sadness and notes that he nearly fell on his way to his room. Having seen her son so distraught, Pertevniyal got worried and fainted in the imperial harem. Besides Abdülaziz’s sorrow, an incident during the last

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<sup>60</sup> “Vâlichesini iknâ’ ise hiç kaabil olmuyordu.” Ibid, 2: 136.

<sup>61</sup> “Birâder benden artık hayır yok. Ben muâyedeye dahi ancak vükelâ ve sâirleriyle vedâ’ için gittim. İşte her şey sana kalacak. İnşa’allâhu ta’âlâ muvaffak olursun. Evlâdlarımı sana emânet ettim. Zarûret çektirme.” Ibid, 2: 136.

<sup>62</sup> “Bu sırada vükelâm bana ihânet etti. Bana seninle kardeşliğimi bildirmediler.” Ibid, 2: 136.

*bayram* before Abdülmecid's death expresses Pertevniyal's grief regarding the illness of the old sultan. According to Ahmet Cevdet Pasha's account, the sultan asked Pertevniyal to distribute gold pouches to the odalisques in the imperial harem, a celebrated tradition within the palace during the *bayram*. But, as she was weeping in great grief, Pertevniyal could not perform this act.

Abdülmecid died on June 25, 1861, when Abdülaziz (fig. 3) was thirty one years old.<sup>63</sup> When the grand vizier, the *serasker*, and the *kapudan* pasha went to Abdülaziz's room to inform him about the death of the sultan and to take him from the heir's suite to the ruler's suite in the Dolmabahçe Palace, Pertevniyal worried that her son would be killed in order to bring Murad V to the throne. As such, she begged the officials, "Please leave my son to me."<sup>64</sup> After having waited for the imperial factions to be ready, Abdülaziz was taken to the Topkapı Palace. But as Pertevniyal was still worried about her son's life, she followed him to the Topkapı Palace, as recounted by Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, "The Valide Sultan grew impatient and came to the Topkapı Palace. She was relieved only when she saw her darling child with her own eyes."<sup>65</sup> With her son's accession to the throne, Pertevniyal gained the title of *valide sultan*, "*mehd-i ûlyâ-i saltanat*" on June 25, 1861.<sup>66</sup> From then on, she was to sign letters with the following titles: "*mehd-i ûlyâ-i saltanat*", "*Valde Sultan*", "*İsmetlû Valde Sultan-ı Âlişan Efendimiz Hazretleri M.*" (The Virtuous, Most Noble Her Majesty, Valide Sultan), "*İsmetlû Valde Sultan*" (The Virtuous Valide Sultan). She also referred to her son Abdülaziz as "*Şevketlû Nur-ı Aynım Aslanım Hazretleri*"

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<sup>63</sup> Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Sultanları*, 505. On the other hand, Şehsuvaroğlu states that he was thirty two years old, see Şehsuvaroğlu, *Sultan Aziz*, 26.

<sup>64</sup> "Aman oğlumu almayınız bana bırakınız." See Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir*, 2: 140.

<sup>65</sup> "Vâlîde hazretleri dayanamayıp geriden Topkapı sarayına gelerek ve ol odaya girip nûr-ı didesini kendi gözüyle görerek tahsîl-i itmi'nân eylemiştir." Ibid, 2: 140.

<sup>66</sup> Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Kadın Sultanları*, 391.

(Majestic, Glorious, My Lion, His Majesty) or “*Şevketlî aslanım Hazretleri*” (Majestic, My Lion, His Majesty).<sup>67</sup>

After her ‘lion’ became the sultan, Pertevniyal, as a *valide* sultan, had the necessary means to exercise influence and power both within the harem and in the world “beyond the harem walls.”<sup>68</sup> Like prior *valide* sultans, she had to build a considerable political network to gain influence and power in the Ottoman political arena. That network included the viziers, pashas, commanders, and powerful governors of the empire. To carry out her transactions with these statesmen outside the harem, the agency of her *kethüdas* played the major role.<sup>69</sup> These *kethüdas* were generally serving significant positions within the bureaucracy along with rendering service to the *valide* sultan. Their main tasks were to assist the *valide* sultan in all matters that were happening outside the walls of the Harem. Pertevniyal’s first *kethüda* was Mustafa Mazlum Fehmi Pasha, who was appointed minister of imperial treasury (*hazine-i hassa nezareti*) and *kethüda* to the *valide* sultan after the accession of Sultan Abdülaziz.<sup>70</sup> In the following year (1278/ 1861-62), Hüseyin Bey replaced<sup>71</sup> Mazlum Pasha and served his position until his death in 1871.<sup>72</sup> In addition to his role as Pertevniyal Valide Sultan’s *kethüda* and the superintendent of

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<sup>67</sup> Uluçay, *Padişahların Kadınları ve Kızları*, 124.

<sup>68</sup> I have used here, the title of Leslie Peirce’s article in which she explores the networks through which Ottoman imperial women exercised power beyond the walls of the harem contrary to the assumed gender-segregated roles within the Ottoman society. See Leslie Peirce, “Beyond Harem Walls: Ottoman Royal Women and the Exercise of Power,” in *Gendered Domains, Rethinking Public and Private in Women's History*, ed. Dorothy O. Helly and Susan M. Reverby (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992), 40-55.

<sup>69</sup> Fanny Davis states that, “Those valide sultans who were powerful gave their orders directly to the grand vizier and maintained their relationships with many state dignitaries through the agency of their *kethüdas*”; “Valide sultanlar arasında güçlü olanlar, doğrudan sadrazama emir veriyorlar ve birçok devlet adamıyla ilişkilerini kâhyaları aracılığıyla sürdürüyorlardı.” See Fanny Davis, *Osmanlı Hanımı: 1718'den 1918'e Bir Toplumsal Tarih*, trans. Bahar Tırnakçı (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2006), 27.

<sup>70</sup> Ahmed Lütfi, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi tarihi*, trans. M. Münir Aktepe, vol's. IX-XV (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, 1984-1993), 10: 13.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 10: 42.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 12: 112.

the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, Hüseyin Bey also served as the *şehremini* of Istanbul.<sup>73</sup> His first term was between 19 *Zilkade* 1274 (1 July 1858) and *Rebiülevvel* 1276 (September/November 1859), and his second term was between 23 *Rebiülevvel* 1278 (28 September 1861) and 22 *Zilkade* 1284 (16 March 1868).<sup>74</sup> He was the most well-known *kethüda* of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan and she effectively used him as an agent to communicate her messages in the political realm.

The bureaucrats of the time must have been aware of Pertevniyal's involvement in the dynastic politics since they informed and included her in state affairs; some statesmen presented their petitions to the *valide* sultan along with the Sultan.<sup>75</sup> To this end, following his appointment to the Syrian governorship, the visit paid by Ahmet Cevdet Pasha to the Valide Sultan to thank and inform her about his ideas on the current political situation of the state presents a fruitful insight concerning the dynamics of her new position as *valide*. After mentioning how Mahmud Pasha and Avni Pasha were competing with one another to get more bribery and how they dragged the Sultan and the empire into a bad situation,<sup>76</sup> Cevdet Pasha recounts his visit as follows:

I visited the *serkurena* [the Sultan's chief intimate] and the head clerk and expressed to them my contentedness [about my appointment to the Syrian governorship]. Because of my sincerity, I said to both of them that the current situation of the state was very bad. Afterwards, I went to the apartment of the

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<sup>73</sup> For his role as *şehremini*, see Osman Nuri Ergin, *İstanbul Şehreminleri*, ed. Ahmed Nezih Galitekin. (İstanbul: İşaret Yayınları, 2007), 103-121.

<sup>74</sup> Osman Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-u Belediye* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı, 1995), 1561.

<sup>75</sup> Akyıldız, *Pertevniyal Valide Sultan*, 239. Akyıldız refers to BA, İrade-Dâhiliye, nr. 101585.

<sup>76</sup> “Esdikay-ı bendegân bu hallere nazar-ı te’essûf ile bakup ancak ellerinden bir şey gelmiyordu. Zira Padişaha söz söyleyecek mukarrebinin kimi Mahmud Paşa’ya ve kimi Avni Paşa’ya meclûb idiler. Ve Mahmud Paşa ile Avni Paşa, ikisi de bol bol rüşvet vermekde yarış etmekde idiler. Ve birisi mücerred agraz-ı şahsiyyesini tervic için ve diğeri de agraz-ı nefsanîyyesini icra için çalışup ikisinin de hareketleri Padişahı halkın lisanına düşürmekde idi. Devlet bir müfsid ile bir ha’inin ellerinde kalup kulları iki fırkanın da haricinde bulunduğum cihetle li-ecli’t-teşekkür Mabeyn-i Hümayûn’a gitdim.” See Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'rûzât*, ed. Dr. Yusuf Halaçoğlu (İstanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1980), 227.

Valide Sultan and while expressing my gratitude, I also indirectly mentioned the bad situation to her.<sup>77</sup>

Using her network and influence over her son, Abdülaziz, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan succeeded to be directly involved in the appointment and dismissal of the grand viziers and other important statesmen. While she would be influential in the appointment of a vizier she favored and would build up a close relation with that vizier, there were some viziers whom she clearly did not approve of, and whom she would lobby against, by first complaining to her son, then to her entourage.

Following Abdülaziz's accession in 1861, the experienced Ali and Fuad Pashas secured their positions and kept them until 1871. During these ten years either Ali or Fuad Pasha would serve as grand vizier, with only two interludes, the periods of the grand vizierates of Yusuf Kamil Pasha and Mütercim Mehmed Rüşdi Pasha, which lasted five and eight months respectively.<sup>78</sup> Georges Douin, in his book, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, which was published in 1933, refers to Pertevniyal's efforts to weaken Ali and Fuad Pashas, with whom her interests clashed.<sup>79</sup> The account he presents pertains to the situation in which the Egyptian Khedive Ismail Pasha found himself during his visit in Istanbul in 1865, a voyage during which he intended to get support for a change in the Egyptian succession law, a matter which will be discussed later in this chapter.

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<sup>77</sup> My Italics: "Serkurenayı ve başkâtibi görüp, lisan-ı şükran ile memnûniyetimi arz etdirdim. Lakin bi-hasebi'l-ihlas ikisine de hal-i hazırın fena olduğunu söyledim. *Ba'dehü, Valide Sultan Dairesine gidüp bi'lvasıta teşekkür yolunda burasını Mehd-i ulya tarafına dahi bildirdim...*" Ibid, 227.

<sup>78</sup> Grand vizierial appointments in this period were: Mehmed Emin Ali Pasha, 6 August 1861- 22 November 1861; Keçecizade Mehmed Emin Fuad Pasha, 22 November 1861- 6 January 1863; Yusuf Kamil Pasha, 6 January 1863- 3 June 1863; Keçecizade Mehmed Emin Fuad Pasha, 3 June 1863- 5 June 1866; Mütercim Mehmed Rüşdi Pasha, 5 June 1866 11- February 1867; Mehmed Emin Ali Pasha, 11 February 1867- 7 September 1871.

<sup>79</sup> There are two volumes of the book; the first volume concerns the events of 1863-1867 and the second volume is about the events between 1867 and 1873. The book is very detailed and is mostly based on French, British and Egyptian documents. See Georges Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail, 1863-1867*. Vol. I (Rome: Société Royale de Géographie D'Égypte, 1933); *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail, 1867-1873*. Vol. II (Rome: Société Royale de Géographie D'Égypte, 1934).

Le voyage que fit le vice-roi [*Ismail Pasha*] à Constantinople, au cours de l'année 1865, n'avança cependant pas la solution de l'affaire. Le sérail était devenu un nid d'intrigues. La Sultane Validé, femme d'excellentes intentions et qui se croyait douée pour la politique, n'était satisfaite ni d'Aali ni de Fouad pachas. Incapable de comprendre les principes qui les guidaient en matière de politique et de finances, elle leur préférait les Turcs de la vieille école, qui sympathisaient avec ses idées à la fois chimériques et généreuses. Au cours de la dernière maladie du Sultan, elle avait pris de l'influence sur son fils et elle travaillait, avec les mécontents, à écarter du pouvoir les deux ministres qui lui déplaisaient.<sup>80</sup>

As part of her efforts to overthrow Ali and Fuad Pashas, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan also sent her *kethüda* Hüseyin Bey several times to Yusuf Kamil Pasha<sup>81</sup> to convince him to accept the vizierate role offered by Abdülaziz.<sup>82</sup>

When Ali Pasha became ill in June 1871, a competition started among the statesmen who aspired to the grand vizierate. From Georges Douin's account we learn that Pertevniyal Valide Sultan was not indifferent to this political situation. At the time, she took sides with some of the pashas: "Excitées par sa fin prochaine [*Ali Pasha's end*], les ambitions avaient de la peine à se contenir. Mehemet Kuprisli pacha avait fait alliance avec Riza pacha, tous deux étaient protégés par la Sultane Validé."<sup>83</sup> Still linked to Ali Pasha's illness, Gouin also refers to an event which clearly confirms that Pertevniyal "continued to carry on her roles as tutor and protector of her son" as a *valide* sultan,<sup>84</sup> and the sultan had reliance on his mother's counsel, even though it concerned his relationship with his viziers. Accordingly, when the grand vizier Ali Pasha's health improved, he asked the sultan's permission to pay tribute to him, "la permission d'aller déposer ses hommages à ses pieds."<sup>85</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 1: 206.

<sup>81</sup> Yusuf Kamil Pasha held the office of grand vizierate between 6 January 1863- 3 June 1863. See Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 110.

<sup>82</sup> Akyıldız, *Pertevniyal Valide Sultan*, 239.

<sup>83</sup> Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 2: 599.

<sup>84</sup> Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 236.

<sup>85</sup> Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 2: 600.

Although the sultan was not thinking about refusing his request, the *valide* sultan frightened him by stating that Ali Pasha had tuberculosis, which was contagious, and that it would be imprudent to receive him. Listening to his mother's advice, Abdülaziz sent Emin Bey to Ali Pasha's residence in Bebek and asked him to stay ten more days at his residence although he knew that Ali Pasha would not survive that long.<sup>86</sup>

Despite her clash with Ali and Fuad Pashas, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan was known, and was mostly condemned, by critics of the time for her close relation with vizier Mahmud Nedim Pasha, who was known for his recklessness and incompetence.<sup>87</sup> Following the deaths of Ali and Fuad Pashas, Abdülaziz consulted different people regarding the appointment of a grand vizier. When Ali Pasha passed away in September 1871, Abdülaziz sent his head clerk Emin Bey to *Serasker* Hüseyin Avni Pasha and asked for his opinion about who would be suitable for the office of the grand vizierate. Though Hüseyin Avni Pasha did not at first propose a name, after Abdülaziz's insistency, he recommended Mütercim Rüştü Pasha.<sup>88</sup> Instead, Abdülaziz appointed Mahmud Nedim Pasha as the grand vizier. The English historian Sir Edward Shepherd Creasy describes this appointment as follows, "... the year 1871 saw the accession to power of a reactionary ministry headed by

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<sup>86</sup> "Un jour qu'il se sentait mieux, fit même demander au Sultan la permission d'aller déposer ses hommages à ses pieds. Sa Majeste n'avait pas dit non, mais la Sultane Validé lui fit peur; elle lui représenta qu'Aali pacha avait le *verem*, que cette maladie était contagieuse et qu'il y aurait imprudence à le recevoir. Là -dessus le Sultan envoya Emin Bey à Bebek pour faire savoir que sa volonté était que le malade restât encore dix jours chez lui avant de sortir. En même temps, fit remettre un cadeau aux médecins traitants, en témoignage de sa haute satisfaction pour « avoir assuré la guérison du malade ». Mais le Sultan n'était pas dupe; un médecin, en qui avait confiance, lui avait assuré que son vizir ne passerait pas dix jours." See Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 2: 600.

<sup>87</sup> On Mahmud Nedim generally, see Mahmud Kemal İnal, *Osmanlı Devrinde Son Sadrazamlar* (İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1955), 1: 259-273; Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 280-288; Ali Akyıldız, "Mahmud Nedim Paşa" in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 27 (İstanbul, 2003), 374-376.

<sup>88</sup> When his advice was asked, Hüseyin Avni Paşa first refused to offer a name by saying, "Münasibi efendimiz bilirler, birini tavsiye etmek haddimin fevkindedir." See Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 7: 123.

Mohammed Nedim, an ignorant favorite of the Sultan and a nominee of the Harem.”<sup>89</sup> And the prominent Turkish historian Enver Ziya Karal, writing in 1977, proposes a more elaborate root cause for this assignment. He states that for the dismissal and appointment of a grand vizier, there were several influences on the sultan: his *mabeynci* (court chamberlain), the *valide* sultan and *saray halkı* (the Palace). He also states that “regarding the appointment of Mahmud Nedim Pasha as the grand vizier, the role of the Valide Sultan was substantial.”<sup>90</sup>

Pertevniyal’s support for Mahmud Pasha is not surprising given her efforts to discard Ali Pasha and Fuad Pasha. Mahmud Nedim Pasha, who by then was the minister of the navy,<sup>91</sup> was seen as a conspirator against Ali Pasha.<sup>92</sup> Contrary to the previous grand vizier’s dominant positions within the dynastic politics, Mahmud Nedim allocated all authority to Abdülaziz and his *valide*.<sup>93</sup> He was actually the first minister Abdülaziz had who did what the sultan wanted, “[d]epuis dix ans, disait Abdul-Aziz au comte de Prokesch-Osten qu’il recevait en audience de congé, depuis dix ans je n’ai pas trouvé un ministre qui exécutât mes volontés, enfin je l’ai rencontré.”<sup>94</sup> Although Mahmud Nedim did not know any foreign languages and had never been outside the empire, these deficiencies did not prevent him from holding office. During the last five years of Abdülaziz’s reign, it seems that Mahmud Nedim Pasha was to become the sultan’s favourite,<sup>95</sup> holding the office of grand vizierate

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<sup>89</sup> See Sir Edward Shepherd Creasy, *The History of Nations/ Turkey*, ed. Archibald Cary Coolidge and W. Harold Claflin. (Philadelphia: John D. Morris and Company, 1906), 14: 473.

<sup>90</sup> Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 7: 123.

<sup>91</sup> Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 269.

<sup>92</sup> Ali Haydar Mithat, *Midhat Paşa: hayat-ı siyasiyesi, hidematı, menfa hayatı* (İstanbul: Hilâl Matbaası, 1325 [1909]), 2: 19.

<sup>93</sup> When Mahmud Nedim Pasha was the minister of the navy, he would consistently flatter Abdülaziz by saying, “Efendimiz bir padişahı müstebitsiniz, her emir ve fermanınızı icraya muktedirsiniz.” See Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 7: 123.

<sup>94</sup> Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 2: 631.

<sup>95</sup> Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 280.

twice, eleven months after his first appointment in September 1871 and for more than eight months in 1875-1876.

One of the first cases in which the interests of the new grand vizier and the *valide* sultan coincided concerned the exile of Abdülaziz's head clerk Emin Bey. When Mahmud Nedim became the grand vizier on 7 September 1871, Emin Bey had been in his position for fifteen years as the confidant of the Ottoman sovereign. He had also become one of the most powerful statesmen in the capital. This situation bothered the new grand vizier and he wanted to get rid of the experienced head clerk. The situation was no different for the *valide*, who "[...] faisait tout son possible pour le [Emin Bey] faire renvoyer."<sup>96</sup> The *valide* sultan and Mahmud Nedim's plans to overthrow Emin Bey worked out and in October, 1871, the head clerk Emin Bey was dismissed by Abdülaziz and he was sent to exile.

Contrary to the earlier grand viziers' close relations with the French and British ambassadors, Mahmud Nedim came to be called "Nedimoff" by the public due to his affiliation with the Russian ambassador, Ignatyev, who was vehemently opposed to Ali Pasha's previous policies, which favored cooperation with European countries.<sup>97</sup> In addition to Ignatyev, Mahmud Nedim had good relations with the khedive Ismail Pasha of Egypt, who had greater influence and power during Mahmud Nedim's grand vizierate and who also had very good relations with the *valide* sultan.<sup>98</sup> Ismail Pasha bribed not only Mahmud Nedim but also many other Ottoman officials during this period to exercise his power and to get the necessary concessions for himself. In fact, both Ottoman and European sources negatively

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<sup>96</sup> Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédivé Ismail*, 2, 613.

<sup>97</sup> Ali and Fuad Pashas had sought support from the British and French ambassadors. See Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 283.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 283-284.

describe Mahmud Nedim, writing that “he was undoubtedly venal.”<sup>99</sup> Accordingly, during his office, bribery, corruption became wide spread in the empire. Pertevniyal was particularly condemned by the critics of the time for her close relation with such a bureaucrat who was defined as “hypocrite, sycophant, flatterer, [and] untrustworthy.”<sup>100</sup> Roderic Davison’s criticism of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan concerns her contribution to the mismanaged policies of Mahmud Nedim Pasha:

“[p]resumably the influence of the Palace, especially of the harem and the *valide* sultan Pertevniyal, increased the chaos and the chances for gaining office through bribery.”<sup>101</sup>

Concerning the chaos and increasing bribery during this period,<sup>102</sup> which starts with the appointment of Mahmud Nedim Pasha as the grand vizier, Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha (1838-1899), a significant bureaucrat of the time, in his *Mir’ât-ı Hakikat*, confirms this situation. He states that after the death of Ali Pasha in 1871 until 1874, there were too many changes in the empire’s administration, especially regarding the office of grand vizierate. Of more serious concern was the economic crisis that could not be controlled by the administration. In addition, the pasha stated that those rising to the grand vizierate position saved the day by taking on more foreign debt and tried to satisfy the expenses of the Sultan and the *valide* sultan. Accordingly, they also indulged themselves during their term of service. As such, this period following the death of Ali Pasha in 1871 was mostly perceived by its

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 281.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, 281.

<sup>101</sup> See Ibid, 282; İnal, *Osmanlı Devrinde Son Sadrazamlar*, 1: 274-275.

<sup>102</sup> Grand viziers in this period: Mahmud Nedim Pasha, 7 September 1871- 31 July 1872; Mithat Pasha, 31 July 1872- 19 October 1872; Mütercim Mehmed Rüşdi Pasha, 19 October 1872- 15 March 1873; Sakızlı Ahmed Esad Pasha, 15 March 1873- 15 April 1873; Şirvânî-zâde Mehmed Rüşdü Pasha, 15 April 1873- 14 February 1874.

chroniclers as a time of chaos and corruption both for the administration and the financial situation of the empire.<sup>103</sup>

Contrary to her close relationship with Mahmud Nedim Pasha, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's dislike for Hüseyin Avni Pasha is mentioned in different sources.<sup>104</sup> For instance, during his first grand vizierate, Mahmud Nedim dismissed Hüseyin Avni Pasha from the Ministry of War.<sup>105</sup> According to İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, it was Pertevniyal Valide Sultan who ordered this dismissal: "Although Hüseyin Avni Pasha's illegitimate affair with a woman supervisor of the Harem entailed the Valide Sultan's complaint, his position was untouched during Ali Pasha's Grand Vizierate. But once he passed away, and a new grand vizier was appointed, Hüseyin Avni Pasha was immediately dismissed due to the *valide* sultan's will."<sup>106</sup>

On the other hand, Ziya Şakir's account of the memoirs of Murad V's concubine Filizten, clearly reflects the fact that Pertevniyal's hatred for Hüseyin Avni Pasha was not one-sided. According to the concubine Filiz, one day, Pertevniyal's grandson Yusuf İzzettin Efendi said to Hüseyin Avni Pasha, "What does this woman want from you? She blames you for ceasing correspondence with Murat Efendi." Hearing this, Hüseyin Avni Pasha got confused, thinking about who that woman was. Seeing him perplexed, Yusuf İzzettin Efendi stated he meant

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<sup>103</sup> See Mahmud Celaleddin Paşa, *Mir'ât-ı Hakikat*, ed. İsmet Miroğlu (İstanbul: Berekat Yayınevi, 1983): 48.

<sup>104</sup> Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha states that Mahmud Nedim incited Pertevniyal Valide Sultan about Hüseyin Avni's possible conspiracies. Ibid, 105.

<sup>105</sup> Prior to Mahmud Nedim's second grand vizierate, Hüseyin Avni Pasha held the office of grand vizier for about a year between 1874- 1875.

<sup>106</sup> "Hüseyin Avni Paşa'nın eteğine pis olup bir hazinekar kalfa ile münasabeti Valide Sultan'ın şikâyetini mucip olmuş ise de Ali Paşa sadaretinde kendisine dokunulamamış, fakat onun vefatından ve yeni sadrazamın tayininden sonra Valide Sultan'ın arzusuyla derhal azlolunmuştur." See İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Midhat Paşa ve Yıldız Mahkemesi* (İstanbul: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1967), 6. Uzunçarşılı's account must be based on Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha's *Mir'ât-ı Hakikat*, see Celaleddin Paşa, *Mir'ât-ı Hakikat*, 101.

Pertevniyal Valide Sultan. Subsequently, the author describes what Pertevniyal meant for Hüseyin Avni Pasha as follows:

... His biggest enemy was the *valide* sultan. Due to his disrespectfulness towards her during a procession, she developed a grudge against him. He was aware that the *valide* sultan, who valued Mahmud Nedim Pasha's words above anything else, was scheming against him. He was deeply vexed at this, but this stern and brusque man quickly pulled himself together.<sup>107</sup>

Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, in his *Ma'rûzât* refers to the *valide* sultan's aversion for Hüseyin Avni Pasha as follows:

Hüseyin Avni Pasha as well was scheming covertly and increasing his supporters. For a while he suffered being undermined. Afterwards he was once again appointed *Serasker* with Ali Pasha's help. Although the *valide* sultan hated him, Ali Pasha guarded him.<sup>108</sup>

Hüseyin Avni Pasha was appointed grand vizier only once during Abdülaziz's reign.<sup>109</sup> The English-American writer Elizabeth Wormeley Latimer states that the reason for that appointment was that "... both Abdul Aziz and the *valide* [Pertevniyal] believed that he would lend himself to their scheme of substituting Yussef Izzeddin for Murad as heir to the Turkish throne."<sup>110</sup> But in fact, that never happened. According to Uzunçarşılı, Hüseyin Avni Pasha was one of the statesmen who was also known for his hatred towards Abdülaziz, so he had a big role

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<sup>107</sup> "... Onun en büyük düşmanı, Valide Sultandı. Bir selamlık resminde kendisine hürmetsizlik gösterdiği için Hüseyin Avni Paşaya kin bağlamış olan ve sabık Sadrazam Mahmut Nedim Paşanın sözlerini her şeyden üstün tutan Valide Sultanın, kendi aleyhinde yine bir fırıldak çevirmeye hazırlandığını hissetmişti. Buna son derecede canı sıkılmakla beraber bu sert yüzlü ve haşin ruhlu adam çarçabuk kendini toparlamış." See Ziya Şakir, *Çırağan Sarayında 28 Sene Beşinci Murad'ın Hayatı* (İstanbul: Anadolu Türk Kitap Deposu, 1943), 60.

<sup>108</sup> "Hüseyin Avni Paşa dahi saman altından su yürüderak el altından tarafdarlarını çoğaltmakda idi. Ve bir aralık menkûb olarak hayli hamyâzeler çekmişken sonra Ali Paşa'nın himmetiyle yine Serasker olmuş ve eğerçi Valide Sultan andan müteneffir ise de Ali Paşa anı himaye etmekte bulunmuşdur." See Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'rûzât*, 202.

<sup>109</sup> He served as grand vizier between 14 February 1874- 25 April 1875.

<sup>110</sup> Elizabeth Wormeley Latimer, *Russia and Turkey in the nineteenth century* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and company, 1893), 212.

in Abdülaziz's dethronement and was blamed for the assassination of the deceased sultan.<sup>111</sup>

## 2. The Khedive Family in Egypt

Besides her involvement in the political affairs of the Sublime Porte, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan also played significant roles in the relationship of the Khedive Ismail in Egypt (r. 1863-1879) with the Porte. This relationship was going to be of crucial importance for Egypt and the Ottoman Porte as it had everlasting consequences for both. During Abdülaziz's reign, Ismail spent time and treasure to gain concessions and thus to stretch his independence as a ruler. Besides using bribery and gifts to manipulate the officials of the time, Ismail had another privilege, according to two sources, to be the maternal cousin of Sultan Abdülaziz. This blood relationship between the two rulers is first mentioned in Georges Douin's previously mentioned book, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, which consists of two volumes that supply significant information from the French, British and Egyptian documents and refer many times to Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's role in Ismail's relationship with the Porte.<sup>112</sup> According to Douin, "La mère du sultan et celle du vice-roi sont soeurs, disait un confident d'Ismail pacha à M. Tastu en juin 1863, toutes deux très respectées de leurs fils et fort unies entre elles, tel a été le début du rapprochement des deux princes."<sup>113</sup> The relationship is mentioned later in an article

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<sup>111</sup> "Bilhassa [Hüseyin Avni Paşa] Abdülaziz'in hasm-ı canı idi. [...] Sultan Aziz hakkındaki gazabını saklamıyan Hüseyin Avni Paşa bir gün Mustafa Fazıl Paşa'ya: 'Ben ondan ahz-ı se'r etmedikçe Allah canımı almasın' demiş." Uzunçarşılı refers to the memorandum Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha presented to Sultan Abdülhamid. See Uzunçarşılı, İsmail Hakkı. *Midhat Paşa ve Yıldız Mahkemesi*, 111.

<sup>112</sup> Roderic Davison, in his book's bibliography refers to Douin's book as such, "A very detailed work, not well integrated but supplying copious information out of French, British and Egyptian documents." See Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 438.

<sup>113</sup> See Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 1: 205. M. Tastu is referred as the "consul général de France" of the time, Ibid, 1: 54.

by Afaf Lutfi Al-Sayyid Marsot, published in 1975 in the *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*.<sup>114</sup> Accordingly, Marsot states that, “[t]hat blood relationship between the two men was to stand Ismail in good stead, especially because the Sultan was well known to be under the influence of his mother, the Valide Sultan Pertevniyal, Ismail's mother's sister.” Apart from the blood relationship, what Marsot also underlines is the influence of Pertevniyal on Abdülaziz and therefore on the strategic relationship between the sultan and the khedive. The mother of Ismail mentioned by Douin and Marsot was Hoshiar Kadınefendi (Khushiyar Khater) (c. 1813-1886), the third wife of Ismail’s father, Ibrahim Pasha.

There are several other accounts in the Turkish sources about Pertevniyal and Hoshiar Kadınefendi’s close relationship although none refers to the blood relation between the two. For instance, according to Nahid Sırrı Örik, Hoshiar Valida Pasha visited Istanbul frequently and succeeded in establishing a close friendship with Pertevniyal Valide Sultan. Örik also states that from what he read in a newspaper of the time, Pertevniyal Sultan stayed overnight at the khedive palace in Emirgan, as a guest of Hoshiar Kadınefendi.<sup>115</sup>

What Örik refers to as a newspaper report, the incident of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan staying in the khedive palace in Emirgan, also appears in Georges Douin’s *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*. According to his account, for the annual celebration of Abdülaziz’s enthronement, Ismail Pasha prepared a feast on June 24, 1873. After the celebration, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan stayed at the palace in

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<sup>114</sup> Marsot did not give a source for his statement, but in his introduction and throughout his paper, he refers to Georges Douin’s book, which strengthens the possibility that he used Douin as his reference. See Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot, “The Porte and Ismail Pasha's Quest for Autonomy,” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* (1975): 89-96.

<sup>115</sup> See Nihad Sırrı Örik, “Mısır’ın Valdepaşaları,” *Resimli Tarih* (1 September 1951): 952.

Emirgan, “[l]a Sultane Validé, chez qui le harem de S. A. le Khédive venait de passer plusieurs jours, serait également reçue à Emirghian, où elle séjournerait après la fête.”<sup>116</sup> This account also shows that the Egyptian women of Ismail Pasha’s harem were hosted by Pertevniyal Valide Sultan in her apartments in the palace. These visits witnessed the exchange of valuable gifts, which was “an aspect of the inseparability of regal consumption and display and the exercise of royal politics.”<sup>117</sup> During one of the visits of the Khedive family, which occurred in 1865, the gifts presented to the khedive family by the *valide* sultan and her son, Abdülaziz, cost 100.000 liras.<sup>118</sup>

Another account, this time from 1871, notes a visit by the daughter of Ismail Pasha to Istanbul. For this occasion, the Egyptian princess Tevhide brought precious gifts for the *valide* sultan and stayed at the *valide*’s apartments in the Dolmabahçe Palace. Douin also emphasizes the importance of this visit to the *valide* sultan for the Egyptian harem as the *valide* had “great influence on her son.”

La fille du vice-roi apportait avec elle de précieux cadeaux pour la mère du Sultan. A l'annonce de sa venue, la Sultane Validé témoigna l'intention de la retenir deux ou trois jours auprès d'elle; elle fit préparer des divertissements, et comme le palais de Beylerbey était un peu petit, on envoya Mehemed Rachid effendi et sa mère au palais de Dolma-Bagtché, afin de disposer de ses appartements en faveur de la princesse. Ces visites de harem n'étaient pas sans importance; l'influence de la Sultane Validé était grande sur son fils; en cultivant la bonne intelligence avec elle, le vice-roi se préparait un moyen d'action auprès du Sultan. La princesse égyptienne reçut, en effet, le meilleur accueil au palais. Un soir, elle fut la messafire de la Sultane Validé, et, le lendemain, celle du Sultan lui-même.<sup>119</sup>

This close relationship between the khedive of Egypt and the sultan and his mother Pertevniyal Valide Sultan was consistently supported by many sorts of

<sup>116</sup> Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 2: 727.

<sup>117</sup> Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 227.

<sup>118</sup> Akyıldız, *Pertevniyal Valide Sultan*, 239.

<sup>119</sup> Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 2: 596.

presents, vast amounts of money and personal visits during the reign of Abdülaziz. Maintaining such a close relation with the palace was vital for khedive Ismail Pasha, who was determined to gain the concessions that would make his Egypt both administratively and economically more independent.

The first concession Ismail Pasha wanted to gain concerned the law of succession to the Egyptian throne. By a firman in 1841, the succession in Egypt started to follow that of the Ottoman dynasty; the oldest male of the ruling family gained the right to enthronement. Unless this practice would change, either Ismail's half-brother Mustafa Fazıl Pasha, who was a cabinet minister in the Ottoman state at the time or Halim Pasha, Muhammad Ali's youngest son, was going to inherit the throne. But as Ismail Pasha wanted to change the law of succession from passing the rule to the oldest male to primogeniture, to favor his son for the throne, he lobbied strongly for this change. The grand vizier of the time, Fuad Pasha refused this change by pointing to the dangers of bringing a possible infant to the throne. When Ismail Pasha's mother Hoshiar Kadınefendi also tried to talk to Fuad Pasha on one of her visits to Istanbul, all she met was Fuad Pasha's rebuff. In fact, during his grand vizierate, Fuad Pasha tried to block these maneuvers by Ismail Pasha and intended to keep him in control.<sup>120</sup>

But Ismail Pasha did not give up. He consistently distributed vast amounts of money to the Sultan, the *valide* sultan, the members of the ruling household and the cabinet members in order to realize his objective. Regarding how the khedive and his mother tried to convince Abdülaziz and Pertevniyal Valide Sultan about this change in the law of succession, Georges Douin presents a rewarding account:

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<sup>120</sup> Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 285.

“L'année suivante, la mère du vice-roi [*Ismail Pasha*] se rendit à Constantinople pour faire visite à sa soeur, la mère du Sultan: « On prépare depuis longtemps de magnifiques cadeaux, mandait M. Tasta à propos du voyage de la princesse. Je crois utile de rappeler que c'est par cette voie que se traitera la question d'hérédité directe qui, pour être négligée en apparence, continue à faire l'objet des préoccupations du vice-roi.”<sup>121</sup>

The historian Ahmed Lütü gives the date of this visit as *Rebiülahir* 1281 (September 1864) and recounts its pomp and the gift exchange in detail.<sup>122</sup> As can be detected from these accounts, the mother of Ismail Pasha paid several visits to Istanbul including this particular one in 1864, and presented precious gifts to Pertevniyal to bring forth a new procedure in the law of succession and to persuade her and her son to change the law. It is quite clear that Pertevniyal was perceived by Ismail Pasha as an important influence on political decisions of the dynasty, and thus they had to win her over.

Meanwhile, some political events served a suitable ground for Ismail Pasha's craving for a change in the succession. By then, it was known that Fuad Pasha had a big quarrel with Mustafa Fazıl Pasha, a cabinet minister and also Ismail Pasha's brother.<sup>123</sup> Following this dispute, Mustafa Fazıl Pasha was asked to leave Istanbul and sought exile in France. As he turned against the Sublime Porte, he joined the camp of the “Jeune Turcs.”<sup>124</sup> Finally on May 27, 1866, Ismail's efforts paid off. A firman which announced the change in the Egyptian rule of succession to one of

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<sup>121</sup> Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 1: 206.

<sup>122</sup> “... O esnada Mısır Valisi İsmail Paşa'nın validesiyle halileri ve mahdumu beray-i tebdil-i hava İstanbul'a geldiklerinde fevka'l-ade merasim-i mer'iyye-i ihtiramiyye ile Fer'iyye daire-i aliyyesine müsafir verilerek müddet-i ikametlerinde haklarında türlü ikramlar ve ziyafetler edilmiş ve hin-i avdetlerinde taraf-ı şahaneden ve Valide Sultan canibinden aile-i mezkurete i'ta buyrulan mücevherat ve eşya-yi giran-baha yirmi bin kise akçe kıymetinde bulunduğu ve hin-i avdetde vali-yi müşarün-ileyhin validesi tarafından muhacirin-i Çerakise'ye altı yüz ve halilesi canibinden üç yüz kise akçe i'aneten i'ta olunduğu evrak- matbu'ada görülmüştür.” See Lütü, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütü Efendi tarihi*, 10: 137.

<sup>123</sup> He was one of the two males to inherit the Egyptian throne.

<sup>124</sup> Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 200. The New Ottomans were more widely known as the “Jön Türkler.” For the formation of this movement, see M. Şükrü Hanioglu, “Jön Türkler,” in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul 2001) 23: 584-587.

primogeniture, was issued during the grand vizierate of Fuad Pasha. A week after the firman was issued, Fuad Pasha was dismissed from his grand vizierate for a totally different reason but one which was still linked with Ismail Pasha: Fuad Pasha opposed firmly Abdülaziz's desire to marry Ismail Pasha's daughter, the princess Tevhide, realizing that such a connection would increase Ismail's influence even more at the Porte.<sup>125</sup>

Although the marriage plan was cancelled, Ismail's privileges did not suffer. Abdülaziz encouraged Ismail Pasha to convey his requests directly to him, the palace, rather than the court, and Ismail Pasha took advantage of this privilege for his objectives.<sup>126</sup> Before he sent his requests via his agent Hasan Pasha, he sent presents or vast amount of money to Pertevniyal Valide Sultan. Georges Douin refers to one of these "presents" that Ismail Pasha sent to Pertevniyal before he would request important concessions from the sultan,

Le vice-roi, par ailleurs, avait fait parvenir, un mois plus tôt, une somme de dix mille bourses en or [soit 5 millions de piastres] à la Sultane Validé. Abdul-Aziz, à court d'argent, s'était emparé de cette somme et avait fait

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<sup>125</sup> Regarding the incident, see Mehmet Memduh Paşa, *Mirât-ı şüûnat* (İzmir: Âhenk Matbaası, 1328 [1912]), 36-37; Ali Fuat Türkgeldi, *Rical-i mühimme-i siyasiye* (Istanbul, 1928): 166-177; Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi, *Tarih musahabeleri* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 1985), 108; Orhan F. Köprülü, "Fuad Paşa," in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul, 1996), 13: 202-205; Anthony Dolphin Alderson, *The Structure of the Ottoman Dynasty* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 89; Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 115; Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 1: 229-231. Fuad Pasha's opposition which caused him his dismissal was as follows: "Kullarında iki hal vardır: birisi sadece Fuadilik, öbürüsü sadrazamlıktır; Fuadilik Efendimizin rahatı ve gönlü neyi isterse anı yapmaktır. Sadrazamlık, çaresiz bazı mütalâa dermeyan etmiye mecbur eder." See İnal, *Osmanlı Devrinde Son Sadrazamlar*, 1: 174. "Hıdiv'in kerimesini padişah alsa, padişaha kayınpeder olacak; hâlbuki padişahlara valid macid yine bir padişaktır. Kayınpeder tabirini havsalayı saltanat birgün çekse ertesi gün çekemez. Sarayda kadınefendiler ve ikballer müteaddit bulunmasıyle Hıdiv'in kerimesi bir müddet geçince emsalleri gibi dairei mahsusasında tek başına kalacak, Mısır'a gitmek istese müsaade olunmayacak, tatlik edilse pederinin yanına gönderilse, diğer ere verilmek olmayacak, saraydan çıkarılsa bu nikâhlı kadın yeis ve kederden hastalığa uğrayacak; Ismail Paşa kerimesinin alamını iştirmekle sözü güdazi arttıracak Avrupa matbuatına kadar havadis yayılacak." See Memduh Paşa, *Mirât-ı şüûnat*, 37 in İnal, *Osmanlı Devrinde Son Sadrazamlar*, 1: 174.

<sup>126</sup> "Le vice-roi ne présenta pas tout d'abord ses demandes à la Porte, mais préféra s'adresser au Sultan. Abdul-Aziz l'y avait encouragé, en lui déclarant à plusieurs reprises, au cours de son dernier séjour à Constantinople, qu'il ne devait nullement se préoccuper des opinions ou de la manière de voir des ministres ottomans et qu'il pouvait en toute occasion s'adresser directement à lui, promettant d'accueillir favorablement les modifications de nature à consolider le gouvernement égyptien." See Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 1: 393.

remettri à sa mère l'équivalent en titres du Trésor portant intérêts à 6 %. La mère et le fils avaient ainsi profité de la libéralité d'Ismail pacha. Le Sultan reçut donc la requête que Hassan pacha, agent du vice-roi à Constantinople, avait soumise à la Sultane.<sup>127</sup>

This reference clearly shows that Ismail Pasha addressed Pertevniyal Valide Sultan directly to involve her in his political requests and this involvement included monetary transactions. In addition, it is also clear that the sultan, Abdülaziz, conducted such actions together with his mother, Pertevniyal. After having read the contents of Ismail Pasha's request, Abdülaziz sent his head clerk Emin Bey to the grand vizier and the minister of foreign affairs to inform them about Ismail Pasha's request. By then the grand vizier, Fuad Pasha's reply explicitly shows how Pertevniyal's involvement in state affairs troubled him. Douin recounts Fuad Pasha's reply as follows:

Le grand vizir répondit à l'envoyé que le Sultan ayant pris depuis quelque temps l'habitude de traiter toutes les affaires concernant l'Égypte en dehors de son ministre, celui-ci ne saurait avoir une opinion, que toutefois il lui semblait que le Sultan aurait pu répondre à sa mère qu'elle devait s'abstenir de s'immiscer dans des questions qui ne la concernaient pas [...].

Beyond presenting his treasure to the *valide* sultan and her son, Ismail Pasha also tried different strategies to accomplish his goals. A letter dated 16 *Şaban* 1283/ 24 December 1866, marked "Secret and Private," from Ismail Pasha to his agent in Istanbul, Hasan Rasim Pasha, points to a different feature of the *valide* and her son as perceived by the pasha, namely their passion for mysticism such as astrology, soothsayers, diviners. Following Fuad Pasha's dismissal, Mütercim Mehmed Rüşdi Pasha was appointed as the new grand vizier on 5 June 1866. Ismail Pasha, in his letter, stated that he found the new vizier "timorous" and therefore he would not be

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<sup>127</sup> Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 1: 393.

able to help them to realize their objectives. So, he preferred Ali Pasha to replace the current vizier and Fuad Pasha to take the office of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For such a change to happen he recounted his plan to his agent as follows:

... on sait que Sa Majesté le Sultan et la Sultane Mère croient fermement aux astrologues et aux charlatans. Ils ont pour eux une singulière inclination. Feu Khourchid Pasha (un des hommes d'Egypte) est entré en rapports avec certains d'entre eux. Ils ont rendu des services appréciables en mainte occasion, notamment à l'accession à la présidence du conseil de Kamel Pasha [kapukatkhoda of Egypt in Istanbul and husband of Princess Zainab the elder]. Ils y ont joué un rôle par des interventions morales ou spirites.<sup>128</sup>

Subsequently, Ismail Pasha suggested to his agent to find “safe” statesmen through bribery and let them:

[servir] de trait d'union et d'intermédiaires entre vous et les spirites, les devins, les charlatans, les astrologues qui délivrent des oracles et expliquent les songes, en crédit auprès de Sa Majesté le Sultan et la Sultane Mère, qui leur inspirent une confiance absolue et qui sont liés avec les fonctionnaires du Mabein Sultanien et de la Cour, ainsi qu'avec les aghas et autres employés et gens de service à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur.<sup>129</sup>

Having gained the confidence of these people, Ismail went on to explain,

... on commencera par s'employer à publier sur Rida Pasha [*minister of war*]- par le secours de l'astrologie, des signes cabalistiques, de l'explication des songes, et de leur invention, des oracles et autres rentrant dans le spiritisme et l'astrologie- des renseignements montrant que le susnommé n'est pas loyaliste et qu'il est partisan du Prince Mourad Effendi que c'est pourquoi il n'est pas digne de confiance et il faut l'écarter des hauts postes de gouvernement.<sup>130</sup>

According to the plan, the sultan or the *valide* sultan was going to have a dream and the trusted interpreter was going to give it “the proper slant”<sup>131</sup>, so that

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<sup>128</sup> Marsot, “The Porte and Ismail Pasha's Quest for Autonomy,” 93-94.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid, 94.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid, 94.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid, 94.

Abdülaziz or Pertevniyal would act accordingly.<sup>132</sup> Whether these plans outlined by Ismail Pasha to his agent were successfully implemented is a matter of question, but it should be noted that the grand vizier was dismissed six weeks after this letter; in his place Ali Pasha was appointed on February 11, 1867.

On June 8, 1867 a firman was issued which granted Ismail his new title, Khedive of Egypt, and assigned him power above all other viceroys of the empire. The firman also authorized Ismail Pasha to negotiate nonpolitical treaties with foreign powers deemed necessary for the economy of Egypt.<sup>133</sup>

In that same year, as “the interest of the Viceroy was to maintain the best relations with the Sultan and his ministers,” he organized splendid feasts at his palace in Emirgan.<sup>134</sup> The first one took place on 28 August in honor of the sultan. Afterwards, “another party, equally beautiful, was given at Emirgan in honor of the Valide Sultan.”<sup>135</sup> This once again demonstrates how the *valide* sultan was taken seriously at political functions due to her perceived power and influence in the realm of dynastic politics. Another account, this time from 1871, is a vivid affirmation of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan’s significance in the eyes of the Egyptian khedive:

Le Khédive ne négligeait pas non plus la Sultane Validé; lui envoyait des dattes, des bananes, et comme elle avait fait construire une mosquée qui devait être inaugurée le premier jour du Ramadan, lui fit offrir, pour la décorer, des lampes qu’il avait fait fabriquer exprès à Venise sur l’ancien style des lampes de mosquée. Peintes et dorées au feu, ces lampes portaient des inscriptions religieuses appropriées; au nombre de quarante-huit, elles constitueraient un lustre de toute beauté pour cette mosquée.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> According to Enver Ziya Karal, Abdülaziz arranged spiritual parties in the palace and interrogated ‘spirits’. Abdülaziz would say “The best religion is the one which does not involve elements that would not prevent the exercise of justice.” Karal’s interpretation of these words is that for Abdülaziz, religion was more like a social phenomenon. See Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 115.

<sup>133</sup> Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 200.

<sup>134</sup> “L’interêt du vice-roi était d’entretenir les meilleures relations avec le Sultan et ses ministres.” Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 2 : 34.

<sup>135</sup> “[U]ne autre fête, non moins belle, fut donnée à Emirghian en l’honneur de la Sultane Validé.” Ibid, 2: 35.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, 2: 626.

During the summer of 1872, Ismail Pasha visited Istanbul and made several official visits. Following these visits, for the first time, the khedive visited Pertevniyal Valide Sultan.<sup>137</sup> And during this visit, the *valide* sultan invited Ismail Pasha's harem to spend a day at the Dolmabahçe Palace.

### 3. Contestation with Şevkefza Kadınefendi

Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's eagerness to gain a dominant position in the harem and to exercise power in the dynastic politics outside the harem walls had an inevitable consequence: a compelling contestation with Şevkefza Kadınefendi, who was, as mentioned earlier, the mother of Murad V, and Abdülaziz's sole rival to the throne. She was therefore the biggest competitor of Pertevniyal for the position of highest ranking woman in the Ottoman harem: the *valide* sultan. Although Pertevniyal won the first round in 1861 and became the next *valide* sultan after Abdülmecid's mother, Bezmialem Valide Sultan, the conflict between the two imperial women did not end. A struggle for supremacy in the Ottoman harem continued between the two women until the death of Pertevniyal Sultan in 1883.

Nahid Sırrı Örik, in his article "İki Valide Sultan Arasında" (Between the Two Valide Sultans), states that the rivalry between Pertevniyal Sultan and Şevkefza Sultan is the second biggest competition in the empire's history after that of the two *valide* opponents Kösem Sultan and Turhan Sultan in the seventeenth century.<sup>138</sup> This contestation between the two sultanas started prior to the enthronement of

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<sup>137</sup> "Pour la première fois, le vice-roi fit une visite à la Sultane Validé, et on remarqua que leur entretien dura fort longtemps... Le 17, la Sultane Validé invita le harem de Son Altesse à passer la journée à Dolma-Bagtche. Ces témoignages de bienveillance de la famille impériale montraient que les liens de l'Égypte avec l'empire ottoman se resserraient." Ibid, 2: 646.

<sup>138</sup> For the struggle for power in the Ottoman harem between Turhan Sultan and Kösem Sultan, see Thys-Şenocak, *Ottoman Women Builders*, 27-28.

Abdülaziz, as Abdülaziz and Murad V competed for the throne, and it lasted about a quarter of a century.<sup>139</sup>

Apart from Nahid Sırrı Örik's assertion, Ziya Şakir's book *Çırağan Sarayında 28 Sene Beşinci Murad'ın Hayatı* is an important source to better understand the relationship between Pertevniyal and Şevkefza Sultan.<sup>140</sup> The book is a memoir of one of the concubines of Murad V, Filizten. In her memoir, Filizten refers many times to the hostility between the two mothers. The agony Pertevniyal had after her son's death and how Şevkefza did not reply to her call for help is described in the following excerpt from Filizten's memoir:

Poor Pertevniyal Kadın spent three full months moaning and wailing in the veritable prison of her rooms in Topkapı. A few times she sent word to our Lady Mother [*Şevkefza Kadınefendi*], hoping that she would help put an end to her anguish, but our Lady Mother was always afraid of anything that could stir up trouble and so she replied, "Your stay there is a matter of state business. I do not interfere in matters of state." Most noteworthy of all this for us was that some members of our entourage took great pleasure in the sufferings of Sultan Aziz's mother.<sup>141</sup>

According to Filizten, Şevkefza Sultan's hatred towards Pertevniyal Valide Sultan also affected her attitude towards Abdülhamid Efendi, who had a close relationship with Pertevniyal Valide Sultan.<sup>142</sup> Thus, when the heir Abdülhamid Efendi came to the palace to congratulate Şevkefza Sultan for her son Murad V's accession (following Abdülaziz's dethronement), Şevkefza Sultan kept herself at a

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<sup>139</sup> Örik, *İki Valide Sultan Arasında*, 32-34.

<sup>140</sup> Ziya Şakir states that he had checked the reliability of Filizten's account by confirming it through three other people who had lived in the Çırağan Palace.

<sup>141</sup> See Brookes, *The Concubine, the Princess, and the Teacher*, 49; Şakir, *Çırağan Sarayında 28 Sene Beşinci Murad'ın Hayatı*, 118.

<sup>142</sup> According to Ahmed Saip, the assistant of Egypt Commissar Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Pasha, "[Abdülhamid] succeeded to appeal to Sultan Abdülaziz through the agency of the sultan's mother Pertevniyal Valide Sultan who was very influential in the Palace." See Ahmed Saip, *Abdülhamid'in Evail-i Saltanatı (Abdülhamid'in Saltanatının İlk Günleri)*, trans. Ruhi Turfan (İstanbul: Erler Matbaası, 1983), 10.

distance. According to Filizten, her dislike towards Abdülhamid Efendi had a valid reason:

Şevkefza Kadın did not like Hamit Efendi at all and did not want him coming to the palace often. Nor was her coldness toward him without reason. Since he got along well with everybody, Hamit Efendi always used to pay a call three times a week on Sultan Aziz's mother, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan. She would say, "Here's another sin of this *efendi*. Probably he is telling tales to the Valide Sultan all about what happens in our court." This is why she wasn't so indulgent toward Hamid Efendi, and why she received him so frostily on this day as well. Nonetheless she showed him a bit of politeness by saying, "I congratulate you too, my boy; now you've become the Heir Apparent."<sup>143</sup>

Another incident between Abdülhamid and Şevkefza Kadın, recounted by the concubine Filizten, also reveals Şevkefza's enmity towards Pertevniyal. According to her account, right after her son's enthronement, Şevkefza Kadın prepared a banquet to which all brothers of Murad V were invited. The plan was to eliminate Abdülhamid as a rival to the throne. She ordered Murad V's chamberlain Seyit Bey and the imperial son-in-law Nuri Pasha to ask the pashas to perform this order. But as the heir Abdülhamid Efendi did not accept the invitation, the plan was never realized. Three months later, when Abdülhamid became the new sultan, he ordered an investigation regarding this incident. When Seyit Bey and Nuri Pasha denied the accusation of poisoning, Abdülhamid answered,

I am entirely certain that my brother is not capable of harming even a flea. But I know his mother to be an absolute witch, a rapacious snake. I am aware of many things, but at this moment I am not in a position to divulge them. I would investigate this matter fully, were it not for Princess Fatma and Prince Kemaleddin. They came to me and implored me to stop the investigation, which I am doing. For the sake of my brother, I am prepared to forget everything that has transpired.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Brookes, *The Concubine, the Princess, and the Teacher*, 30; Şakir, *Çırağan Sarayında 28 Sene Beşinci Murad'ın Hayatı*, 85.

<sup>144</sup> Brookes, *The Concubine, the Princess, and the Teacher*, 53.

Seyit Bey told Abdülhamid's words to Şevkefza Kadın. Her answer once again confirms the hatred between the two ambitious mothers, "What did I ever do to him that he should call me a witch? The real witch is Pertevniyal! She's behind all this mischief, mark my words! Dear God, may those who make trouble for us never find peace!"<sup>145</sup>

Although there may be elements of dramatization in the concubine Filizten's account, it still captures the negative feelings between the two imperial women. This conflict between the two, which lasted until their deaths, was a natural consequence of their struggle for power in the Ottoman harem and beyond its walls. It is a vivid demonstration of both their awareness of the resources and potential influence that gaining the rank of a *valide* sultan encapsulated and their ambition to possess these.

One last note on the two women's rivalry ironically concerns their entitlement as *valide* sultans. While the imperial edict reporting the death of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan mentioned her as "*Valde Sultan*", Şevkefza was referred as "*İkinci Kadın Hazretleri*" (second consort) of Abdülmecid when she died in 1889. Although Şevkefza stayed as the mother-queen for three months during her son's reign, she was denied any title of *valide* sultan in the edict notifying her death. Actually, there is no Ottoman imperial document that refers to Şevkefza Sultan as Valide Sultan. That is why Pertevniyal Valide Sultan is referred as the last *valide* sultan in the empire's history.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid, 53.

<sup>146</sup> Uluçay, *Harem*, 61.

#### 4. The Dethronement and Death of Sultan Abdülaziz

After reigning as the sultan of the Ottoman Empire for fifteen years, Abdülaziz was deposed on May 29, 1876 and he was forced to live in the Topkapı Palace.<sup>147</sup> During his three days in the Topkapı, he wrote a letter to his half-brother, the new sultan, Murad V, and asked to be moved to another place.<sup>148</sup> Murad V accepted his request and Abdülaziz, with his mother Pertevniyal and other *kadinefendiler*, were all transferred to the Fer'iye palace, where the old sultan spent his last three days. He died on June 4, 1876. His death has since been subject to speculations about whether it was a suicide or an assassination by the order of Hüseyin Avni Pasha and Midhat Pasha.

The period which ended with Sultan Abdülaziz's dethronement and death provides profound clues about Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's political involvement, her great influence on her son Abdülaziz, and in İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı's words, how "Abdülaziz was very fond of his mother."<sup>149</sup> So, it is crucial to analyze some of the incidents that happened during this episode.

First, in order to understand Pertevniyal's role during the period immediately prior to Sultan Abdülaziz's dethronement, the official accounts of some of the leading statesmen of the late Tanzimat era are helpful. These primary sources exist because these statesmen were charged with the murder of Sultan Abdülaziz and they

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<sup>147</sup> For a detailed account of Abdülaziz's last six days first in the Topkapı Palace, then in the Fer'iye palace, see: Uzunçarşılı, *Midhat Paşa ve Yıldız Mahkemesi*, 59-79; Fahri Bey, *İbretnümâ: Mabeynci Fahri Bey'in hatıraları ve ilgili bazı belgeler*, trans. Bekir Sıtkı Baykal (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1968), 1-18.

<sup>148</sup> Abdülaziz wrote in his letter to Murad V, "Tanrıya, sonra atabe-i şevketlerine sığınırım. Mürüvvet ve insaniyet, sıkılmışlara yardım etmektir. Bulduğum ıstıraptan beni kurtarmak için bir mahalli mahsus tayinini rica... ederim." In Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 356 cited as Ahmet Mithat, *Üss-i inkılâb* (İstanbul: Takvim-i Vekayi Matbaası, 1294-95/1877-1878), 398. For the whole letter, see Uzunçarşılı, *Midhat Paşa ve Yıldız Mahkemesi*, 61.

<sup>149</sup> "Abdülaziz validesine çok düşküdü." See Uzunçarşılı, *Midhat Paşa ve Yıldız Mahkemesi*, 103.

were interrogated. The interrogation and the court proceedings took place at Yıldız Palace during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II.<sup>150</sup>

One of the late Tanzimat statesmen who was interrogated at the Yıldız court was Midhat Pasha, who had served as the grand vizier during Abdülaziz's reign between 31 July 1872 and 19 October 1872. His official statement in the interrogation on 8 May 1297/1880 is an attestation of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's involvement and pivotal role in the late Tanzimat political scene. Accordingly, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan had consulted him twice about the worsening political situation through the agency of Hamdi Pasha and Cevher Agha respectively. From his account, we learn that once the *valide* sultan invited him to her orchard in Kadıköy, he immediately accepted her invitation and went there. Midhat Pasha stated that although he presented a *lâyiha*<sup>151</sup> on what was wrong and what should be done, the *Valide* Sultan did not pass his memorandum to the sultan, fearing that her son would be worried.<sup>152</sup>

<sup>150</sup> These accusations have been a highly debated issue in Ottoman history.

<sup>151</sup> *Lâyiha* is a memorandum expressing one's viewpoint on a subject. See Redhouse, 706.

<sup>152</sup> My italics: "[...] yine ol günlerde ben Topkapıdaki çiftliğim umuriyle meşgul iken valide sultan tarafından Hamdi Paşa bana gelüp ve Mevlevihanenin mihrabı içinde beni bulup, "*Valide sultan selâm etti seni bir suretle görmek istiyor, bu fenalıkların çaresi hakkında reyinizi dahi soruyor*". Ben de cevabımda, "Bunun çaresi pek kolaydır, yalnız askere hasr-ı nazar etmekle olmaz; bulunduğumuz mevkîe göre bu mülkün idare bir kanuna merbut olmak ve islâmî hıristiyan sahihan müsavat haline getirilmek lâzımdır; lâkin bendegân-ı pâdişâhi bunları anlatamıyor" dediğime cevaben Hamdi Paşa, "*Vâlîde sultan bunların birini söylemeğe cesaret edemez, arslanının üzüldüğünü istemez*" dediğine ve bunu bir kaç kerre tekrar ettiğine tabîi hiddet geldiğinden "işler öyle giderse akıbeti vahim olacak ve halisâne ihtar ederim ki gerek vâlîde sultan ve gerek Abdülaziz Hanın hanedanına pek büyük mazarrat gelecektir; ben böyle görüyorum" dedim. [...] Galiba Hamdi Paşa bunu ya söylememiş ve yahut söylemiş te anlatamamış olmalıdır ki bir eseri zuhur etmedi. Andan sonra hal' ve cülûs lâkırdıları herkesin lisanına düşüp vükelâ ve ulemâdan buna vukufu olmıyan ve izhar-ı memnûniyyet etmiyen yok idi; [...]. *Bu hal arasında Cevher ağa, vâlîde sultandan olarak bana haber gönderüp Kadıköyündeki bağına gitmekliğim için davet etmişti; derhal kayığa binüp gittim. "Valide sultan selâm etti mütalâanızı hâvi bir lâyiha istiyor" dedi. Ben de "şimdiye kadar pek çok lâyiha takdim ettim, hiç birine sem-i îtibar olunmadı, halbuki ortalık günden güne fenalaşıyor, size yazacağım lâyihanın derhal hükmünü icra ettirmeği taahhüd edersiniz yazar gönderirim dedim"; o da kabul eyledi; hatıra kalmamış; galiba dört veyahut beş bend bir lâyiha idi, bir gün uğraştım ve takdim ettim ve andan evvel meclis-i vükelâyâ memur olduğumdan o gün meclis günü Hüseyin Paşa yanıma gelüp askeri vesair nizamâtı ihlal edeceğinden ol suret caiz değildir söziyle bıraktım; konağa avdetimde valide sultandan bir tezkire aldım, mealinde lâyihayı okudum, beğendim inşaallah icra olunur deyu yazılıp icraatına ve hâkan-ı merhumun manzur-ı olduğuna dair bir işaret görülmüdüğünden valide sultan'ın bunu dahi takdime cesaret etmediğini anladım."* See İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Midhat ve Rüşti Paşaların Tevkiplerine Dair Vesikalar* (İstanbul: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1946), 53-55.

The historian İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, in his book, *Midhat Paşa ve Yıldız Mahkemesi*, argues that if Pertevniyal would have passed this *lâyiha* to Sultan Abdülaziz, then perhaps Abdülaziz may not have had to encounter such a tragic end. He adds that Pertevniyal's urge to protect her son from any grief led her to hide such an opinion from him, which, as a result made her responsible for her son's mournful end.<sup>153</sup> Although Uzunçarşılı's assessment may be exaggerated, it is relevant in the context of this thesis to assume that Pertevniyal, as a *valide* sultan, was deeply involved in the late Tanzimat politics. She had her agents through whom she could contact anyone she wanted to communicate or consult. The important statesmen of the era took her seriously, acknowledged her significance in the dynastic politics and addressed her directly.

Besides the accounts of the late Tanzimat statesmen, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan herself left a very valuable source that reveals her relationship with her son and reflects her awareness of the politics of the time. Her *Sergüzeştname* is a short narration dictated by Pertevniyal about the incidents she experienced during that era. For instance, Pertevniyal in her *Sergüzeştname*, recounts the moment of the dethronement of her son on May 29, 1876, as follows:

Once the navy started gunfire, concubines wakened me, saying "Fire!" But I felt that such untimely cannons resembled the sultanate change. Still, I wakened my son saying, "There is fire." But he also looked around and deemed that he was dethroned, and he said, "They reduced me to Sultan Selim."<sup>154</sup> Once he asked me, "My dear mother, do you know who did this?" I replied, "Dearest son! It should be Hüseyin Avni Pasha." He said, "He can't be the only one. The grand vizier Mehmed Rüşdü Pasha must have also aligned with him." And then he started crying. To relieve his distress, I said, "My lion, first let's figure out what happened." He replied, saying, "It is no longer the time to examine because I saw this happening to me three times in

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<sup>153</sup> Uzunçarşılı, *Midhat Paşa ve Yıldız Mahkemesi*, 104.

<sup>154</sup> Sultan Selim III was the son of Mustafa III, who was the brother of Abdülhamid I, Abdülaziz's grandfather. Ibid, 62. Abdülaziz referred to Selim III as his uncle. Selim III was killed in a room in the Topkapı Palace, the same room which was also assigned to Abdülaziz after his dethronement. See Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 355-356.

my dreams. Even the angel Gabriel would not be able to re-throne me now. I should be prepared to go now.” Later Hafız Mehmed Bey came and explained the situation. They took me and my son to the Istanbul Palace.”<sup>155</sup>

Fanny Davis in his book, *The Ottoman lady: a social history from 1718 to 1918*, interpreted this excerpt as follows, “[Pertevniyal Valide Sultan] had made her son so dependent on her that when he heard the crowd that had gathered in front of Dolmabahçe to bring about his dethronement in 1876, he looked to her for comfort and guidance.”<sup>156</sup>

As mentioned earlier, following his deposition, Abdülaziz was transferred to the Topkapı Palace where he and the *valide* spent the next three days. An account by İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı is important to highlight the old sultan’s reliance and dependence on his mother Pertevniyal. Accordingly when Abdülaziz asked to be moved to the Fer’iye Palace, his mother Pertevniyal refused. So, Abdülaziz changed his mind and told Ethem Bey, “Ethem Efendi, after you were gone, I called my mother and told her about our transfer to the apartment in Ortaköy. My mother said, “You would be uncomfortable there, Ortaköy would be a good option during the winter. It would be better to transfer to the Beylerbeyi Palace as a summer resort.” So please state it as such to His Majesty.”<sup>157</sup> And regarding this change, he resent a letter to Murad V.

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<sup>155</sup> “Donanmanın şenlik toplanı atılınca, cariyeler beni “Yangın var” diyerek uykudan uyandırdılar. Ancak böyle vakitsiz atılan toplanın saltanat değişikliği gümbürtüsünü andırdığını hissettim. Oğlumu, yine “Yangın varmış” diyerek uyandırdım. Ama o da etrafa bakıp saltanat tahtından düştüğüne hükmetti, ve “Beni Sultan Selim’e döndürdüler” dedi. Daha sonra, “Anneciğim! Bu işi kim yaptı, biliyor musun? Diye sorduğunda; “Oğlum! Hüseyin Avni Paşa olsa gerektir” dedim. “Yalnız o değildir. Sadrazam Mehmed Rüştü Paşa da beraber olmalı!” cevabını verdi ve ağlamağa başladı. Ben çektiği acının ateşini söndürmek için, “Arslanım! Bir defa durumu etrafıca inceleyelim” dediğimde, “Artık inceleme yapmanın sırası değil; çünkü bu hale uğrayacağımı üç defa rüyada görmüştüm. Gökten Cebrâil Aleyhisselâm inse benim için sultanlığa dönüş mümkün olamaz. Buradan çıkıp gitmeliyim” dedi. Sonra Hâfız Mehmed Bey gelip durumu arzetti. Oğlumu ve beni İstanbul Sarayı’na götürdüler.” See Celalettin Paşa, *Mir’ât-ı Hakikat*, 115-116.

<sup>156</sup> Roderic H. Davis, *The Ottoman lady: a social history from 1718 to 1918* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986), 11; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 109-110.

<sup>157</sup> “Baksana Ethem Efendi, siz gittikten sonra validemi celbeyledim ve Ortaköy’deki daireye naklimizi söyledim; sonra validem ‘orada rahatsız olursunuz, kışın Ortaköy’de sayfiye olarak

Since the cabinet ministers did not accept Abdülaziz's request about being moved to Beylerbeyi, he was transferred to the Fer'iye Palace in Ortaköy. However only three days later, Abdülaziz died on June 4, 1876. The day of his death was also recounted by several officials in the Yıldız Trial. According to the statement of the *karakol kumandanı* (commander on guard) İzzet Bey, the *valide* sultan ran to her son's room following his suicide and Abdülaziz died in her arms. When he and the navy commander Arif Pasha saw this scene in Abdülaziz's room, they took the *valide* sultan, who was in shock, and put her in a different room.<sup>158</sup> After Dr. Milingen, the doctor of the Sultan's harem, examined the dead body of Abdülaziz and the scene of suicide, he wanted to check the *valide* sultan. But when he entered the room, Pertevniyal refused his attempt by saying, "I am the one who caused my son's death. Send me an executioner, not a doctor."<sup>159</sup>

Four days after Abdülaziz's death, a decree was issued: Pertevniyal Sultan and Tiryal Hanım, one of Sultan Mahmud's concubines, were to be taken to the Topkapı Palace. Fearing to be killed, Pertevniyal cried out, "I will not take this ferry, you will throw me to the sea and kill me like you killed my son."<sup>160</sup> The officer in charge, Hacı Raşit Pasha replied, "You will take this ferry; you ruined the people, you still do not want to go."<sup>161</sup> Following Tiryal Hanım's beseeching to send Pertevniyal by car, the officers tried to put Pertevniyal in a car. But Pertevniyal's worries were still notable as she cried "you will take away and kill us."<sup>162</sup> The other

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Beylerbeyi sarayına naklolunur ise münasip olur' dediler. Öylece zat-ı şahaneye ifade edesiniz." See Uzunçarşılı, *Midhat Paşa ve Yıldız Mahkemesi*, 63.

<sup>158</sup> İzzet Bey's 22 May 1297 (1880 April) dated statement. Ibid, 104.

<sup>159</sup> "Oğlumun canına kıyan ben oldum; bana hekim göndereceğinize cellât gönderin." Ibid, 104.

<sup>160</sup> From the statement of Afyonkarahisarlı Captain (*yüzbaşı*) Mustafa Efendi, one of Fer'iye Palace's guards. It is dated 1298 cemaziyelâhır guresi (19 April 1881). "Ben vapura (çatanaya) binmem, oğlumu öldürdüğünüz gibi beni de denize atacaksınız." Ibid, 105.

<sup>161</sup> "Vapura bineceksin; millet batırdınız, daha gitmek istemiyorsun." Ibid, 105.

<sup>162</sup> "Bizi götürüp öldüreceksiniz." Ibid, 105.

officer in charge, Necip Bey silenced Pertevniyal by saying “shut up you witch”<sup>163</sup> and sent her to the Topkapı Palace. Pertevniyal and Tiryal Hanım stayed in the Topkapı Palace for the next thirty nine days, in a very much neglected state, as expressed by Uzunçarşılı. Uzunçarşılı attributes this bad condition to Pertevniyal’s foe, Şevkefza Kadınefendi, and claims it was a part of her retaliation.<sup>164</sup>

At the end of these thirty nine days, both women were transferred back to the Fer’iye Palace. According to Pertevniyal’s *Sergüzeştname*, she was tortured by two black eunuchs, İsmet Ağa and Emin Ağa to extract information about her possessions:

... Sultan Mecid’s wife Şevkefza Kadın sent two black eunuchs, İsmet and Emin Aghas, saying “You must kill the Valide Sultan.” İsmet tortured me eight days and nights in August, saying “take out all your belongings or I will kill you.” He would say, “Şevkefza Kadın told me to kill you, but I will not do it myself. You will kill yourself.” In fact, I did not have any belongings, they took me without my veil and dustcoat. On the eighth day, another black eunuch came and opened the windows and provided some relief.<sup>165</sup>

This difficult period ended with the enthronement of Sultan Abdülhamid. According to the memoir of the concubine Filizten, Abdülhamid could not tolerate the situation Pertevniyal was in, so he transferred her to the Fer’iye Palace. Filizten recounts this as follows:

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<sup>163</sup> From the statement of Bursalı *yüzbaşı* Ahmed Efendi, one of the battalion officers in the patrol. It is dated 1298 cemaziyelâhır ibtidası. “Sus hey büyücü.” Ibid, 105.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid, 106.

<sup>165</sup> Quoted from *Sergüzeştname*. “... Sultan Mecid’in Şevkasar (Şevkefsar- Şevkefza) kadını iki haremağası göndererek ‘mutlaka Valide Sultanı öldürünüz’ diyerek birisi İsmet birisi Emin Ağa idi. İsmet, Valide Sultan efendimiz karşısında ağustos sıcaklığında sekiz gün, sekiz gece mallarını çıkar ‘şimdi seni öldürecekim’ diyerek eziyet etti. Şevkasar Kadın ‘mutlaka öldür’ dedi, ‘lâkin ben öldürmiyeceğim, mutlaka sen kendi kendini öldür’ diyerek hücum ederdi; halbuki mal değil, yaşmaksız feracesiz götürdüler. Sekizinci günü diğer bir haremağası gelip pencereleri açtı, biraz ferahlık verdi.” Ibid, 106.

Sultan Hamid had loved Pertevniyal Kadın since he was a little boy. He was more devoted to her than to the lady Perestû,<sup>166</sup> who had raised him, and so as soon as he became Sultan his mind turned to the days of torment that Pertevniyal had passed in Topkapı Palace. He sent men to move the lady and her entourage to one of the villas in Ortaköy, thereby delighting her and repairing the injustice done to her. Of course, in doing so Sultan Hamid stirred up the fire of the clique opposed to Sultan Aziz's entourage- notably Nakşifend Kalfa, but our Lady Mother [*Şevkefza kadınefendi*] numbered among them as well- which led to the first opposition movements against the new Sultan.”<sup>167</sup>

Pertevniyal spent the rest of her life at Fer'iye. According to Princess Ayşe's account, during her last years she could not forget or forgive her dearest son's death:<sup>168</sup>

In those days the Princess Mother Pertevniyal was despondent over the death of her son Sultan Aziz. Her only pleasure and distraction lay in passing time by training young and lovely children, gathering them about her and finding consolation in the things they said and in their sweet behavior. The Princess Mother Pertevniyal had another habit: between dusk and the nighttime prayer she would prostrate herself in worship, weeping loudly as she cried out, “I forgive everything, only I seek justice for the blood of my son!” afterwards in her room she would have the whole Quran recited and then have the children say “Amen.”<sup>169</sup>

Pertevniyal died on February 5, 1883 (27 *Rebiülevvel* 1300).<sup>170</sup> Before her death, she put all her belongings she had during her stay in the Topkapı Palace, in a coffer along with her *Sergüzeştname*, and willed the coffer to be opened by Sultan

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<sup>166</sup> Brookes's note: “Sultan Abdülmecid's consort Perestû had raised Prince Abdülhamid after the death of his mother Tirimüjgân in 1852, when the Prince was ten years of age. See Brookes, *The Concubine, the Princess, and the Teacher*, 51.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid, 51; Şakir, *Çırağan Sarayında 28 Sene*, 120.

<sup>168</sup> “Princess Ayşe was the daughter of Sultan Abdülhamid II and the only child of her mother, the Circassian concubine Müşfika, who was raised to the rank of Imperial Consort. Princess Ayşe wrote her memoir in Istanbul after her return from exile, completing it by 1955. Princess Ayşe states that for large portions of the memoir she relied on the memory of her mother, as the two lived together after the Princess's return to Turkey. Her mother, Ayşe, later to be Müşfika, was raised by Pertevniyal. At the death of Pertevniyal, she was transferred to Dolmabahçe Palace, where she was noticed by Sultan Abdülhamid.” See Brookes, *The Concubine, the Princess, and the Teacher*, 123, 145.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid, 145.

<sup>170</sup> Uzunçarşılı, *Midhat Paşa ve Yıldız Mahkemesi*, 106.

Abdülhamid after her death. In fact, following her death, the coffer was opened in the presence of a committee, consisting of Server, Cevdet, Derviş, Mahmud, Hasan Hüsnü, Ali, Osman, Ali Rıza Bey and Pashas.<sup>171</sup> The coffer contained several objects, her *Sergüzeştname* and a short letter, with needles pricked into Murad V, a scene which once again testifies Pertevniyal's avid passion in her son's political contest with Murad V.<sup>172</sup> The letter is as follows:

Thanks to Sultan Murad's 'kindness', they exiled me and my son to the new palace. Although all I had was this much, I stayed captive there for three months<sup>173</sup> and had to manage with what I had. Both my dustcoat and veil were this white shawl. They deemed me worthy of only three concubines and these goods despite all the belongings I attained during the reigns of three sultans (Mahmud, Abdülmecit, Abdülaziz). I did not have evil intentions for anyone, I only wanted goodness. Because of them I was exposed to all these insults. For God's sake, those who would open and see this; mention me with mercy and be bewildered at their 'munificence' and draw a lesson from me... They poured my blood to the sea; they did all these to me...

The helpless  
PERTEVNİYAL<sup>174</sup>

## 5. A Pious Valide Sultan

Some Ottoman rulers and *valide* sultans were publicly known for their piety or adherence to Sufism. Pertevniyal Valide Sultan was among those, whose piety and inclination towards mysticism such as astrology, soothsayers, and diviners, are

<sup>171</sup> Ibid, 107-108.

<sup>172</sup> Uzunçarşılı states that this was documented among the photographs of *Sergüzeştname*. Ibid, 107.

<sup>173</sup> Uzunçarşılı states that although Pertevniyal says three months in this letter, it is indicated as thirty nine days in *Sergüzeştname*, a figure which should be more correct. Ibid, 107.

<sup>174</sup> "Sultan Murad'ın kemal-i lûtf u kereminden olarak fermân-ı şâhâneleriyle beni yeni saraya sürdükleri vakit mürüvvetlerinden üzerimde olan ve yanımda bulunan eşya bu kadar olduğu halde, üç ay orada mahbus kaldım ve bu eşya ile idare eyledim. Ferace ve yaşmağım olan da bu beyaz şalıdır. Üç padişah (Mahmud, Abdülmecit, Abdülaziz) sayesinde nail olduğum maldan bu kadar eşya ile üç cariyeye lâıyk görüp mürüvvet buyurdular; kimsenin hakkında hayırdan başka sünîyet etmedim. Sayelerinde bu hakaretlere müstahak oldum. Allah aşkına bunları açıp görenler, beni rahmet ile yâdeylesinler ve benden ibret alıp hakkımda mürüvvet ve merhametlerine şaşıp mütehayyir kalsınlar. Benim sergüzeştim pek uzun tarih olacak şey ise de oralardan sarfı nazar olundu. Elbette o vukuat-ı hüzn-engizi herkes iştîmiştir, tekrarına hacet göremem. Kanımı deryalara akıttılar; bu mürüvvetleri de bana ettiler. el- Hükmülillah. Bîçare, PERTEVNİYAL" Ibid, 107.

frequently mentioned in the Ottoman sources. Besides those references, her *vakfiyes* are full of quotations about her acts of piety, charity and her strong connection with diverse branches of Sufism.

The first reference to Pertevniyal's moral qualities appears in the Ottoman historian Ahmet Cevdet Pasha's narration of the impact, Abdülaziz's accession, aroused in the public. He states that "the utmost goodness and chastity of his *valide* was one of the major sources of consolation."<sup>175</sup> His account is important to show that the first reception of the new *valide* sultan concentrates on her *iffet* (chastity/ innocence/ uprightness).

In line with Ahmed Cevdet Pasha's account, the very first deed of Pertevniyal, dated 6 *Safer* 1268 (1 December 1851) focuses on her piety and high morality: "... the quintessential of virtuous ladies, the crown of modesty, the owner of pious foundations, desirous of good works and heavenly rewards, the virtuous, chaste, Her excellency Pertevniyal Kadınefendi, the daughter of Abdurrahman, who is the son of Abdulmennan..."<sup>176</sup>

Another account from Ahmed Cevdet Pasha's *Tezâkir* indicates Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's belief in soothsayers and diviners, which was actually "a timeless tradition in the Ottoman palaces."<sup>177</sup> Cevdet Pasha recounts that one time when Sultan Abdülaziz was believed to be vexed at something and he acted in a particular manner, his mother Pertevniyal Valide Sultan interpreted his behavior as a result of a spell cast over him.<sup>178</sup> To break the spell, she asked a preacher named Hulusi to

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<sup>175</sup> "Vâlide-i Sultan Efendi hazretlerinin dahi kemâl-i salâh ve iffeti başkaca bâdî-i tesliyet oldu." See Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir*, 2: 143.

<sup>176</sup> VA 747-170-143. The *evkaf müfettişi* is Seyyid Mehmed Sadeddin Efendi and the *vakıf* is founded in Fatih.

<sup>177</sup> Şakir, *Çırağan Sarayında 28 Sene*, 89.

<sup>178</sup> "[...] Zât-ı Şâhâne ise fevka'l-âde sûretle levâzım-ı harbiyyenin ikmâlîne sarf-ı efkâr etmekle miyânede ihtilâf-ı ârâ vuku'a geldi ve Zât-ı Şâhâne'nin ulûvv-i himmet ve maksadına hazîneler kâfi olamayıp istediğini yapamadığından merak getirmiş gibi canı sıkılarak kendisini hasta olmuş zannıyla merak eder oldu. Saraylılar ale'l-husus Vâlide Sultan hazretleri Zât-ı Şâhâne'ye sihir yapılmış

prepare a Turkish prayer and had it recited in several imperial mosques during the sermon.<sup>179</sup>

Murad V's concubine Filizten recounts familiar incidents that underline Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's passion for mysticism. Filizten's first reference occurs right after Abdülaziz's dethronement. While she and the others were cleaning and preparing the rooms for Murad V and his new *valide*, Filizten recounts what she witnessed:

In the midst of this cleaning, one thing in particular caught our attention: the lower drawers of every cabinet contained handfuls of talismans written on little notes, sealed sheets of paper, and strips of yellow and green satin. The Valide Sultan's apartments had the greatest number of these magic charms. One talisman in particular, located beneath some bundles right in the cabinet in the Valide Sultan's bedroom chamber, astonished us all. This talisman was a very crude statuette made from a yellow wax candle about two palm-widths high. The name "Murad" was written in red across the chest, back, head, kneecaps, and arms of this statuette, while dozens of round-headed pins had been stuck into it from the top of its head to the soles of its feet.<sup>180</sup>

Filizten also adds that, "[i]n fact, it was actually whispered within the palace that the Valide Sultan used witchcraft to control her son." Then she goes on to tell another story related to the importance of soothsayers for Pertevniyal. The story is about Pertevniyal's close contact with a sheikh of a dervish lodge in the neighborhood of the Edirne Gate. The sheikh had strong powers of divination. When Sultan Abdülaziz's return from his journey to Egypt was a bit delayed and it was

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zu'muna zâhib olarak sihri bozmak üzere ba'z-ı meşayih-i müzevvirîne düştüler. Bu ise beyne'n-nâs güft ü gûyu mücib oldu. Bu sırada Hulûsi nam vâizin bî-ma'na ve nâ-mü'eddâ olarak tertîb eylediği türkce bir duâ Vâlîde Sultan'ın emriyle recebin beşinci cuma günü ba'z-ı cevâmî'-i salâtîn hatiblerine hutbe esnasında okutturuldu. Bu ise nâsın hakk-ı şâhânede olan şübûhatını te'yîd eyledi. Kimi "Pâdişah merak getirmiş" kimi "Cünûn alâmeti var imiş" deyu erâcif münteşir oldu." See Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir*, 2: 256-257.

<sup>179</sup> According to Cevdet Pasha, this action further confirmed the suspicions of Ottoman public which led to false rumors about the mental illness of the sultan: "The sultan became a hypochondriac" ("Pâdişah merak getirmiş") or "there are signs of madness" ("Cünûn alâmeti var imiş").

<sup>180</sup> Brookes, *The Concubine, the Princess, and the Teacher*, 32-33; *Çırağan Sarayında 28 Sene*, 88-89.

heard that the steamer transporting the Padishah ran into a great storm<sup>181</sup>, the *valide* sultan got frightened, she went directly to the sheikh at the Edirne Gate to find out what would happen to her son. The sheikh fell into a trance and then said, “Your Highness, our master was indeed in danger, but we saved him. Now return to the imperial palace and be at peace.” With that Pertevniyal Valide Sultan returned back to the palace and learned that the sultan was going to arrive in two hours’ time.

According to the concubine Filizten, as a result of this incident,

[Pertevniyal] Valide Sultan believed more than ever in the powers of this sheikh. In fact, she clung to him completely. She would make use of him in every furtive business of hers. She had Nakşifend take her son’s undergarments to this sheikh, and after the sheikh had recited an incantation over the clothing she would see that Sultan Abdülaziz put them on. If she had a wish that her son had not granted, she would dispatch some sugar to the sheikh, have him recite an incantation over it, then mix it into coffee she had brewed, and have her son drink it.<sup>182</sup>

This sheikh in Filizten’s account was probably the Bektashi Emin Baba at the Edirne Gate.<sup>183</sup> Although there is no reference in the *vakfiyes* to Pertevniyal’s Bektashi affiliations, John Kingsley Birge, in his famous book, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, published in 1937, states that “[o]ne Bektashi who had been both a Baba and a *Halife* told me his understanding was that *Abdul Aziz*’s mother was initiated by *Emin Baba* at the *Edirne Kapısı Dergâhı*.”<sup>184</sup> Birge also argues that there

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<sup>181</sup> Douglas Scott Brookes states that “Sultan Abdülaziz departed Istanbul 3 April 1863 to tour the Ottoman province of Egypt- the first reigning Ottoman monarch to set foot in the province since Selim I conquered it in 1516- returning to Istanbul 1 May 1863. Contemporary descriptions of the return voyage do not mention a storm, but his return to Istanbul was delayed as Abdülaziz stopped at Izmir for some days of fetes and inspections there. This delay could account for his mother’s anxiety, if indeed the account here is not simply anti-Aziz gossip current in the retinue of Prince Murad.” See Brookes, *The Concubine, the Princess, and the Teacher*, 32-33.

<sup>182</sup> The writer points that “when Hamit Efendi’s entourage moved into the Heir Apparent’s apartments (the rooms vacated by Sultan Murad’s entourage), they too found baskets full of charms and magic spells- a timeless tradition in the Ottoman palaces.” See Şakir, *Çırağan Sarayında 28 Sene*, 89.

<sup>183</sup> Mesut Ayar, “Yeniçeri Ocağı’nın Ilgasından Sonra Bektaşî Tarikatı” (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 1998), 228.

<sup>184</sup> John Kingsley Birge, *The Bektashi order of dervishes* (London: Luzac Oriental, 1937), 81.

may be a link between the Bektashi affiliations of Pertevniyal and the burst of open publicity concerning the Bektashi books in the 1870s.<sup>185</sup>

This tendency in literature to link Pertevniyal with the Bektashi order<sup>186</sup> also originates from the restoration of the Emin Baba dervish lodge by the *valide* sultan. (Fig. 4) Although there seems to be no reference<sup>187</sup> to this restoration in the *vakfiyes*, the restoration inscription at the *semahane* of Emin Baba's convent, dated 1284 (1867/68) shows that it was Pertevniyal Valide Sultan who restored the lodge.<sup>188</sup> (Fig. 5)

As aforementioned, some Ottoman rulers and *valide* sultans were renowned for their adherence to a particular Sufi order. What is unique about Pertevniyal's religious patronage is that her acts of munificence were not exclusively limited to

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<sup>185</sup> "Many Bektashis believe that this legalized publication of Bektashi ideas was made possible by the mother of *Sultan Aziz* who was said herself to be a Bektashi. The claim is that both the *Vilayetname* and the *Aşkname* were published in 1288 (1871/72) under her secret protection, and that the *Miratül Mekasit*, which came out in 1293 (1876/77) in answer to the *Kâşif ul Esrar*, was printed at her expense. However, this particular fact may be, it remains true that during the years 1869 to 1876 there was this unprecedented burst of open publicity." Ibid, 80-81.

<sup>186</sup> The order was in fact abolished by Pertevniyal's husband Mahmud II following the destruction of the Janissary corps in 1826 as the Janissaries were closely affiliated with the Bektashi Sufi order. But after 1832, the Bektashis started to reopen their lodges and in time gained back their influence within the empire. See M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), 58-60; Ayar, "Yeniçeri Ocağı'nın İlgasından Sonra Bektaşî Tarikatı."

<sup>187</sup> Any reference in the *vakfiyes* to such a commission may have escaped my attention as it has been challenging to carefully analyze all the folios in Pertevniyal's *vakfiyes* due to the scope of this thesis.

<sup>188</sup> Pâdişâh-ı Hâzret-i Sultân 'Azîz'in mâderi  
Hâzret-i Pertevniyâl Sultân ü zî-şân 'âliyâ

Dergehi pâk-ı rızâ-i Hakk ma'mûr eyledi  
Görmemiş aşlâ felek böyle kerem-kân u şehâ

Râhata oldu mübeddel ehl-i fakrın fûrkati  
Böyle şâhib-merhamet sultâna kılsınlar du'â

Oldu bu evrâd-ı ezkârın hemî dilde kadîm  
Dâ'imâ olsun mu'în[i] hâlik-i 'arz u semâ

Şubhiyâ cevherle târîh zâhidâ bu dergehi  
Ol Emîn Baba'ya ilmâh murtazâ gördü revâ  
sene 1284

Aynur, Hatice, Kayoko Hayashi, and Hakan Karateke. "Database For Ottoman Inscriptions." Accessed May 15, 2016. <http://www.ottomaninscriptions.com>, ID K5145.

one Sufi sect. On the contrary, the analysis of the *valide* sultan's *vakfiyes* reflects a diverse patronage regarding the different orders of Sufism, including the Halveti, Mevlevi, Nakshbandi, Sunbuli and Shadhili.

One of her endowments,<sup>189</sup> prior to her appointment as *valide* sultan, concerns the distribution of *aşure*<sup>190</sup> each year on the tenth of *Muharrem* and the distribution of food for breaking fast during the Ramadan in sixteenth century dervish lodge, Yahya Efendi Hazretleri *Tekyesi* in Beşiktaş. At the time, the sheikh of the lodge was from the Nakshbandi sect.<sup>191</sup> Pertevniyal Valide Sultan also endowed silver candlesticks, a silver tableau, and a silver three-footed censer to the tomb of Yahya Efendi,<sup>192</sup> which she restored in 1290 (1873). The tomb was previously restored and enlarged in 1812 by her husband Sultan Mahmud II. For Pertevniyal's restoration, the poet Hasan Hayri wrote the following lines:

To please the soul of Yahya Efendi  
Revived his sacred and holy tomb sincerely  
Hayri came and composed a chronogram  
Valide Sultan built this sacred building<sup>193</sup>

Three other Nakshbandi convents appear in Pertevniyal's *vakfiyes*: Sheikh Hafız Efendi *Dergâhı* (from the Sa'diyya branch of the order), the Kaşkari Abdullah Efendi *Dergâhı*, and the Kalenderhane *Tekkesi* in Eyüp. To the first one, Pertevniyal

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<sup>189</sup> VA 747-198-170.

<sup>190</sup> Aşure is a "sweet dish made of cereals, sugar, raisins, etc." made and distributed at Aşure Day, which is the 10th of Muharrem. See *Redhouse*, 88.

<sup>191</sup> The sheikh was Mehmed Nuri Şemseddin Efendi who served the position from 1836 until 1886. See M. Baha Tanman, "Yahya Efendi Külliyesi," in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 43 (Istanbul 2013), 246-249.

<sup>192</sup> VA 634-141-29.

<sup>193</sup> TSMA. E. 842-5= 360-10-1.

"Rûhunu hoşnûd için Yahyâ Efendi'nin dağı  
Kıldı ihyâ türbe-i pâk-i şerîfin bî-riyâ  
Hayrî geldiler yediler dediler târîhini  
Etti bu bâb-ı şerîfî Vâlide Sultân binâ  
Sene 1290"

endowed *buhurdans* and *g labd ns*. And concerning the last two, the *valide* sultan commissioned Quran recitation and the organization of meals to be given to the dervishes and the poor during the fast of Ramadan.<sup>194</sup>

Sunbuli was another order of Sufism with which Pertevniyal had connections. The *valide* sultan commissioned the distribution of *a ure* in the Ke  fi Cafer Efendi *Tekkesi* in Fındıklı, to which she also donated Qur'ans and copies of *Sahih-i Buhari* (Sahih al-Bukhari), one of six major hadith collections of Sunni Islam.<sup>195</sup> Yunus Hilmi Efendi was the *postni  n* of this dervish lodge between 1819- 1863 and he belonged to the Sunbuli sect. During his time in office, he had gained the appreciation of Mahmud II, who paid several visits to him at the lodge.<sup>196</sup>

Apart from the dervish lodges mentioned above, the   hid Mehmed Pa  a *Derg h * at Kadırga limanı, the es-Seyyid Hafız Mehmed Efendi *Tekyesi* in Beykoz, the Balmumcu Ahmed Efendi *Zaviyesi* at Unkapanı, and the Kasımpa  a *Mevlevihanesi* are other convents that appear in the *valide*'s *vakfiyes*. While the first two are from the Halveti order, the other two belong to the Shadhili, and the Mevlevi orders respectively.<sup>197</sup> According to a document from the Ottoman Prime Ministry Archives, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan also paid a visit to the Aziz Mahmud H dai *Derg h * in   sk dar, belonging to the Jelveti branch of the Halveti order.<sup>198</sup>

Pertevniyal not only made generous donations to the dervish convents in İstanbul, she also commissioned the recitation of the Qur'an at the tombs of great masters of Sufism in the holy city of Damascus: the tombs of Muhyi al-Din Ibn al-

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<sup>194</sup> VA 634-152-34, dated 25 *Rebi  lahir* 1283 (6 September 1866).

<sup>195</sup> VA 634-141-29; 634-142-30.

<sup>196</sup> H r Mahmut Y cer, "S n liyye," in *T rk Diyanet Vakf  İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 38 (İstanbul 2010), 136-140.

<sup>197</sup> VA 634-147-32. The *vakfiye* concerns the stipulation of the meals to be given to the dervishes and the poor during the fast of Ramadan.

<sup>198</sup> BOA Hazine-i Hassa Defterleri, G mlek no: 27800.

‘Arabi (*Muhyiddin-i Arabi*), and Khalid-i Baghdadi (*Mevlana Halid-i Bağdadi*).<sup>199</sup>

The same *vakfiye* also stipulates the recitation of the Qur'an at the shrine of John the Baptist at the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, an unusual commission for an Ottoman *valide* sultan.<sup>200</sup>

Besides her diverse interests in Sufism, Pertevniyal's religious patronage concentrated on three main areas: the *Ashâb-ı Kehf* (The Seven Sleepers); the mosques and the tombs of Fatih Sultan Mehmed and Ebu Eyyub El-Ensari; and the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

Pertevniyal displayed a significant interest in the *Ashâb-ı Kehf*. The second deed Pertevniyal decrees as “a *valide* sultan” in 1862 concerns the recitation of the Al Kahf surah (*Kehf suresi*) each Friday in Medina.<sup>201</sup> In this surah there is the story of the *Ashâb-ı Kehf* who slept in the cave for a long period, yet they thought they had been there only for a few days. Through their story, this surah mainly states that, “the life is brief and subject to vicissitudes. Our ideas of time are defective, as shown in the story of the [Seven Sleepers], who had faith, truth, patience, and other virtues.”<sup>202</sup> The cave referred to in the surah was believed to be either in Afşin or Tarsus by the Ottoman Muslims. From Ahmed Lütfi we learn that Pertevniyal Valide Sultan built a mosque at the entrance of the *Ashâb-ı Kehf* in Tarsus, which was opened in 1290 (1873).<sup>203</sup> Lütfi also states that Pertevniyal restored the tombs of *Hazret-i Şit* and *Hazret-i Lokman* in Tarsus through the agency of the Tarsus mufti Ahmed Hilmi

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<sup>199</sup> VA 634-173-39. Khalid-i Baghdadi was an influential Ottoman mystic, and the founder of a branch of the Naqshbandi Sufi order, called Khalidi after him and Ibn Arabi was considered as one of the greatest masters of Sufism.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> VA 634-141-29, dated 9 Cemaziyel'ahır 1279 (2 December 1862).

<sup>202</sup> ‘Abdullah Yusuf ‘Ali, *The Holy Qur’ân: text, translation, and commentary* (Brentwood, Maryland: Amana Corporation, 1989), 706.

<sup>203</sup> “Adana’da Ashâb-ı kehf hazerâtının Gâr-ı cennet kararı pişgâhında Mehd-i ülyâ-yı Saltanat-ı Seniyye tarafından bir câmi’-i şerîf inşâ olup, ta’zîmât-ı lâyika ile resm-i küşâdı icrâ olundu.” Another account by Ahmed Lütfi a year later refers to a fountain, newly built by the *valide* sultan at the entrance of Tarsus. See Lütfi, *Vak’a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi tarihi*, 14: 54.

Efendi, with whom the *valide* had close relations.<sup>204</sup> A *zeyl vakfiye* also organizes the stipends to be given to the fellow *zaviyedars* Ahmed and Mehmed Efendiler, the sons of Sheikh Ömer, in the *Ashâb-ı Kehf* and the Qur'an recitation in the *zaviye*.<sup>205</sup>

In Istanbul, apart from the dervish convents, Pertevniyal was interested in the mosques and the tombs of Fatih Sultan Mehmed and Ebu Eyyub El-Ensari, to which she made regular endowments including the recitation of the Quran and the *Mevlid*; the donation of books, Qurans, reading desks (*rahle*), silk prayer rugs, chairs; and the appointment of a timekeeper (*muvaqqit*).<sup>206</sup> As Leslie Peirce has argued “the importance attached to visiting the tombs of the dead, and the rituals connected with [it] was of pervasive significance in Islamic culture.”<sup>207</sup> Bestowing acts of charity to the tombs of the past's important figures acted as a means to reinforce the sultan's or sultana's role as “upholder of the faith.” Indeed, given Fatih and Ebu Eyyub El-Ensari's links with the conquest of Istanbul, the victory of the Islamic faith, and their roles as supreme ghazis, Pertevniyal's persistent interest in their tombs and mosques attests to her willingness to display her devotion to Islam.

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<sup>204</sup> Ahmed Lütfi's entry is dated 1291 (1874): “Tarsus'da, Hazreti Şîr ve Hazret-i Lokman Aleyhime'sselâm ile Bilâl-i Habeşî Radiyallahu-anh efendilerimizin makâmât-ı aliyyelerinin Tarsus Müftîsi Ahmed Hilmi Efendi ma'rifet ve nezâreti ile Vâlide Sultan tarafından müceddeden binâ ve ihyâsı ve Kehf-i şerîfe dahi müceddeden bir bâb câmi' ile züvvara mahsûs odalar ve memleket derûnuna çeşme inşâsı zımnında icâb-ı hâl icrâ olundu.” See Ibid, 15: 14. From Ahmed Cevdet Pasha's account we learn that the Tarsus mufti had a very close relationship with Pertevniyal Valide Sultan. He often came to Istanbul and was hosted by the *valide*. According to Cevdet Pasha, Avni Pasha and even the shaykh al-islam Kezubi Hasan Efendi were jealous of the mufti's success and influence which put the mufti's position in danger. In another account, Cevdet Pasha recounts that during one of his stays as the guest of the *valide* sultan, the Tarsus mufti made a visit to Avni Pasha and the office of the SheikhuIslam. He drank coffee and sherbet during these visits. Following his return back to the Palace, the mufti suddenly got sick and died. His account shows that Ahmed Cevdet Pasha attributes the mufti's death to a poisoning during one of these visits as he had been a potential competitor, supported by the *valide*. See Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'rûzât*, 219, 221.

<sup>205</sup> In this *vakfiye*, dated 13 Şevval 1286 (16 January 1870), Pertevniyal Valide Sultan also commissions the repairment of the water system in Eski Saray in Tarsus, which carries water to several fountains in the town.

<sup>206</sup> VA 634-145-31; 634-150-33; 634-152-34.

<sup>207</sup> Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 51.

Apart from the mosques and tombs of these two significant historical figures, Pertevniyal made other endowments connected with the conquest of Istanbul. In 1838 she restored the formerly burnt Sekbanbaşı İbrahim Ağa Mosque in Kırkçeşme,<sup>208</sup> which had been converted from a Byzantine church in honor of a martyr of the 1453 conquest, Sekbanbaşı İbrahim Ağa.<sup>209</sup> She also restored the tomb of Abdülvedud at the Defterdar pier in Eyüp in 1875, who had also participated in the conquest of the city.<sup>210</sup> These consistent acts of munificence further illustrate the *valide* sultan's desire to link herself with the values embedded in the historic victory of the Ottoman dynasty.

The last category of Pertevniyal's religious patronage concerned her benefactions to Mecca and Medina,<sup>211</sup> following the footsteps of the previous Ottoman sultans and *valide* sultans who "had shown great liberality in their donations and gifts (*surre*) to the Holy Cities."<sup>212</sup> Pertevniyal's endowments included the gift of a clock to the tomb of the Prophet; the construction of a hospital in Medina; and the recitation of the Qur'an in Mecca for the Prophet.<sup>213</sup>

As can be seen from these various examples, Pertevniyal's religious endowments all attested to the *valide* sultan's willingness to demonstrate her charity and personal religious conviction, which would legitimize her spiritual authority in the eyes of her diverse audiences. Her zealous efforts in conveying this image of

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<sup>208</sup> VA 634-141-29.

<sup>209</sup> See Semavi Eyice, "Sekbanbaşı İbrahim Ağa Mescidi ve İstanbul'un Tarihi Topoğrafyası Hakkında Bir Not," *Fatih ve İstanbul II* 7-12 (1954): 139-149. According to the 14-line inscription with Mahmud II's tughra, dated 1254 (1838), it was Pertevniyal who constructed and revived this mosque. In 1943, the mosque was demolished as part of the new urban planning by Henri Prost to widen the Atatürk Bulvarı.

<sup>210</sup> See Semavi Eyice, "Ayvansaray," in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 4 (Istanbul 1991), 293.

<sup>211</sup> VA 634-173-39.

<sup>212</sup> See Howard Crane, "The Ottoman Sultan's Mosques: Icons of Imperial Legitimacy," in *The Ottoman City and its Parts: Urban Structure and Social Order*, ed. R. Abou-el-Haj and D. Preziosi I. Bierman (New York: Aristide Caratzas, 1991), 197.

<sup>213</sup> VA 634-152-34.

piety and generosity were indispensable to her overall patronage which continued unabated with her major work of charity: the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque complex.



## CHAPTER II

### II. Pertevniyal's Monument: The Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque Complex

#### 1. The Historiography of the Mosque Complex

The Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque complex, particularly its architectural style, was received and interpreted in dramatically different ways by scholars assessing the structure since it was constructed. Each and every interpretation was inevitably a part of the scholars' specific contexts that have shaped their lenses in reconstructing the building. In fact, this was and still is an inextricable occurrence: once Pertevniyal's monument came into being in 1871, it became subject to the dual nature of context for its interpretation (the dual nature pertaining to the positionalities of the building and the scholar assessing it) and thus "[would not have to chance to] fix in advance the outcome of any of its encounters with contextual plurality."<sup>214</sup> So, it is important to acknowledge that this contextual plurality is also valid for the author of this thesis. Keeping this reality in mind, the objective of this part is not to criticize any particular historiography concerning the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, but rather to shed light on the building's reception from 1873 until today.

The first reference to the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque appears in the *Uşûl-i Mi'mārî-i 'Osmânî* (The fundamentals of Ottoman architecture) (hereafter referred to as the *Uşûl*) which was commissioned by imperial order to articulate the architectural patrimony of the "Ottoman nation" and to represent the empire in the 1873 World

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<sup>214</sup> Bal & Bryson discuss the "plurality of contexts" which means that "works of art are constituted by different viewers in different ways at different times and places." See Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, "Semiotics and Art History," *Art Bulletin* 73 (1991): 179.

Exposition in Vienna.<sup>215</sup> The *Uşûl* was the first initiative for architectural historiography in the empire's history.<sup>216</sup>

Architecture was inextricably linked with the political and ideological projects of the late Tanzimat era which set out to build a kind of 'imperial nationalism' during the reign of Pertevniyal's son Abdülaziz. The main focus of the architectural discourse at that time was to reconstitute the Ottoman dynastic national style in architecture in line with this "all-inclusive Ottomanism."<sup>217</sup> The *Uşûl* played an important role in presenting this "entirely novel and highly eclectic repertoire" that would define the new dynastic style.<sup>218</sup> With its diversity of styles, Ottoman, neo-Gothic, Moorish, and neo-Classic, the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque encapsulated the spirit of this eclectic and novel architectural enterprise. It is no surprise therefore that, written two years after the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, the *Uşûl* presents the commission of the sultan's mother, along with the Çırağan Palace, as the crowning examples of the "Ottoman Renaissance" style of the late Tanzimat era:<sup>219</sup>

The beloved mosque that Her Majesty, Highness, Illustrious, Virtuous Valide Sultan bestowed benevolently in Aksaray and the Çırağan seafront Imperial Palace are enough evidence of the charm of the re-established fundamentals of Ottoman architecture.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> The *Uşûl* uses the term "la nation Ottomane" in the French text and "millet-i Osmâniye" in the Ottoman Turkish text.

<sup>216</sup> Its text and drawings were prepared under the supervision of Ibrahim Edhem Pasha, the Minister of Trade and Public Works. The editor of the whole volume, and the author of a substantial portion of the original text, was the amateur historian and artist Victor Marie de Launay; the technical documents in the *Uşûl* were provided by Pietro Montani, an Ottoman Levantine artist of Italian origin. It was prepared in three languages: Ottoman Turkish, French and German.

<sup>217</sup> This topic will be elaborated in Chapter III, so this subchapter limits itself to a discussion of the Aksaray Mosque Complex in the *Uşûl*.

<sup>218</sup> Ersoy, "On the Sources of the Ottoman Renaissance," iii.

<sup>219</sup> Marie de Launay describes the architecture of Abdülaziz's era as the "Ottoman Renaissance": "La renaissance de l'architecture ottomane, tout nous le fait donc espérer et nous n'en doutons pas, va prendre date dans l'histoire sous la protection du nom illustre de Sultan Abdul-Aziz Khan." See Marie de Launay, *Osmanlı mimarisi: usûl-i mi'mârî-i Osmânî* (İstanbul: Çamlıca, 2011), 7.

<sup>220</sup> "Devletlü ismetlü Vâlide Sultân-ı aliyyetü'ş-şân Efendimiz Hazretlerinin Aksaray'da te'sisine bezl-i âtîfet-i hayriyyet-i menkabet buyurdıkları cami'-i dilârâ ve Çırağan sâhil sarây-ı hümâyûnu

Marking a poignant contrast with the *Uşûl*'s exaltation, the building was evaluated quite differently by the twentieth-century architectural historians as incoherent, "alien,"<sup>221</sup> "a product of Orientalism"<sup>222</sup> or lacking the grandeur of classical Ottoman architecture and being deprived of authenticity, along with other monuments of the late Tanzimat era.

The Early Republican scholars' nationalist readings using primarily formal analysis had an undeniable role in this more traditional historiography of the mosque complex.<sup>223</sup> The nationalist lenses, filtrating the perceptions of the early twentieth century scholars, like those of the authors of the *Uşûl*, also had an ideological background from which they ripened, but instead of 'all inclusive Ottomanism', the lenses were defined this time by Turkism, the new ideological context replacing and in many ways denying its late Tanzimat version. Due to this ideological difference, although the writers of the *Uşûl* and the Early Republican scholars shared the same formalist methodology, the twentieth century interpretations of Pertevniyal's monument were totally different from the late Tanzimat reading.<sup>224</sup>

Apart from these two different ideological contexts, Ottomanism and Turkism, another determinant that shaped the standpoints of the writers of the *Uşûl* and the Early Republican architectural historians was their urge to respond to the Orientalist discourses that were essentializing the Islamic tradition of architecture.

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yeniden te'sîs buyurulan usûl-i mi'mârî-i Osmânî'nin letâfetine delîl-i kâfidir." Launay, *L'architecture Ottomane*, 8.

<sup>221</sup> See Doğan Kuban, *İstanbul, an Urban History: Byzantion, Constantinopolis, Istanbul* (İstanbul: The Economic and Social History Foundation of Turkey, 1996), 406.

<sup>222</sup> See Saner, *19. Yüzyıl İstanbul Mimarlığında "Oryantalizm"*, 118.

<sup>223</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of the nationalist historiography and formalist readings in the Early Republic, see Sibel Bozdoğan, and Gülru Necipoğlu, "Entangled Discourses: Scrutinizing Orientalist and Nationalist Legacies in the Architectural Historiography of the "Lands of Rum"," *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 1-6 and Bozdoğan, "Reading Ottoman Architecture through Modernist Lenses."

<sup>224</sup> For a detailed analysis of the usage of formalist methodology by the early twentieth century art historians, please see Oya Pancaroğlu, "Formalism and the Academic Foundation of Turkish Art in the Early Twentieth Century," *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 67-78.

By then, these Orientalist readings were partitioning the Islamic tradition of architecture into ahistorical schools reflecting ethno-racial character traits: Arabian, Moorish, Persian, Turkish, and Indian, among which Turks occupy the lowest position.<sup>225</sup> So, both in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the writers chose to respond to this reductionist methodology in their own particular ways, which also shaped their perceptions about Pertevniyal's monument accordingly.

While the *Uşûl* introduced the concept of 'decay' and attributed it to the eighteenth century and the early decades of the following century, early Republican historians later extended this decadence theme, introduced by the *Uşûl*, to the second half of the nineteenth century, to include the "Ottoman Renaissance" of the Abdülaziz era.<sup>226</sup> One of the pioneer Early Republican architectural historians, Celal Esad Arseven,<sup>227</sup> in his book *Constantinople: de Byzance à Stamboul*, emphasized "la dégénérescence du style ottoman" which started in the eighteenth century and continued.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> See Gülru Necipoğlu, "Creation of a National Genius: Sinan and the Historiography of "Classical" Ottoman Architecture," *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 141-183.

<sup>226</sup> According to the *Uşûl*, the Ottoman architectural style consisted of three major formative stages: the "growth" stage which started with the first architectural elements of the founding dynasty and culminated with the classical style in the sixteenth century; the "decay" stage which referred to a gradual decline comprising the eighteenth century and the early decades of the following century. This decay stage paralleled the arrival of the French architects and engineers and their artists, sculptors, painters and decorators to the Empire. And the final phase was the "revival" of the Ottoman style under Sultan Abdülaziz. See Launay, *L'architecture Ottomane*, 3-7. For the decline discourse, see Shirine Hamadeh, "Westernization, Decadence, and the Turkish Baroque: Modern Constructions of the Eighteenth Century," *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 185-197.

<sup>227</sup> Arseven was an active participant in building a 'historically continuous Turkish identity', which was the desired myth of the Early Turkish Republic. Faced with a heterogenous ethnic community, comprising diverse linguistic and religious backgrounds, the Kemalist regime set out to formulate a Turkish History Thesis and to produce new significations for the Turkish nation myth such as: political unity, linguistic unity, geographical unity, genealogical unity, historical ties, moral ties. Besides his collaboration on the Committee for the Preservation of Historic Works, Arseven was part of the committee searching for the origin of Turkish history and culture in the Turkish Historical Foundation and Turkish Language Foundation. See Soner Çağaptay, "Otuzlarda Türk Milliyetçiliğinde İrk, Dil ve Etnisite." In *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce 4: Milliyetçilik*, translated by Defne Orhun (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003), 259-261; Afet İnan, *Vatandaş İçin Medeni Bilgiler [The main Tenets of Turkish History]* (İstanbul: Milliyet Matbaası, 1930), 13; Nur Altınyıldız, "The Architectural Heritage of Istanbul and the Ideology of Preservation," *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 288.

<sup>228</sup> Arseven in his book divides Ottoman architecture into four periods. The first period is from Sultan Mehmed Çelebi to Beyazıd; from the Green Mosque in Bursa to Beyazıd Mosque in Istanbul. The

... jusqu'à nos jours, et les architectes n'ont guère abouti à des résultats satisfaisants, leurs efforts n'étant point basés sur une étude sérieuse des anciens monuments et des règles et des formules qui présidèrent à l'époque du sultan Abdul Aziz pour construire quelques mosquées et palais dans un style pseudo-renaissance, ne donnèrent pas de meilleurs résultats.<sup>229</sup>

This “degeneration” resulting “highly from European influence” became the dominant theme in the historiography of the late Tanzimat era’s architectural discourse which would shape it for the rest of the century until the 1980s.<sup>230</sup>

Although Arseven makes no direct reference to the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque in *Constantinople*, he condemns the mosque’s contemporaneous monument, the Çırağan Palace, which was highly praised by the *Uşûl* along with the Aksaray Mosque as the best examples of the Ottoman Renaissance style of the late Tanzimat era. According to Arseven, the palace was “an essay of the Ottoman Renaissance” and lacked “the interesting originality of the classical Ottoman architecture.”<sup>231</sup>

In *Türk Sanatı* (Turkish Art), published in 1928 as the revised edition of *Constantinople*, Arseven created a periodization for Ottoman architecture, which has been generally accepted by scholars until quite recently.<sup>232</sup> According to his periodization, the nineteenth century is divided into two periods: the Empire Style

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second period is from Beyazîd to Ahmed I; until the Mosque of Ahmed I. The third is from Ahmed I to Sultan Ahmed III. And the fourth period is from Ahmed III to ‘the present’. Regarding the last period including the Late Tanzimat architectural discourse, he states, “depuis Ahmed III jusqu’à l’époque contemporaine, période marquée par une décadence générale due à l’abandon des principes essentiels qui, loin d’empêcher la manifestation de la personnalité, conservent les caractères particuliers d’un style national, de même que les lois naturelles gardent et perpétuent la ressemblance de deux plantes de la même famille et la physionomie des hommes de la même race.” See Celal Esad Arseven, *Constantinople: de Byzance à Stamboul* (Paris: H. Laurens, 1909), 180.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid, 180.

<sup>230</sup> “Les ingénieurs français, appelés en Turquie par Mahmoud Ier pour les travaux hydrographiques, amenèrent avec eux des sculpteurs, des décorateurs et des dessinateurs qui, en introduisant les styles Louis XV et baroque, préparèrent la dégénérescence du style ottoman... Avec le temps les artistes ottomans se rapprochèrent de plus en plus des types d’ornementation européenne qui devint à la mode, et fut appelée alors vulgairement “à la franka”. Ils eurent tôt fait d’oublier les principes de l’art ottoman.” Ibid, 179-180.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid, 238: “On peut considérer l’architecture de [la palais de Tchéragan] comme un essai de renaissance de l’art ottoman. La façade a été bâtie sans respect des proportions de l’art, et les ornements surchargés n’offrent pas l’originalité intéressante de l’ancien art ottoman. A l’intérieur, la décoration est plus artistiquement comprise.”

<sup>232</sup> See Celal Esad Arseven, *Türk Sanatı* (İstanbul: Akşam Matbaası, 1928).

(*Ampir Usül*) (1808-1874) and the Neo-Classic Style (*Neo-klasik Usül*) (1874-1930), the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque falling into the second category. In this book and his later book, *L'art turc depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours*, published in 1939, Arseven reaffirms the “décadence” concept that defines the Neo-Classic style, which is “sans style et sans goût.” According to Arseven, this style’s “motifs de décoration [sont] copiés dans les ouvrages d’architecture de l’Europe” and it is a style “qui n’a aucun rapport avec l’art turc.”<sup>233</sup> For an architectural idiom to belong to “l’art turc” or to have a “national (Turkish) character” (“*milli bir seciyeyi haiz şahsi bir sanat*”), it should “divest itself from pomp and excessive ornamentation” and “develop the best novel formulas in line with pureness (simplicity) and rationality” (“*debdebe ve fazla süslerden tecerrüd etmesi, sadelik ve mantık içinde en güzel ü bedi’î formülleri bulmuş olmasıdır*”).<sup>234</sup> As this projection makes it clear, the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, with its ‘pomp and ornamentation’, had no national character and was one of the best examples of the Neo-Classic style, “sans style et sans goût.”<sup>235</sup>

Although Arseven repeats his assessment in the later versions of *Türk Sanatı*, published in 1970 and 1984;<sup>236</sup> in his *Sanat Ansiklopedisi*, published from 1943 to 1952, he emerges with a softer version of criticism. Beside the Neo-Classic (*Yeni Klasik*) term, he offers an alternative name for the late Tanzimat era, “*Yeni Türk*” (Neo-Turc) and interprets the architectural style of the Aksaray Valide Mosque as an attempt to return to the style of classical Turkish architecture. He also adds that this

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<sup>233</sup> See Celal Esad Arseven, *L'art turc: depuis son origine jusqu'a nos jours* (İstanbul: Devlet basımevi, 1939), 178-179.

<sup>234</sup> Arseven, *Türk Sanatı*, 6.

<sup>235</sup> Arseven, *L'art turc*, 178-179.

<sup>236</sup> In 1961, Arseven also publishes *Türk sanatı tarihi: menşeyinden bugüne kadar*. In this book, he evaluates the architectural style of the Aksaray mosque as “melez.” In addition, although he refers to the account of Serkis Balyan’s family informing that Serkis and Agob Balyan were the building’s architects, he chooses to cling to Halil Edhem’s assertion that Montani Efendi was the architect. See Celal Esad Arseven, *Türk sanatı tarihi: menşeyinden bugüne kadar* (İstanbul: Millî Eğitim Basımevi, 1961).

was an endeavor stemming from a conscious reaction to the Baroque and Empire styles. But his negative assessment does not change: he presents the result of this attempt as “a mere copy of European styles.”<sup>237</sup>

Arseven’s concept of ‘decadence’, which he equates with the intrusion of European elements into Ottoman architecture is echoed in the later works of the historians assessing the late Tanzimat era’s monuments. The German art historian, Ernst Diez, in his book *Türk sanatı: başlangıcından günümüze kadar* (Turkish Art: From its beginning to the present), published in 1946, evaluates this era’s monuments as a “gerileme” (regression) in Turkish architectural history. He nominates the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque as the pioneering example of this era, carrying a “mixture of styles.”<sup>238</sup> His second book, *Türk Sanatı* (Turkish Art), published in 1955, reiterates the earlier conviction about the mosque. And like many other scholars, Diez attributes the mosque to the Italian architect Montani Efendi,<sup>239</sup> a common assumption asserted by the twentieth century historians, based on Halil Edhem’s book *Camilerimiz* (Our Mosques) published in 1932.<sup>240</sup>

The same year, not diverting from his predecessors, the art historian Semavi Eyice, in his book *Istanbul: petit guide à travers les monuments byzantins et turcs* describes Pertevniyal’s mosque as having “un éclectisme trop surchargé et loin d’être satisfaisant [et] seule sa masse blanche peut attirer l’attention.”<sup>241</sup> Seven years later, in his book *Minarelerimiz* (Our Minarets), Semavi Eyice strengthens his critique and defines Pertevniyal’s monument as “*tuhaf*” (strange) due to the negligence of a total

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<sup>237</sup> Celal Esad Arseven, “Türk Sanatı.” In *Sanat Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 4. (İstanbul, 1952), 2089.

<sup>238</sup> Ernst Diez, *Türk sanatı: başlangıcından günümüze kadar*, trans. Oktay Aslanapa (İstanbul: Üniversite Matbaası, 1946), 239.

<sup>239</sup> Ernst Diez and Oktay Aslanapa, *Türk Sanatı* (İstanbul: Doğan Kardeş yayınları, 1955), 192.

<sup>240</sup> Halil Ethem, *Camilerimiz* (İstanbul: Kanaat Kütüphanesi, 1932), 99; Halil Edhem, *Nos mosquées de Stamboul* (Stamboul: Librairie Kanaat, 1934), 131.

<sup>241</sup> Semavi Eyice, *Istanbul: petit guide à travers les monuments byzantins et turcs* (İstanbul: İstanbul Matbaası, 195), 87-88.

harmony. He also defines the mosque's minarets as “*üslûpsuz*” (without style) and “*nisbetsiz*” (disproportional).<sup>242</sup>

In 1961, the architectural historian Aptullah Kuran starts his article, written for the First International Congress of Turkish Art, with a premise emphasizing that four criteria should be used for assessing architectural structures: social, intellectual, technical and aesthetic.<sup>243</sup> He states that he not only values the formalist reading of architecture but also considers the social and intellectual values of a society in evaluating its architectural forms. Despite this emphasis, the result is no different for Pertevniyal's monument. Although Kuran links the monuments of the nineteenth century prior to 1860 with a ‘favorable’ Westernization attempt, he presents the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, as the “best example” of “the true decadence of Turkish architecture” with its “purposeless and characterless eclecticism” and continues as follows:

In this mosque, the traditional form of the Ottoman mosque, which has an uninterrupted progression from the foundations up to the tip of the dome, was destroyed. The dome not only has no relationship to the body but is also proportionally too small for it. The structure and the form are unrelated... This work demonstrates that the traditional cultural values were so weakened and confused at this point that the Ottomans could not rise above the tide of Western aspirations sweeping their society. The reaction to this confusion, to recreate Turkish art and nationalize architecture, was in no sense an improvement over the architecture of the Valide Mosque.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> Semavi Eyice, *İstanbul minareleri* (İstanbul: Berksoy Matbaası, 1962), 40.

<sup>243</sup> See Aptullah Kuran, “A Study of Turkish Architecture of Modern Times.” In *Selçuklular'dan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye'de Mimarlık*, by Aptullah Kuran, ed. Çiğdem Kafesçioğlu, Lucienne Thys-Şenocak and Timur Kuran (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2012), 619-627.

<sup>244</sup> Kuran, “A Study of Turkish Architecture of Modern Time,” 625-626. Like previous scholars, Kuran attributes the building to an “Italian,” Montani Efendi in this article. Two years later, in his article “Çağdaş Mimaride Madde ve Ruh: 20. Yüzyılda Batı Mimarisiyle Türk Mimarisinin Gelişmesi Hususunda Mukayeseli Bir Çalışma,” Kuran reaffirms his conviction that the structure and the form are totally separate from each other as foreign architectural elements are brought together to appeal to the eye: “Valide Camisi'nde yapı ile form birbirinden ayrılmış, yabancı mimari şekiller sırf göze hitap eden belkemiş bir düzen içerisinde bina sathına yerleştirilmiştir.” See Aptullah Kuran, “Çağdaş Mimaride Madde ve Ruh: 20. Yüzyılda Batı Mimarisiyle Türk Mimarisinin Gelişmesi Hususunda Mukayeseli Bir Çalışma.” In *Türk sanatı tarihi araştırma ve incelemeleri*, Vol. I (İstanbul: İstanbul Devlet Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi, 1963), 416. In his lecture given at Chicago University in May in 1981, Kuran adapts a less pejorative tone in his assessment and states that, “towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Greco-Roman type of classical revivalism started to giving way to an architecture sprayed with a kind of medieval flavor. The transformation is exemplified by the

In 1962, Tahsin Öz paraphrases Kuran's eclecticism as "*melez*" (hybrid) having "*yabancı unsurlar*" (foreign elements) like Gothic and Indian. Like Kuran, Öz also attributes the building to the Italian Montani Efendi.<sup>245</sup>

A decade later, Pertevniyal's major commission receives a severe blow from the renowned Ottoman art and architecture historian Godfrey Goodwin. Goodwin focuses on the interior paintwork of the Pertevniyal's monument and states that "it is typical of much Turkish work of the period and so gaudy that it is unfettered by taste and instead attains the zest of gypsy, canal and fairground art ..."<sup>246</sup>

The 1970s end with a rather positive assessment of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque by Ülkü Bates in her article "Women as Patrons of Architecture in Turkey." In one of the earliest examples in the architectural historiography about women's patronage in Islamic society, she presents the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque as the last mosque in the empire that was donated by a *valide* sultan, and she asserts that the Aksaray mosque was "the only religious building in Istanbul that attempted the fashionable eclectic style of this time."<sup>247</sup> She describes the mosque as follows:

The mosque, which is in the Aksaray quarter of İstanbul, was completed in 1871. Attached to it are a tomb building, a fountain, and a splendid courtyard which is approached by wide marble staircases that lead to monumental and ornate gates. The mosque is small, single-domed and has two minarets. Its originality lies in its daring surface decoration. The motifs that are carved on its marble façades include those recalling Seljuk period floral and geometric

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Mosques of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan at Aksaray and the Hamidiye at Yıldız... Their style represents more than a new fashion; it portrays a critical change in the Ottoman socio-political outlook." But it should be noted, he still explicitly states that the structures of that century lost their classical substance. See Kuran, "A Study of Turkish Architecture of Modern Times," 662.

<sup>245</sup> See Tahsin Öz, *İstanbul Camileri* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1962), 149.

<sup>246</sup> Godfrey Goodwin, *A History of Ottoman Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), 10. In his book "A history of Ottoman Architecture" written earlier in 1971, Goodwin does not elaborate too much on the Aksaray mosque. He refers to Montani and Agob Balyan as the possible names for the building's architect. He considers Pertevniyal's commission as a part of the eclecticism of the period and criticizes "the hall of prayer... [being] painted all over with that love of massed rich colour... [which] is not necessarily ideal for a mosque" but would be fit for "bargee art." Ibid, 425.

<sup>247</sup> The 1990s witness a big growth in women studies with the appearance of works that challenge the sexist and essentialist perspectives and acknowledge the active role of women in cultivating networks of influence and patronage.

inter-lacings, as well as the Indian flower arrangements found on the Taj Mahal, and fanciful Western neo-Gothic windows.<sup>248</sup>

Starting from the 1980s, discourses about European influence on Ottoman architecture reemerge this time under the category of ‘Westernization’. The writings concentrating on this latter discourse present the assumption that the increasing interactions with Europe starting from the eighteenth century onwards intermingled with the Ottoman ruling elites’ admiration for the West, a blend which resulted in shaping the architectural discourse along with other realms like painting. One of the works emphasizing this phenomenon of Westernization is Serim Denel’s book *Batılılaşma sürecinde İstanbul’da: tasarım ve dış mekânlarda değişim ve nedenleri* (1982) which attributes the style of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque to the westernization of the late nineteenth century, a process which was accelerated by the Tanzimat.

In 1981, the linguist, encyclopedist and historian Pars Tuğlacı published *Osmanlı mimarlığında batılılaşma dönemi ve Balyan ailesi* (Westernization period in the Ottoman Architecture and the Balian Family), which is about the role of the Balyan family in Ottoman architecture. The family’s nine members served as imperial architects from the late eighteenth to the late nineteenth centuries. The architects of Pertevniyal’s monument, Serkis and Agob Balyan, were also from this family. Tuğlacı renamed the English version of his book, published in 1990, as “The Role of the Balian Family in Ottoman Architecture,” removing the emphasis on ‘westernization’ only from the title of the book. In his book, Tuğlacı applauds the Balyan family’s “innate talent combined with a meticulous sense of craftsmanship and an inexhaustible capacity for hard work” and their products of which “the plans

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<sup>248</sup> Bates, “Women as Patrons of Architecture in Turkey,” 256.

were western and the style eclectic, although baroque and neo-classicism dominated.”<sup>249</sup> Here he regards the combination of eastern and western decorative motifs as a unique synthesis and he praises the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque. Accordingly, he states that “the marble carving of the façade is highly intricate and ranks among the finest examples of Turkish craftsmanship.”<sup>250</sup> He does not present any other aesthetic or structural comments related to the mosque, nor does he contextualize it historically.<sup>251</sup>

About the same time, Turgut Saner (1988) argues that starting from the mid-nineteenth century, the imperial attempt “to create a new Ottoman architecture” led to “the introduction of Orientalism into the agenda of Ottoman architecture.”<sup>252</sup> According to him, although the Ottoman architecture “received Orientalism like the West, it departed from the western approach as it related Orientalism to its own tradition.”<sup>253</sup> And among the three groupings of monuments built with Orientalist influence, Pertevniyal’s mosque complex, he states, belongs to the second group, in which Orientalism has an equal share with the Gothic style.<sup>254</sup>

Towards the end of the twentieth century, Doğan Kuban in his book *Istanbul, an urban history: Byzantion, Constantinopolis, Istanbul* (1996) labels the Aksaray mosque as an “alien” building in its “ancient traditional quarter.” He adds, “like many buildings of the Abdülaziz period, a building like Valide Mosque at Aksaray, by its strange mixture of Gothic and Saracenic, devised by the architect Montani

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<sup>249</sup> Pars Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family in Ottoman architecture* (Istanbul: Yeni Çığır Bookstore, 1990), VII.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid, 538.

<sup>251</sup> Tuğlacı, in his book, presents eighteen documents that he obtained from the descendants of the Serkis Balyan regarding the construction costs of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque and its tomb.

<sup>252</sup> Saner, *19. Yüzyıl İstanbul Mimarlığında “Oryantalizm,”* 162. At the time Saner’s book was published, Orientalism was a much-used term by scholars in art history following Edward W. Said’s *Orientalism* book published in 1978. See Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978).

<sup>253</sup> Ibid, 159.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid, 118.

Efendi as the modern national and imperial style, has never been integrated with the wooden houses of the surrounding quarters.”<sup>255</sup>

Contrary to these critiques of the twentieth century, more recent scholarship has set out to understand the architectural authenticities of the late Tanzimat era and assess them within their own historical contexts. For instance, Ahmet Ersoy<sup>256</sup> argues that this epithet of “lack of style” raised by earlier scholarship regarding the late Tanzimat monuments, “points unwittingly to a deliberate attempt on the part of the late Tanzimat architects to defy established canons of expression, and acknowledges their conscious departure from a consistent and popularly acclaimed stylistic tradition that characterized the buildings of the early Tanzimat era.”<sup>257</sup> This deliberate choice on the part of the late Tanzimat architects had its roots in the political ideology that Abdülaziz and his ruling elite chose to embrace in the late Tanzimat’s historical context, of which Pertevniyal’s monument was an important part, a subject which will be further analyzed in Chapter Three.

## 2. The Complex through its Written Records

According to the court historian Ahmed Lütü Efendi, the organization of the construction register documents was an important duty of the *bina emini*.<sup>258</sup>

Fortunately, the *bina emini* of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque carried out this duty very carefully and left behind not only the construction register books of the

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<sup>255</sup> Kuban, *İstanbul, an Urban History*, 406.

<sup>256</sup> Ersoy, “On the Sources of the ‘Ottoman Renaissance’,” 321.

<sup>257</sup> Ahmet A Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary, Reconfiguring the Architectural Past in a Modernizing Empire* (England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2015), 196.

<sup>258</sup> “Gerek binâ eminleri gerek sâirleri olsun defterlerini hakkıyla tanzîm ederler, bu sûretle masraftan hemân sülûs ve sülûsân fâide ve vüzerâ iltizâmâtının dahi Dersââdet’te münâsip ve mu’tedil âdemlere ihâlesiyle semerâtından haylice fazla hâsıl olacağından bu usûle ri’âyetin lüzûmunu beyândan ibârettir.” See Ahmed Lütü, *Vak’anüvis Ahmed Lütü Efendi tarihi*, trans. Yücel Demirel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı-Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1999), 1: 97.

Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, but also his personal correspondences with the *valide*, which are now kept in the Topkapı Palace Archives.<sup>259</sup> The earliest of these documents dates to 1867 and the latest to 1871. According to these records, the construction superintendent was Hüseyin Bey (Pertevniyal's *kethüda* and *şehremini*), Sami Efendi was the clerk, the *vakıf* managers were Bogos Bey and Mihran Bey respectively, Serkis (Balyan) Bey, Agob (Balyan) Bey and Bedros Bey were the architects, and Oseb Bey, with his assistant Agob (Balyan) Bey, were the ones who drew the decorative elements of the construction.

Although some previous sources,<sup>260</sup> based on the account of Halil Edhem,<sup>261</sup> indicate Pietro Montani (1829-1887) as the chief architect for the mosque complex; in TSMA D. 8218. 48, dated 26 *Şaban* 1286 (1 December 1869), the construction superintendent Hüseyin Bey<sup>262</sup> refers to Serkis Bey and his brother Agob Bey as the architects of the mosque. As Ahmet Ersoy<sup>263</sup> also points out in his work, Serkis Balyan was probably the master builder, mainly responsible for the supervision of the construction since Agob Bey is distinguished in the document as “the one who came to the mosque most frequently and made the drawings and explained them.” (*“Kalfa Serkis Bey kullarının biraderi Agob Bey kulunuz geldi... Ekseri cami-i şerife gelen ve resimleri çizip tarif eden odur.”*) It was a common practice that the chief architect usually had a *ser-mimar* (head architect) and a *mimar-ı sani* (second architect) working under him. Ahmed Lütfi's account from 1281 (1865), four years earlier than the above-mentioned document, shows that at the time Serkis Balyan was

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<sup>259</sup> For the plans of the mosque, see TSMA D. 8214, D. 8215. For other construction records, see TSMA D. 8201, 8202, 8204, 8205. 01-04, 8206, 8207, 8209, 8212, 8218. 43, 8218. 47-48, 8218. 56, 8219. 02, 8219. 04, 8219. 06-07, 8219. 09-12, 8219. 13-15, TSMA. E. 842-3.

<sup>260</sup> See Tahsin Öz, *İstanbul Camileri*. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1964); Celal Esad Arseven, *Türk sanatı tarihi: menşinden bugüne kadar* (İstanbul: Millî Eğitim Basımevi, 1961).

<sup>261</sup> Edhem, *Nos mosquées de Stamboul*, 131.

<sup>262</sup> Hüseyin Bey is referred as “Câmi-i şerif ebniyesi baş memûru” (the superintendent of the holy mosque complex) in the construction documents.

<sup>263</sup> Ersoy, “On the Sources of the ‘Ottoman Renaissance’,” 180.

the chief imperial architect and was awarded a *nişan*, an Ottoman order of special merit.<sup>264</sup>

The document TSMA D. 8207. 01 provides a detailed list of the two hundred and twenty-two people working in the construction of the complex. Under the heading of “A list of the employees and workers employed in the buildings of the holy mosque” (“*Cami-i şerif ebniyesi üzerinde bulunan memurlar ve işleyen amelelerin defteri*”), the document lists the names as follows:

- *Cami-i şerif ebniyesi baş memuru* (the superintendent of the mosque) Hüseyin Ağa kulları,
- *Kâtip* (clerk) Sami Efendi kulları,
- *Kalfa bey tarafından ve tarafımızdan memur* (commissioned by the master builder and us) Bedros Kalfa kulları,
- *Kalfa bey tarafından gönderilmiş, duvarcı ve hamamcılar üzerine memur* (sent by the master builder to lead the masons and *hamamcılar*<sup>265</sup>)
- Ohannes Kalfa kulları,
- *Mabeyn-i hümayundan gelen emin-i kavas kulları* (the guard sent by the Palace),
- *Mutemet* (reliable) Mehmed Ağa kulları,
- *Mutemet* Hasan Ağa kulları,
- *Mutemet* Abbas Ağa kulları,
- *Mutemet* Kadri Ağa kulları,
- *Mutemet* Ali Ağa kulları,
- *Yalı köşkünde taş üzerinde duran* (responsible for the stones in the Yalı köşkü) İbrahim Ağa kulları,
- *Mutemet* İzzet Ağa kullarına,
- *Yenikapı’da kum ve kireç çıktığı vakit üzerinde duran* (responsible for sand and lime in Yenikapı) *Mutemet* Agob kulları, *Irgatbaşı* (capstan head) Simon kulları,
- *Duvarcı ve hamamcıların iki nefer işbaşları kulları* (two foremen for masons and *hamamcılar*),
- *Otuz nefer bazı icabına göre beş ziyade ve noksan olur duvarcı ve hamamcılar kulları* (thirty masons and *hamamcılar*; can be five more or less),
- *Taşçıbaşı* (chief stonemason) Hacı Melkon kulları,
- *İki minarede işleyen taşçıların iki nefer işbaşları ve kulları* (two foremen for the stonemasons working on the two minarets),

<sup>264</sup> “Mâbeyn-i hümayûn Ebniyye kalfalarından Hoca Serkiz’e هوجه سرکز ma’-nişân ... unvânı verildi.” See Lütfi, *Vak’a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi tarihi*, 10: 123. Serkis and his brother Agob Balyan were appointed imperial architects when their father died in 1866. See Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 429.

<sup>265</sup> *Hamamcı ustası* was the bricklayer or stonemason skilled in the construction of watertight walls for bathhouses, cisterns, etc. See Redhouse, 442.

- *Seksen beş nefer bazı icabına göre ziyade ve noksan olur taşcılar kulları* (about eighty five stonemasons),
- *Lağımçıbaşı ve yanında işine göre üç olur beş olur lağımçılar kulları* (chief sewer and three or five sewermen depending on the job),
- *Dülgerlerin kolbaşısı* (foreman of carpenters) *Dimitri ve yanında işine göre iki üç dülger bulunur* (two or three carpenters depending on the job),
- *Yedi nefer rençberlerin ve sırık hammallarının kolbaşıları* (seven foremen for day laborers and porters carrying loads on poles),
- *Kırk beş nefer sırık hammalları bazı noksan ve ziyade olur* (forty five more or less porters carrying loads on poles),
- *Otuz nefer rençberler kulları* (thirty day laborers),
- *Demircibaşı ve yanında işine göre üç dört kalfası* (chief ironmonger and his three or four assistant masters),
- *Camiden çıkan molozu Yenikapıya ücretle götürüp Yenikapıdan kum ve kireç ve saire taşıyan merkepçi* (donkeyman who is paid to carry the debris from the mosque to Yenikapı and to carry back sand, lime, and other things from Yenikapı) Abbas Kulları,
- *Ressam* (painter) *Oseb kulları*.

*İki yüz yirmi iki nefer adamlar olduğu beyanı* (declaration of two hundred and twenty two men).

The construction of the complex started in *Ramazan* 1285 (January 1869) with a big groundbreaking ceremony.<sup>266</sup> According to the memorandum coming from the *müneccimbaşı* (chief astrologer of the Sultan), the auspicious time (*eşref saat*) to lay the foundation of the mosque complex was fifteen minutes past four according to *ezani saat* (the hour as reckoned from sunset) on 20 *Ramazan* 1285 (4 January 1869, Monday). The *müneccimbaşı* also stated that the *valide* sultan would be attending the ceremony in disguise (*tebdil suret*). Since it was a *selatin* mosque (mosque built by the imperial family), the ceremony would be too crowded and according to the *valide* sultan's will, the house of a clerk which oversaw the mosque would be prepared for the *valide* to watch the ceremony. According to the records, on that day, 3.225

<sup>266</sup> The groundbreaking ceremony was one of the traditions in the empire concerning the construction process of an imperial mosque. If the founder was the sultan, the *valide* sultan or a significant state dignitary, a special day would be determined for the groundbreaking ceremony and the construction would start on that day.

Ottoman liras were dispersed into the foundation of the complex, a tradition that was carried out for significant architectural commissions. (Table 2)

In TSMA D. 8218.47, Hüseyin Bey informs the *valide* sultan about the sheikhs and others that were invited to the ceremony to perform prayer:

Yenikapı *Mevlevihanesi* Sheikh Osman Efendi, Merkezefendi Sheikh Efendi, Kasımpaşa *Mevlevihanesi* Sheikh Efendi, Kocamustafapaşa Sheikh Efendi, Ser-tarik Şakir Efendi, *Pişkadem* (deputy leader in a dervish lodge) Hacı Nida Efendi, *Merhum Şeyh Nuri Efendi Hazretleri Damadı Nuri Efendi* (Nuri Efendi, son-in-law of His Excellency, the deceased sheikh Nuri Efendi) Fındıklı *Dergâhı* Sheikh Hafız Ahmed Efendi, Eyüp'te Kalenderhane Sheikh Efendi, Horhor'da Kefevi *Tekyesi* Sheikh Efendi, Mirahur'da Sheikh Nazif Efendi, Mehmetpaşa *Tekyesi* Sheikh Hacı Mustafa Efendi, Saraçhanebaşında Kaykuluzade Sheikh Efendi, Beşikçizade *Tekyesi* Sheikh Mehmet Efendi, Hoca Arnavud Ali Efendi, Hacı Pir Efendi, Tarsus Mufti Mehmet Efendi, Tophaneli Hacı Mehmet Efendi, Kara Ali Efendi, Ayasofya *Başımamı* (head imam) Hacı Abdi Efendi, *Duacı* (reciter) Ömer Efendi, Küçük Numan Efendi, *Evkaf-ı Hümayun Mahkeme-i Teftiş Müdürü* (the director of court of inquiry for imperial estates) İsmet Efendi (*daima vakfınızın işlerine çabalayan* [who is always struggling for your wakf's works]), *Aksaray'da bazı mahallelerin mütevellisi* (trustees of pious foundations in Aksaray) *Ve İsmet Efendi'nin yanında kâtip* (and the clerk working with İsmet Efendi) Hamdi Efendi.

Despite the ingrained theme of seclusion of women, the related correspondence clearly acknowledges the active role of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan in cultivating networks of influence starting from the very first day of her mosque's construction. She appears to have been aware of every individual, official and sheikh in the capital who was invited to her mosque's groundbreaking ceremony. As the names from different dervish convents suggest, Pertevniyal aimed to maintain good

connections with diverse Sufi orders, which she supported financially, as mentioned earlier in Chapter One. Following the ceremony, a detailed report of it, which was sent to the *valide* sultan by Hüseyin Bey, further confirms the patron's active follow-up and interest in her commission.<sup>267</sup> This correspondence informs the *valide* that all the people invited to the ceremony attended, including the sheikhs with their disciples (*mürüt*) and their students (*talebe*), the *ulema*, the gendarmerie and the Fatih gendarmerie official Hacı Halim Pasha. From the list of attendees, it seems the ceremony also served to bring together diverse elements of late Tanzimat society. Besides the guests listed, Hüseyin Bey reflects his happiness upon the appearance of a very important statesman:

... And my dear benefactor, since he is the grand vizier of the time, I brought up the subject once yesterday. He did not say that he would come. But even he graced us with his presence. To be honest, he made us happy.<sup>268</sup>

The grand vizier to whom Hüseyin Bey is referring in his correspondence was likely Ali Pasha who was still serving in his position in *Ramazan* 1285 (January 1869).<sup>269</sup> Given the clash Pertevniyal had had with Ali Pasha, as elaborated in the previous chapter, it seems understandable that Pertevniyal's *kethüda* Hüseyin Bey expresses both his surprise and happiness at the unexpected attendance of the grand vizier.

Both the size of the crowd and the high-ranking list of participants, including the grand vizier of the time, in the groundbreaking ceremony give clues about the reception of Pertevniyal's architectural commission by the prominent religious

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<sup>267</sup> TSMA D. 8212. 01. Hüseyin Bey signs the correspondence as 24 *Ramazan* 1285 (17 May 1868) and in the beginning of it refers to the event as "*bugün*" at "*eşref-i saat*." This raises the question if the ceremony for the foundation was held on 24 Muharrem or 20 Muharrem, as stated by the chief astrologer of the Sultan.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> He served the position from 11 February 1867 until 7 September 1871.

authorities and state dignitaries of the time. One may presume that this was a widely-known architectural commission and the notables of the time regarded it seriously and did not lag behind in attending its first announced event.

Beside the attendees, Hüseyin Bey also informed the *valide* sultan about the progression of the ceremony. He states that “all the guests were seated down in the tents and were offered coffee, tobacco pipe and sherbet (sweet fruit drink).”

(“[C]ümlesi çadırlara oturtulup kahve ve çubuk ve şerbet ikram olundu.”) He recounts the *atiyye* (bounty granted by the *valide* sultan) presented to the invitees and the workers and he adds that he will present a detailed account of these gifts to her later as he is in a hurry to send this correspondence in a timely manner to his patron, the *valide*.

The construction superintendent Hüseyin Bey died during the twenty-ninth month of the construction.<sup>270</sup> According to the documents that Pars Tuğlacı obtained from the descendants of Serkis Balyan, Ferid Pasha was appointed as Pertevniyal’s new *kethüda*.<sup>271</sup> The correspondence, TSMA D. 8202. 01, dated 16 *Safer* 1289 (25 April 1872) confirms this information as it is signed as *Köleleri Ferid* (Your very humble servant, Ferid).

The inauguration ceremony of the mosque took place on 26 *Muharrem* 1289 (5 April 1872).<sup>272</sup> It was even more splendid than the groundbreaking ceremony. In contrast to his brief mention about the inaugurations of earlier imperial mosques, like the Dolmabahçe Valide and Ortaköy,<sup>273</sup> Ahmed Lütfi provides an elaborate

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<sup>270</sup> Şehsuvaroğlu, *Asırlar boyunca İstanbul*, 155. Ahmed Lütfi gives the year 1871 for Hüseyin Bey’s death, see Lütfi, *Vak’a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi tarih*, 12: 112. And Osman Ergin, *İstanbul Şehreminleri*, 108, gives 12 Şevval 1287 (5 January 1871) for Hüseyin Bey’s death.

<sup>271</sup> Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 424, appendix: ‘Document 138/Ç’.

<sup>272</sup> See Lütfi, *Vak’a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi tarih*, 14: 15.

<sup>273</sup> Regarding the inaugurations of the Dolmabahçe Valide and Ortaköy Mosques, Ahmed Lütfi only states the locations of the mosques and the inauguration dates. Ibid, 9: 110; 9: 115.

description of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's mosque's ceremony, which indicates that he was moved by its "*kemal-i debdebe ve ihtişam*" (utmost pomp and magnificence). According to his account, from the Beşiktaş Palace all the way to the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, the Divanyolu was filled with regular troops and the gendarmerie who stood to salute their *valide* sultan and other notables according to protocol:

All of the construction, embellishment and furnishing of the sacred mosque, which has been newly built of stone in Aksaray, İstanbul in the place of the burned Kâtip Mosque by the Valide Sultan, is completed beautifully. The official inauguration was performed with utmost pomp and magnificence on the twenty sixth day of Muharrem of the year eighty nine (5 April 1872). The pomp and circumstance was as such that, on the day of the inauguration, the regular troops and the gendarme were arranged in rank for salutation to Her Highness Valide Sultan, the Grand Vizier, the Sheikhuislam, the Minister of War, and the marshall of the Sultan's household, along the Sultana's route from the Beşiktaş Imperial Palace to the mosque. When the *valide* sultan and the prince Yusuf Efendi, his sister Saliha Sultan and other virtuous, honorable, chaste ladies of the sultan in her majesty's company arrived with utmost pomp and splendor at the mosque, animals were killed as a sacrifice accompanied with prayers and presented to the servants of the mosque, to those who are in need and to those who recited the prayers. As high amounts of remuneration were given to those who rendered service to the construction of the mosque, the head architect Serkiz Bey was granted a jeweled snuffbox. Due to the procession mentioned above, the tram was closed for a few hours and one hundred *lira* was given to its firm by the *valide* sultan.<sup>274</sup>

The Istanbul newspapers *The Levant Herald* and *La Turquie* share Ahmed

Lütfi's enthusiasm about the inauguration ceremony. They reported the details of the

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<sup>274</sup> "Bir müddetten berü İstanbul'da, Aksaray'da muhterik olan Kâtip Câmii'nin yerine Vâlide Sultan tarafından müceddeden kârgîr olarak, inşâ olunmakta bulunan câmi-i şerîf kâffe-i levâzım-ı inşâiyye ve tezyîniyye ve tefrîşiyesiyle rehîn-i hüsn-i hitâm olmakla, seksen dokuz Muharrem'inin yirmi altıncı (5 Nisan 1872) günü gâyet mutantan olarak resm-i küşâdı icrâ olunmuştur. Şöyleki, yevm-i mezkûrda Beşiktaş Saray-ı Hümâyûn'undan câmi'-i mezkûra kadar güzergâh-ı Sultânî'ye tesâdüf eden yerlerde asâkir-i muntazama ve zabtiyye safbeste-i selâm, Vâlide Sultan Hazretleri ve Sadr-ı a'zam ile Şeyhülislâm, Serasker Paşa ve Mâbeyn Müşîri hâzır oldukları halde, Sultân-ı müşârûnileyhâ kemâl-i debdebe ve ihtişam ile ma'iiyyet-i aliyyelerinde Şehzâde Yusuf Efendi ile hemşireleri Saliha Sultan ve sâir selâtîn-i ismet-âyin muhadderât-ı iffet-rehîn câmi'-i mezkûre bi'l-vüsûl kurbanlar zebhile hîn-i küşâdda hazır bulunarak ve edâ-yı salât ederek, câmi'-i şerîf hademesiyle sâir erbâb-ı ihtiyâcî mesrûr ve edâ-yı du'avât-ı hayriyyelerine mecbûr buyurdular. Hizmet-i inşâiyyede bulunanlara alâ-mekâdirihim taltifat-ı aliyye icrâ buyurulduğu misillû Sermi'mâr Serkiz Bey'e murassa' bir kıt'a enfiye tabakası ihsân buyurulmuştur. Zikrolunan alay münâsebetiyle yevm-i mezkûrda birkaç sa'at ta'til edilen tramvay için kumpanyasına taraf-ı Sultânî'den yüz lira verilmiştir." See Lütî, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütî Efendi tarihi*, 14: 15.

ceremony in several issues. According to their account, Sultan Abdülaziz performed the Friday prayer at the Aksaray Valide Mosque on the day of the inauguration,<sup>275</sup> which in fact must have proved in the eyes of the public the sultan's deference to his *valide*.<sup>276</sup> Both newspapers underline the "solemnity" of the ceremony. They also emphasize "the crowdedness of the public" and "the prominence of the protocol":

"...a large concourse of people was present at the inauguration," "en présence de la Sultane Validé, des ministres de la Porte et d'une foule immense de curieux et de curieuses...", "la Validé Sultane ... assistait à cette cérémonie avec les dames du palais, ainsi que le Grand-Vézir et tous les ministres... Le public était très nombreux," "... surtout le parcours une foule immense se passait pour voir passer les équipages de la Sultane Validé, du prince Youssef Izeddin (qui était en voiture découverte) de la princesse Saliha sa sœur, des autres Sultanes et dames du Palais ainsi que ceux du Grand Vézir, du Cheikh-ul-Islam, du Sérasker, du Mabein muchiré et des autres ministres qui formaient partie du cortège."<sup>277</sup>

While such an outstanding protocol may attest to the high esteem the prominent state dignitaries had for Pertevniyal and her architectural commission, the pomp and magnificence of the ceremonial procession clearly attests to the *valide* sultan's desire to display the dynasty's prestige and power to the crowd who watched her retinue with curiosity. As the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque was one of the two imperial mosques completed during the reign of Abdülaziz,<sup>278</sup> it had to play a significant role in the affirmation of the grandeur of the imperial family by means of its public ceremonial.

Like Ahmed Lütfi, the two newspapers, *The Levant Herald* and *La Turquie* also mention the closure of the tramway due to the confluence.<sup>279</sup> While the *valide*

<sup>275</sup> *The Levant Herald* (26 Muharrem 1289/ 5 April 1872), 158.

<sup>276</sup> Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 187, points to the gestures used by the sultan in acknowledging the obeisance of the women of the dynasty.

<sup>277</sup> *The Levant Herald* (26 Muharrem 1289/ 5 April 1872), 158; *La Turquie* (6 April 1872); *The Levant Herald* (29 Muharrem 1289/ 8 April 1872), 167.

<sup>278</sup> The other imperial mosque that was commissioned and completed during Abdülaziz's reign was the Kâğıthane Mosque, built in 1862.

<sup>279</sup> *The Levant Herald* (26 Muharrem 1289/ 5 April 1872), 159; *La Turquie* (6 April 1872).

sultan presented “a snuff-box richly set with diamonds” both to Serkis Bey and Boghos Bey,<sup>280</sup> she distributed alms “to a crowd of poor,”<sup>281</sup> which underlines the *valide* sultan’s willingness to “garner the gratitude of the local population for her philanthropy.”<sup>282</sup> Lastly, it is important to note that the news about the ceremony refers to the inauguration of both the mosque and its newly erected fountain, which is stated to be designed by Monsieur Cocifi.<sup>283</sup>

Besides the construction documents and the correspondences, the *vakfiye*<sup>284</sup> of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, dated 15 *Şevval* 1289 (16 December 1872), provides enriching information about the monument. This *vakfiye* along with Pertevniyal’s other *vakfiyes*<sup>285</sup> are today in the *Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi* (Archives of the General Directorate of Pious Foundations) in Ankara. There are six *vakfiyes* and nine amendments to the *vakfiyes* (*zehl vakfiyes*), spanning many years. In these *vakfiyes*, there are 515 folios, of which 461 have text. Three of the *vakfiyes* date to before 1861,<sup>286</sup> thus before Pertevniyal was given the title of *valide* sultan. These are registered in the records under *defter* 747, while the *vakfiyes* after 1861 are registered under *defter* 634.<sup>287</sup> The first deed is dated 6 *Safer* 1268 (1 December 1851) and the last one is dated 18 *Rebiülevvel* 1294 (2 April 1877). It is crucial to note that in all the *vakfiyes*, Pertevniyal is referred as the daughter of Abdurrahman, who was the son of Abdulmennan.<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>280</sup> *The Levant Herald* (29 Muharrem 1289/ 8 April 1872), 166.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid*, 167.

<sup>282</sup> Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 199, refers to the *valide* sultans’ pious deeds to “garner the gratitude of the local population for her philanthropy.”

<sup>283</sup> *La Turquie* (5 April 1872).

<sup>284</sup> VA 634-161-37. It is the fourteenth in all *vakfiyes*.

<sup>285</sup> There are two copies of Pertevniyal’s *vakfiyes* in the Directory.

<sup>286</sup> 14 folios in total.

<sup>287</sup> 501 folios in total.

<sup>288</sup> I could not locate any information regarding Pertevniyal’s father.

The *vakfiye* of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque complex is a *zeyl vakfiye* to the ninth *vakfiye* (14 December 1864). As such the *vakıf* to which this *vakfiye* of the mosque complex belongs, was registered in the *Evkaf Umum Müdürlüğü* (Administration of Estates in Mortmain) in Istanbul on 15 *Recep* 1281 (14 December 1864). The *vakıf*'s name is “*Pertevniyal Sultan binti Abdurrahman*” (The daughter of Abdurrahman, Pertevniyal Sultan) and the *lakap* (by-name) of the endower is stated as “*Sultan Abdulaziz Han'ın Validesi*” (the mother of Sultan Abdülaziz). The *evkaf müfettişi* (chief inspector of the pious foundation) is es-Seyyid Mehmed Tevfik.

As this complex was Pertevniyal's major commission, its *vakfiye* reflects its importance, being the longest *vakfiye* of all fifteen *vakfiyes*; it consists of 100 folios. Besides its length, the flow of this *vakfiye* differs significantly from the others. Most of the *vakfiyes* start with a description of Pertevniyal and continue with the list of the officers who were supported by the foundation. Following this introduction, there is a list of estates donated to the *vakıf*, and directions for its usage. Diverging from this prevailing structure, the *vakfiye* of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque starts with a long prologue exalting God and his Prophet Muhammed,<sup>289</sup> followed by different hadiths and suras. This long prologue consists of twenty-two folios, comprising about one fifth of the whole *vakfiye*.

Before describing the physical and organizational scheme of Pertevniyal's architectural commission, it is no surprise that the *vakfiye* dedicates a remarkable portion for this prologue. Following the invocation to God and his messenger, the *valide* sultan's justifications and objectives for this specific pious act are articulated. It is noteworthy that these listed reasons, in line with Pertevniyal's other acts of munificence elaborated in the previous chapter, also pronounce her piety and

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<sup>289</sup> Opening with a passage exalting God and his messenger is typical of Ottoman royal deeds of endowment. Aktan, “The Atik Valide Mosque Complex,” 84.

generosity, the values with which she wanted to associate herself in the eyes of her readers and audience.

The first part of the invocation is rather conventional and includes several verses from the Quran that pertain to God and his creation of mankind. As such, it starts with a verse from the Al Tîn surah: “we have indeed created man in the best of moulds.”<sup>290</sup> It states that the human was treated with great respect and honor (*tebcîl ve tekrîm eyledi*), and provides a related verse from the Al Isrâ’ surah, “and verily we promote, we honor, we make it gracious.”<sup>291</sup> The following verses in this part are from the Âli ‘Imrân and Al Anbiyâ surahs respectively: “they contemplate the creation in the heavens and the earth”<sup>292</sup> and “we sent thee not, but as a mercy for all creatures.”<sup>293</sup>

The next section continues from the creation of mankind and introduces more specific surahs and hadiths that prepare the grounds for the justification of Pertevniyal’s pious act in the *vakfiye*. As such, this new part begins with the “*Ammā ba’d*”<sup>294</sup> (now to our subject) and states that once the human being was created, the omnipotent God “to manifest and to cite the proofs of his divinity, created the moral qualities/characters of these individuals unequal to one another and some of them more distinguished/ privileged.”<sup>295</sup> To support this, the *vakfiye* exemplifies a saying of the Prophet Muhammad: “People are like gold and silver mines.” In accordance with the hadith’s meaning, the deed states that people are given “dissimilar/various

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<sup>290</sup> Al Tîn surah, 4th verse. See ‘Ali, *The Holy Qur’ân*, 1670. This surah uses sacred symbols to underline that Allah created man in the best of moulds, but “that man is capable of the utmost degradation unless he has Faith and leads a good life.” See ‘Ali, *The Holy Qur’ân*, 1668.

<sup>291</sup> Al Isrâ’ surah, 70th verse.

<sup>292</sup> Âli ‘Imrân surah, 191st verse.

<sup>293</sup> Al Anbiyâ surah, 107th verse. See ‘Ali, *The Holy Qur’ân*, 818.

<sup>294</sup> It is “the clause by which a writer, after pious ascriptions, ordinarily introduces his subject.” See *Redhouse*, 58.

<sup>295</sup> VA 634-161-37.

amounts of ores and skills by God.”<sup>296</sup> Then, the deed goes on to give many examples of human beings, some of whom are in need of ephemeral nourishment and live in poverty, while others are bestowed wealth and are happy being given power and high rank by God. Those people who have “vicious, malice, envious looks and thoughts/intentions” resulting from their ardent desire for the high and powerful positions of their fellows waste their deeds. While others “preserve themselves from sin, keep their patience and conviction and thus acquire the consent of God and as a reward make the highest chamber in the next world a seat of beauty for themselves.”<sup>297</sup>

Like many other *vakfiyes*, Pertevniyal’s deed admonishes those who are conceited because of the worldly possessions they own, as they are deceived by “the meaningless trappings of the world.” They pretext their “worldly ambitions” (“*tūl-i emel*”) by withholding from spending their wealth on charities and pious deeds. The deed warns them that they will suffer from thousands of instances of grief and will have to share the possessions that they wrongfully collected with Zeyd and Amr once they go to the next world where they will be tortured and tormented and be held responsible for their wrong-doings. So, the deed draws attention to the futility of adhering to worldly power and wealth in a transitory world and advises distancing oneself from worldly ambitions and envious intentions to gain the highest ranks in the next world. It adds that those who obtained diverse blessings by the divine guidance, should be aware of the meaningless of worldly possessions and spend their money on “the path to charities and pious deeds” (“*rah-ı hayrāt ve ḥasenāt*”) to earn their rewards in the next world.<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> VA 634-161-37.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

By highlighting these outcomes of good and bad behavior, the deed clearly dissociates Pertevniyal Valide Sultan from those who are attached to worldly power and wealth. Instead it portrays the *valide* sultan as a person who is given “ores and skills” by God along with worldly possessions, and mentions she will be spending these on “the path to charities and pious deeds” to attain the highest chamber in the next world. As she is well aware of the ephemerality of this world and has efficacious spiritual understanding to appraise and to put her prosperity to good use, she chooses to use her power and wealth not to satisfy her worldly ambitions, but rather to gain spiritual gratification. As Leslie Peirce has argued, these pious deeds were “undertaken for the ostensible purpose of pleasing God through an act of piety, but they had the worldly benefit of announcing the status and wealth of the builder,”<sup>299</sup> and stipulated the subjects’ allegiance by proving the patron’s generosity and piety. The same must have been true for Pertevniyal’s deed, as she in her *vakfiye* was determined to prove her religious conviction in the eyes of her audiences; from the Ottoman public to religious authorities, contemporaneous state dignitaries and future administrators of the *vakıf*.

The *vakfiye* continues with the blessings of pious deeds. Referring to a verse from the Hûd surah, “surely, pious deeds remove evil acts,”<sup>300</sup> it states that the endower, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan, is occupied with delivering “the laudable efforts” (“*mesâ ‘î-i meşkûre*”) and “praiseworthy monuments/works” (“*âşâr-ı mebrure*”) to “attain and gain such degrees/pious deeds.”<sup>301</sup>

A verse from the Al Baqarah surah is then used to underline the importance of dispensing worldly fortune for the sake of spiritual attainment:

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<sup>299</sup> Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 198-199.

<sup>300</sup> Hûd Surah, 114th verse.

<sup>301</sup> VA 634-161-37.

The parable of those who spend their substance in the way of Allah is that of a grain of corn: it groweth seven ears, and each ear hath a hundred grains. Allah giveth manifold increase to whom He pleaseth: and Allah careth for all and He knoweth all things.”<sup>302</sup>

Remembering this surah and the hadith, “I have built a mosque for Allah to give consent to bestow me a mansion in heaven,”<sup>303</sup> and “specialized each day in the necessary sincere efforts for spending her power and expending herself with great zeal and strength for endowing many praiseworthy monuments and bountiful works.” For the result of the *valide* sultan’s great efforts, the *vakfiye* refers to all sorts of charities and bountiful pious deeds that are expressed and explained in detail in the former *vakfiyes* and in their amendments which were issued over several years.

After communicating Pertevniyal Valide Sultan’s conviction, generosity and piety to the reader through the references to different surahs and hadiths, the *vakfiye* then describes the location, physical properties and organization pertaining to Pertevniyal’s pious act, specific to this deed: her mosque complex in Aksaray.

According to the *vakfiye*, the mosque complex was “constructed with sincere intention (“*şidk-ı niyyet ve hulûş-i taviyet*”) on the estates, possessed by [the endower] contiguous to the land of the formerly burnt Kâtip Mosque in Aksaray.” Similar to the prologue, which emphasizes Pertevniyal’s efforts to spend her wealth on pious acts, the deed states that much money was spent on the mosque complex’s construction (“*nukûd-i kesîre şarfile*”).<sup>304</sup>

Aksaray is described as the “nest of prosperity,” (“*feyz-i âşiyâne*”). Since the *vakfiye* was written in 1872, a year after the completion of the complex, the

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<sup>302</sup> Al Baqarah surah, 261st verse, 1st fascicle. See ‘Ali, *The Holy Qur’ân*, 109.

<sup>303</sup> “Men benâ mesciden Lillâhi ben Allahû lehu beyten fil cenneti”; “Bana cennette bir köşk ihsan etmesi için Allah rızası için bir mescit inşa ettim.”

<sup>304</sup> VA 634-161-37.

construction is referred as “successfully completed.” The description of its architectural components starts with a tribute to the mosque:

... [i]ts stony foundation attains the sovereign’s throne, its sublime roof reaches the apogee of the Pleiades; and the glory of purity and the splendor’s ray of light that exist in its interior and exterior resemble the Kaaba.<sup>305</sup>

The mosque and its ancillary structures listed in the *vakfiye* are: *mahfil*, *daire-i hümayun*, a library, rooms, “charmingly constructed” *şadırvan* (fountain for ablutions), fountain of “*zemzem*” water (the famous well in the court of the Kaaba at Mecca), an “excellent two-minaret mosque that is incomparable,” (“*mukemmel iki mināreli bir cāmi’i bīmesil ve bīhemta*”), a school that contains several classrooms, study rooms and outhouses and a tomb and a *muvaqqithane*.<sup>306</sup>

A map prior to the Aksaray fire of 1911 is useful to locate the different structures of the complex. (Fig’s. 6 & 7) Accordingly, the mosque and the tomb were situated at the two corners of the Aksaray Square across from one another. (Fig’s. 8 & 9) The school was built on the street right across the mosque, closer to its eastern entrance. The bakery and other shops, built by Pertevniyal’s *vakıf*, were located next to the school. Once the school burned down in the Aksaray fire of 10 July 1327 (23 July 1911),<sup>307</sup> it was rebuilt next to the mosque. (Fig. 10) The *muvaqqithane* and fountain of the tomb were demolished and the tomb was moved during the widening of the Vatan and Millet throughfares and the rearrangement of the Aksaray Square which took place between 1956 and 1959. (Fig’s. 11 & 12) Following its replacement, the tomb was demolished. It was reconstructed with the remaining original parts in the garden of the mosque. (Fig.13) The fountain was also rebuilt into

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<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid. The tomb and the *muvaqqithane* next to it are recounted in earlier *vakfiyes* 634.152.34 (6 September 1866) and 634.156.35 (12 May 1868).

<sup>307</sup> This fire demolished 2400 buildings. See Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-u Belediyye*, 1326.

the enclosure wall of the mosque's courtyard in 1968. Since the Millet Street was elevated during the widening of the roads, the western entrance of the mosque stayed below street elevation, and is hard to see today. (Fig's 14 & 15) Following the construction of the grade separation and subway bridges, which started in 1969, the mosque took its present position.

The mosque was a single-domed, square prayer hall, which measured 10\*10m. (Fig. 16) The prayer hall was extended with arches on four sides and the dome was set on a sixteen-sided high drum. (Fig. 17) The two-storey building attached to the prayer hall was aligned in an east-west axis. This annex resembled a small pavilion like the examples in other nineteenth century mosques.<sup>308</sup> There is a main entrance at the center (fig. 18) and two side entrances for the *harem* and *selamlık*.<sup>309</sup> (Fig. 19) The main entrance door opens to an entrance hall (fig. 20) which connects to the late prayer hall. (Fig. 21) The room located at the western end of this hall had been used as the library (fig. 22) until the books were transferred to the Süleymaniye Library in 1945. This room has two doors; one in the late prayer hall, another at the exterior. (Fig's. 23& 24) Across the library, at the east of the late prayer hall, there is a staircase (fig. 25) which led to the *valide sultan's daire-i hümayun* and other galleries upstairs. The two minarets are attached to this building, each with a single balcony.

According to the *vakfiye*, "in front of the mosque" ("*pişgâhında*") a school was built that contained several classrooms, study rooms and outhouses. The school is described as having an "elegant, graceful style" ("*uslûb-u leţâfet*") which gives "delight to those hearts overlooking," ("*kulûb-i nâzirine şafâ verir*"). It is also as

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<sup>308</sup> See Afife Batur, "Valide Camii," in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*. Vol. 7 (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1994), 360-362.

<sup>309</sup> *Harem* and *selamlık* are the parts reserved for females and males respectively.

“pleasant as heavens,” (“*mekteb-i dilkūşa-i felek fersay*”) and “polishes the essence of Muslim children.” The *vakfiye* confirms that it was Pertevniyal Valide Sultan who named the school “Mahmudiye” (“*mahmudiye tesmiye buyurdukları...*”).

The *vakfiye* then lists the people with their titles who were in charge of the registration of the pious deed. As Hüseyin Hasib Bey was deceased at this time, it is Abdülhamid Ferid Pasha, who acts as the attorney for Pertevniyal Valide Sultan along with his *kethüda* role.<sup>310</sup> The examining clerk is es-Seyyid el-Hac Abdussamed İsmet Efendi bini's-Seyyid Seli and the secretary is Hasan Efendi ibn-i Ahmed. In accordance with the structure of the document, the *vakfiye* states that it will list the responsibilities of the employees working in the complex, their salaries and the costs of the complex, and from where and how revenue will be derived.

From this point onwards, the *vakfiye* takes on the first person narrative and the reader experiences the document as if Pertevniyal Valide Sultan herself is recounting the details of her commission. She first starts with listing the property endowed to her *vakıf* for revenue. There is a reference to a deed that documents the *huccet-i şer'iyye* (canonical title deed) and *icmāl-i hakanī* (imperial summary), dated 25 *Muharrem* 1289 (4 April 1872), signed by the *Kazasker* of Rumelia, Sadık Beyefendi. Accordingly, the following estates are donated from the royal domains and fief to Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's *vakıf*:<sup>311</sup> six farms which are all in Terhale *Sancağı* in the city of Yanya, Tırnova farm, Buhurlar farm, Kebirci farm, Madermat farm, Ortacılar farm, Kabil Ağa farm. Finally, the author of the *vakfiye* specifies the amount of bushels of wheat and barley in three of these farms, namely Tırnova, Buhurlar and Madermat, to be allocated for the support of the complex.

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<sup>310</sup> VA 634-161-37.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid.

After listing all the items endowed to support the different components of the complex, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan states that out of the total 6144 cubits (*zira*) of land,<sup>312</sup> she built six units of houses (*altı bāb menazil*) on 943 cubits of land. Each of the units has both ground (*tahtanī*) and second (*fevkanī*) floors and a common sofa as well as a ewer for ablutions and a kitchen. The six units are reserved for the two imams, two *müezzins*, the *kayyim*, and the watchman of the imperial suite. The *türbedar* is to live in another unit built next to the tomb.

Besides these houses, Pertevniyal lists other buildings she built in the area which are also endowed to the *vakıf*. The police station (*karakolhane*), the pharmacy and the *çörekçi* bakery are constructed next to the school.<sup>313</sup> The tobacco shop (*bir bāb duhan*), the *helvacı* shop and four other shops are built next to the tomb.<sup>314</sup> She states that she also donated her mansion (*bir bāb konağı*) in Mecidiye Mahallesi, Beşiktaş<sup>315</sup> and the two estates in Maçka to her *vakıf*. Along with the revenues of those newly donated shops and estates, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan allocated the revenues of the following, which were endowed in previous *vakfiyes*, to support the costs of her new mosque complex:

- Seven agricultural estates (“*yedi kıta çiftlik*”) that also contain arable fields, meadows, mills, and pastures: Narlı and Voyvoda (Tırhala district), Pınarbaşı and Garcu (Alasonya district), Piçeri (Yenişehir district), Kirman (Perseye district), Nüska (Filorina district)
- Twenty-one shops that are built by the bridge (the Galata Bridge)

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<sup>312</sup> The borders of the land are described in detail in the *vakfiye*. Some of this land was rented (*muḳāṭa‘a*) from the *vakıf* of Tayyibi el-Hac Mustafa Efendi, to which 500 kuruş was to be paid yearly.

<sup>313</sup> *Çörek* is a round cake or loaf, commonly sweetened; kind of bun. *Redhouse*, 261.

<sup>314</sup> *Helvacı* is maker or seller of *helva*, which is a sweet prepared in many varieties with sesame oil, various cereals, and syrup or honey. *Ibid*, 472.

<sup>315</sup> The land of this *konak* was rented from (*muḳāṭa‘a*) the Sultan Bayezıf *vakıf*, to which 590 *akçe* was to be paid yearly.

- The steamer mill (“*bir bāb vapur değirmeni*”) and the land in Üsküdar Paşalimanı
- The powdermill and the garden at Yenibahçe

In addition to explaining from where and how revenue will be derived, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan lists the responsibilities of the employees working in the complex, and their salaries. Accordingly, the personnel recruited for the mosque included two *imams*, a *hatip*, six *müezzins*, four *kayyims*, a *vaiz*, and a *mahyacı*. Regarding the appointment of the *hatip*, the *vakfiye* states that he is required to have a “beautiful voice and a graceful articulation.” Besides preaching (*hiṭābet*), he is required to recite *Hatm-i Şerif* (recitation of the Quran from beginning to end) every Friday (*devrhanlık*). In fact, this stipulation shows that Pertevniyal valued the soundscape of her mosque. Like previous Ottoman royal women and other Ottoman patrons of mosques, she most likely appreciated the acoustic potentials of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque to communicate her messages to the public.<sup>316</sup>

For the library, the *vakfiye* stipulates the appointment of two *hafız-ı kütübs* (librarian). For the school, ten *muallims*, each to teach a different course, were appointed. Additionally, a *mubassır* (superintendent), a *halife-i mektep* (assistant teacher), a *hatm-i şerif tertipçisi* (organizer for the recitation of the Quran from beginning to end), a *hizmetçi* (servant), and a *bevvap* (gatekeeper) were appointed to the school by the *vakfiye*. For the tomb, three *türbedars* and for the *muvaḳkithane* next to it, two *muvaḳkits* were appointed. The appointment of a *suyolcusu* (water carrier) and a *bahçıvan* (gardener) were also stipulated for the tomb.<sup>317</sup> And finally, for the complex, the *vakfiye* organizes the appointment of a “person of sagacity” (*bir*

<sup>316</sup> On the acoustic methods of communication, see Ergin, “The Soundscape of Sixteenth-Century Istanbul Mosques,” 204-221; Ergin, “Ottoman Royal Women’s Spaces,” 89-111.

<sup>317</sup> The *muvaḳkits*, *suyolcusu* and *bahçıvan* are appointed in the VA 634.152.34.

*zāt -ı dirāyet*) as the superintendent. The total number of personnel appointed for the complex is forty. (Table. 3)

According to the *vakfiye*, the school had two parts, *Rüştiye* (high school) and *Sıbyan Mektebi* (primary school). For the high school, two “perfect scholars” (“*‘alīm mukemmel*”) are to be appointed as *muallims*. They should have “perfect capacity” (“*‘kudret-i kāmīl*”) and “comprehensive knowledge” (“*iḥāṭa-i şāmilesi olan*”) for arts and sciences. Subsequently, the *vakfiye* stipulates the appointment of a “*farisi muallimi*” (Persian teacher), “*riyaziye muallimi*” (mathematics teacher), “*sülüs muallimi*” (*thulth* script teacher), “*hat-ı divani muallimi*” (Arabic calligraphy teacher), “*rika ve imla ve inşā muallimi*” (teacher for Arabic script, orthography and literary composition) “*resim muallimi*” (drawing/painting teacher). The last three calligraphy teachers are supposed to have “apparent skills” (“*mahāreti zahīr olan*”). For the *Sıbyan Mektebi*, a teacher talented in literature and versed in the Quran, is to be appointed. One of the duties of this teacher is described as “to threaten and frighten those students who behave ill-mannered by *falaḳa*<sup>318</sup> and encourage them for education.”<sup>319</sup> In fact, this stipulation was based on an education system of “uniformity and surveillance” which had its roots in the earlier “understanding of schools as agents for correcting and disciplining students particularly within the historical context of military reforms and administrative centralization,” an approach which continued until the 1860s.<sup>320</sup>

Besides the primary teacher, a *halife-i mektep* (assistant teacher) and a *hoca-i meşk-i sülüs* (*thulth* script and calligraphy teacher) are also appointed for the *sıbyan*

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<sup>318</sup> A staff with a loop of rope let through two holes, by which the feet of a culprit are held up for the bastinado. See Redhouse, 359.

<sup>319</sup> VA 634-161-37.

<sup>320</sup> For the social disciplining aspect of government primary education, see Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The modernization of public education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, autocracy, and discipline* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2001): 16, 27.

*mektebi*. One person is appointed as the *hatm-i şerif tertipçisi* (organizer for the *hatm-i şerif*, recitation of the Quran from beginning to end). The *vakfiye* states that a part of the Quran is to be recited every day and once every month the *hatm-i şerif* is to be completed with the children following the recitation with their amen's.

The long part reserved in the *vakfiye* for the stipulations regarding the school's personnel and their monthly salaries constituting the highest amount in the complex's overall costs suggest that Pertevniyal Valide Sultan highly valued her school, "Mahmudiye," which she named after her husband. Given her specific choice for the name of the school, it is likely that the *valide* sultan wanted to make a reference to the educational reforms realized by Sultan Mahmud. In fact, the late Tanzimat reformers continued to promote educational modernization, which gradually adopted a more secular understanding of education after the introduction of the Regulation of Public Education (*Maârif-i Umûmiyye Nizâmnâmesi*) of 1869.<sup>321</sup> At about the same time when the government was taking new measures concerning public education, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan chose to include a *Rüştiye* and a *Sıbyan Mektebi* in her complex and designed their requirements elaborately in her *vakfiye*. This act of public charity undertaken by Pertevniyal's *vakıf* illustrates the *valide* sultan's awareness of her era's political and socio-cultural dynamics and her willingness to promote the late Tanzimat's state ideology concerning education.

The *valide* sultan's endeavor for the promotion of education and knowledge is also evident in her patronage of a library, to which she endowed a rich collection of 828 books.<sup>322</sup> The collection today is in the Süleymaniye Library, where it was

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<sup>321</sup> For the modernization of the public education during the Tanzimat and late Tanzimat eras, see Ibid, 1-78.

<sup>322</sup> VA 634-161-37.

transferred in 1945.<sup>323</sup> These books have the seal of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's *vakıf*, on which the following is written: “‘*An vakfı devletlū ‘ismetlū Pertevniyāl Vālide Sultān ‘alliyyeti ‘ş-şān hazretleri 1279 (1862/63).*”<sup>324</sup> (Fig. 26) There is also a catalogue of the books, *Aksaray Valide Cami-i Şerifi Kütüphanesi Defteri*, printed in 1311 (1893/94).<sup>325</sup>

Compared to the number of books endowed by the previous *valide* sultans, Pertevniyal's collection has the largest number of books as can be seen in Table 4. It is clear that she deliberately chose to continue this tradition of endowing a library and books, following her predecessors.

**Table 4.** The list of number of books endowed by Ottoman Valide Sultans<sup>326</sup>

| Name of the Valide Sultan | Foundation Date of the Library | Total # of Books Endowed to the Library |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Nurbanu Sultan            | 1582                           | 143                                     |
| İsmihan Sultan            | 1582                           | 586                                     |
| Turhan Valide Sultan      | 1664                           | 339                                     |
| Gülnuş Valide Sultan      | 1712                           | 66                                      |

<sup>323</sup> See Günay Kut and Nimet Bayraktar, *Yazma Eserlerde Vakıf Mühürleri* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1984), 60. Despite the number, 828, in the *vakfiye*, there are 886 (329 manuscripts, 557 printed) books in the Pertevniyal Collection in the Süleymaniye Library. The difference may be due to the transfer of other books donated by the *valide* sultan to her tomb and to other mosques. Along with Pertevniyal's collection, many imperial book collections were transferred to this library, mostly in the first half of the twentieth century.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid, 60-61.

<sup>325</sup> See *Aksaray Valide Cami-i Şerifi Kütüphanesi Defteri* (Dersaadet (İstanbul): Bab-ı ali caddesi, 20 numaralı matbaa, 1311 [1893/94]).

<sup>326</sup> See Kut and Bayraktar, *Yazma Eserlerde Vakıf Mühürleri*; and Nimet Bayraktar's works: “‘İstanbul’da Kadınlar Tarafından Kurulmuş Kütüphaneler,” *Türk Kütüphaneciler Derneği Bülteni* XII/3-4 (1963): 85-95; “Tarihte Hayırsever Türk Kadınları: Bezm-i Alem Valide Sultan ve Kütüphanesi,” *Kadın Gazetesi*, February 28, 1959; “Tarihte Hayırsever Türk Kadınları: Gülnuş Valide Sultan ve Kütüphanesi,” *Kadın Gazetesi*, February 21, 1959; “Tarihte Hayırsever Türk Kadınları: İsmihan Sultan ve Kütüphanesi,” *Kadın Gazetesi*, January 24, 1959; “Tarihte Hayırsever Türk Kadınları: Mihrişah Sultan ve Kütüphanesi,” *Kadın Gazetesi*, February 14, 1959; “Tarihte Hayırsever Türk Kadınları: Nurbanu Sultan ve Kütüphanesi,” *Kadın Gazetesi*, January 17, 1959; “Tarihte Hayırsever Türk Kadınları: Pertevniyal Valide Sultan ve Kütüphanesi,” *Kadın Gazetesi*, March 14, 1959; “Tarihte Hayırsever Türk Kadınları: Turhan Sultan ve Kütüphanesi,” *Kadın Gazetesi*, January 31, 1959 and M. Hüdaî Şentürk, “Bezmialem Valide Sultan,” in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 6. (İstanbul 1992), 108-113.

|                           |      |            |
|---------------------------|------|------------|
| Saliha Sultan             | 1752 | 182        |
| Mihrişah Sultan           | 1795 | 462        |
| Bezmialem Valide Sultan   | 1840 | 546        |
| Pertevniyal Valide Sultan | 1871 | <b>886</b> |

All the books endowed to the library are listed in the *vakfiye*'s appendix and consists of 108 folios, of which 62 have text. The empty folios are left for possible book additions. All the books are organized very neatly, categorized according to headings. The number of volumes (*cilt*) are given for sets of all books, while the calligrapher names (if it is not a printed book) are indicated for some, mostly the Qurans. Most of the books in the first three categories are also dated.

The table below, summarizing the different categories of this rich collection, is an important reflection of the *valide* sultan's interests. The highest number of books belongs to the *Tasavvuf* category, followed by the exegetical works on the Quran (*Kütüb-i tefsir*). The big portion allocated to the books on *Sufism* lends weight to our understanding of Pertevniyal's passion for Islamic mysticism and her awareness of the pivotal role played by the Sufi dervish orders, as discussed earlier. Second, the high number of religious works in the collection would have strengthened her reputation as a pious *valide* sultan in the eyes of the audiences who were allowed access to the collection in Aksaray.

**Table 5.** The list of book categories and numbers, endowed to the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque's library by Pertevniyal Valide Sultan<sup>327</sup>

| Category              | Content/Meaning | # of Different Books | Total # of Volumes |
|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Masâhif</i>        | Qurans          | 28                   | 30                 |
| <i>Delâil-i şerîf</i> | Prayer books    | 11                   | 11                 |

<sup>327</sup> VA 634-161-37, Appendix.

|                                |                                                              |            |            |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| <i>En'âm</i>                   | Collection of verses from the Quran                          | 9          | 9          |
| <i>Kütüb-i tefasîr</i>         | Exegetical works on the Quran                                | 38         | 77         |
| <i>Hadis</i>                   | Books on the tradition of the words and deeds of the Prophet | 46         | 74         |
| <i>Kütüb-i siyer</i>           | Books on the biography of the Prophet Muhammad               | 30         | 38         |
| <i>Kırâât</i>                  | Books on the art of reading and reciting the Quran           | 5          | 6          |
| <i>Usûl</i>                    | Books on the bases of the canon law of Islam                 | 18         | 21         |
| <i>Fıkıh</i>                   | Books on Muslim canonical jurisprudence                      | 51         | 62         |
| <i>Fetâvâ</i>                  | Books on legal decisions                                     | 21         | 31         |
| <i>Farâiz</i>                  | Books on religious duties                                    | 4          | 4          |
| <i>Tasavvuf</i>                | Books on Sufism                                              | 70         | 78         |
| <i>Mevâiz</i>                  | Books on sermons                                             | 18         | 22         |
| <i>Akâid, Kelâm and Hikmet</i> | Books on theology and metaphysics                            | 43         | 43         |
| <i>Maânî, Beyân and Bedî</i>   | Books on rhetoric                                            | 20         | 22         |
| <i>Mantık</i>                  | Books on logic                                               | 38         | 38         |
| <i>Nahv</i>                    | Books on grammar, syntax                                     | 51         | 57         |
| <i>Sarf</i>                    | Books on grammar                                             | 26         | 26         |
| <i>Tevârîh</i>                 | Books of annals, histories                                   | 44         | 55         |
| <i>Lûgat</i>                   | Dictionary                                                   | 18         | 23         |
| <i>Kütüb-i Fârisî</i>          | Books in Persian                                             | 26         | 36         |
| <i>Ciziyât</i>                 | Books on Islamic fiscal practice                             | 60         | 65         |
|                                |                                                              | <b>675</b> | <b>828</b> |

The books of histories include the *Makâmât* of el-Hariri, *Hadikatü's-Süada* of Fuzuli, a translation of the *Mukaddime* of İbn-i Haldun, *Keşfü'z-Zunûn* of Katib Çelebi, *Kitab-ı Cihannüma* of Mehmed Neşri, *Tarih-i Râşid* of Mehmed Raşid Efendi, *Münşeatü's-Selâtin* of Feridun Bey and *Tarih-i Cevdet* of Ahmed Cevdet Pasha. The presence of these books in the collection could be an indication of Pertevniyal's interest in history and the empire's past. In this category there is also the famous eighteenth century work on the pious monuments of Istanbul: *Hadikatü'l-Cevâmi'* by Hafız Hüseyin Ayvansarayı. The presence of this book would constitute evidence of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's historical awareness regarding the earlier centuries' mosques in the capital, a subject which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three, while assessing the patron's deliberate references to past imperial mosques. Other examples of interesting books in the collection are *Şehname* of Firdevsi, *Hamse*, *Terceme-i Elf Leyle ve Leyle* (Arabian Nights/ One Thousand and One Nights), and a large illustrated *Zübdetü't-Tevârih* of Seyyid Lokman Aşuri.

For most of the Qurans ("Masâhif"), the calligraphers and the dates are presented in the *vakfiye*'s appendix. According to the order indicated in the appendix, the calligraphers of the Qurans in the collection are the following: Mehmed Yusuf el-Garraf (1114- 1702/1703), Hüseyin er-Reşid (1253- 1837/38), Mehmed Yahya el-Maraşı (1137- 1724/25), Hüseyin er-Reşid İstanbuli (1275- 1858/59), Seyyid Salih Üsküdari (1205/ 1790-91), Mehmed Salih (1266- 1849/50), Mehmed Şakir (1284- 1867/68), Abdullah Vefa'i (1125- 1713/14), Halil Rıfkı and İbrahim Edib (1 Şaban 1280- 11 January 1864), Ahmed İlhami (19 Recep 1279- 10 January 1863), another Ahmed İlhami (13 Cemaziyelevvel 1270- 11 February 1854), Hüseyin Fevzi (1287- 1870/71), Ömer Hulusi (1288- 1871/72), Osman Hilmi (1281- 1864/65), Hafız Mehmed Ali en-Niyazi (1288- 1871/72). These dates show that most of the Qurans

in the collection were commissioned by Pertevniyal during her lifetime for her library. Undated Qurans were produced by the following calligraphers: Mehmed Behcet Efendi, Kütahyalı Mustafa Efendi, Abdülkadir el-Nakşbendi, Sheikh Hamdullah, Abdurrahman Şükri and Hafız Mustafa Zeki Efendi.

The *vakfiye* states that the library should be opened each day by the librarians and none of the books should be lent out to the individuals. For those people who want to read or benefit from the books, they ought to be welcomed by the librarians to do so within the library.<sup>328</sup>

Besides this big library within the mosque, Pertevniyal also ordered a small library to be situated within her tomb. For this small library, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan endowed a Quran by the calligrapher Hafız Mustafa, a collection of verses from the Quran (*En'am-ı şerif*) by the calligrapher Hafız Ali Şükrü, two printed catechisms (*ilmihâl*) and a prayer treatise (*dua risalesi*). Indicative of her interest in mysticism and superstition, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan decrees *mühür-i şerifler* on which different verses or the names of God (*esma'-yi hasna*) are written. She states that these should be given to “those who are in pain suffering from the evil eye (*nazar*), pain in the heart (*yürek ağrısı*) and headache and twinge (*sancı*) and spell/sorcery (*sihir*)” so that they anticipate their blessings. She argues that their effects (*tesirat*) are undeniable (*münker olmayıp*); rather they are proven (*mücerrebatdan olarak*).

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<sup>328</sup> VA 634-161-37.

The *vakfiye* of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque complex ends with a curse (typical of *vakfiyes*<sup>329</sup>) to “those who are inclined to distort (*tahrif*), change (*tebdil*), alter (*tağyir*) or diminish (*taklil*) the stipulations outlined in the *vakfiye*.”<sup>330</sup>



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<sup>329</sup> For various examples of curses from the *vakfiyes* of Ottoman sultans and sultanas, see İbrahim Ateş, “Vakfiyelerde Dua ve Beddualar,” *Vakıflar Dergisi*, 17 (1983): 34-54.

<sup>330</sup> VA 634-161-37.

## CHAPTER III

### III. The Iconographic Significance of Pertevniyal's Monument

#### 1. Location: Aksaray

The nineteenth century urban memory of Aksaray includes a very important event for Ottoman history, called the Auspicious Event (*Vak'a-i Hayriye*). This event refers to the dramatic destruction of the Janissary corps in 1826 by Pertevniyal's husband Mahmud II and marks a significant turning point in the empire, which impacted not only the military but all realms: political, social, religious or cultural. This incident changed the power dynamics of the empire, which had existed for centuries. At the age of sixteen, when the *Vak'a-i Hayriye* occurred, Pertevniyal was no stranger to the historical circumstances and the socio-political realities of the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire that led to this significant turning point in the empire's history. She was born in the second decade of 'the long nineteenth century' which witnessed a series of reforms, each replacing the long-preserved institutions of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>331</sup> These efforts were the result of the cumulative impact of military, economic and administrative challenges the empire faced at the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>332</sup> The reforms of the military were prioritized as a consequence of the empire's military defeats. However realizing reforms in the military was not easy since they were perceived as a serious threat by the centuries old Janissary corps.

May 1807 brought the deposition of Sultan Selim III and the disintegration of his reformed *Nizam-ı Cedid* army, following the Janissaries' uprising, who were

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<sup>331</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*. 2 vol's. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 2: viii.

<sup>332</sup> Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, 42.

against the sultan's reform agenda and defended the old order. Coming to the throne in 1808 with the support of the Danubian notable Alemdar Mustafa Pasha and other reform proponents, the accession of Sultan Mahmud II, Selim's cousin, was to mark a turning point in Ottoman military history. The foundations of the nineteenth century's Ottoman reforms occurred during his reign.<sup>333</sup>

Mahmud II's reform strategy included important elements. First, he was aware that the only way for reformed institutions to operate smoothly was to eradicate the ones they were replacing. Second, the reforms had to be carefully planned and that necessary support had to be guaranteed before they were attempted.<sup>334</sup> The overthrow and slaughter of Grand Vizier Alemdar Mustafa and his men by the outraged Janissaries in November 1808 as a reaction to Alemdar Mustafa's new army, the *Sekban-ı Cedid*, further convinced Mahmud II that the new army could not be built successfully unless the Janissary corps was destroyed. Accordingly, Mahmud II spent the next eighteen years preparing the necessary background for the day that he would eradicate the Janissary corps altogether in order to modernize the Ottoman army.

In 1826, Mahmud II felt ready to confront the Janissaries and he established a new army called the *Eşkınciyân*. To protest this new army, on the night of June 14, the Janissaries overturned their soup cauldrons at the Et Meydanı in Aksaray, a traditional symbol of rebellion called "*kazan kaldırma*." By then, thousands of Janissaries were living in the Aksaray district.<sup>335</sup> Subsequently, the sultan obtained a fatwa that urged the faithful to join an attack on the 'corrupt' Janissaries. Many of

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<sup>333</sup> Shaw ve Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire*, 2: 1.

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid*, 2: 1-54.

<sup>335</sup> There are different references for the number of Janissaries living at the Et Meydanı. Kuban states that most of the total 40.000 Janissaries were living here. See Dogan Kuban, "Aksaray," In *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*. Vol. 1. (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1993), 161-165.

them were slaughtered and the remaining were forced to return to their *Yeni Odalar* (New Barracks) at the Et Meydanı.<sup>336</sup> Following their return, these barracks were set on fire and all the Janissaries inside were immolated. Their main barracks, the *Yeni Odalar* in Aksaray and later the *Eski Odalar* (Old Barracks) in Şehzadebaşı were eradicated from the map of the capital. This dramatic destruction of the Janissary corps on June 15 1826 was called the Auspicious Event (*Vak'a-i Hayriye*) and marked a significant turning point in Ottoman history.<sup>337</sup> The demolition of the rebellious Janissaries not only led to the establishment of a new reformed army, *Asâkir-i Mansûre-i Muhammediye* (Victorious Troops of Muhammad), but also changed the centuries old political balance of power within the empire. As the Janissary corps perished, a major resistance group was eradicated and the *ulema* lost a significant source of leverage over the court and the ruling elite, strengthening the sultan and his administration.<sup>338</sup>

After abolishing the old Janissary corps, Pertevniyal's husband wanted to crown and legitimize his victory by building a stately mosque complex in the capital. He had already commissioned an imperial mosque in 1822, the Nusretiye Mosque, to be erected at a critical site beside the parade ground of his new cannon foundry at Tophane.<sup>339</sup> (Fig. 27) This mosque was completed and opened on 8 April 1826 just before the Auspicious Event.<sup>340</sup> But, interestingly, the long inscription, consisting of

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<sup>336</sup> Neşe Gürallar Yeşilkaya, "From a Courtyard to a Square: Transformation of the Beyazıt Meydanı in the Early Nineteenth Century İstanbul," *METU JFA* 24/1 (2007): 73.

<sup>337</sup> For details of the incident, see Godfrey Goodwin, *The Janissaries* (London: Saqi Books, 1997), 214-228.

<sup>338</sup> Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, 58-60.

<sup>339</sup> Freely, *Istanbul : the imperial city*, 266.

<sup>340</sup> See Dâniş Mehmed Bey, *Yeniçeri Ocağının kaldırılışı ve II. Mahmud'un Edirne seyahati: Mehmed Dâniş Bey ve eserleri*, trans. Şamil Mutlu (İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1994), 43. There are also sources that claim the mosque was completed after the Auspicious Event. For instance John Freely states that, "Mahmud II had commissioned an imperial mosque in 1822, to be erected on the European shore of the Bosphorus near his new cannon foundry at Tophane. The mosque was completed in 1826 soon after the Auspicious Event. Thus Mahmud called it Nusretiye Camii, the Mosque of Victory, to commemorate his triumph over the Janissaries." See Freely, *Istanbul : the imperial city*, 266. Goodwin points to the same timing: "For his imperial mosque, the Nüsretiye (built

forty-two verses by Keçecizade İzzet Molla, situated on the exterior of the mosque's *muvaḳḱithane* and dated to the same year 1242 (1826), was probably constructed after the Auspicious Event<sup>341</sup> because it explicitly states that Mahmud had named his imperial mosque, *Nusret*, the Mosque of Victory, three months before his triumph over the Janissaries.<sup>342</sup> As the eradication of the Janissaries was a planned action on the part of the sultan, the inscription clearly states that the “victory,” after which the mosque of Tophane was called prior to the Auspicious Event, was in fact referring to Mahmud II's triumph over the Janissary corps. The related lines from the inscription read as follows:

Abolished one corps (the Janissaries), thereby rejuvenating one thousand  
corps  
Saved the Muslims from the grasp of the enemy

Everyone would bestow his/her life for him  
Once they see the current demand for the artillery

Is it worth his glory to say that he built the arsenal (*Tophane*)?  
He, the Sultan, reinvigorated the Ottoman Empire

Before the three months, he became victorious with the aid of God  
He had named the mosque of *Tophane*, the “Victory” (*nusret*)<sup>343</sup>

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1823-26), Mahmud II followed the example of Selim III by locating it at a critical site beside the parade ground of the artillery barracks at Tophane, so that it was intimately linked with his military reforms. The mosque, completed shortly after the abolition of the Janissaries, was the work of the royal architect, the Armenian Krikor Balyan (d. 1831).” See Stephen Vernoit, ed. *Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art. Orientalism: Islamic art in the 19th century* (New York: Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University, 1997), 76.

<sup>341</sup> The last two verses of the inscription are “*mücevher tarih*,” which means that once these verses are calculated according to “*ebced hesabı*” (the coded mathematical value in Arabic alphabet), they give the date 1242. The last two verses are the following:

Dāver-i devrān yaptırdı muvaḳḱithāneyi  
Mülkī ihyā etmenin ol şāh buldu rāḥatın

<sup>342</sup> Before the three months, he became victorious with the aid of God  
He had named the mosque of Tophane, the “Victory” (*nusret*)

<sup>343</sup> Bir ocağı kaldırıp yüz bin ocağı kıldı şen  
Dest-i düşmenden ḥalāş etti Muḥammed ümmetin

Yoluna etmez mi dünyā ṭobdan işār-ı cān  
Sā'iri gördükçe ṭobcu kullarına rağbetin

Şānına lāyık mıdır Ṭob-ḥāne yaptırdı demek

These lines explicitly attest to Mahmud II's wish to legitimize his rule and to affirm the dynasty's prestige, power and piety in the eyes of Ottoman society. First, he bestowed peace on the Muslims, a claim which asserts, as part of his pious motive, to abolish such an infidel corps. Secondly, he enacted a series of military reforms, including the construction of the artillery at Tophane, which were part of the sultan's wider reformist and modernizing agenda that "reinvigorated the Ottoman Empire" at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Nusretiye Mosque, as the symbol of the sultan's victory, power and reformist ideology embodied all the values associated with the Auspicious Event and thus carried the related political, socio-cultural and religious connotations that had changed the centuries-old power dynamics of the empire. So, Pertevniyal's husband not only left a vital mark on the urban memory of Aksaray when he eradicated all the Janissary barracks, but he also intended to make the Nusretiye Mosque the symbol of this victory. For Pertevniyal there was a specific and notable incident with which her husband was associated during that era; and there was also his evident intention to convey that event's symbolic meanings through his architectural patronage of the Nusretiye Mosque.<sup>344</sup>

What Pertevniyal's husband Mahmud II realized in June 1826, and the way in which he crowned this *Vak'a-i Hayriye* with his imperial "Mosque of Victory" must have had a powerful and long-lasting impression on the young Pertevniyal. When she

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Eyledi ihyā o ḥākān āl-i 'Oṣmān devletin  
Varmadan üç māha manşūr oldu 'avn-i Hakk ile  
Cāmi'-i Tōb-ḥāne'nin koymuşdu nām-ı nuşretin  
See Aynur, Hatice, Kayoko Hayashi, and Hakan Karateke. "Database For Ottoman Inscriptions," ID K1913.

<sup>344</sup> A question may arise at this point: why had Mahmud II not chosen Aksaray, the center of his victory, for his mosque? First, as mentioned before, the imperial mosque at Tophane was commissioned four years before the eradication of the Janissaries, who had been living in Aksaray at that time. So, at the time of the commission, Aksaray was not an option. Secondly, Tophane was also a strategic location, chosen deliberately due to its link with the sultan's reforms of the army, as clearly mentioned in the inscription above. So, Tophane as a location had the potential to advertise Mahmud II's army reforms.

commissioned her biggest architectural monument in 1867, forty one years after the Auspicious Event, contrary to the previous imperial mosques of the nineteenth century built along the Bosphorus<sup>345</sup> (fig. 28), she chose Aksaray as the location for her complex<sup>346</sup> and declared to Ottoman society, through the two foundation inscriptions of her mosque, each situated above the eastern and western entrance gates, that she had built it in memory of her deceased husband, Sultan Mahmud II.<sup>347</sup>

“His Excellency Abdülaziz Khan, who nourishes piety,  
the world has not seen anyone like Him in bestowing charities

For this reason the Valide Sultan has pleased  
the soul of His Father, the deceased Mahmud Khan”<sup>348</sup>

“It is a charity filled with lights, to animate the soul of  
the deceased Mahmud Khan, the father of the magnificent.”<sup>349</sup>

The correspondence between the *valide* sultan and her *kethüda* Hüseyin Bey dated 26 *Rebiülevvel* 1284 (July 28, 1867) explicitly shows that it was Pertevniyal Valide Sultan who demanded the mosque to be built in its specific place: “... [A]t the

<sup>345</sup> Most of the nineteenth century mosques like the Selimiye, Nusretiye, Küçük Mecidiye, Dolmabahçe, Ortaköy and Yıldız Hamidiye were built along the Bosphorus shore, close to the newly built barracks and palaces. Two exceptions were built during the Abdülaziz era: the Aksaray Valide Sultan and the Kâğıthane imperial mosques. See Çisem Uzun’s thesis, “17.-19. Yy’larda İstanbul’da Caminin Kentsel ve Simgesel Dönüşümü,” (Unpublished MA Thesis, Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü, 2008); Stefanos Yerasimos, “Tanzimat’ın Kent Reformları Üzerine” in *Modernleşme Sürecinde Osmanlı Kentleri*, ed. Paul Dumont and François Georgeon, trans. Ali Berktaş (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996), 1-19; İlhan Tekeli, “19.Yüzyılda İstanbul Metropol Alanının Dönüşümü,” in *Modernleşme Sürecinde Osmanlı Kentleri*, ed. Paul Dumont and François Georgeon, trans. Ali Berktaş (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996), 19-31.

<sup>346</sup> Bahar Yolac Pollock in her unpublished seminar paper also emphasizes Aksaray as the site of the Auspicious Event, see Bahar Yolac Pollock, “The Pertevniyal Valide Sultan Camii: “An Auspicious Building On An Auspicious Site,” Unpublished seminar paper, Koc University, (2015).

<sup>347</sup> It is also important to point out that the tomb of Sultan Mahmud II, built by Sultan Abdülmecid in 1840, was the first monument after a long period of time to re-attract attention to the Divanyolu. The location of her husband’s tomb might have strengthened Pertevniyal’s inclination to build her mosque and tomb on the Divanyolu.

<sup>348</sup> Hâzret-i ‘Abdül’azîz Hân-ı diyânet-perverin  
Görmedi vâz’-ı müberrât etmede mişlin cihân

Vâlid-i cennet-mekân Maḥmūd Hân’ın rūḥunu  
Vâlide Sultân bu yüzden daḥı kıldı şâdmân

<sup>349</sup> Vâlid-i şâhâne Maḥmūd Hân-ı cennet-meskenin  
Rūḥunu iḥyâ için bir ḥayr-ı pür-envârdur

place Our Master demanded the mosque to be built at...” (“... *Efendimizin matlûb-u aliye buyurduğu cami-i şerif yapılacak mahalde...*”).<sup>350</sup>

Following the Auspicious Event, Aksaray was abandoned and became a desolate place, not warranting commemoration of any sort. The traveler Charles White in 1845 describes the neighborhood as a ‘wilderness’: “The immense space occupied, from the year 1453 to 1826, by [...] buildings, courts, fountains, and magazines, is now a wilderness; intersected by narrow, walled lanes, inclosing small tenements or gardens...”<sup>351</sup>

Revitalizing Aksaray decades later as the site of the Auspicious Event in honor of Sultan Mahmud II had the potential to revive the collective memory about the importance of this event and to evoke, in the minds of Ottoman public and administration its strong ideological messages about the destruction of a well entrenched opposition to the modernization of the state, the subsequent implementation of a reform program, and the centralization of the government. In fact, these events and the memories of them must have been vital for the *valide* sultan to revive as she was aware that her son’s reign was plagued by financial difficulties and separatist tendencies. Further, Abdülaziz and his ruling elite were “devis[ing] policies which would legitimate their position in the eyes of both their own people, and the outside world.”<sup>352</sup> By choosing Aksaray, the site of the Auspicious Event, for her mosque complex’s setting, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan may have intended to re-assert the

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<sup>350</sup> TSMA D. 8218. 43.

<sup>351</sup> White, *Three Years in Constantinople*, 260-62.

<sup>352</sup> ‘Ottomanism’ was the state ideology followed by Abdülaziz and his ruling elite in order to fight the disruptive danger from within and outside the territories of the Empire. Under this state ideology, they “devise[d] policies which would legitimate their position in the eyes of both their own people, and the outside world.” See Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1998), 3.

piety, power and victory of the imperial dynasty and that of herself as its patroness at a time when the dynasty was facing legitimacy issues.

It is noteworthy that some aspects of Pertevniyal's wider patronage agenda strengthen the hypothesis that she closely observed her husband's military reforms and during her tenure as the *valide* sultan, she controlled how she was represented to the Ottoman subjects particularly with regards to the symbols of the military reforms.<sup>353</sup> For instance, Pertevniyal's *vakfiye*<sup>354</sup> dated 15 *Recep* 1281 (14 December 1864) recounts the arrangements for the recital of the *Mevlid* every *Rebiülevvel* at the eight military barracks in Istanbul, some of which were commissioned or restored by her husband Mahmud II.<sup>355</sup> The barracks that appear in the *vakfiye* are the following: the one inside the *Serasker Kapısı* (the War Ministry), Adliye and Mecidiye in Beyoğlu, Selimiye in Üsküdar, Kuleli in Boğaziçi, Gümüşsuyu barrack near Dolmabahçe, *Tophane-i Âmire* (Imperial Arsenal of Ordnance and Artillery) and *Tersane-i Âmire* (Imperial dockyard) in Kasımpaşa.<sup>356</sup> The *valide* sultan also endowed a *güğü*m (copper jug), brass *tas* (bowl), *tepsi* (tray), crystal dishes and glasses, *buhurdan* (incense-stick holder), *gülabdan* (rose water flask), and silky *futa* (aprons) to each of these barracks to be used during *mevlid* memorial services.<sup>357</sup>

Pertevniyal's both acoustic (the recitation) and olfactory methods (*buhurdans* and

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<sup>353</sup> For the issues of self-representation and empowerment through the patronage of women, see Ruggles, ed., *Women, Patronage, and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*.

<sup>354</sup> VA 634-147-32.

<sup>355</sup> Besides the abolition of the Janissary corps, the establishment of *Asâkir-i Mansûre* and the artillery, during his reign, Mahmud also set out to renovate or build new barracks to house the new members of the military. So, the Ottoman capital witnessed an intense architectural production concerning the military in the first half of the nineteenth century. Ahmed Lütfi in his *Tarih-i Lütfi* recounts how people in the Old Palace were transferred to the New Palace and the Old Palace was transformed to serve the Army, and new barracks and a fire tower were built for the *Asâkir-i Mansûre*. Existing barracks such as the Selimiye, Davutpaşa ve Râmî were also restored to house the new members of the military. See See Lütfi, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi tarihi*, 1: 109. According to Godfrey Goodwin, these new barracks that were built after the Auspicious Event "dominated the suburbs of Istanbul." See Goodwin, *A History of Ottoman Architecture*, 420.

<sup>356</sup> VA 634-147-32.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid.

*gülabdâns* donated by the *valide*) of communication in these barracks, which were the symbols of the modernization of the army, attest to her interest to control how she was represented with these novelties of the era.<sup>358</sup> Besides the modernization of the army, Sultan Mahmud II had also made several reforms and improvements of the imperial navy.<sup>359</sup> A regular supply of timber was provided so that ships could be built continuously in the dockyard. The largest warship of the time, called the *Mahmudiyye* was built during his reign. According to Ahmed Lütî, during her tenure as the *valide* sultan (similar to her husband's earlier commission) Pertevniyal Valide Sultan covered the expenses of constructing a covered shipbuilding yard at *Tersâne-i Âmire* in 1281 (1865). At the time, "numerous armored ships were ordered from Europe, of which the costs were paid from the Imperial treasury."<sup>360</sup> Several documents in the Prime Ministry Archives show that one of the war ships ordered from London was actually named after Pertevniyal.<sup>361</sup> The *valide* sultan's various acts of munificence/beneficence, with regards to the symbols of the modernization of the army, strengthen the hypothesis that the *valide* sultan displayed a deliberate and consistent patronage which aimed to revitalize and support the successful reforms of Sultan Mahmud II. These in return, had demonstrated the potential to promote the regenerating modernization agenda of the late Tanzimat era.

In line with her intention to revitalize Aksaray as the site of the Auspicious Event in honor of Sultan Mahmud II, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's choice of Aksaray

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<sup>358</sup> For the soundscape and the olfactory practices as means of communication, see Ergin, *The Fragrance of the Divine*; Ergin, *Ottoman Royal Women's Spaces*.

<sup>359</sup> According to Ahmed Lütî, the sultan had built a great dock ("*havz-ı cesîm*") and timber storehouses ("*kereste anbarları*") inside the *Tersâne-i Âmire* (Imperial Dockyard). See Lütî, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütî Efendi tarihi*, 6: 1009.

<sup>360</sup> "Düvel-i sâire tersânelerinde olduğu misillü Tersâne-i Âmire'de dahi lüzûmu bedîdar olan üstü örtülü Taş Destgâh'ın masârif-i lâzimesi Vâide Sultan tarafından tesviye olunmak üzere inşâsına mübâderet ve akçeleri Ceyb-i hümayûn Hazînesi'nden verilmek üzere Tersâne-i Âmire için Avrupa'dan müteaddid zırlı gemiler sipâriş olundu." Ibid, 10: 108.

<sup>361</sup> BOA HR.SFR. Dosya 93- Gömlek 10; HR.SFR. Dosya 93- Gömlek 11; HR. SFR. Dosya 93- Gömlek 17; HR. SFR. Dosya 94- Gömlek 18.

for her complex was also connected to the *valide* sultan's desire to shape the urban planning process for Aksaray following the big fire in 1854. This action would have also supported the Tanzimat's urban regeneration program. Aksaray had been a significant neighborhood since the establishment of Constantinople. The largest of the Byzantine public squares in the capital was the Forum Tauri, today's Beyazıt Square. The Byzantine historical thoroughfare, the *mese*, was divided into two branches in the west of the Forum Tauri. Today's Aksaray, then the Forum Bovis, constituted one of these branches to the southwest.<sup>362</sup> (Fig. 29) Due to the closeness of the sizeable Roman harbor, Eleueterios, today's Yenikapı, Aksaray maintained its substantive position as an important commercial center. During the Ottoman era, the famous Divanyolu replaced the centuries-old Byzantine *mese* and passed through Aksaray. The district continued to carry an important position within the historical peninsula.

Aksaray had also acquired a significant fame due to its continuous fires.<sup>363</sup> Fires were not rare in Istanbul and they were among the most striking historical disasters of the city. Osman Nuri Ergin<sup>364</sup>, in his *Mecelle-i umûr-u belediyye* (1338/1922) (hereafter referred to as the *Mecelle*), which is the main source for the development of municipal organizations in Istanbul, refers to fires as the "historical calamity" ("*Yangın İstanbul'un ... tarihi belasıdır*") of Istanbul.<sup>365</sup> The fires of the

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<sup>362</sup> Zeynep Çelik, *The remaking of Istanbul: portrait of an Ottoman city in the nineteenth century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986), 19.

<sup>363</sup> H. Necdet İşli, *İstanbul'un Ortası, Aksaray* (Istanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür A.Ş. Yayınları, 2008), 29.

<sup>364</sup> Osman Nuri Ergin (1883-1961) worked in the Istanbul municipality from 1924 until his retirement in 1946. He served the roles of head clerk, examining clerk, and secretary general of the municipality. He was also the founder of the Istanbul Municipality Archives. See Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-u Belediye*, 11-12.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid, 1077. He also reminds his readers of an idiom, which according to him, best describes the fate of the empire for seven centuries: "The fire of Istanbul, the epidemic of Anatolia," ("*İstanbul'un yangını, Anadolu'nun salgını*").

capital were also noted by foreign travelers.<sup>366</sup> The Italian traveler Edmondo De Amicis describes the fires “as the city’s destiny,”<sup>367</sup> and adds that “the word ‘fire’ strikes fear into the hearts of the inhabitants of Constantinople and their bowels shudder at the tremendous cry of ‘Yangın var!’ as if it were a declaration of imminent divine punishment.”<sup>368</sup>

According to Osman Ergin the reasons for these famous fires could be summarized under three headings. First, the buildings were made of wood and adjoined one another in narrow streets, which made it quite easy for the fire to spread quickly. The scarcity of water and fire brigade trucks were two other reasons underlying these disastrous fires.<sup>369</sup> The situation Ergin describes for Istanbul was particularly true for Aksaray where timber constructions adjoining one another along the narrow streets provided the best occasion for destructive fires. On average, every five years a conflagration and every two years a smaller incident of fire brought destruction to the district.<sup>370</sup> Some of these fires, called “*Kızıl Bayram*,” were due to arson or caused by the fire brigades of the janissaries and their pillaging.<sup>371</sup>

One large fire that affected the urban fabric of Aksaray happened on 3 *Rebiülevvel* 1271 (24 November 1854).<sup>372</sup> Ahmed Lütüfi recounts this fire (“*Aksaray*

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<sup>366</sup> An American traveler and a much celebrated literary figure in his day, Bayard Taylor in 1852 notes his surprise at the extensive damage caused by a fierce fire in the city: “Constantinople has been terribly ravaged by fires, no less than fifteen having occurred during the past two weeks. Almost every night the sky has been reddened by burning houses, and the minarets of the seven hills lighted with an illumination brighter than that of the Bayram... the entire amount of buildings consumed in these two weeks is estimated at between five and six thousand!” See Samuel Retsov, ed. *The American in Constantinople: 1800-1901* (Greenfield, Massachusetts: Talisman House, 2013), 125-126.

<sup>367</sup> Edmondo De Amicis, *Constantinople*, trans. Stephen Parkin (London: Hesperus Classics, 2005), 194.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid, 196.

<sup>369</sup> Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-u Belediye*, 1077.

<sup>370</sup> İşli, *İstanbul’un Ortası*, Aksaray, 29.

<sup>371</sup> Reşad Ekrem Koçu, *Yeniçeriler* (İstanbul: Doğan Kitapçılık, 2004), 425.

<sup>372</sup> Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-u Belediye*, 963; 1228. Osman Ergin gives a list of the fires that happened in the capital. “Aksaray-Lâleli-Yeşil Tulumba” fire’s date is given as “3 *Rebiülevvel* 1271.” He also states that “A year after the fire in Aksaray in 1271 (1854/55), Engineer İstorari prepared the new plan for the neighbourhood.” On the other hand, Zeynep Çelik gives 1856 as the year of the big fire in Aksaray, see Çelik, *The Remaking of İstanbul*, 53. However Ahmed Lütüfi’s account dated 1273

*Harîki*”) in detail and underlines how, following the conflagration, “the organization of regular streets and thoroughfares” in the capital started “first in Aksaray.” “Once the virtues/advantages of this regulation were seen,” it became an example for the regulations executed gradually in other areas.<sup>373</sup>

According to the *Mecelle*, this renowned fire of 1854 destroyed 748 buildings.<sup>374</sup> It not only had a significant impact on the transformation of the Aksaray district, but also marked a turning point in the history of Istanbul’s urban landscape as Ahmed Lütî emphasizes in his account. A year after this fire (1272- 1855/56), the Ottoman state appointed an Italian engineer, Luigi Storari, to make a survey of the devastated area and to present an alternative urban plan for implementation.<sup>375</sup> This was the first time that the government took an initiative and commissioned a new plan for the urban fabric following a disastrous fire.

Storari’s plan was to follow the specified imperial order stating, “the reconstruction should be in line with a regular plan, which would trace the alignment and width of the streets and indicate the squares and fountains that would be established.”<sup>376</sup> Accordingly, one of the main features of the proposed plan was that

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(1856/57) points to the regulations already realized in Aksaray and in consecutive areas; so the year 1271 seems to be a more reliable date for the fire, after which regulations could be completed in two years time. See Lütî, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütî Efendi tarihi*, 9: 131. *Journal de Constantinople*’s news on January 3, 1856 also refers to the new plan ordered by the government following the disastrous fire; which makes it certain that the Aksaray fire occurred prior to January 1856.

<sup>373</sup> “O esnâda Dersâdet’te, Aksaray’da vukû’ bulan harîk-ı kebîrde pekçok büyü u mesâkin harâb ve telef olup, olhavâli âsâr-ı umrândan hâlî kalmış idi. Harîklerin suhuletle sirâyetine ve birçok hânelerin harâblığına sebep sokakların darlığı olduğundan, hutût-ı hendesekârî ile yolların tevsi’ ve taksîmi o mahzûrun def’i için tedbîr-i âcîl ve ceyyid-i havâyı mûcib olmasıyla, harîk mahâlleri arsa-i vâhide farz olunarak muntazam ve vâsi’ sokaklar ve caddeler tanzîmine ibtidâr olundu. Bu tanzîm İstanbul’da en evvel Aksaray’dan zuhûr etti. Bu kâidenin muhâssenâtı görünerek refte refte o esere riâyet ve devâm i’tiyâd sûretini aldı.” (1273/ 1856) See Lütî, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütî Efendi tarihi*, 9: 131.

<sup>374</sup> Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-u Belediyeye*, 1228.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid, 963. According to Osman Nuri, the Italian engineer was sent back to his country in 1280/ 1863-64.

<sup>376</sup> “Après l’incendie qui réduisit en cendres le quartier d’Ac Sérail, le gouvernement impérial donna les ordres nécessaires pour que la reconstruction ne se fit que conformément à un plan régulier, qui tracerait les alignemens, la largeur des rues et indiquerait les places et les fontaines à établir.” See *Journal de Constantinople* (January 3, 1856), 3.

it increased the significance of the two main arteries by clearly intersecting them: the north-south road from Unkapanı to Yenikapı and the east-west road constituting the Aksaray Caddesi, a continuation of the Divanyolu. (Fig. 30) This intersection was further emphasized by straightening the two arteries and articulating their corners. Such a clear emphasis on the intersection of streets was a novelty in the Ottoman urban fabric. At that time, it was perceived as a ‘beautiful square’, and presented by the *Journal de Constantinople* as a “*belle place*.”<sup>377</sup>

Storari used the crossroads pattern three more times along the Aksaray Caddesi to emphasize this thoroughfare as the most significant artery of the district. All other streets that intersected with the Aksaray Caddesi were also neatly aligned. These streets were classified according to their widths: the main artery, the east-west oriented Aksaray Caddesi was 12.5 meters wide, and the other streets intersecting with it were 10 meters and 8 meters respectively.<sup>378</sup> The new quarter was viewed as a strong reflection of European urban planning principles and was particularly inspirational for the general urban transformation of the historic peninsula that took place during the reign of Pertevniyal’s son, Sultan Abdülaziz.<sup>379</sup>

The urban planning that was realized following the Aksaray fire of 1854 was followed by regulations actualized by the *Islahat-ı Turuk Komisyonu* (Commission for Road Improvements) which was founded in 1282 (1865).<sup>380</sup> The commission functioned for about four years until 1285/1869, when its responsibilities were all transferred to the new municipality. Ergin in his *Mecelle* points out two reasons for

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<sup>377</sup> “Nous apprenons que le nouveau plan du quartier d’Ac Séraïl vient d’être approuvé par le gouvernement impérial, et que d’après ce travail, on aura dans ce quartier des rues bien alignées, larges de 12 pics et demi, 10 et 8, deux belles places, et deux fontaines au milieu d’une jolie construction.” Ibid, 3.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>379</sup> Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul*, 54-55.

<sup>380</sup> Doğan Kuban translates it as such. See Kuban, *Istanbul, an Urban History*, 387.

the commission's foundation: the first being the influence of the Tanzimat dignitaries, Fuad Pasha, Ali Pasha and Reşid Pasha, who had seen the "prosperity, cleanliness and orderliness" of European cities; and the second was the great Hocapaşa fire (6 September 1865)<sup>381</sup> which caused the demolition of many houses and roads and made the renewal and construction of new roads inevitable. According to Ergin, it was this commission that made most of the construction and embellishments of the late nineteenth century Istanbul's thoroughfares like the Divanyolu, Nuruosmaniye and Mahmudiye.<sup>382</sup>

The two official reports (*mazbata*) presented by Osman Ergin outline the actions performed by this commission. In these reports, the Aksaray Caddesi is mentioned as "previously regulated" ("*mukaddemâ hâl-i intizâma girmiş olan Aksaray Caddesi*"),<sup>383</sup> referring to its regulation instigated by Storari following the Aksaray fire. In addition to the former straightening and widening of the streets in Aksaray in 1272 (1855/56), the pavements of the three streets, emphasized by Storari via the crossroads pattern, were macadamized by the commission between 1865 and

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<sup>381</sup> Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-u Belediyye*, 1229. On the other hand, Zeynep Çelik gives 18 September, 1865 as the date of the Hocapaşa Fire, referring to the date of a news from *Takvim-i Vekâyi*, provided by Osman Ergin in his *Mecelle*. See Çelik, *The remaking of Istanbul*, 55, quotes from Osman Ergin, *Mecelle-i umûr-ı belediyye*, (Dersaadet (İstanbul): Arşak Garoyan Matbaası, 1338/ 1922), 1313. After this fire, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan donated "*yüz elli bin kuruş atıyye*" (one hundred fifty thousand piasters) to those suffered from this fire. So, she was very well aware of the fires ruining the city. See Lütfi, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi tarihi*, 10: 145.

<sup>382</sup> Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-u Belediyye*, 937-962. One of the two aspects of the regularizations realized by the commission concerned the straightening and widening of streets. As mentioned earlier, the street network was classified into three categories based on width: the major thoroughfares were to be 19.00 meters and 15.20 meters, the medium-sized streets were 11.50 meters and 7.60 meters wide. The last category of the network included the side streets which were to be 6.00 meters wide. In this classification the Divanyolu was intended to be 19.00 meters. Secondly, to decrease the damage caused by fires, the commission promoted stone or brick (*kârgir*) usage in house constructions and for this purpose, supplied those materials cheaply. The commission dealt greatly with all the construction going on in the city, to the extent that it even required approval for the construction plans of all newly built houses.

<sup>383</sup> Ibid, 956.

1869, (“*Aksaray’da bulunan üç büyük caddenin kaldırımları şose olarak pek güzel ve metin yaptırıldığı...*”).<sup>384</sup>

In his narration about the regularization of thoroughfares by the commission, Osman Ergin also provides an interesting anecdote<sup>385</sup> that took place between Fuad Pasha (whom Ergin presents as the main executer of the new Divanyolu) and Pertevniyal’s *kethüda* Hüseyin Bey, who is narrated as one of the biggest opponents of Fuad Pasha, (“[*Fuad Paşa’nın*] *en büyük mu‘ârizlarından ‘İhtisab Ağası’ nâmıyla ma‘rûf Şehremini Hüseyin Bey*”). According to Ergin’s account, one day Hüseyin Bey ran into Fuad Pasha while he was heading to his home near Kadırga. As if he wanted to atone for his former criticisms (*tenkidât*) and objections (*i’tirâzât*) and to thank him for the convenience he experienced in the traffic, he said to Fuad Pasha, “Thanks to you, the pavements of these thoroughfares became very beautiful,” and Fuad Pasha answered, “Yes, these pavements are made by the stones thrown at us (allude).” His anecdote is important first to confirm that the hostility between Fuad Pasha and Hüseyin Bey (and Pertevniyal Valide Sultan as his Master) was widely recognized. What is more important is Hüseyin Bey’s awareness of the new urban regularization, which is also underlined in his correspondence with Pertevniyal Valide Sultan.

In fact, Hüseyin Bey was right in paying tribute to the Tanzimat dignitary for the urban regeneration. The analysis of twelve satirical newspapers published

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<sup>384</sup> Ibid, 951.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid, 955: “... en büyük mu‘ârizlarından ‘İhtisab Ağası’ nâmıyla ma‘rûf Şehremini Hüseyin Bey, bir gün Divanyolu’ndan ve Şerefiye Caddesinden sapıp Fazlı Paşa Meydanı’ndan geçerek Kadırga tarafındaki konağına giderken o civarda konağı bulunan Fuad Paşa’ya rastgelmiş. Güyâ hem tenkidât ve i’tirâzât- sâbıkasının kefareti olmak, hem de mürur u uburda gördüğü kolaylıktan dolayı teşekkür etmek maksadıyla!

- Sâye-i devletinizde bu caddelerin kaldırımları pek güzel oldu, demiş. Fuad Paşa da:
- Evet! Bu kaldırımlar, bize atılan taşlarla yapılmıştır, cevabını vermiştir.”

between 1869- 1877<sup>386</sup> shows strikingly that by following the Tanzimat's urban regulations, Aksaray became a lively neighborhood displaying a salient contrast to its earlier description as a 'wilderness'. In these newspapers, Aksaray and the Beyazıt Square are the two districts that are mentioned most frequently, followed by Beyoğlu. Especially during Ramadan, the Aksaray Caddesi is described as being "very lively" and "animated" and a place where women strolled along with men until very late at night.<sup>387</sup> A note that appeared in "Çaylak," one of these satirical newspapers, on 15 Şaban 1292 (September 16, 1875), three years after the inauguration of Pertevniyal's mosque, is valuable as it illustrates this transformation of the once "desolate" Aksaray into a popular urban center where both women and men enjoyed the liveliness of the neighborhood:

The Aksaray Street... is beautifully illuminated by the kerosene lamps that are lighted here and there by the keepers of coffee houses, tea merchants, pharmacists, tobacconists, hairdressers and other shopkeepers. Especially the passing of cars, in between groups of women and men who walk up and down the street, is shiny as these cars are lighted with oil lamps and there are women inside them with amusing headgears, kindling men to strife.<sup>388</sup>

Osman Ergin's account written at the beginning of the twentieth century confirms Aksaray's new reputation as an orderly urban center which was a concrete expression of state policies. Ergin points to the straightness and regularity of the streets in Aksaray prior to the fire of 1327 (1909) and remarks on the piazzas created at the crossroads, including the square in front of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque:

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<sup>386</sup> In her MA Thesis, Nezihe İdemen studies the life in Istanbul in the late nineteenth century through the analysis of the satirical newspapers published between 1869 and 1877: Diojen, Terakki, Letaif-i Asar, Çingiraklı Tatar, Hayal, Latife, Tiyatro, Kahkaha, Latife, Geveze, Meddah, Çaylak. See Nezihe İdemen, "1869-1876 Yılları Arasında Yayınlanan Mizah Gazetelerinde İstanbul Hayatı." (M.A. Thesis, İstanbul University, 1994).

<sup>387</sup> Ibid, 1, 3.

<sup>388</sup> "Aksaray caddesi ... kahvecilerin, çaycılarının, eczacılarının, tütüncülerinin, perukarların veya sair bu gibi dükkancıların cabeca yaktıkları gaz ile pek güzel tenvir edilip hele bir takımı yukarıya ve bir takımı aşağıya doğru yayan olarak fevc fevc gelip gitmekte olan kadın ve erkeklerin arasında iki tarafına renkamiz kandil ikad ve derunlarına yapma bebek gibi tuhaf tuhaf hotozlu kadınlar ikad olunan arabaların geçişi doğrusu pek parlaktır." İdemen refers to *Çaylak*, 16 September 1292, 3.

Prior to the fire of 1327, the streets of Aksaray and its environs were straight and parallel to one another; in other words, they were very regular. Even at crossroads like Yeşiltulumba and in front of the Valide Mosque, small public squares were formed by sharpening the corners.<sup>389</sup>

Therefore, following the disastrous fire in 1854, Aksaray became the locus of urban transformation implemented by the Late Tanzimat dignitaries. The creation of urban thoroughfares and big piazzas, first in Aksaray, and then in several other areas of the city, along with the monuments of the era, not only revitalized the Ottoman urban daily life, but also served as a great “token of dynastic regeneration, power and sovereignty.”<sup>390</sup> Following the urban strategies executed during her son’s reign, Pertevniyal from the first day of her empowerment as a *valide* sultan, opted to shape the urban fabric of Aksaray and to continue to implement various aspects of the urban regeneration program.

Prior to the construction of her mosque complex, the first deed Pertevniyal decreed as a *valide* sultan in 1862<sup>391</sup> concerns the construction of a four-sided fountain with four sebils (“*dört yüzlü ve dört köşesinde sebilleri cari*”) built at “the crossroads in the middle of the Aksaray Caddesi” (“*dört yol ağzı nam mahallin vasatinde*”) close to the Kâtip Mosque at the place of “*arсланlı havuz*” (Lion Pool).<sup>392</sup> Displaying a “novel/ new style” (“*nevresm*”) the fountain’s water chamber was intended to be built of stone (“*kârgir*”) while its front façade, according to the deed, is to be “artistically fashioned” (“*musanna*”) and “manufactured” (“*mamul*”) from

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<sup>389</sup> Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-u Belediye*, 963: “Aksaray ve civarının 1327 senesi yangınından evvel, sokakları müstakim, yekdiğerine amûd u muvazi bir vaziyetle yani muntazam bir halde olduğu görülmekte idi. Hatta yeşil tulumba gibi dört yol ağzı olan yerlerde ve Vâlîde Camii önünde köşeleri kesmek sûretiyle ufak birer meydan bile vücûda getirilmişti.”

<sup>390</sup> Ahmet Ersoy uses this expression for the monuments of the Ottoman Renaissance. Here, I appropriate it for the urban regeneration program of the late Tanzimat era. See Ersoy, “On the Sources of the ‘Ottoman Renaissance,’” 374.

<sup>391</sup> This commission is elaborated in the fifth *vakfiye*, dated 3 *Cemaziyelevvel* 1279 (27 October 1862), the first *vakfiye* after Pertevniyal’s entitlement as the *valide* sultan. In this endowment deed, for the first time Pertevniyal is referred as the *valide* sultan, “*mehd-i ülyâ-i salţanat*.” VA 634-137-28.

<sup>392</sup> Ibid.

marble. It is significant that the *vakfiye* underlines the *valide* sultan's intention that her fountain should be built at the crossroad created by the Italian engineer, Luigi Storari. In fact, according to *Journal de Constantinople*, Storari's plan included the intention of building a 'fountain that would be established at the crossroad'.<sup>393</sup>

Although we do not know if the fountain in Storari's plan was envisaged to be that of Pertevniyal's or the Lion Pool; it is clear that Pertevniyal Valide Sultan desired to emphasize the new urban regeneration program by punctuating one of the most important junctions of the quarter with her fountain. This act of munificence in return had the potential to associate the *valide* with the rejuvenation of the quarter.

The nineteenth century imperial historian Ahmed Lütü confirms this observation. In the chronogram he composed for this fountain, he stated that it "prospered and rejuvenated" Aksaray and made evident the *valide* sultan's munificence in the neighborhood.<sup>394</sup> In his account of the inauguration of the fountain, Ahmed Lütü describes it as both "unusual and pleasant." He draws attention to the location of the fountain, "*dörtüol ağzı*" (the crossroad), a statement that shows the *valide* sultan's first commission in Aksaray was perceived as a landmark of the district and was situated at the very heart of it.<sup>395</sup>

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<sup>393</sup> "Après l'incendie qui réduisit en cendres le quartier d'Ac Sérail, le gouvernement impérial donna les ordres nécessaires pour que la reconstruction ne se fit que conformément à un plan régulier, qui tracerait les alignemens, la largeur des rues et indiquerait les places et les fontaines à établir." See *Journal de Constantinople*, January 3, 1856, 3.

<sup>394</sup> This captivating fountain of the Glorious Valide Sultan Satisfied the thirsty of this city with its water

...  
Manifested Her munificence in Aksaray  
A drop of her river-like grace is current  
Prospered and rejuvenated this quarter on all sides  
Lütü composed a choronogram at utmost luster and sheen

...  
1279 (1862/63)

<sup>395</sup> "Dersâdet'de, Aksaray'da, dörtüol ağzında Vâlide Sultan tarafından misli görülmedik gâyet tuhaf bir çeşme ve sebîl-i dilnişîn inşâsına şurû' olunmuş idi. Sene-i hâliye ile Cumâde'l-ülâ'sında (Ekim/Kasım 1862), mezkûr çeşme rehîn-i hitâm olarak şeker şerbetleri icrâsiyle birçok ahâlî dil-sîr-i zülâl-i hoşgüvâr-ı emsâr olmuştur." 1279 (1862) See Lütü, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütü Efendi tarihi*, 10: 80.

It is possible that in choosing this very central location for her fountain, the *valide* sultan may have had a chance to consult Storari through the agency of her *kethüda* Hüseyin Bey as both were working in the *Ebniye Meclisi* (the Building Council) by then.<sup>396</sup> At the time, Hüseyin Hasib Bey was serving his second term as the *Şehremini* of Istanbul (the period of his service was between 28 September 1861 and 16 March 1868),<sup>397</sup> and his responsibilities included “regulation and collection of taxes, construction and repair of roads, cleaning and embellishment of the city and control of markets and guilds.”<sup>398</sup> During his tenure as the mayor of the city, Pertevniyal not only commissioned a fountain, but her patronage efforts with the late Tanzimat’s urban regeneration program continued with the construction of her mosque complex, which was to further shape the urban fabric of Aksaray. Ultimately, it was referred to in the mosque’s *vakfiye* as “the nest of prosperity.”<sup>399</sup>

Somewhat ironically, the historian Ahmed Lütüfi recounts that the erection of the *valide* sultan’s new *kârgir* mosque’s “glorious splendor did not allow for an elegant view of [her] fountain” and her mosque “sort of overwhelmed the [Aksaray] Street.”<sup>400</sup> As a remedy to this, during the mosque’s construction, “the fountain at the

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<sup>396</sup> Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-u Belediye*, 963-64. Osman Ergin’s account shows that Storari continued working for the Ottoman state until 1864.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid, 1561. Hüseyin Hasib Bey’s first term was between 19 *Zilkade* 1274 (1 July 1858) and *Rebiülevvel* 1276 (September/November 1859), and his second term was between 23 *Rebiülevvel* 1278 (28 September 1861) and 22 *Zilkade* 1284 (16 March 1868).

<sup>398</sup> Çelik, *The remaking of Istanbul*, 44: Çelik quotes from “Şehremaneti Nizamname Lahiyası” (1854), art.2, in Ergin, *Mecelle-i umûr-ı belediyye*, I: 1374.

<sup>399</sup> Aksaray is described as the “nest of prosperity,” (“*feyz-i âşiyâne*”) in the mosque’s *vakfiye*, as mentioned in the previous chapter.

<sup>400</sup> “Mu’ahharen orada köşe başında kâin Kâtib Câmi-i şerîfinin yerine Sultân-ı müşârünileyhâ tarafından çifte minâreli olarak müceddeden yapılan kârgir câmi-i şerîfin şa’şaa-i nûrânîsi mezkûr çeşmenin nazara-i zîbâsına hâcet bırakmamış ve zâten caddeyi bir nevi tazyîk eylemiş olduğundan, menfaat-i umûmiyyesine hâlel gelmemek üzere meydân-ı mezkûrdan kaldırılıp câmi-i şerîfin büyük cadde kapusu yanına yapılmıştır. Bu çeşme için cennet-mekân Sultan Mahmûd Hân-ı sâni hazretlerinin bendinden iki mâsûra mâ-i lezîz ile Sûfîler [Sofular] çeşmesinden üç mâsûra mâ’-i mürr tahsîs ve tefrîk olunmuştur.” See Lütüfi, *Vak’a-nüvis Ahmed Lütüfi Efendi tarihi*, 10: 80.

crossroad was moved and reassembled at the side of the mosque's western entrance gate," where it stands today.<sup>401</sup>

What Ahmed Lütfi expressed as a feature which "sort of overwhelmed the [Aksaray] Street," in fact reflects the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque's dominating position in the newly arranged square. At the time, the mosque and the tomb were placed at the most central point on the western side of the main artery: Aksaray Caddesi. An order of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan, referred to by Hüseyin Bey in the correspondence, TSMA D. 8218. 43, dated 26 *Rebiülevvel* 1284 (28 July 1867), clearly indicates a concern for the individual positions of different components of the complex as he states that the mosque and the tomb should align with the corners of the Aksaray Square across from one another. As the tomb was built prior to the mosque, it is given as the reference point to which the mosque across the street should align itself:<sup>402</sup>

... to make the courtyard bigger and since the place of the previous mosque was a bit in the back, the mosque should be moved forward to align with the corner; so the tomb of our Master and the clock room will be at one corner, and the mosque will be located at the opposite corner.<sup>403</sup>

This note shows that during the construction of the complex, the space and boundaries of the Aksaray Square were specifically articulated by straightening the two intersecting arteries and sharpening their corners. After confirming "the desirable alignment with the corners,"<sup>404</sup> Hüseyin Bey informs the *valide* sultan about yet another urban regulation. He states that "the streets there are also wide

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<sup>401</sup> Ibid.

<sup>402</sup> The first reference to the tomb and the *muvakkithane* next to it appears in the *vakfiye* dated 6 September 1866. In this *vakfiye*, written in the first person narrative, Pertevniyal refers to the two structures as "formerly built," VA 634.152.34.

<sup>403</sup> TSMA D. 8218. 43.

<sup>404</sup> Ersoy emphasizes the *valide* sultan's urban concerns, referring to the same correspondence. See Ersoy, "On the Sources of the "Ottoman Renaissance,"" 374.

according to the new style,” (“*Oranın sokakları da açılmış yeni usul üzere genişçedir*”). His emphasis on the “width of the Aksaray Street” affirms that Pertevniyal Valide Sultan was cognizant of the street classifications stipulated by the new urban plans that were being implemented during the era.

Finally it is noteworthy that the horse-drawn tram between Eminönü-Aksaray opened in 1872, the same year as the inauguration of Pertevniyal’s mosque; and it passed right in front of the mosque.<sup>405</sup> (Fig. 31) Like the regularization of the urban fabric, this new transportation system “had a distinctly modernizing effect on [Aksaray’s] urban image” and “added to the liveliness of the [Aksaray Street].”<sup>406</sup> Most likely, this novelty was also to reinforce the interaction and connection of the Aksaray Valide Sultan’s Mosque complex with its surroundings.

These clearly articulated examples of the urban landscape which are mentioned in the *vakfiyes*, along with the correspondence of the *valide* sultan, illustrate Pertevniyal’s awareness of the new urban renovations that were being implemented in Aksaray, and her desire to locate her projects at the heart of the new ‘public square,’ an urban space which was a novelty in the Ottoman city of the time. Constructing first her fountain and then her mosque complex at the most dominant spot in such a prominent public square of the era would have allied Pertevniyal with diverse layers of empowerment associated with the late Tanzimat era’s urban reforms, such as modernization, ‘dynastic regeneration, power, and sovereignty’.<sup>407</sup> Contrary to its desolate position after the Auspicious Event, following the

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<sup>405</sup> According to *The Levant Herald*, the tram was already opened before the inauguration of the mosque on April 5, 1872. Due to the crowdedness, it was closed to service on that day: “Ak-Serai is the terminal station of the Stamboul tramways,” “Afin de ne pas augmenter l’encombrement, la circulation des wagons du tramway a dû être suspendue dans la rue aboutissant à Ak-Séraï.” See *The Levant Herald* (26 Muharrem 1289/ 5 April 1872), 158-159.

<sup>406</sup> Here, I appropriated the expressions used by Çelik for Istanbul in general. See Çelik, *The remaking of Istanbul*, 93.

<sup>407</sup> Here I appropriated what Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary*, 236, uses in his reference to the architecture of the late Tanzimat era.

Tanzimat's urban regeneration program, Aksaray was revitalized in the 1860s and 1870s, and became a very popular urban center for the Ottoman public. In the end, the *valide* sultan was not only a part of the urban transformation Aksaray underwent, but she also shaped it through her architectural patronage. While Sultan Mahmud II left a significant imprint on Aksaray's urban memory in the 1820s, five decades later, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan embarked on an ambitious project to revitalize the site of the Auspicious Event and to leave her lasting mark in the district's social and collective memory, and its actual urban landscape.

## 2. Constructional and Structural Aspects

Once the *valide* sultan had chosen a symbolic site for her commission she did not leave the rest of the construction process to the architects of the complex, Serkis and Agob Balyan. On the contrary, through the agency of her *kethüdas*, she conducted a meticulous and engaged architectural patronage and oversaw many of the constructional and structural aspects of her mosque.

Ottoman royal women turning to their immediate Ottoman predecessors in shaping the rhetoric of their patronage is a known practice. As studies on Ottoman imperial women have shown, this practice involved imperial women affiliating their patronage efforts with those of their female predecessors.<sup>408</sup> When we analyze the correspondence between Pertevniyal Valide Sultan and her *kethüdas* Hüseyin Bey and Ferid Pasha respectively, we see that these documents contain potent dialogue that involved architectonic aspects of monuments commissioned by imperial women of the Ottoman court, but also of those commissioned by the previous Ottoman sultans. What these references share is that they all evoke 'imperial' monuments of

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<sup>408</sup> Thys-Şenocak, *Ottoman Women Builders*, 67; 74.

the past. Although Pertevniyal's reference to the Ortaköy Mosque has been mentioned by scholars, her references to the following mosques were not revealed before: the Süleymaniye Mosque, the Dolmabahçe Valide Mosque and the Laleli Mosque.

The architectural features in these four mosques that are referred to by Pertevniyal in her correspondence, from the size of her mosque, the configuration of the dome to the diameter of its minarets, had a large role in determining the relative grandeur of imperial mosques with respect to one another.<sup>409</sup> Therefore, making references to these status symbols in architecture, reserved to the "highest stratum of sultans, princes and sultanas,"<sup>410</sup> was important in the iconographical conceptualization of a monument as these references would define the social status of the the mosque's patron. For Pertevniyal's mosque to be perceived as a 'prestige mosque', it had to abide by the principles of decorum prevalent in the Ottoman architectural culture of the time.<sup>411</sup>

Gülru Necipoğlu in her analysis of Sinan's imperial mosques and the architectural discourse of the early-modern era<sup>412</sup> has demonstrated that specific

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<sup>409</sup> Despite the paucity of Ottoman archival sources dealing with architectural works and their iconography, there are a few very significant works that go beyond mere descriptive accounts and contain references to the meanings of the architectonic aspects of an imperial mosque. Among such works are Sinan's autobiography, *Tezkiretü'l-Bünyan* that the chief architect dictated to the poet-painter Mustafa Sa'î, the *Risale-i Mi'mariyye* of Ca'fer Efendi, the *Seyahatname* of Evliya Çelebi and *Hadikatü'l-Cevâmi'* by Hafız Hüseyin Ayvansarayî. Howard Crane in his article discusses the importance of some of these works and focuses on Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahatname*. See Crane, "The Ottoman Sultan's Mosques."

<sup>410</sup> Necipoğlu provides the three levels of status among the members of the ruling elite outlined by Mustafa Ali: the highest (sultans, princes, sultanas), the high (viziers, governors, and amirs), and the middle stratum (middling notables and fiefholders). See Gülru Necipoğlu, *The age of Sinan: architectural culture in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 116.

<sup>411</sup> For codes of decorum in architectural discourse, see Necipoğlu, *The age of Sinan*, 115-124. Necipoğlu also describes the codes of decorum observed in the 'prestige mosques' in the capital.

<sup>412</sup> See Gülru Necipoğlu, "Challenging the Past: Sinan and the Competitive Discourse of Early Modern Islamic Architecture," *Muqarnas* 10 (1993): 169-180. Gülru Necipoğlu in her analysis shows that the iconographical conceptualization of a monument sometimes included specific references to well-known architectural projects of the past. These deliberate references, such as height or monumental scale, challenged the past through "self-consciously intertextual monuments and urban schemes." They helped the patron or the architect to build a patently competitive enterprise which had the potential to assert the architectural superiority of the present or to associate the patron or the

references to well-known architectural projects of the past also helped the patron or the architect to build a patently competitive enterprise. This competitive discourse with the monuments of the past either asserted the architectural superiority of the present work or helped to associate the patron and the architect with a range of values associated with these earlier monuments, from piety to wealth. There are several examples cited by Necipoğlu and others about a competitive architectural discourse between classical Ottoman mosques and earlier Islamic and Byzantine and even Biblical monuments. An interesting example of this sort of competitive discourse exercised by a woman patron, thirteen centuries earlier than Pertevniyal Valide Sultan and at a site very close to the Aksaray mosque<sup>413</sup> was the church commission of the Princess Anicia Juliana in sixth-century Constantinople.<sup>414</sup>

The following inscription from the church, excavated by Dumbarton Oaks and the Istanbul Archaeological Museum in the 1960s,<sup>415</sup> is a clear manifestation of the Byzantine Princess's aspiration to challenge Solomon, "the most kingly of kings" and "to match the splendor of his building," built in ancient Jerusalem in the tenth century B.C.:<sup>416</sup>

What choir is sufficient to sing the work of Juliana, who, after Constantine-embellisher of his Rome, after the holy golden light of Theodosius, and after the royal descent of so many forebears, accomplished in few years a work worthy of her family, and more than worthy? *She alone has conquered time and surpassed the wisdom of renowned Solomon, raising a temple to receive*

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architect with renowned architectural projects of the past. These allusions "bridged the past and the present through the rhetorical device of intertextuality" and reflected the historical consciousness of the present enterprise.

<sup>413</sup> The site of the church was excavated at Saraçhane, which was located at the time between the Forum of Tauri and the Holy Apostles, on the main throughfare of the city, the Mese, very close to the nineteenth century monument Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque. The Princess was a prominent heiress of her time and commissioned the church in honor of the soldier- martyr Polyeuktos some ten years before St. Sophia.

<sup>414</sup> I am grateful to Yavuz Sezer who brought to my attention the following reference: Martin Harrison, *A temple for Byzantium: the discovery and excavation of Anicia Juliana's palace-church in Istanbul* (London: H. Miller, 1989).

<sup>415</sup> These lines are a part of a longer poem which was carved in the narthex of the church.

<sup>416</sup> Harrison, *A temple for Byzantium*, 137-140.

*God, the richly wrought and graceful splendor of which the ages cannot celebrate.*<sup>417</sup>

The efforts of Martin Harrison and the excavation team of this site have shown that the remarkable similarities of the dimensions and the decoration of the two monuments are a solid evidence of the princess's intention "to emulate the Temple of Solomon in conception and execution."<sup>418</sup> While there is no evidence that Pertevniyal knew of this earlier project by a Byzantine royal woman, it is interesting to consider whether there would have been some historical memory or even archaeological evidence of this earlier monument at the time of Pertevniyal's patronage.

Whether using the iconographical language of earlier imperial mosques or entering into competitive discourse with a monument of the past, it is clear that Pertevniyal wanted to construct a 'prestige mosque' in Aksaray as part of her role as a *valide* sultan. To this end, she set out to benefit from a multiple number of iconographical references concerning her mosque's structural and constructional features.

A reference to the Ortaköy Mosque appears in TSMA D. 8218. 43, dated 26 *Rebiülevvel* 1284 (28 July 1867) and indicates that since Pertevniyal Valide Sultan decreed her mosque should be as big as the Ortaköy Mosque. The chosen site of the burnt Kâtip Mosque in Aksaray was not big enough and a new estate was purchased to insure that this could be realized. The letter reads, "You had commanded that it should be as big as Ortaköy. Hopefully there would be a public procession and you would honor it with your visit. For that reason, it should be enlarged." (*İrade dahi*

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<sup>417</sup> My italics. Ibid, 34.

<sup>418</sup> Ibid, 144.

*buyurmuştunuz. Ortaköy kadar olsun*<sup>419</sup> *deyü irade buyurulmuş idi. İnşallah selâmlık da olup teşrif-i şahane buyurulur. O cihetle biraz büyümesi lazım gelir.*”)<sup>420</sup>

The Ortaköy Mosque (fig. 32), or the Büyük Mecidiye Mosque, which appears in this document, was an imperial mosque commissioned by the previous sultan, Abdülmecid, prior to Pertevniyal’s appointment as a *valide* sultan. It was built in 1854-55<sup>421</sup> by Nigoğos Balyan,<sup>422</sup> the brother of Agob and Serkis Balyan, who were to be the architects of Pertevniyal’s commission about two decades later.<sup>423</sup> Therefore, both the patron and the architect of the Ortaköy Mosque were known to Pertevniyal. It is quite possible that she was also familiar with the mosque as it was very close to the Beşiktaş Palace where she was living at the time.<sup>424</sup>

The Ortaköy Mosque was a significant monument of the Mecid era. Its architect, Nigoğos Balyan was the chief imperial architect who was involved in the construction of other important monuments of the era, like the Dolmabahçe Palace, the Çırağan (Küçük Mecidiye) Mosque and the Dolmabahçe Valide Mosque, which

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<sup>419</sup> Uluçay, *Padişahların Kadınları ve Kızları*, 125: Uluçay rewrites the reference in the document as “Ortaköy Valde Camii büyüklüğünde olacaktı” which then refers to the Dolmabahçe Mosque (b. 1853) commissioned by Mahmud II’s wife and Abdülmecid’s mother Bezmialem Valide Sultan. While this interpretation is interesting for further research, another document from the construction register, D. 8218.56, refers to Bezmialem Valide Sultan’s mosque as the “Dolmabahçe Valide Cami (Mosque)” instead of “Ortaköy Valide Cami (Mosque)”. This reference in the primary documents confirms that Pertevniyal Valide Sultan’s reference, the Ortaköy Mosque, was the Büyük Mecidiye Mosque, commissioned by Sultan Abdülmecid.

<sup>420</sup> TSMA D. 8218. 43.

<sup>421</sup> For the construction date of the mosque, Afife Batur, “Ortaköy Camii,” In *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*. Vol. 6 (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1994b), 143; Doğan Kuban, *Osmanlı Mimarisi* (İstanbul: Yem Yayınları, 2007), 638; and Metin Sözen, *Türk Mimarisinin Gelişimi ve Mimar Sinan* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 1975), 347, all point to 1270 (1853); Öz, *İstanbul Camileri*, 51; Oktay Aslanapa, *Osmanlı Devri Mimarisi, Orhan Gazi’den Başlayarak Başlangıcından Sonuna Kadar Padişahlara Göre Gelişmesi* (İstanbul: İnkılap Yayınevi, 1986), 449, point to year 1271 (1854); Pars Tuğlacı, *Osmanlı Mimarlığında Batılılaşma Dönemi ve Balyan Ailesi* (İstanbul: İnkılap ve Aka Kitapevleri, 1981), 198, points to 1854-1855.

<sup>422</sup> Batur, “Ortaköy Camii,” 143; Tuğlacı, *Osmanlı Mimarlığında Batılılaşma Dönemi*, 198; Kuban, *Osmanlı Mimarisi*, 638.

<sup>423</sup> Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 303.

<sup>424</sup> What would have made her visit easy is that the sultan’s lodge (*hünkâr kasrı*) of the Ortaköy Mosque was built as a two storey building designed along an east-west axis; the entrance for the sultan was built at the sea front so that Sultan Abdülmecid could enter his lodge from the sea. Like the sultan, she might have used an imperial caique to come to the mosque via the sea or may have seen it during an excursion. See Batur, “Ortaköy Camii,” 143.

was commissioned by the *valide* of Sultan Abdülmecid.<sup>425</sup> Like other early Tanzimat buildings, it reflected its patron's taste for "highly ornate, deeply carved surfaces or sculpted forms"<sup>426</sup> which were derived mostly from French Neo-Classical and Neo-Baroque sources.

Two verses from the mosque's foundation inscription dated 1271 (1854), and written by the poet Ziver, show that Sultan Abdülmecid perceived his monument as "excellent and strong," (*hem nefis hem metin*) and claimed that "there would be no other mosque to surpass its qualifications." ("... *Yaptı evvelkinden âlâ, hem nefisü hem metin, Olamaz bu camiin vâsfında asla kalü kıl...*").<sup>427</sup> The message of these verses can be read as: the mosque is a reflection of its patron's glory and his ultimate imperial power which cannot be "surpassed" or challenged. In other words, the Ortaköy Mosque functioned to legitimize Abdülmecid's claim to authority and can be interpreted as a metaphor of his rule. The contemporary historian Ahmed Lütfi describes the mosque as "firm/strong" (*gayet metîn, ra'sîn*), "all embellished" (*her tarafı müzeyyen*) and "pleasing" (*dil-nişîn*), parallel with the qualities portrayed in the mosque's inscription by its patron.<sup>428</sup> Lütfi's account is important since it gives an idea about how the mosque was perceived at the time at least by the imperial retinue when it was also subject to Pertevniyal's perception.

Two decades later, by commissioning her mosque to be as large as the Ortaköy Mosque, the *valide* sultan intended to enter an active and competitive dialogue with Sultan Abdülmecid's 'unsurpassable' monument. She deliberately

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<sup>425</sup> Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 303.

<sup>426</sup> Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary*, 202.

<sup>427</sup> *İstanbul âbideleri* (İstanbul: Yedigün Neşriyatı, 1940), 80.

<sup>428</sup> He recounts the mosque's inauguration on 26 December, 1854: "Bir müddetten beri müceddeden yapılmakta bulunan Boğaziçi'nde kâin Ortaköy Câmi-i şerîfi gâyet metîn ve her tarafı müzeyyen ve ra'sîn ve dil-nişîn olarak o esnâda binâsı rehîn-i hüsni ihtitâm oldu. Rebî'ü'l-âhirin beşinci Cum'a selâmlığının orada icrâsıyla küşâd olundu." See Lütfi, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi tarihi*, 9: 110.

wanted to match the size of the previous sultan's mosque which in return would place her own mosque into the category of an imperial mosque, affirming her imperial identity and prestigious status.

The correspondence TSMA D. 8218. 43, which refers to the Ortaköy Mosque, continues with the *kethüda* Hüseyin Bey reporting to Pertevniyal Valide Sultan that the expropriation process was carried out according to the necessities of the building site that would fulfill the *valide* sultan's wishes concerning the size of her mosque:

You had commanded that it should be as big as Ortaköy. Hopefully there would be a public procession and you would honor by your visiting. For that reason, it should be enlarged... Two estates, one at the same row with the mosque, the other one across it, were bought; their *akçe* was given last year. There was one small estate, and also a mansion estate owned by a *reaya*.<sup>429</sup> These were also bought after bargain, by their owners' consent. And to make the courtyard bigger and since the place of the previous mosque was a bit in the back, the mosque should be moved forward to align with the corner; so the tomb of our Master and the clock room will be at one corner, and the mosque will be located at the opposite corner. Hence, there is a coffeehouse at the corner. And a *çörekçi* bakery,<sup>430</sup> a tobacco shop, a grocer, a coffeehouse, a small shoemaker shop and two small houses behind it. These should be bought.<sup>431</sup>

The expropriation was an important part of the construction process in the empire. If the building site belonged to the 'subjects' of the empire, these estates would be bought according to their current values.<sup>432</sup> But sometimes the land owners had to be convinced about selling their property.<sup>433</sup> Regarding their negotiation with the land owners, Hüseyin Bey warns Pertevniyal Valide Sultan against "property

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<sup>429</sup> Reaya were the non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire.

<sup>430</sup> Çörek is a round cake or loaf, commonly sweetened; kind of bun. *Redhouse*, 261.

<sup>431</sup> TSMA D. 8218. 43.

<sup>432</sup> Abdülkadir Dündar, "Osmanlı Mimarisinde Yapıların İnşa Süreci Üzerine Bir Araştırma." *Kök Sosyal ve Stratejik Araştırmalar* (2000): 170.

<sup>433</sup> Ahmed Lütfi narrates this persuasion phase in relation to another nineteenth century monument, the Beylerbeyi Palace. See Lütfi, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi tarihi*, 4: 748,749.

speculation” and a possible “increase in the prices demanded by the land owners as time passes.”<sup>434</sup> He also states that “he already sent the list of amounts that the land owners required” and expresses his wish to the *valide* sultan that “these amounts would be reduced by the owners’ consents through the help/influence of the *valide* sultan.”<sup>435</sup> His remarks clearly show that Pertevniyal Valide Sultan carefully monitored each and every step in the construction, got involved in the expropriation process and even in the bargaining for the newly bought estates, all to make sure that the size of the mosque followed the intentions outlined by her decree.

The same correspondence provides striking evidence for Pertevniyal’s direct and frequent involvement in the planning of her mosque, something rare in Ottoman architectural patronage, particularly of women patrons. In fact, she not only decreed that her mosque be as big as the Ortaköy Mosque, but she reviewed its plans and commented on these. This appears to be the first evidence of such direct and tangible involvement of the patron in an architectural project when compared to earlier commissions by *valide* sultans. Hüseyin Bey informs the *valide* sultan that “he had the plan (*resm*) made and presented it to her.”<sup>436</sup> (“*Cami-i şerifin resmini dahi yaptırtıp hâk-i pay seniyelerine takdim eyledim.*”) When the *Hassa Mimarları Ocağı* (The Imperial Architects’ Office) was active, it was the chief architect or one of the imperial architects that would prepare the plans for the construction. Once the sultan would approve, these plans would be analyzed in the *Divan-ı Hümayun* (Imperial

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<sup>434</sup> TSMA D. 8218. 43.

<sup>435</sup> Ibid.

<sup>436</sup> Dündar, “Osmanlı Mimarisinde Yapıların İnşa Süreci Üzerine Bir Araştırma,” 166. The term “*resm*” used in his statement was the term usually used in the empire for referring to a plan, sketch or drawing of a building. Besides “*resm*,” “*kârnâme*” and “*mücessem-i tersim*” were also used. Although “*resm*” and “*kârnâme*” were synonyms, “*mücessem-i tersim*” was different from the two that it substituted for a perspective drawing or a model. In the nineteenth century’s architectural discourse, plan was expressed by “*resm*” or “*musattah*” terms, and “*mücessem*” was used for façade and perspective drawings. For instance, regarding the Unkapanı Bridge, built during the reign of Mahmud II, Lütî Efendi refers to an attendant, Fevzi Ahmed Pasha, who had the “*resm*” (plan) made of bridge and that it was built according to this plan. See Lütî, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütî Efendi tarihi*, 5: 888.

Chancery of State) and their final decision would be reported to the chief architect. In the nineteenth century, the *Ebniye-i Hassa Müdürlüğü* (the Directorate of Imperial Building), *Ebniye Meclisi* and *Şehremaneti* (municipality) replaced the *Hassa Mimarları Ocağı*, so it became the responsibility of the *bina emini*, Hüseyin Bey in this case, to mediate this process of communication between the *valide* and the architect.

Having procured the plan, Hüseyin Bey assures his patron Pertevniyal that “the mosque, in the plan, is as big as the Ortaköy Mosque.” And he adds, “in fact, its courtyard will be much bigger; the Imperial Ottoman army and the officials will rise respectfully to receive your salute during your honorable visit.” (“*Ortaköy cami-i şerifi büyüklüğündedir. Fakat avlusu ziyade geniş olacak. Velinimetî âlâ efendimizin teşrifi şahanelerinde asakir-i şahane ve selamlığa memurlar duracak*”). His account explicitly confirms the plan of the mosque was prepared according to the *valide* sultan’s decree. It is also evident that in addition to adjustments regarding Pertevniyal’s decree, the *valide* sultan’s possible presence in the mosque was also taken into consideration when arranging the proportions of the courtyard.

The two plans of the tomb and the mosque<sup>437</sup> (fig’s. 33 & 34) which are in the Topkapı Palace Archives, confirm that showing these plans to Pertevniyal Valide Sultan was not a mere act of propriety. On the contrary, notes on these actual plans (fig’s. 35 & 36), possibly written by Hüseyin Bey or the architect, requesting responses from the *valide* regarding the location of a specific function demonstrate that Pertevniyal actively shaped the plans of her commission from the beginning until it was finalized. These two plans indicate two specific rooms, and the *valide*

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<sup>437</sup> TSMA D. 8214 & TSMA D. 8215.

sultan is asked to choose the location, most likely, that of her library.<sup>438</sup> The document TSMA D. 8214 shows a room next to the “*taş tekne*” (stone trough), and a note stating, “this locus in next to the stone trough, if you wish/command it can be built in this spot.” (“*Bu mahal taş teknenin yanıdır. İrade buyurursanız bu mahalde yapılabilir.*”) On the other hand, the document TSMA D. 8215, marks the room next to the late prayer hall, which is assigned as “the room next to the late prayer hall in the mosque, if you wish/ command it can be built in this spot.” (“*Camide son cemaat mahali yanında oda. İrade buyurulur ise bu mahale yapılabilir*”). From these queries written directly on the plans, it is clear that the *valide* sultan was asked her opinion about the lay-out, spatial organization and the placement of several architectural elements of her mosque.

About two and a half years after this reference to the Ortaköy Mosque, the correspondence TSMA D. 8218.48,<sup>439</sup> dated 26 Şaban 1286 (1 December 1869), reveals yet another reference made by Pertevniyal Valide Sultan, this time to the sixteenth century imperial mosque complex, the Süleymaniye Mosque. (Fig. 37) In the document, Hüseyin Bey clearly reveals the *valide* sultan’s ambitions regarding the structural features of her mosque’s dome for which the dome of Süleymaniye Mosque is identified as a standard. Addressing her, he states the following:

My benefactor, I stated to him (Agob Bey) that our master (Pertevniyal Valide Sultan) commanded the dome to be very strong (*pek metin*). Though its wideness (*viisat*) is not the same, it is being just as strong (*metin*) as the Süleymaniye Mosque. It is obvious that the dome of such a building will be constructed very carefully (*ihitimamli*) and strongly (*pek metin*). Agob Bey stated that since our master commanded the dome to be very strong, it is

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<sup>438</sup> The notes refer to a specific structure of the complex and ask the *valide* sultan’s opinion on that structure’s location. The library’s later placement in the mosque suggests that the notes were referring to the library and the *valide* sultan chose it to be built in the mosque rather than in the courtyard of her tomb.

<sup>439</sup> Dated 1 December 1869 (26 Şaban 1286).

going to be built ten times more carefully (*on kat daha ziyade dikkat olunarak*).<sup>440</sup>

First and foremost, this paragraph displays the active role and agency of the *valide* sultan in cultivating networks of influence regarding her commission. She effectively conveyed her requests to Agob Bey, one of the mosque's architects, through the mediation of Hüseyin Bey. Her decree reached the architect and he responded to his patron's request by assuring her about the strength of the dome. Second, this excerpt is another illustration of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's direct efforts to shape the iconographical content of her mosque project. Regarding the structural quality of her mosque's dome, she makes a reference to one of the most well-known sixteenth century mosques, acknowledged in many Ottoman sources for the strength and width of its dome.<sup>441</sup> These fine qualities desired by the *valide* sultan were perceived by her as symbols of the piety, power and legitimization of the Ottoman imperial power. The *Hadîkatü'l-Cevâmi'* by Hafız Hüseyin Ayvansarayı, a famous eighteenth century compendium on the pious and other monuments of Istanbul, was among the books endowed by Pertevniyal for her library and its presence further strengthens the assumption that she was aware of the Süleymaniye's importance in the imperial repertoire of monumental Ottoman mosques. Sinan's mosque was re-inaugurated in Şaban 1278 (February/March 1862) following its restoration,<sup>442</sup> the date corresponding to the second year of Pertevniyal's tenure as

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<sup>440</sup> TSMA D. 8218. 48.

<sup>441</sup> For instance, the seventeenth century Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi with regards to the Süleymaniye states that, "Its azure dome at the highest summit of this great mosque is more circular than Aya Sofya's and seven Mecca cubits in height. It is the vault of the world." See Crane, *The Ottoman Sultan's Mosques*, 213. Crane quotes from Evliya Efendi, *Narrative of Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa in the Seventeenth Century*, trans. by Ritter Joseph von Hammer. Vol. I. (London: Oriental Translation Fund, 1834), 152-153.

<sup>442</sup> Ahmed Lütfi describes the inauguration as such: "Evkâf Nâzırı Ahmed Vefik Efendi ma'rifet ve nezâretiyle bir müddetten beri der-dest-i ta'mir olan Süleymâniye Câmi-i şerîfinin ta'mirât-ı dâhiliyyesi rehîn-i hitâm olmağla, Şa'bân-ı şerîfde selâmlık resminin orada icrâsıyla küşâdına himmet olundu." Lütfi, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi tarihi*, 10: 56.

*valide* sultan. It is therefore likely that Pertevniyal was aware of these important celebratory events that occurred at the Süleymaniye Mosque just prior to her own undertaking of a major mosque complex.

The last two references to mosque building projects that appear in Pertevniyal's correspondences concern the Dolmabahçe Valide Mosque and the Laleli Mosque. In the document, the architectural feature chosen for comparison is the 'diameter of the minarets'. The document TSMA D. 8218. 56 shows three drawings of the minarets of these two mosques along with the minaret of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque. (Fig. 38) There are notes on and under each drawing indicating the comparative dimension of the minarets' diameters. The notes briefly state that the diameters of the Dolmabahçe Valide Mosque's minarets are 18.5 *arşın parmağı*<sup>443</sup> (58.4 cm). The Laleli Mosque's minarets' diameters are 19.5 *arşın parmağı* (61.6 cm), 1 *arşın parmağı* larger than the diameter of the Dolmabahçe Valide Mosque's minarets. The Aksaray Mosque's minarets are 20.5 *arşın parmağı* (64.7 cm): one *arşın parmağı* larger than the Laleli Mosque, and two *arşın parmağı* larger than the Valide Mosque in Dolmabahçe.

In addition to size of her mosque and the strength of its dome, why would Pertevniyal and her architect be concerned about this specific architectural element? In fact, the minaret was an important element in Ottoman architectural discourse. Jonathan Bloom, in his book *Minaret, Symbol of Islam*,<sup>444</sup> which analyzes the origin, development and meanings of the minaret in Islam, argues that the introduction of the minaret into the mosque signaled an important change in the iconography of architecture and in time it came to represent political and imperial power. This was

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<sup>443</sup> In architecture, 1 *arşın (zira)*= 0.757738 m; 1 *Parmak (1/24 zira)*= 0.031572 m.

<sup>444</sup> Jonathan Bloom, *Minaret, symbol of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, 1989).

true for later Ottoman architecture,<sup>445</sup> for which “multiple minarets [were] a distinctive feature and their pencil-thin form [derived] ultimately from Seljuq precedents.”<sup>446</sup> According to Bloom, while “the slender Ottoman minaret marked the Muslim conquest of Istanbul,”<sup>447</sup> as a wooden minaret was erected to the Hagia Sophia, the number (two or more) of minarets was an identifier of an imperial mosque. So, in line with its meaning derived from an Arabic word signifying “sign” or “marker,” the minaret came to be ‘the universal architectural symbol of Islam.’”<sup>448</sup> Pertevniyal’s interest in the calculation and comparison of the diameters of her mosque’s minarets with two other prominent mosques in the city is a strong indication of her awareness of the potential for minarets to convey iconographical meanings.

In the document, the first mosque whose minarets are compared is the Valide Mosque in Dolmabahçe (fig. 39) or the Bezmialem Valide Sultan Mosque, commissioned by Abdülmecid’s mother, Bezmialem Valide Sultan, which was inaugurated on 5 *Recep* 1271 (24 March 1855),<sup>449</sup> two years after the death of

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<sup>445</sup> The words of the sixteenth century architect Sinan regarding the construction of the Selimiye Mosque in Edirne, are testimonial to the significance given to the minarets in Ottoman architectural rhetoric:

“[The minaret] of the previously built Üç Şerefeli [Mosque] is like a tower. It is very thick. However, people of discernment know that it was very difficult to build [the Selimiye] minarets both slender and with three [separate] staircases.” See Howard Crane and Esra Akın, *Sinan’s Autobiographies: Five Sixteenth Century Texts*, ed. Gülru Necipoğlu (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006), 130.

His words signify the importance of the minarets as an arena over which competition with monuments of the past could be staged. Here, it is the Üç Şerefeli (“Three Balcony”) Mosque built in Edirne by Murad II between 1437 and 1447 (the first Ottoman mosque to be given four minarets), which Sinan aims to surpass by making more slender minarets for his new mosque. It is testimony to his aim to advertise the power and piety embodied in his monument. See Bloom, *Minaret, symbol of Islam*, 187.

<sup>446</sup> Ibid, 185.

<sup>447</sup> Ibid, 188.

<sup>448</sup> Ibid, 191.

<sup>449</sup> Ahmed Lütüfî gives 5 *Recep* 1271 (24 March 1855) as the inauguration date: “Dolmabahçe sahasında binâ ve inşâ olunmakta bulunan Vâlide Câmi-i lâtifî resîde-i hüsn-i hitâm olarak, Receb’in beşinci (24 Mart 1855) günü Cum’a selâmlığı resmînin orada icrâsı ile câmi-i mezkûr kulûb-ı sâfiyye-i ibâd-ı zühhâd misüllü küşâd olundu.” See Lütüfî, *Vak’a-nüvis Ahmed Lütüfî Efendi tarihi*, 115. While Batur gives the year 1855 in line with Ahmed Lütüfî’s account, see Afife Batur, “Dolmabahçe Camii,” in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*. Vol. 3, 88-89 (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve

Bezmialem.<sup>450</sup> As the *valide* died before the mosque's completion, Sultan Abdülmecid completed his mother's commission. Its architects were Garabet Balyan and his son Nigoğos Balyan, who also built the Ortaköy Mosque, as stated earlier.<sup>451</sup> The mosque was built in the center of a courtyard, of which the walls and four gates were demolished in 1948 when the square was extended. It has a square ground plan and features Neo-Baroque and Neo-Renaissance elements. "Despite the clutter in their styles," Semavi Eyice particularly praised and emphasized the "slenderness and elegance" (*incelik ve zarafet*) of the mosque's minarets.<sup>452</sup>

Bezmialem Sultan was the second wife of Mahmud II. She became the *valide* sultan on 30 June, 1839 when her son Abdülmecid succeeded his father. She established a *vakıf* through which she commissioned many architectural works, including schools, fountains, hospitals and a bridge.<sup>453</sup> Pertevniyal Valide Sultan knew her well and the construction documents of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque show that she was also aware of Bezmialem's mosque in Dolmabahçe. As mentioned earlier, imperial women often turned to prominent female predecessors in shaping the rhetoric and hyperbole of their patronage and used these historical references to legitimize their power and patronage.<sup>454</sup> So, it is understandable that Pertevniyal chose to calibrate the minarets of her monument with those of the Dolmabahçe Valide Sultan Mosque, the commission of the previous most powerful imperial woman of the empire. These comparisons could point to Pertevniyal's aspiration not to be seen as less influential as Mahmud II's second wife Bezmialem Sultan in terms

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Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1994a); Öz, *İstanbul Camileri*, 20; Sözen, *Türk Mimarisinin Gelişimi*, 347; Aslanapa, *Osmanlı Devri Mimarisi*, 447, give the year 1853.

<sup>450</sup> The *valide* sultan died on 3 May 1853 at the Beşiktaş Palace. See Şentürk, "Bezmialem Valide Sultan," 108.

<sup>451</sup> Tuğlacı, *Osmanlı Mimarlığında Batılılaşma Dönemi*, 172; Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 306.

<sup>452</sup> Eyice, *İstanbul minareleri*, 40.

<sup>453</sup> For a detailed account of her commissions, see Şentürk, "Bezmialem Valide Sultan."

<sup>454</sup> Thys-Şenocak, *Ottoman Women Builders*, 67.

of the meanings, the minaret, “the symbol of Islam,” encapsulates, from piety to imperial power.

The last mosque that is mentioned in these documents is the Laleli Mosque,<sup>455</sup> (fig. 40) an imperial mosque commissioned by Sultan Mustafa III and built between Beyazıt and Aksaray in 1177 (1763).<sup>456</sup> Besides its imperial connotations, the Laleli may have been perceived as worthy of comparison by Pertevniyal due to its proximity to the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque.

From Hüseyin Bey’s note addressed to the *valide* sultan in TSMA D. 8218. 43, we learn that Hüseyin Bey assessed the congregation of a mosque nearby and reported his observation to Pertevniyal, stating “it had a big congregation.” (“*Vaki çeşme de orada ve cemaati dahi çok.*”) The mosque referred to here is presumably the Laleli Mosque since at the time it was described with its five fountains. Hüseyin Bey’s assessment and report may reveal Pertevniyal’s possible curiosity about the potential size of the congregation an imperial mosque could attract in that district. For the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque to attract the district’s congregation, it had to be perceived as a center of piety, and the role of the minaret was therefore important. So, Pertevniyal may have chosen to make her mosque’s minarets as slender as those of the Laleli to make sure that her mosque’s sanctity and elegant appearance would rival that of the other imperial mosques in the same neighborhood.

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<sup>455</sup> Ayvansarayı in his work *Hadikatü'l-Cevâmi*’ makes reference to the minarets of the Laleli Mosque and informs that, “the right minaret was built along with the mosque, while it took six years until 1183 (1769) to complete the left minaret; “Sağ minaresi beraber bina olunub, sol minaresi altın sene mürurunda ihdas olunmuştur, 1183 (1769).” See Hafız Hüseyin Ayvansarayı, *Hadikatü'l-Cevâmi*, ed. Ahmed Nezih Galitekin (İstanbul: İşaret, 2001), 64. And Semavi Eyice in his book, *İstanbul minareleri*, points to the slimness of its minarets: “Tek şerefeli iki minaresinin inceliklerinden başka hiçbir hususiyetleri yoktur.” See Eyice, *İstanbul minareleri*, 37.

<sup>456</sup> Ayvansarayı, *Hadikatü'l-Cevâmi*, 64.

### 3. Architectural Style

Faced with the ethnic and nationalist tensions, and the interventions of the European powers over the empire,<sup>457</sup> the sultanate and the empire in the second half of the nineteenth century were on the verge of disintegration. As a response to these developments, Abdülaziz and his ruling elite set out to build a kind of ‘imperial nationalism’<sup>458</sup>, which was to be defined as an “all- inclusive cultural Ottomanism.”<sup>459</sup> Like many cultural spheres,<sup>460</sup> architecture was inextricably linked with this political and ideological context, and the result was an attempt to reassert the Ottoman dynasty through the creation of a “national style” in architecture. This revivalist movement in Ottoman architecture presented “an entirely novel and highly eclectic repertoire” that brought together the “supposedly ‘authentic’ sources of the Ottoman tradition”: from the “early Ottoman and Medieval Islamic architecture (particularly that of Spain) to European Gothic.”<sup>461</sup> Collectively this style was seen as embodying an “Ottoman Renaissance.” Until very recently, this eclecticism in architecture had been perceived as a passive response and imitation on the part of the

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<sup>457</sup> Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire*.

<sup>458</sup> Suraiya Faroqhi and Fikret Adanır, “Introduction,” in *The Ottomans and The Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography*, ed. by Suraiya Faroqhi and Fikret Adanır (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2002), 40.

<sup>459</sup> Tülay Artan, “Questions of Ottoman Identity and Architectural History,” in *Rethinking Architectural Historiography*, ed. Dana Arnold, Elvan Altan Ergut and Belgin Turan Özkaya (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 95.

<sup>460</sup> For the creation and dissemination of an image of the modern sultanate and a historically continuous, culturally unified Ottoman nation, disciplines of architectural historiography, photography and painting played significant roles during the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz. For instance, in the realm of painting, the analysis of the war paintings commissioned by the sultan to Stanisław Chlebowski shows that these historical battle paintings had a unique iconography. Their recurring forms and common theme, the depiction of the historical battles gained by the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the fifteenth century and throughout the sixteenth century, show that these paintings were commissioned by the sultan so that the victorious Ottoman history would be a “bulwark for the contemporary regime” and thus legitimize imperial supremacy and aspirations during his reign. In other words, these paintings were to serve as a strategic tool in imagining a glorious unified Ottoman nation, including the non-Muslim subjects in contemporarily disputed southeastern European borders. See Bahar Bilgin, “Identity Making through War Paintings: From the Commissions of Abdülaziz and Abdülhamid II to the Şişli Studio,” (Unpublished paper. Koc University, 2015).

<sup>461</sup> Ersoy, “On the Sources of the ‘Ottoman Renaissance,’” iii.

late Tanzimat architects. The negative assessment of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque by many scholars, referred to in Chapter Two, was common for all the monuments of the Abdülaziz era, and Pertevniyal's monument was presented as an outstanding example. This trend in scholarship about this era is revisited by Ahmet Ersoy in his discussion of the political and cultural milieu within which the professed "Ottoman Renaissance" was born.<sup>462</sup> Examining the motives underlying the highly eclectic architectural vocabulary of the Ottoman revival, Ersoy argues that this novelty was not a mere stylistic change; rather it was "commensurate with other revivalist movements in modern Europe" and a result of the wider program of "redefining a collective Ottoman past in the face of the burgeoning changes of Tanzimat modernization."<sup>463</sup>

The emergence of architectural historiography along "analytical standards of modern scholarship"<sup>464</sup> during Abdülaziz's era brought forth the creation of an evolutionary, progressive Ottoman architectural tradition as outlined in the *Uşûl*.<sup>465</sup> Accordingly, the 'unique' Ottoman architectural style consisted of three major formative stages: the "growth" stage which started with the first architectural elements of the founding dynasty and culminated with the classical style in the sixteenth century; the "decay" stage which referred to a gradual decline comprising the eighteenth century and the early decades of the following century. This decay stage paralleled the arrival of the French architects and engineers and their artists, sculptors, painters and decorators to the Empire.<sup>466</sup> And the final phase was the "revival" of the Ottoman style under Sultan Abdülaziz. As Ersoy points out, this

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<sup>462</sup> Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary*.

<sup>463</sup> Ibid, 199.

<sup>464</sup> Ibid, 205.

<sup>465</sup> Launay, *L'architecture Ottomane*, 5.

<sup>466</sup> Ibid, 3-7.

historical outline of Ottoman architecture according to the progressive modernist theory of ‘birth-growth-decay’, “... must also be read as a politically motivated attempt to enunciate the historical legitimacy of the Abdülaziz era.”<sup>467</sup> Following this cyclical historical process, the revival of Ottoman architecture with a distinct identity during Abdülaziz’s era was presented as inevitable. A selective architectural historicism actualized along “Romantic- nationalistic lines” resulted in “a [deliberate] anachronistic and hybrid concoction,”<sup>468</sup> that came to define the renaissance of Ottoman architecture. As Ersoy argues, “history [was used] as a ground for eclectic reconstruction” in defining the novel architectural style, parallel with the “prevalent search for ‘novel syntheses’ in late Tanzimat culture.”<sup>469</sup> The creation of novel syntheses in different media, including architecture, was to serve the imagination of a glorious unified Ottoman nation that shared a common cultural heritage. This was an indispensable ideology which it was assumed could hold the remaining Ottoman territories together in the face of both internal and external threats. In other words, the selective reading of history and its resulting novel syntheses were intended to be a “bulwark for the contemporary regime,”<sup>470</sup> legitimizing its imperial supremacy which was on the verge of disintegration.

The architects of Pertevniyal’s mosque, Serkis Balyan (fig. 41), the last Chief Imperial Architect of the Ottoman Empire, and his brother Agob Balyan (fig. 42) were influential figures of the late Tanzimat cultural milieu.<sup>471</sup> As members of the

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<sup>467</sup> Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary*, 161.

<sup>468</sup> Ibid, 214.

<sup>469</sup> Ibid, 214.

<sup>470</sup> Mary Roberts, “Ottoman Statecraft and the Pencil of Nature: Photography, Painting and Drawing at the Court of Sultan Abdülaziz,” *Art Orientalist* 43 (2014): 12.

<sup>471</sup> For the role of the Balian Family in the nineteenth century building enterprise, see Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*; works of Alyson Wharton: “Mosque Building in the Tanzimat Period,” in *Armenian Architects of Istanbul in the Era of Westernization*, ed. Hasan Kuruyazıcı, 90-105 (Istanbul: Mas Matbaacılık, 2010); *The architects of Ottoman Constantinople: the Balyan family and the history of Ottoman architecture* (London: I. B.Tauris, 2015) and Afife Batur, “Balyan,” 35-41.

Balyan family, they were directly responsible for the official building activity of the empire and were representatives of the Ottoman Renaissance's novel and eclectic style. Both were educated in Paris,<sup>472</sup> like many other prominent architects of the time.<sup>473</sup> These two, along with their brothers Simon and Nigoğos, were the architects of more than fifty buildings.<sup>474</sup> According to Tuğlacı, "[Agob Balyan] prepared almost all the plans and drawings of the palaces, pavilions, mosques, barracks and other buildings for which Serkis Bey undertook the contracting and structural work."<sup>475</sup> Apart from the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, the two worked together<sup>476</sup> in the construction of the major monuments of the period like the Beylerbeyi Palace, completed in 1864,<sup>477</sup> (fig's. 43 &44) and the new Çırağan Palace (1864-1871).<sup>478</sup> (Fig's. 45 &46)

Although the *Uşûl*, which can be regarded as the manifesto of the novel architecture of the Abdülaziz era, makes no reference to Serkis and Agob Balyan, it presents their work, the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, as the forerunner of the emerging "Ottoman Renaissance" and classifies it as "neo-Turkish" ("*néo-turque*" in the French) as follows:

The *renaissance of Ottoman architecture*, much hoped for and undoubted by all of us, has taken its place in history under the protection of the illustrious name of Sultan Abdülaziz Khan.

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<sup>472</sup> Agob Balyan went to Paris in 1855. He graduated from the Department of Architecture of the Sainte-Barbe School in 1858. He later went to Vienna, Venice and other European cities to pursue his studies. He came back to Istanbul upon the untimely death of his elder brother Nigoğos. Serkis Balyan went to Paris in 1843. In 1845 he came back from Paris, to where he returned three years later in 1848 to complete his studies. He graduated from the Department of Architecture of Sainte-Barbe College. Then he took courses at the Ecole Centrale and the Academy of Fine Arts; and graduated in mechanical and complementary studies in 1855. See Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 395; 429.

<sup>473</sup> For the influence of the Paris education on the works of the Balyan family, see Wharton, *The architects of Ottoman Constantinople*, 76-96.

<sup>474</sup> Including six palaces, three mosques, four barracks, fifteen mansions and pavilions, two hunting lodges in Validebağ and Ayazağa, two schools, two ministries, a factory and a warehouse, as well as other minor projects.

<sup>475</sup> Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 395.

<sup>476</sup> Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 395.

<sup>477</sup> Tuğlacı, *Osmanlı Mimarlığında Batılılaşma Dönemi*, 207.

<sup>478</sup> Ibid, 178-179.

The mosque of Aksaray [fig's. 47 & 48] and the Çırağan Palace are proof of the solid qualities that distinguish modern Ottoman artists. It is already possible to talk about a school called *neo-Turkish*, on its way to be founded upon their honorable efforts.<sup>479</sup>

The lines below, taken from the two foundation inscriptions situated above the western and eastern entrance gates of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (fig's 49 & 50), show that Pertevniyal Valide Sultan also wanted her commission to be perceived as a product of this Ottoman Renaissance and its new style:

“May God bless, she *built a mosque in a new style* [“*nev-zemîn*”]  
The heavens was amazed at its beloved foundation/plan”<sup>480</sup>

“His excellency Abdülaziz Khan’s dynasty’s time  
With its most beautiful works, is envied by every other era  
...  
The aspirations of the mother of the Glorious are like herself  
Her advocacy of a plan is always the most laudable choice

That is how she built that mosque, *ornamented and adorned*,  
its amazing plan and revolving dome are objects of envy”<sup>481</sup>

These foundation inscriptions were a very important part of the epigraphic program of a mosque and conveyed a variety of meanings to the public, a subject which will be further discussed below. It is important to note that through these

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<sup>479</sup> My Italics. The English translations from the original are taken from Ahmet Ersoy’s book: Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary*, 161. The French text in the *Uşûl* is as follows:

“La renaissance de l’architecture ottomane, tout nous le fait donc espérer et nous n’en doutons pas, va prendre date dans l’histoire sous la protection du nom illustre de Sultan Abdul-Aziz Khan.

La mosquée d’Ak-Seraï, le palais de Tchéraghan, font preuve des qualités solides qui distinguent les modernes artistes ottomans, et donnent d’avance droit de cite à l’école dite *néo-turque*, en voie de fondation par leurs honorable efforts.” Launay, *L’architecture Ottomane*, 7.

<sup>480</sup> My Italics. See the 3rd couplet of the inscription situated above the big western gate, Fig. 49.

<sup>481</sup> My Italics. See the 1st, 3rd and 4th couplets of the inscription situated above the eastern gate, Fig. 50.

inscriptions Pertevniyal Valide Sultan wanted to emphasize her mosque's unique architectural style and to present it as her own deliberate choice: "[the *valide* sultan] built a mosque in a new style."<sup>482</sup>

In fact, the accounts of the contemporary writers of the late Tanzimat show that they agree with both the writers of the *Uşûl* and Pertevniyal Valide Sultan in perceiving the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque as the crowning example of the "Ottoman Renaissance" prevailing during the Abdülaziz era. According to Dr. Philipp Anton Dethier, the director of the Imperial Museum of Antiquities and writer of the *Der Bosphor und Constantinopel*, a guidebook on Istanbul prepared for the 1873 Vienna Exhibition;<sup>483</sup> the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque was the best example of the renaissance of the "national Turkish architecture":

National architecture has been neglected up until the construction of the Valide Sultan Mosque in Aksaray. This little mosque is a real pearl that reflects the Turkish style.<sup>484</sup>

The Aksaray Mosque is built by the Valide Sultan who is ruling the empire in person. As well as being small, it is the peerless jewel of the rebirth of the national Turkish architecture.<sup>485</sup>

The Italian traveler Edmondo de Amicis shared the same conviction with Dethier and stated that "Aksaray is the finest example of the Turkish Renaissance

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<sup>482</sup> As aforementioned, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan also described her four-sided fountain in Aksaray as having "a modern novel style." VA 634-137-28.

<sup>483</sup> Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary*, 65.

<sup>484</sup> "Ulusal mimarlık ise, Aksaray'daki Valide Sultan Camii'nin yapıldığı şu günlere kadar ihmal edildi. Bu küçük cami eski Türk biçimini (stilini) örnek alan gerçek bir incidir." Semavi Eyice, "Notes on Dr. Detier, one of the earlier directos of the Archaeological Museums of Istanbul," in *İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri Yıllığı /Annual of the Archaeological Museums of Istanbul*, Vol. 9 (İstanbul: Pulhan Matbaası, 1960), 37. Semavi Eyice quotes from the book of Philipp Anton Dethier, *Le Bosphore et Constantinople: description topographique et historique* (Vienne: A. Hölder, 1873).

<sup>485</sup> "[Aksaray Cami], devleti bizzat yönetmekte olan Valide Sultan tarafından yapılmıştır. Küçük olmakla birlikte, ulusal Türk mimarlığının yeniden doğuşunun eşsiz bir mücevheri durumundadır." See Eyice, *Notes on Dr. Detier*, 53. Eyice also provides the original quote: "... und obgleich klein, ist sie nichts desto weniger ein wahres Muster-Kleinod für die Wiedergeburt der National-türkischen Baukunst." Dethier, *Le Bosphore et Constantinople*, 38.

style.”<sup>486</sup> And for the occasion of its inauguration, the Istanbul newspaper *La Turquie* referred to Pertevniyal’s commission as “la mosquée élégante d’Ak-Sérai.”<sup>487</sup>

Praised very much by the privileged contemporary gaze, the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque encapsulated a diversity of styles: Ottoman, neo-Gothic, Mughal-India, Moorish and neo-Classic. As such it mirrored the late Tanzimat culture’s interest in creating a novel synthesis. It was perceived at the time as a unique product which reflected the newly defined architectural vocabulary as underlined in the *Uşûl*. According to Ülkü Bates, it was “the only religious building in Istanbul that attempted the fashionable eclectic style of this time.”<sup>488</sup>

The traditional features of Ottoman architecture can be seen in the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque<sup>489</sup>: its square ground plan, the slender minarets (fig. 51) and the central prayer hall (fig. 52) which is surmounted by an angular dome. According to Ahmet Ersoy, “with its stern rectangular body crowned by an elevated dome, the Valide Mosque was quite successful in evoking a particular image of massiveness and solidity that was, in turn, easily associated with Early Ottoman / Medieval Islamic structures.”<sup>490</sup> (Fig. 53) The columns which carry the dome in the corners resemble towers and are surmounted by onion-shaped domes which remind one of Indian Islamic architecture. These columns carry neo-classical and neo-Gothic features along with the *muqarnas* decorations. (Fig. 54) The onion-shaped dome is also repeated above the minbar. (Fig. 55)

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<sup>486</sup> De Amicis, *Constantinople*, 253.

<sup>487</sup> *La Turquie* (9 April 1872).

<sup>488</sup> Bates, “Women as Patrons of Architecture in Turkey,” 256.

<sup>489</sup> For a detailed formal architectural analysis of the mosque, see Batur, “Valide Camii”, 360-362.

<sup>490</sup> Ersoy, “On the Sources of the “Ottoman Renaissance, 366. In fact, this was a novelty in the nineteenth century religious architecture that was to be followed by the Hamidiye Mosque, built in 1884-1886, which also had this rectangular effect “with its horizontal, box-like body and centrally positioned high drummed dome.” Ibid, 367. (Fig. 58)

Departing from earlier traditional mosque façades, three façades of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque have a projecting central section which is crowned by a triangular neo-classical pediment. These façades are covered with low-relief stone carving, depicting Islamic motifs like blind arches, pyramidal vaults, and mihrabs. (Fig. 56) Among the mosque's most remarkable features are the elongated windows that carry the traces of the neo-Gothic style, strengthening the monument's verticality. (Fig. 57) Their richly carved ornamentations with multi-lobed stone arches refer to the "Moorish" style.

The interior of the Aksaray Mosque is lined with extensive *kalem işi*. While the blind arches on the corner piers and cartouches of ornament on the walls echo the Ottoman motifs from the Bursa period (fig. 59), the horseshoe arches, *muqarnas* and flower motifs on the ceiling carry neo-Islamic reflections. (Fig. 60) The similarity between the painted decoration of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque and the drawings and ornament plates executed by Pietro Montani in the *Uşûl* have led to a common assumption, asserted by twentieth century historians, that Montani was the architect of the building. Although this was not the case, as mentioned before, Ahmet Ersoy suggests that Montani must have acted as an intermediary between Serkis and Agob Balyan and the craftsmen who executed the interior wall paintings of the building.<sup>491</sup> In fact, these visual similarities between the decorative vocabulary of Pertevniyal's building and the renderings of tiles and decorative patterns in the *Uşûl* attest to the pioneer role played by the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque in introducing the new decorative vocabulary of the "Ottoman Renaissance." In addition, the deliberate references in this vocabulary to the early Ottoman elements once again reflect the late Tanzimat's consciousness of the past; a consciousness which also led

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<sup>491</sup> Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary*, 188.

Pertevniyal to choose a historical location, the site of the Auspicious Event, on the old peninsula, as the location of her mosque complex.

According to Ahmet Ersoy, while the “oriental” elements of the Ottoman Renaissance were a “self-consciously strategic form of engagement with the exotic” “to gain appeal and a presence in the universal arena,”<sup>492</sup> the Gothic elements, similar to Moorish decoration, were perceived as “a distinguished and ubiquitously recognizable marker of the broad Euro-Mediterranean medieval heritage.”<sup>493</sup> In the end, all of these forms were loaded with new meanings that would signify the “historic rootedness and ... a putatively shared dynastic/national identity,” the ultimate goal of the late Tanzimat’s ruling elite.<sup>494</sup> Unveiling these new significations embedded in the diverse architectural elements of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque proves Pertevniyal’s commission to be an innovative product of that era’s political and cultural climate.

As the mother of the ruling sultan, it is quite likely that Pertevniyal Valide Sultan would have wanted to be perceived as a supporter and advocate of the “Ottoman Renaissance” promoted by her son. Although “the secularized “orientalness” of the Ottoman Renaissance ultimately failed to become a collectively shared expression of “difference,” community and identity for the Ottoman public at large,”<sup>495</sup> Pertevniyal’s mosque played the biggest role in the declaration and presentation of this new style of architecture to the internal elite and public audiences of Istanbul. In the end, her mosque, as a ‘full-fledged expression of the late Ottoman

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<sup>492</sup> Ibid, 219.

<sup>493</sup> Ibid, 224.

<sup>494</sup> Ibid, 225.

<sup>495</sup> Ersoy, “On the Sources of the “Ottoman Renaissance””, 378. Ersoy discusses how “the ambivalences and inadequacies embedded in the definition of late Tanzimat Ottomanism” constrained it from “forg[ing] a collectively recognized, pluralist artistic expression for the empire.” Ibid., 378-379.

Renaissance',<sup>496</sup> attested to the novelties of the late Tanzimat identity and linked its patron inextricably with the imperial ideology of the time and its cultural, aesthetic, and political aspirations.

#### 4. Interior Furnishings

In addition to shaping her mosque complex's exterior decoration, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan would have also been motivated to decorate and have a say about the interiors of her complex. In all the written documents of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, from the registers, to the correspondence and the *vakfiye*, there are references to the *valide* sultan's enthusiasm about the details of her commission's furnishings. She supervised the choice of the carpets, tapestries, draperies, furniture, mirrors, clocks and all the other furnishings in the complex. Most of these items were luxurious and identified as *İngilizkârî* (English) or *Saksonya* (Bohemian). As Tülay Artan has shown in her study of the eighteenth century Ottoman princesses as collectors of Chinese and European porcelains, the motivation underlying the collection of such luxurious objects was not only for their practical use. For some imperial women, collecting these items was a way "to distinguish themselves (and their privileged status) from the rest."<sup>497</sup> The display of such objects was a statement not only of the patron's "refined taste" and "up-to date knowledge of foreign things"<sup>498</sup> but also her wealth, high status and prestige. The case was no different for the ambitious patronage of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan.

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<sup>496</sup> Here, I appropriated the expression, which Ersoy employs for the Beylerbeyi Palace. Ibid., 352.

<sup>497</sup> Tülay Artan, "Eighteenth Century Ottoman Princesses as Collectors: Chinese and European Porcelains in the Topkapı Palace Museum," *Ars Orientalis* 39 (2010): 139.

<sup>498</sup> Ibid, 135.

In the correspondence, TSMA D. 8202. 01, dated 16 Safer 1289 (25 April 1872), the importance of creating luxurious interiors for her complex is apparent. The *kethüda* Ferid Bey informs the *valide* sultan about the orders of all kinds of fabrics (from carpets to drapery) that are intended to be used in her complex. He provides in detail the costs of each and every textile bought for the different spaces, from the sultan's lodge (*hünkâr kasrı*) to the school. He states that "upon the desire of the *valide* sultan" ("*manzur-u seniyeleri buyrulduğu vechile mahsusan*"), the interior of the mosque along with the late prayer hall and the sultan's lodge were covered with Uşak and Gördes carpets, the former considered to be the best carpets in the empire.<sup>499</sup> The inventory was presented to the *valide* sultan:

The interior of the exalted mosque which is shining with divine light, its late prayer hall, the private galleries and the *hünkâr mahfili* are covered with excellent, first class mats and the ground floor galleries are covered with second class mats. All of these places' carpets are ordered according to Your Majesty's will: the best Uşak and Gördes carpets among the Sultan's private storehouse. Even the drapery of the chairs and the curtains are furnished with the products from the imperial factory. An inventory of these materials is presented enclosed to your Majesty.<sup>500</sup>

Apart from the correspondence, the first ten folios of the *vakfiye* for the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, written in first person, indicate the objects Pertevniyal Valide Sultan owned and those she endowed to her charitable foundation. The long and very detailed list of these objects, testifies not only to the *valide* sultan's "insatiable interest in the decoration of her [mosque], but also to her drive and desire to be in command at all times."<sup>501</sup>

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<sup>499</sup> Goodwin, *A History of Ottoman Architecture*, 490.

<sup>500</sup> TSMA D. 8202. 01.

<sup>501</sup> Artan, "Eighteenth Century Ottoman Princesses as Collectors," 128, refers to the collection of letters exchanged between the late eighteenth century princess Hadice Sultan and her architect building her palace, the Neşedâbâd, at Defterdarburnu. Artan argues that these "letters testify not only to Hadice's insatiable interest in the decoration of her palace(s), but also to her drive and desire to be in command at all times."

The *valide* sultan begins with stating that all the items were her own possessions, each of which she herself had bought. The items she donates to her mosque are the followings: two framed inscriptions, a silver plated ornamental mahogany casket, two mahogany coated lecterns, a silver rose water flask (*g  labdan*) and a silver incense-stick holder (*buhurdan*) weighing 677,5 dirhams, a pair of five handled lanterned silver chandeliers (*beř kollu ve fanoslu sim řemdan*) weighing 2120 dirhams, four silver hangers (*askı*), a handled silver tray (*kulplu bir sim tepsi*), a pair of brass plate and glass, two brass braziers with trays, a brass incense-stick (*buhur řamdanı*), a pair of brass lily rose water flask and incense-stick holder (*ve bir çift zambak sarı g  lebdan ve buhurdan*), four prayer rugs made of camel hair and worked with silver thread (*sırma iřlemeli devet  y   d  rt halı seccade*) and eight carpet prayer rugs (*halı seccade*), *Kirdus  * rugs (*kaliçe*), red Uřak rugs (*kırmızı Uřak kaliçesi*), madder-dyed (*k  kboyalı*) Uřak rugs, two big curtains for gates, a curtain for a minbar door worked with silver thread on green satin (*yeřil atlas   zerine sırma iřlemeli bir aded perde*), a standing clock (*bir aded tam saat*), a pair of big brass candlesticks, a pair of candles made of honeydew (*bir çift řem'i asel*), two zinc plaques on which *besmele-i řerif* and *mařallah* are written, two brass torches (*çirağ tabir olunur*), fifteen lantern hangers, a brass U-shaped tube (*pirinçden mamul deveboynu*), a pair of dust pan (*farař*), a grand chandelier (*avize*), a pair of big mirrors and gilded chest of drawers (*konsel yaldızlı*), an oil-lamp hanger (*kandil askısı*), twenty big box-plaques (*levha sandıklı*). The detailed lists of kitchen

equipment<sup>502</sup> reserved for the *imam*, the *müezzins* and the *kayyims* and the school<sup>503</sup> are yet other evidence of the patron's meticulous patronage regarding the interiors of her complex.

The diversity of the items Pertevniyal donates to her tomb are interesting since it seems that the *valide* sultan envisaged the tomb and decorated it with objects as if it was another imperial suite or a reception room.<sup>504</sup> In fact, the *valide* sultan's preoccupation with her own tomb is understandable given her awareness of the "pervasive significance"<sup>505</sup> of the tombs in Islamic culture. She must have intended to create an impressive environment for those who would visit and worship at her tomb. Among the long list of items<sup>506</sup>, there are samovar, trays (one of which is for *lokma*), a sofa, cushions, chairs, a white table, a big mirror, a consul, *gülabdan*, *buhurdan*, and a brass chandelier with twenty-four handles.

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<sup>502</sup> The items that Pertevniyal reserves for the *imam*, the *müezzins* and the *kayyims* are the following: six copper cooking pots with lids, three copper braziers, two bowls and ewers, three trays, three frying pans with lids (*ve üç tabe ma'a kapak*), three jugs with handle, spout and lid, a big copper round metal tray (*bir nühas kebir sini*), two middle-sized round metal trays (*iki vusta sini*), two copper laundry basins, eight copper food dishes with lids, one cauldron, and a copper frying pan.

<sup>503</sup> The following items are allocated to the school: a brass tray, two copper round metal trays, three copper trays for *lokma* (small ball of fried sweet dough), two copper braziers, two big copper jugs, two copper pitchers, a pair of bowl and ewer, a copper samovar (semaver), two laundry basins, two copper braziers for incense or coffee (*iki nühas sitil*), a brass dust pan, silver bastinado (*falaka*) and whip (*kamçı*), a silver lectern, and three hundred ninety rugs.

<sup>504</sup> In fact, by the late nineteenth century, a typical Ottoman reception room included a console-mirror, European style furniture such as chairs, a table and a chandelier. See Lucy Mary Jane Garnett, *The women of Turkey and their folk-lore*. Vol. II (London: D. Nutt. 1890-91), 421-422.

<sup>505</sup> Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 50.

<sup>506</sup> Among those items there are a marble sarcophagus with gilt-brass borders, two steel cupboards, two brass sitting clocks (*oturma saat*), a big mirror, a consul, two prayer rugs made of camel hair and worked with silver thread, five carpet prayer rugs, a small library (*sagır kitabhâne*). Besides those, she also allocates samovar, trays (one of which is for *lokma*), pitchers, brazier for incense or coffee, cups, dust pans, jugs, bowl and ewers, cauldrons, ladles, a sofa, iron trivets, chairs, brasiers, a white table, cushions, *gülabdan*, *buhurdan*, oil-lamps, lectern, an *ud* (lute) and a *kors* and a brass chandelier with twenty-four handles. For the small library, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan endows a Quran by the calligrapher Hafız Mustafa, a collection of verses from the Quran (*En'am-ı şerif*) by the calligrapher Hafız Ali Şükrü, two printed catechisms (*ilmihal*) and a prayer treatise (*dua risalesi*). And confirming her belief in mysticism, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan decrees *vıfk-i mühr-i şerifler* on which different verses or the names of God (*esma-yi hasna*) are written. She states that these should be given to "those who are in pain suffering from the evil eye (*nazar*), pain in the heart (*yürek ağrısı*) and headache and twinge (*sancu*) and spell/sorcery (*sihra*)" so that they anticipate their blessings. She argues that their effects (*te'sirat*) are no means denied (*münker olmayub*), instead they are proven (*mücerrebatdan olarak*).

Among all the endowed materials by the *valide* sultan to her mosque and tomb, the quality of the material (silver) and the large number of *g  labdans* and *buhurdans* she donated are noteworthy. The *vakfiye* governs the usage of these *g  labdans* and *buhurdans*, stating that *g  lab* (rose water) and scent were to be put in these *g  labdans* and *buhurdans*. As Nina Ergin’s studies on the multi-sensory traditions in religious spaces have shown, Ottoman royal women’s olfactory methods of communication enabled them to exceed the limits of ‘visually bounded space’ and challenged the unilateral stereo-type space discussions in relation to their ‘physical seclusion’.<sup>507</sup>

In her library, Pertevniyal had a translation of the *Mukaddime* of İbn-i Haldun which underlines the importance of olfactory tradition. Accordingly, İbn-i Haldun states that perfumers would be found “only in cities of a highly developed culture,” where “luxury customs and conditions exist.”<sup>508</sup> It is uncertain whether the *valide* was cognizant of İbn-i Haldun’s words; nevertheless it is most likely that she was aware of the importance of the rose water flasks and incense burners for display and of their power for producing in her mosque and tomb the olfactory environment she desired. Ultimately, those *g  labdans* and *buhurdans* shaped the experiential layers of her mosque’s and tomb’s reception and reflected the presence of their donor, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan.

For her “*daire-i h  may  n*” (imperial suite) and “*daire-i ismet  ne*” (her private room), Pertevniyal allocates among with many items<sup>509</sup> the following

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<sup>507</sup> See Ergin, “The Soundscape of Sixteenth-Century Istanbul Mosques,” 204-221; Ergin, “The Fragrance of the Divine”; Ergin, “Ottoman Royal Women’s Spaces.”

<sup>508</sup> Nina Ergin quotes from İbn Khaldun. *The Muqaddimah: an introduction to history*, trans. Franz Rosenthal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 292. See Ergin, “The Fragrance of the Divine,” 91.

<sup>509</sup> The full list consists of the following: “...a pair of sofas, four armchairs, twelve chairs, and also two sofas and four armchairs and twelve chairs “for the room downstairs,” three *  ar  eb* (women’s outdoor overgarment), two copper braziers, a big pair of brass ablution bowl and ewer, two copper jugs with handle, spout and lid, four copper pitchers (*d  rt aded n  has desti*), likewise two pitchers

luxurious objects: Lahore shawls, which were the best quality of the time; fifteen *Saksonya* glasses and plates, thirty crystal glasses and plates, forty-five big steel trays and forty steel cups (*kapaklı meşrube*); all specified to be used during the evenings when the *Mevlūd-i Şerif* is recited. Regarding the *Saksonyakârî* hard-paste porcelains, Tülay Artan refers to the fine examples in the Topkapı Palace collections and the Sadberk Hanım Museum. These porcelains were coming to the Ottoman Empire mostly from the Meissen factory in Saxony. They were heavily gilded and decorated mostly with floral patterns.<sup>510</sup> The objects Pertevniyal Valide Sultan endows to her school and her tomb were also valuable. For instance, she donates a *İngilizkârî* (English) standing clock (*tam saat*) to her school and two brass sitting clocks (*oturma saat*) to her tomb. The existence of an old English clock standing today in the corner of the mosque's main prayer hall suggests that this may be the *İngilizkârî tam saat* that Pertevniyal donated to her school. If it is the original one, it must have been transferred to the mosque, where it stands today. (Fig's. 61 & 62)

From George Douin's account we also learn that the Khedive Ismail Pasha of Egypt, with whom Pertevniyal had a very close connection, ordered "ancient style mosque lamps from Venice" to send to the *valide* sultan in honor of her mosque's inauguration. According to Douin's account, "these lamps carried appropriate religious inscriptions and being forty-eight in total, they would constitute a chandelier of any beauty to [the Aksaray] mosque."<sup>511</sup> Although it is unclear if the

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(*ibrik*), six copper drinking pots (*altı aded nühas meşrebe*), a big copper cauldron with lid and ladle (*bir aded nühas kebir kazgan maa kapak ve kepçe*), two copper cauldrons this time with a skimmer and ladle, a copper brazier for incense or coffee (*bir nühas sitil*), two iron trivets (*iki demir saç ayak*), one steel tray, two brass pitchers and tin boilers."

<sup>510</sup> According to Tülay Artan, "after Count Camilio Marcolini took over at the Meissen factory in 1774, special workshops catering to the Ottoman demand were set up, and new models and a distinctive repertoire were established." See Artan, "Eighteenth Century Ottoman Princesses as Collectors," 120. The factory responded to the increasing demand from the Ottoman Palace and the *Saksonya* sets continued to be objects of desire for the Ottoman imperial women.

<sup>511</sup> "...comme [la Sultane Valide] avait fait construire une mosque qui devait etre inauguree le premier jour du Ramadan, [le Khedive] lui fit offrir, pour la decorer, des lampes qu'il avait fait

chandelier found its way to the Aksaray Mosque or not, it is sufficient to say that all these imported riches, ordered by the *valide* sultan or presented to her by other statesmen, continued to be objects of luxury, and the ownership of them was a clear statement of wealth and status.

## 5. The Epigraphic Program

The inscriptions and Quranic verses on works of architecture can provide insight to both the historical context of a monument and the intentions of the patron or the architect “beyond the filter of chronicles, poems and epics.”<sup>512</sup> Studies on calligraphy and architecture in the Muslim world<sup>513</sup> have shown that the epigraphic program of a mosque can encapsulate layers of symbolic meanings that are intended to be conveyed to the congregation by the patron. As text, they can be read as diverse messages, from the endower to the endowed, and convey meanings and messages about the authority, piety, and the legitimacy of the patron.

In the selection of inscriptions for their architectural projects, patrons were often involved.<sup>514</sup> Therefore the analysis of the epigraphic program of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque is crucial to understand what Pertevniyal Valide Sultan wanted to convey to the congregation who came to visit and pray at her mosque complex. Along with their content, the form of inscriptions, mainly their composition, color, dimensions, material or script can also be analyzed as these too

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fabriquer expres à Venise sur l'ancien style des lampes de mosquee. Peintes et dorees au feu, ces lampes portaient des inscriptions religieuses appropriees; au nombre de quarante-huit, elles constitueraient un lustre de toute beaute pour cette mosquee.” See Douin, *Histoire du Règne Du Khédive Ismail*, 2: 626.

<sup>512</sup> Johanna Blayac, “Sovereign Epigraphy in Location: Politics, Devotion and Legitimation around the Qutb Minar, Delhi,” in *Calligraphy and Architecture in the Muslim World*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour and Irvin Cemil Schick, 217-230. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013.

<sup>513</sup> For the studies on this subject, see Gharipour and Schick, ed., *Calligraphy and Architecture in the Muslim World*.

<sup>514</sup> Necipoğlu-Kafadar, “The Süleymaniye Complex in Istanbul,” 109.

are aspects which could have been decided upon by the *valide*. In this thesis, the analysis of the epigraphic program in the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque complex is limited to the content of the inscriptions, their authors and the scripts used.

Two of the inscriptions in the mosque are foundation texts. One is situated above the large western gate and is surrounded with fountains. The inscription is dated 1288 (1871) and has twelve verses. (Fig. 49) The poet is Nüzhet Efendi and the calligrapher is Abdülfettah Efendi. Nüzhet Efendi was known as Hasan Nüzhet Efendi.<sup>515</sup> He served several positions in the Ministry of Finance and was appointed the finance inspector for Baghdad, his last position during which he died. He was most famous for his chronograms.<sup>516</sup> Abdülfettah Efendi (1815- 96) was a very famous calligrapher in the nineteenth century, who served during the reigns of five consecutive sultans from Mahmud II to Abdülhamid II. He learned *thulth* (*sülüs*) and *naskh* (*nesih*) scripts from Hafız Mustafa Şakir Efendi and *ta'liq* (*talik*) script from “the most esteemed among the 19th-century calligraphers,”<sup>517</sup> Yesarizade Mustafa İzzet Efendi (1801-76), who also taught calligraphy to Abdülaziz when he was a prince.<sup>518</sup> Abdülfettah was appointed designer of coins in the imperial mint in 1858 and was sent to Vienna and Paris in 1860 for training.<sup>519</sup>

The first two verses of the foundation inscription praise Pertevniyal Valide Sultan’s son, Sultan Abdülaziz for his piety and devotion to pious works, while the second couplet explicitly states that Pertevniyal Valide Sultan built the mosque in memory of her husband, Mahmud II:

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<sup>515</sup> Bursalı Mehmed Tahir Bey, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*. Vol. II (İstanbul: Meral Yayınevi, 1972), 284-285.

<sup>516</sup> Ibid, 284-285.

<sup>517</sup> Vernoit, Stephen, ed., *Occidentalism*, 88.

<sup>518</sup> M. Uğur Derman, “Abdülfettah Efendi,” in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 1 (İstanbul, 1988), 203.

<sup>519</sup> Ibid, 203.

His Excellency Abdülaziz Khan, who nourishes piety,  
the world has not seen anyone like Him in bestowing charities

For this reason the Valide Sultan has pleased  
the soul of His Father, the deceased Mahmud Khan<sup>520</sup>

It is noteworthy that although Pertevniyal built her mosque in memory of her deceased husband, she exclusively uses her ‘Valide Sultan’ title in the inscription, not referring to her title as ‘the wife of the deceased sultan’. Secondly, Mahmud Khan is specified not as her husband, but as the father of her beloved son, Abdülaziz. In line with these specific choices on the part of the *valide* sultan, the second couplet explicitly suggests that she built the mosque to please the soul of Mahmud II because, thanks to him, Pertevniyal had such a pious, devoted son. In fact, this is a clear acknowledgement by Pertevniyal that she is linked to the Ottoman dynasty through her son, Abdülaziz, from whom she derived her legitimization and her access to wealth and power as she became the Queen Mother once her son was enthroned.

The next two couplets exalt the *valide* sultan’s commission, the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque:

May God bless, she built a mosque in a new style  
The heavens was amazed at its beloved foundation/plan

If Zübeyde had poured water from Baghdad to Mecca,  
with this [monument], Glorious Valide Sultan gave signs of the Kaaba<sup>521</sup>

The second couplet points to a very powerful historical figure, Zübeyde bint Cafer (762- 831), granddaughter of the Abbasid caliph Ebu Cafer el-Mansur and

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<sup>520</sup> See the first two couplets of the inscription, Fig. 49.

<sup>521</sup> See the 3rd & 4th couplets of the inscription, Fig. 49.

royal cousin and wife of the Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid.<sup>522</sup> It is important to understand the possible reasons underlying Pertevniyal's choice for including such a historical personage in her mosque's foundation inscription.

As aforementioned, studies on Ottoman women's patronage have shown that Ottoman royal women, who were patrons of ambitious architectural works "looked to legendary and historical women to legitimate their newly acquired roles."<sup>523</sup> Among these female figures who were frequently celebrated Ottoman imperial women were women related to the Prophet Muhammad: Hadice (Khadija), Ayşe, Fatıma, Zeynep. According to Lucienne Thys-Şenocak, these women of early Islamic world, "served as legitimizing predecessors for imperial Ottoman women, lending both the aura of antiquity and the weight of piety to their contemporary building endeavors." In addition to the frequent appearance of those names, the name of Zübeyde also appears occasionally in the foundation deeds of Ottoman royal women.<sup>524</sup> For instance in the *vakfiye* of her Jerusalem complex, Hürrem, the wife of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, is described as "the quintessence of the queens amongst women, the Zubeyda of her time and age... is unique and to whom there is no second queen in prosperity and good fortune."<sup>525</sup>

Why would imperial Ottoman women many centuries later, such as Pertevniyal Valide Sultan, wish to associate themselves with Zübeyde of the eight century? Besides her acts of architectural patronage and lineage carrying strong caliphal and divine allegiances, Zübeyde was also known for her strong "thrill of

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<sup>522</sup> Gülgün Uyar, "Zübeyde bint Ca'fer," in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 44 (İstanbul 2013), 517.

<sup>523</sup> Thys-Şenocak, *Ottoman Women Builders*, 73.

<sup>524</sup> Ibid, 74.

<sup>525</sup> Ibid, 75. Thys-Şenocak quotes from Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 204.

political intrigue and personal power.”<sup>526</sup> She was deeply involved and had a great influence on her powerful husband Harun al-Rashid in guaranteeing the succession of her son, Muhammed (Emin), to the throne against Harun’s other child, Memun. According to Nabia Abbott, the writer of *Two Queens of Baghdad, Mother and Wife of Hārūn al-Rashīd*, “Islamic history credits [Zübeyde] with a series of ‘firsts’ on which rests much of [her] claim to worldly fame”:

[she] was the first for whom was made the finest of fine brocades costing fifty thousand dinars per piece; the first who organized a body of mounted page boys and palace maids who ran her errands and delivered her messages; the first to use palanquins of silver, ebony, and sandalwood ornamented with gold ...; the first to burn candles made of ambergris... and the first to dress up palace girls as page boys- setting the innovations for high society.<sup>527</sup>

The queen was not just known for these “innovations,” but also for her philanthropic patronage that comprised extensive public works all over the empire. She was renowned mostly for the waterworks she built on the pilgrimage road to Mecca.<sup>528</sup> Nabia Abbott states that these waterworks “were bolder in conception and more extensive in scope than anyone had previously considered.” This meritorious project was completed at a cost of one and three-quarter million dinars<sup>529</sup> and earned the Abbasid queen a worldly fame of generosity, piety and power, values that centuries later, Ottoman royal women like Mihrimah, Safiye and Turhan Sultan all

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<sup>526</sup> Nabia Abbott *Two queens of Baghdad: mother and wife of Hārūn al Rashīd* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), 160.

<sup>527</sup> Ibid, 237-238.

<sup>528</sup> According to Abbott, “the ambitious project included the central waterworks around the Spring of Hunain some twelve miles east of Mecca, a number of smaller springs, large water reservoirs, and a subterranean aqueduct that brought the water to Mecca and to the precinct of the sacred territory. Famour among this complex of waterworks was the ‘Spring of Zubaidah’ on the Plain of Arafāt- a veritable and priceless boon to the tens of thousands of annual pilgrims. Equally famous was the Mushshash Spring in Mecca itself, which ministered to the inhabitants the year around.” Ibid, 243.

<sup>529</sup> Ibid, 243.

wanted to associate themselves with as they “undertook repairs of the early charitable works built [on this pilgrimage route to Mecca].”<sup>530</sup>

Like her Ottoman predecessors, Pertevniyal affiliates herself with Zübeyde and her major pious commission, the waterworks. In the foundation inscription of her own major commission, she chooses to compare the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque with these waterworks, stating that “If Zübeyde had poured water from Baghdad to Mecca/ with [the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque], Glorious Valide Sultan gave signs of the Kaaba.” This reference would indicate Pertevniyal’s aspiration to associate her own commission with the values attached to Zübeyde’s pious work. A book donated by Pertevniyal to her library in the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, may also provide a clue as to why the *valide* sultan invoked this legendary Abbasid queen: the translation of the Arabian Nights/ One Thousand and One Nights, *Terceme-i Elf Leyle ve Leyle*, in which Zübeyde along with her husband Harun al-Rashid appears as the heroine of many of the tales. This edition was owned and donated by Pertevniyal and was probably printed during Sultan Abdülmecid’s era and translated from its original by Ahmed Nazif Efendi.<sup>531</sup>

After this reference to Zübeyde, the foundation inscription continues with the poet Nüzhet’s chronogram, which points to 1288, the year of the mosque’s completion:

Nüzhet wrote a couplet for its completion  
The look of its eight verses made the date evident<sup>532</sup>

The inscription above the western gate finalizes with a couplet once again exalting Pertevniyal’s monument as the center of piety. The comparison to the Kaaba

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<sup>530</sup> Thys-Şenocak, *Ottoman Women Builders*, 75.

<sup>531</sup> *Terceme-i Elf Leyle ve Leyle* was printed twice during the reign of Sultan Abdülmecid. See Veli Ulutürk, “Binbir Gece,” in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 6 (İstanbul 1992), 181.

<sup>532</sup> See the 5th couplet of the inscription, Fig. 49.

is intended to strengthen the mosque's sanctity and elevate it in the eyes of its congregation. It is noteworthy that here Pertevniyal once more chose to emphasize her title as the mother of the ruling sultan, Abdülaziz:

The mother of Abdülaziz built this exalted place of worship  
This house of God (the Kaaba) is worthy of inhabitants of paradise<sup>533</sup>

The second foundation inscription is situated on the eastern gate that opens to the courtyard of the complex. (Fig. 50) It is also dated 1288 (1871). While the poet of this inscription is also Nüzhet, the calligrapher is another renowned calligrapher of the Late Ottoman era, Çarşambalı or Hoca Arif Bey (died in 1892). Arif Bey was a very prominent figure of the time, who learned *thulth* (*sülüs*) and *naskh* (*nesih*) scripts from Mustafa Rakım's pupil, Haşim Efendi; and *ta'liq* (*talik*) script from Kıbrısizade İsmail Hakkı Efendi.<sup>534</sup>

The first two couplets of the inscription focus on the unique architectural discourse of the Abdülaziz era and state that this era has produced very beautiful monuments which are to be envied by other periods:

His Excellency Abdülaziz Khan's dynasty's time  
With its most beautiful works, is envied by every other era

With every moment, the fortification of religious constructions  
Spreads over the chosen ideas which adorn justice<sup>535</sup>

These verses reflect the *valide* sultan's awareness of the unique architectural style created during her son Abdülaziz's era. The subsequent verses describe the mosque built as "ornamented and adorned" by its patron, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan:

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<sup>533</sup> See the last couplet of the inscription, Fig. 49.

<sup>534</sup> M. Uğur Derman, "Ârif Bey, Çarşambalı," in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 3 (İstanbul 1991), 363; İbnülemin Mahmut Kemal İnal, *Son hattatlar*, (İstanbul: Maarif basımevi, 1955), 50.

<sup>535</sup> See the first two couplets of the inscription, Fig. 50.

The aspirations of the mother of the Glorious are like herself  
Her advocacy of a plan is always the most laudable choice

That is how she built that mosque, ornamented and adorned,  
its amazing plan and revolving dome are objects of envy<sup>536</sup>

And once again, the foundation inscription underlines the fact that Pertevniyal  
Valide Sultan built this charity “to animate the soul” of Sultan Mahmud:

It is a charity fulfilled with lights, to animate the soul of  
the deceased Mahmud Khan, the father of the magnificent,

Nüzhet composed a chronogram for its completion  
This mosque is a beautiful monument for the *valide* sultan<sup>537</sup>

Besides two foundation inscriptions, there are also inscriptions on the  
fountains next to the western entrance gate. All the inscriptions here are written by  
the poet Safvet, known as the Galatalı Mustafa Safvet Efendi. The inscription (fig.  
63) at the furthest right describes the fountain as “captivating” and “exhilarating.” It  
is completed in *Muharrem* to render happiness to the soul of Hüseyin of Kerbelâ:

This endowed captivating fountain is completed in Muharrem  
To the soul of Hüseyin of Kerbelâ, God rendered happiness

Safvet drank water and composed its date with pleasure  
The Valide Sultan built an exhilarating fountain in Aksaray

The battle of Kerbelâ took place in *Muharrem* 680, during which Hüseyin  
and his companions were killed near the river Euphrates (*Fırat*) from where they  
were not allowed to get any water.<sup>538</sup> So, the allusion made in the poem seems  
understandable. On the other hand, the placement of his name on the fountain’s

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<sup>536</sup> See the 3rd & 4th couplets of the inscription, Fig. 50.

<sup>537</sup> See the last two couplets of the inscription, Fig. 50.

<sup>538</sup> Mustafa Öz, “Kerbela,” in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 25 (Istanbul 2002), 271-272.

inscription was very unusual, as according to Necipoğlu, the name of Hüseyin was generally relegated to anti-qibla walls, since he was an important figure of Shiites.<sup>539</sup>

In her analysis of the Atik Valide Mosque Complex by the sixteenth century *valide* sultan Nurbanu, Necipoğlu attests the unusual placement of the names of Hasan and Hüseyin on the pendentives of the mosque's mihrab to the patron's connection with the orthodox Sufi order, Halvetism. The appearance of Hüseyin's name on the inscription of Pertevniyal's mosque's fountain may also be attributed to her connection with the Sufi order, considering her acts of munificence for the Halveti lodges, as mentioned in Chapter One.

The inscription (fig. 64) next to the one above also emphasizes the *valide* sultan's piety, stating that she built this "exalted" fountain "in the way of God" and thus procured the prayers:

By building this exalted fountain in the way of God  
The Valide procured the prayers to the sultan of the world,  
  
Drink its healing water and compose its date Safvet  
The Valide built a pure fountain for the thirsty of the world

The inscription (fig. 65) above the fountains on the left side of the entrance gate is one compound poem and consists of eight verses. The first two verses explicitly state that Pertevniyal Valide Sultan, as the "spouse of Mahmud Khan" built this fountain in his memory:

Mahmud Khan deserves a place in Heaven  
His spouse built a holy fountain for his soul

After this emphasis on the "spouse," the next two verses underline Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's title as "the mother of Abdülaziz Khan," "*Abdül'azîz'in*

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<sup>539</sup> Necipoğlu, *The age of Sinan*, 293.

*māder-i.*” And the fountain is described as “holy” (“*pāk-i sebīl*”) and “excellent” (“*a ‘lā nev çeşme*”).

The tughras (fig. 66) on the two entrances belong to Sultan Abdülaziz: “Abdülaziz Khan, son of Mahmud, always the Victorious,” “*‘Abdül‘azīz Hān bin Mahmūd el-muzaffer dā‘imā.*” The one on the eastern gate is dated 1288 (1871/72), while the other one is dated 1289 (1872/73).

Within the mosque, a long tile calligraphic inscription encircles the interior of the prayer hall (fig. 67) and the surah inscribed at its entirety is the Al Mulk Surah (*Mülk Suresi*). The calligrapher is Mehmed Rıfat Efendi and the script is *Celî sülüs*. Mehmed Rıfat Efendi signs his name at the end of the surah with the title “*mücellid*” (bookbinder).<sup>540</sup>

The inscription in the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque has several distinctive formal properties. First, it is the second inscription (among those of the imperial mosques in the capital) after the Nuruosmaniye Mosque’s surah which has the least number of breaks. The only break in the inscription is above the mihrab. Another unique aspect of this inscription is that for the first time the *harim* part of the inscription is placed above the *mahfil* upstairs. The inscription is also the first among those of the imperial mosques to have a green background. And lastly, the Aksaray Valide Sultan is the second mosque after the Nusretiye Mosque in which a surah is written in the *Râkım* style.<sup>541</sup>

What might be the reasons for choosing the Al Mulk Surah for the interior of the mosque, a very significant space for the patroness to convey her intended messages to the congregation of her mosque? First, this surah is accepted as one the

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<sup>540</sup> The date on Bayezid Mosque in Galata and the inscription on Şekerpare Kadın Çeşmesi (fountain) are also his works. See Fatih Özkafa, “İstanbul Selatin Camilerinin Kuşak Yazıları,” (Phd diss. Selçuk Üniversitesi, 2008), 304.

<sup>541</sup> For the formal analysis of this inscription, see Ibid, 291-307.

most important surahs in the Quran. There are hadiths underlining its sanctity. For instance, one hadith states, “There is a surah in the Quran that is composed of thirty verses. This surah intercedes on the Day of Judgment to those who recite it, and ensures God’s mercy. This surah is the Al Mulk Surah.”<sup>542</sup> *Mulk* meant “The Dominion, Lordship, Sovereignty, and the Right to carry out His Will in the visible world.” The God is mentioned in the beginning of the surah by the name “*Rahmân*” and “*Rahîm*”: “In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, and Most Merciful.” The second verse of the surah “He Who created Death, And Life, that He may try which of you is best in deed,” underlines one of the themes of the surah: life is given to man to strive to the good things to reach a noble state in the ephemerality of today and thus receive God’s mercy for the ever-lasting spiritual life. This is in line with Pertevniyal’s emphasis in her *vakfiye*, ‘her will to do good deeds’ as part of her piety, such as building this holy mosque for the Ottoman Muslim society.

Besides its wide-known holiness, what is significant about this surah is that before the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, the only imperial mosque that had the entire Al Mulk Surah inscribed on its interior was the Hidayet Mosque (fig. 68), built by Sultan Mahmud II.<sup>543</sup> As discussed earlier, Mahmud II had identified the Nusretiye Mosque with his victory over the Janissaries. In fact, the Nusretiye Mosque was not the sole mosque to symbolize the sultan’s struggle against the ‘infidel’ janissaries. His earlier commission, the Hidayet Mosque in Eminönü, also includes metaphorical meanings that are connected to a particular incident actualized by the sultan. The neighborhood in which this mosque was erected had been known

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<sup>542</sup> Ebû Davud, *Salât*, 327 (1400)

<sup>543</sup> Fatih Özkafa, in his thesis, analyzes the surahs encircling the prayer halls of the imperial mosques in the capital. Both the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque and the Hidayet Mosque have the entire Al Mulk Surah inscribed in the *Celî sülûs* script. The third mosque which had this surah was the Yıldız Hamidiye Mosque built by Sultan Abdülhamid II later than the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque. See Özkafa, “İstanbul Selatin Camilerinin Kuşak Yazıları,” 419-420.

as “*Melekgirmez*” (Angels do not enter). Cevdet Pasha in his *Tarih-i Cevdet* describes Melekgirmez as disordered (“*karışık*”) and corrupted (“*fesat*”), where *bekâr odaları*<sup>544</sup> and the Janissaries’ *31 Ocağı* were situated.<sup>545</sup> Following the epidemic cholera at the beginning of the year 1227 (1812), all the Janissary barracks and *bekâr odaları* in this neighborhood were demolished by Sultan Mahmud II.<sup>546</sup> Ali Satı Efendi in his addition to Ayvansarayı’s *Hadikatü’l-cevâmi* states that once the neighborhood was entered, “there appeared many harlots and other forbidden things for which it was demolished and a wooden mosque was erected in their place.”<sup>547</sup> Mahmud II named this mosque, *Hidayet*, meaning “the right way, the way to Islam.” As explicit as its name, the Hidayet Mosque was a symbol of this event in which Mahmud II abolished the immorality prevailing in the neighborhood. The mosque was a mirror of the sultan’s personal religious devotion that aimed to convert the area into a pious district. The foundation inscription, which is dated 1229 (1812/13) and situated above the entrance door of the mosque, calls the congregation to prayer five times a day (“*Gele beş vakit cemaat, ede sıdk ile ibadet*”). And before giving the date of the “distinguished” (“*güzide*”) mosque, it refers to Sultan Mahmud II as the defender of the faith: “Annihilates the enemy, He, the Sultan of whom wars on behalf of Islam are told,” (“*Kıla düşmanı müdemmer, o şeh-i gaza hikâye*”).<sup>548</sup>

Therefore, the Hidayet Mosque and Pertevniyal’s Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque were most probably the only imperial mosques in the capital which had the

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<sup>544</sup> “Inn where rooms are let to provincials who come to work in town.” *Redhouse*, 150.

<sup>545</sup> Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet: Osmanlı tarihi*, ed. Dündar Günday and Mûmin Çevik. Vol. V (İstanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat, 1994), 2510.

<sup>546</sup> *Ibid*, 2510.

<sup>547</sup> “ve sonra Yeniçeri ağası olan Mehmed Efendi mahall-i mezburu basdıkdâ, derununda vafır fahişe ve menhiyat-ı sâ’ire zuhur etmekle, hedm olunub, yerine bu câmi’i şerif haşebi olmak üzere bina buyuruldu.” See Ayvansarayı, *Hadikatü’l-Cevâmi*, 327.

<sup>548</sup> *Ibid*, 329.

Al Mulk Surah encircling the interior of the prayer halls at the time.<sup>549</sup> (Fig. 69 & 70)

First, this overlap may indicate that either Pertevniyal, her calligrapher, or both were aware of the earlier epigraphic program in Sultan Mahmud II's mosque. Second, following her husband's iconographical conceptualization of his mosque, turning an immoral district to a devout one through the erection of the Hidayet Mosque on the space once occupied by the Janissary barracks, Pertevniyal may have intended to erect a mosque on the spot which was also occupied by the Janissary barracks and thus convert Aksaray, once an "immoral" neighborhood, to a pious one. This attempt in return would be a visual and symbolic affirmation of Pertevniyal's piety and religious zeal.

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<sup>549</sup> Özkafa, "İstanbul Selatin Camilerinin Kuşak Yazıları," 419-420. The analysis is limited to imperial mosques only. Besides, the Hidayet Mosque was rebuilt by Sultan Abdulhamid in 1305/1887. The original foundation inscription was kept, and it is a high probability that the surah encircling the interior of the mosque also remained the same. Yet, I could not locate any primary source confirming that the original surah was also the Al Mulk Surah when the mosque was first commissioned by Sultan Mahmud II in 1812/13.

## CONCLUSION

The less subordinate roles of the princes of the nineteenth century led Pertevniyal and Abdülaziz to enjoy relatively more freedom together, which gave Pertevniyal considerable physical proximity to her son and strengthened what many sources imply: ‘Pertevniyal’s great influence over her son’. Abdülaziz, as a prince and later as a sultan, relied on his mother’s counsel, which gave Pertevniyal the access to important information and sources of power once her ‘lion’ was enthroned. As a *valide* sultan she became active, like her sixteenth and seventeenth century predecessors, in the direct exercise of political power. She built a considerable network, including viziers, pashas, commanders, and even strong governors of the empire to increase her influence in the nineteenth century dynastic politics. Pertevniyal Valide Sultan’s perceived pivotal role in the late Tanzimat political scene led significant dignitaries of the time to address her directly and involve her in their political requests. She “created and manipulated domestic political factions”<sup>550</sup> to the point that she succeeded to be directly involved in the appointment and dismissal of the grand viziers and other important statesmen.

The *valide* sultan’s eagerness to sustain her dominant position in the harem and outside the harem walls led her to face compelling contestations with other figures of the dynasty whom she perceived as a threat to her and her son’s authority. Meanwhile, she continued her vital role as a mentor and protector of her son until Abdülaziz’s dethronement and death. Her intent to protect the interests of her son, coupled with her political influence had significant effects on the Ottoman dynastic

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<sup>550</sup> Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, vii, uses this expression for the sixteenth-seventeenth century’s politically strong *valide* sultans.

politics, the results of which are the subject of further research on the historical sensibilities of the late Tanzimat era.

Besides her exercise of sovereignty in the 'political arena', Pertevniyal controlled and used her wealth to undertake charitable religious endowments that would symbolize her piety and munificence, values that were indispensable to the strength and survival of the Ottoman dynastic image. From the first day of her tenure as a *valide* sultan, she engaged in numerous efforts to cultivate a pious and benevolent image. While she carried out more traditional acts of charity, like the benefactions she made to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, she also displayed unique traits of patronage, such as the cultivation of different Sufi networks including the Halveti, Mevlevi, Nakshbandi, Sunbuli and Shadhili orders. Further research needs to be conducted to locate the *valide* sultan's particular patronage with respect to these dervish convents, within the wider context of the nineteenth century dynastic policies regarding Sufi orders but she was undeniably an active patron and supporter of many of them.

Among her acts of munificence, the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, constituted the *valide* sultan's most ambitious project. Evident from the mosque's *vakfiye*'s long prologue, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan wanted to present her benevolent act as a means not to satisfy her worldly ambitions, but as a way to gain spiritual gratification. In fact, as Leslie Peirce has argued about an earlier era of Ottoman patronage, these pious works were "undertaken for the ostensible purpose of pleasing God through an act of piety, but they had the worldly benefit of announcing the status and wealth of the builder."<sup>551</sup> The analysis of Pertevniyal's mosque's written records, namely its *vakfiyes*, construction register documents and the correspondence

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<sup>551</sup> Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, 198-199.

between the *valide* sultan and her *kethüdas* clearly affirms Peirce's conviction.

Beyond the motivation of earning rewards in the next world, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan wanted to construct a nineteenth century 'prestige mosque' in Aksaray appropriate for her status and tenure as a *valide* sultan.

To achieve her objective, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan undertook a carefully orchestrated act of architectural patronage and effectively configured the desired symbolic meanings and iconography throughout her complex. Although concrete evidence for determining "the extent to which the hand of the patron [was] evident in the works s/he sponsored"<sup>552</sup> is still lacking for many earlier Ottoman architectural commissions, particularly those undertaken by women, the copious written records belonging to the Aksaray complex testify to Pertevniyal's own authorship<sup>553</sup> in the creation of many aspects of her monument's significance.

By choosing Aksaray as the location of her mosque complex, Pertevniyal intended to revitalize and reassign the identity of the neighborhood as the site of the Auspicious Event in honor of Sultan Mahmud II. This mosque complex could then resonate with the importance of this incident and evoke, in the minds of the local as well as foreign audiences, the piety, power and victory of the imperial Ottoman dynasty and her husband and son as rulers and herself as its patroness. This reaffirmation was of vital importance at the time, as the dynasty was facing legitimacy issues, fiscal problems and separatist ethnic nationalisms which were weakening the empire politically and economically. Meanwhile, Pertevniyal's devoted efforts to leave her lasting mark on Aksaray's social memory, and its actual urban landscape through the establishing of her complex earned the *valide* sultan

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<sup>552</sup> Ruggles, "Vision and Power: An Introduction," 5.

<sup>553</sup> Aktan, "The Atik Valide Mosque Complex," 194, uses this term in assessing the role of Nurbanu Sultan in the creation of her monument's iconography.

diverse layers of identity and empowerment that were associated with the late Tanzimat era's urban reforms, such as modernization, dynastic regeneration and sovereignty.

Once she chose a symbolic site for her commission, Pertevniyal embarked on an iconographically potent dialogue with the 'imperial' monuments of the past regarding her mosque's constructional and structural aspects. The features emphasized by the *valide* sultan, from the size of her mosque, its domical configurations to the diameter of its minarets, further underlined her eminent social and political status. The deliberate allusions to well-known architectural projects of the past, which appear both in the mosque's written documents and epigraphic program, also helped Pertevniyal to conceptualize her mosque as a competitive enterprise, which tied her to and reaffirmed the values these earlier monuments signified, from generosity, piety, power to the legitimacy of the patron.

As the crowning example of the late Tanzimat's novel and highly eclectic architectural style, Pertevniyal's mosque played the biggest role in the promotion and dissemination of the 'Ottoman Renaissance', which was the reassertion of the Ottoman dynasty through a "national style" in architecture. As the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque incorporated "the novelties" of the late Tanzimat's cultural and political identity, it linked its patron, Pertevniyal, inextricably with the imperial ideology of that time.

Pertevniyal's envisaging of her complex as a center of worship and education led her to organize in detail all the specifications regarding her mosque, library, school and tomb. While she addressed olfactory and acoustic methods of communication in her mosque and tomb to shape her self-representation, the investment she undertook for her school Mahmudiye and the rich collection of books

she endowed to her library underlined the *valide* sultan's willingness to promote the educational reforms started by Sultan Mahmud II and continued by the late Tanzimat reformers. Yet, Pertevniyal not only considered the different functions of her complex, her concerns as a patron extended to the furnishings of their interiors with luxurious items which in return would advertise the *valide* sultan's privileged status and display her wealth and prestige.

Lastly, from its groundbreaking to its inauguration, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan used public ceremonial as a vital part of the construction of meaning for her mosque complex. She cultivated networks of influence and made sure that an outstanding protocol of notables would attend the ceremonies. For the inauguration of her monument, she appeared in public in a ritual performance and retinue appropriate to her status. She employed the pomp and magnificence of the ceremonial procession to display the dynasty's prestige and power to the Ottoman public. As the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque was one of the two imperial mosques completed during the reign of Abdülaziz, the role it played in affirming the grandeur of the imperial Ottoman family was substantial.

As this analysis of the monument and its patron indicates, the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque complex became a unique product of the intention and agency of its founder and the late Tanzimat's political and cultural climate. While it cultivated specific identities indispensable for the empire at the time, it also served Pertevniyal's personal and political ambitions and fulfilled her fervent desire to leave a lasting mark in the imperial capital.

## APPENDIXES

### A. TABLES

**Table 1.** The nineteenth century imperial annalists and the periods covered by their works (Kafadar and Karateke, “Late Ottoman and Early Republican Turkish Historical Writing,” 562)

| Annalist                        | Dates in office   | Period covered                           |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Ahmed Vasıf (4th time; d. 1806) | 1799–1806         | 1800–4                                   |
| Mehmed Pertev (d. 1807)         | 1807 (5 months)   | Left scattered notes                     |
| Ömer Amir (d. 1815)             | 1807–8 (3 months) | Left scattered notes                     |
| Ahmed Asım (d. 1819)            | 1808–19           | 1805–Jul 1808                            |
| Şanizade (d. 1826)              | 1819–25           | Jul 1808–Aug 1821                        |
| Mehmed Esad (d. 1848)           | 1825–48           | Sep 1821–Jul 1825                        |
| Recai Mehmed (d. 1874)          | 1848–53           | No known work                            |
| Nail Mehmed (d. 1855)           | 1853–5            | No known work                            |
| Ahmed Cevdet (d. 1895)          | 1855–66           | [1774–1826] *                            |
| Ahmed Lutfi (d. 1907)           | 1866–1907         | Aug 1825–May 1876<br>[1876–1908 missing] |
| Abdurrahman Şeref (d. 1925)     | 1909–19           | Jul 1908–Aug 1909 **                     |

\* Not a sequel to the foregoing imperial annals.

\*\* Further work by this historian is likely to surface.

**Table 2.** The amount of money dispersed into the foundation of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque during the groundbreaking ceremony (Şehsuvaroğlu, *Asırlar boyunca İstanbul*, 155; Doğan Yavaş, “Aksaray Valide Külliyesi İnşaat Defterleri,” 440)

“Cami temel atma töreni esnasında vakit akçesi olarak temele atılan para:

|     |                                  |       |
|-----|----------------------------------|-------|
| 1   | Kebir Lira-i Osmani              | 500   |
| 1   | İki buçuk bir yerde              | 250   |
| 10  | Lira-i Osmani                    | 1.000 |
| 19  | Lira-i Osmani rub <sup>554</sup> | 475   |
| 25  | Beyaz yirmi kuruşluk             | 500   |
| 40  | Beyaz beşlik                     | 200   |
| 50  | Beyaz ikilik                     | 100   |
| 100 | Beyaz kuruş                      | 100   |
| 200 | Beyaz yirmi paralık              | 100   |

3.225

Ceman üç bin iki yüz yirmi beş kuruştur.”

<sup>554</sup> Rub is “quarter; quarter of a kurush.” Redhouse, 961.

**Table 3.** The Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque complex employees, job descriptions, monthly salaries (Data collected and tabulated from the Aksaray Valide Sultan mosque complex *vakfiye*)

| Employee                               | Job Description                                                                             | Number    | Monthly Salary |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| <b>Mosque Personnel</b>                |                                                                                             |           |                |
| <i>Hatip</i>                           | Preacher                                                                                    | 1         | 300            |
| <i>İmam</i>                            | Lead the prayer                                                                             | 1         | 400            |
| <i>İmam-i saniye</i>                   | Second <i>imam</i>                                                                          | 1         | 400            |
| <i>Müezzin-i evvelik</i>               | Call the prayer                                                                             | 1         | 350            |
| <i>Müezzin-i saniye</i>                | Second <i>müezzin</i>                                                                       | 1         | 300            |
| <i>Müezzin-i sâlis</i>                 | Third <i>müezzin</i>                                                                        | 1         | 300            |
| <i>Müezzin-i râbi'</i>                 | Fourth <i>müezzin</i>                                                                       | 1         | 300            |
| <i>Müezzin-i hâmis</i>                 | Fifth <i>müezzin</i>                                                                        | 1         | 250            |
| <i>Müezzin-i sâdis</i>                 | Sixth <i>müezzin</i>                                                                        | 1         | 250            |
| <i>Kayyim-i evvel</i>                  | Caretaker of the mosque                                                                     | 1         | 260            |
| <i>Kayyim saniye</i>                   | Second <i>kayyim</i>                                                                        | 1         | 250            |
| <i>Kayyim-i sâlis</i>                  | Third <i>kayyim</i>                                                                         | 1         | 250            |
| <i>Kayyim-i râbi'</i>                  | Fourth <i>kayyim</i>                                                                        | 1         | 250            |
| <i>Vaiz</i>                            | Preacher                                                                                    | 1         | 150            |
| <i>Mahyacı</i>                         | Responsible for the lights strung between minarets during Ramazan to form words or pictures | 1         | 100            |
|                                        |                                                                                             | <b>15</b> | <b>4.110</b>   |
| <b>Library Personnel</b>               |                                                                                             |           |                |
| <i>Hafız-ı kütüb</i>                   | Librarian                                                                                   | 1         | 300            |
| <i>Hafız-i kütüb-i saniye</i>          | Second librarian                                                                            | 1         | 250            |
|                                        |                                                                                             | <b>2</b>  | <b>550</b>     |
| <b>School Personnel</b>                |                                                                                             |           |                |
| <i>Muallim-i evvel</i>                 | School teacher                                                                              | 1         | 800            |
| <i>Muallim-i saniye</i>                | Second teacher                                                                              | 1         | 500            |
| <i>Farisi muallimi</i>                 | Persian teacher                                                                             | 1         | 300            |
| <i>Riyaziye muallimi</i>               | Mathematics teacher                                                                         | 1         | 300            |
| <i>Sülüs muallimi</i>                  | Calligraphy teacher for thulth script                                                       | 1         | 200            |
| <i>Hat-ı divani muallimi</i>           | Calligraphy teacher for <i>divani</i> script                                                | 1         | 200            |
| <i>Rika ve imla ve inşa muallimi</i>   | Teacher for Arabic script, orthography and literary composition                             | 1         | 400            |
| <i>Resim muallimi</i>                  | Painting teacher                                                                            | 1         | 150            |
| <i>Mubassır</i>                        | Superintendent at a school                                                                  | 1         | 250            |
| <i>Halife-i mekteb</i>                 | Assistant teacher                                                                           | 1         | 300            |
| <i>Muallim-i edib</i>                  | Literature teacher                                                                          | 1         | 500            |
| <i>Hoca-i meşk-i sülüs</i>             | Thulth script and calligraphy teacher                                                       | 1         | 200            |
| <i>Hatm-i şerif tertipçisi</i>         | Organizer for the recitation of the Quran                                                   | 1         | 150            |
| <i>Hizmetçi</i>                        | Servant                                                                                     | 1         | 200            |
| <i>Bevvap</i>                          | Gatekeeper                                                                                  | 1         | 150            |
|                                        |                                                                                             | <b>15</b> | <b>4.600</b>   |
| <b>Tomb and Muvakkithane Personnel</b> |                                                                                             |           |                |
| <i>Türbedar-ı evvel</i>                | Keeper of a mausoleum                                                                       | 1         | 500            |
| <i>Türbedar-ı sani</i>                 | Second <i>türbedar</i>                                                                      | 1         | 400            |
| <i>Türbedar-ı sâlis</i>                | Third <i>türbedar</i>                                                                       | 1         | 400            |
| <i>Muvakkıt-i evvel</i>                | Timekeeper at a mosque                                                                      | 1         | 200            |
| <i>Muvakkıt-i sani</i>                 | Second <i>muvakkıt</i>                                                                      | 1         | 80             |
| <i>Suyolcusu</i>                       | Man responsible for the maintenance of water conduits                                       | 1         | 20             |
| <i>Bahçıvan</i>                        | Gardener                                                                                    | 1         | 200            |
|                                        |                                                                                             | <b>7</b>  | <b>1.800</b>   |
| <i>Bir zat -ı dirayet</i>              | "A person of sagacity" to be employed as the manager of the complex                         | <b>1</b>  | <b>1000</b>    |
| <b>Total</b>                           |                                                                                             | <b>40</b> | <b>12.060</b>  |

## B. ILLUSTRATIONS

**Figure 1.** Sultan Mahmud II, Schlesinger, 1839, Musée national des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, 4842. (Renda, “Propagating the Imperial Image,” 450)



**Figure 2.** Sultan Abdülmecid, attributed to Rupen Manas, 1855-60, Oil on canvas, 144\*125cm, Topkapı Palace Museum. (Renda, “Propagating the Imperial Image,” 512)



**Figure 3.** Sultan Abdülaziz, Pierre Désire Guillemet, 1873, Oil on canvas, 140\*193cm, Topkapı Palace Museum. (Renda, “Propagating the Imperial Image,” 520)



**Figure 4.** The Emin Baba dervish lodge in Edirnekapı (Database For Ottoman Inscriptions, ID K5145)



**Figure 5.** The restoration inscription at the *semahane* of Emin Baba convent (Database For Ottoman Inscriptions, ID K5145)

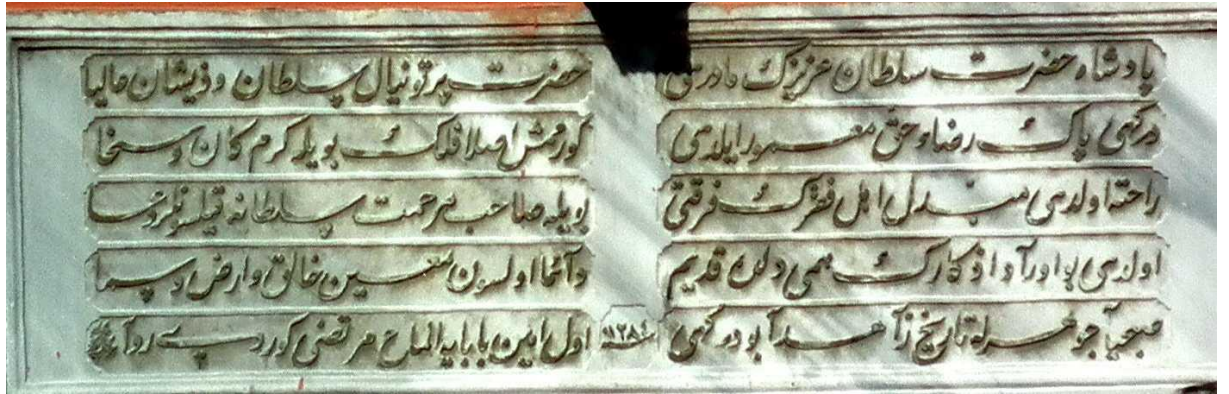


**Figure 6.** Location of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Complex (İşli, *İstanbul'un Ortası*, Aksaray, 42-43)

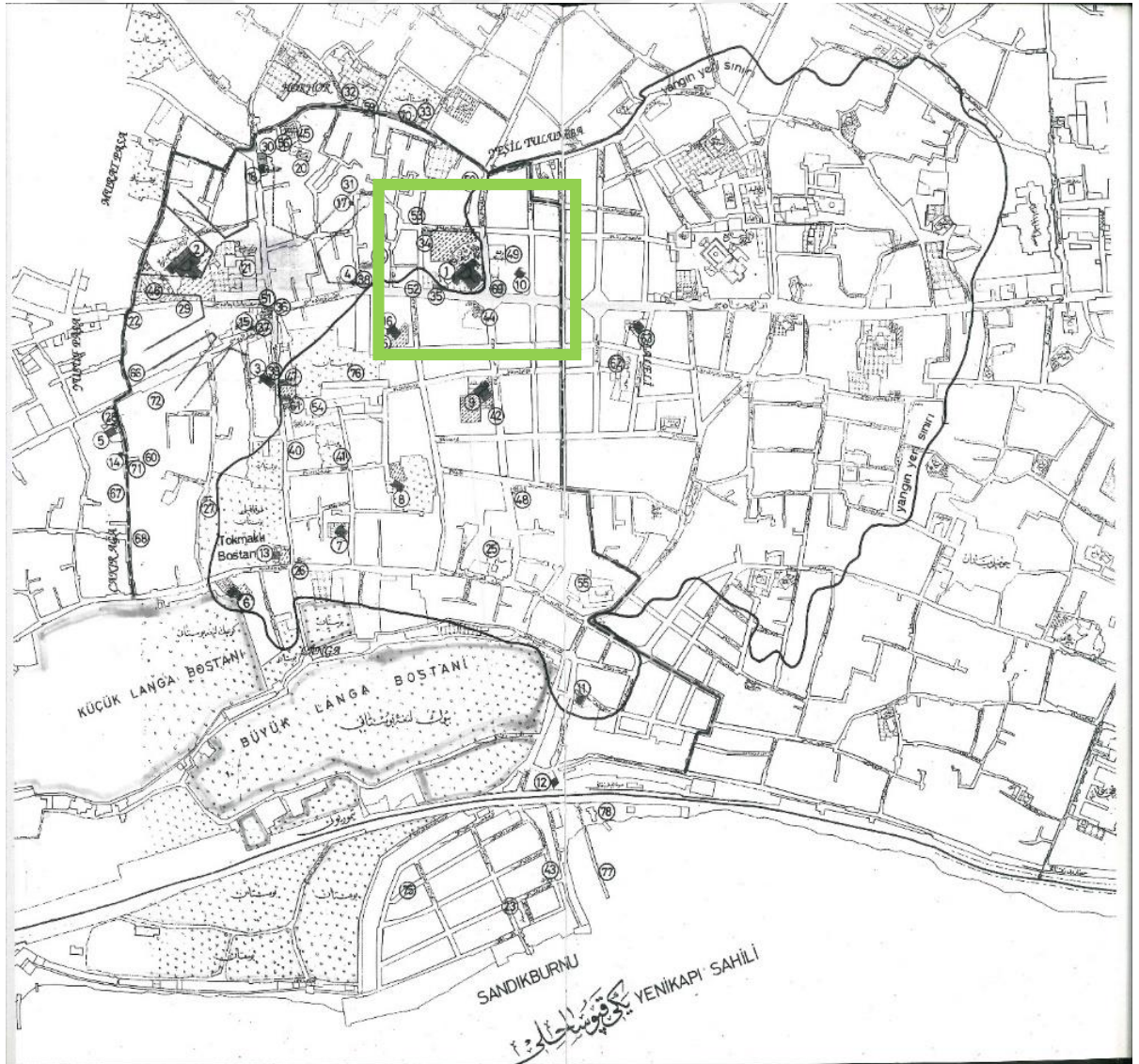


**Figure 7.** The locations of the different structures of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque Complex

- 1) The mosque (886 *ada* 1 *parcel*)
- 34) The fountain
- 35) The fountain
- 44) The tomb and the *muvakkithane*
- 49) The school (886 *ada* 6 *parcel*)
- 69) The bakery and other shops (belonging to Pertevniyal's *vakıf*)

(İşli, *İstanbul'un Ortası, Aksaray*, 42-43)

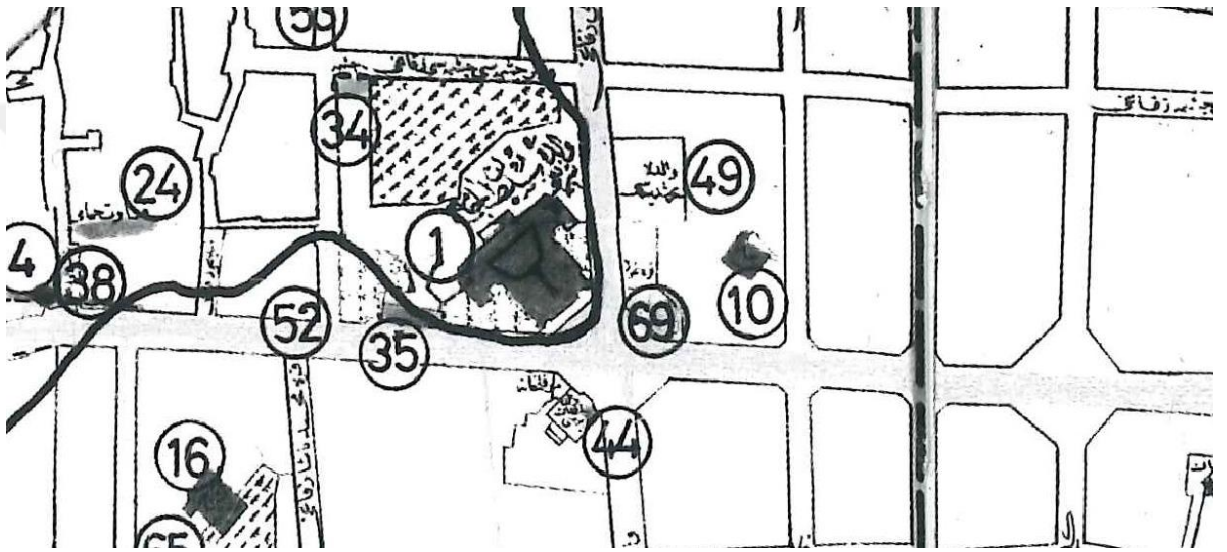


**Figure 8 & 9.** The locations of the tomb prior to its demolition (İşli, *İstanbul'un Ortası, Aksaray*, 99) ("Eski İstanbul Fotoğrafları Arşivi")

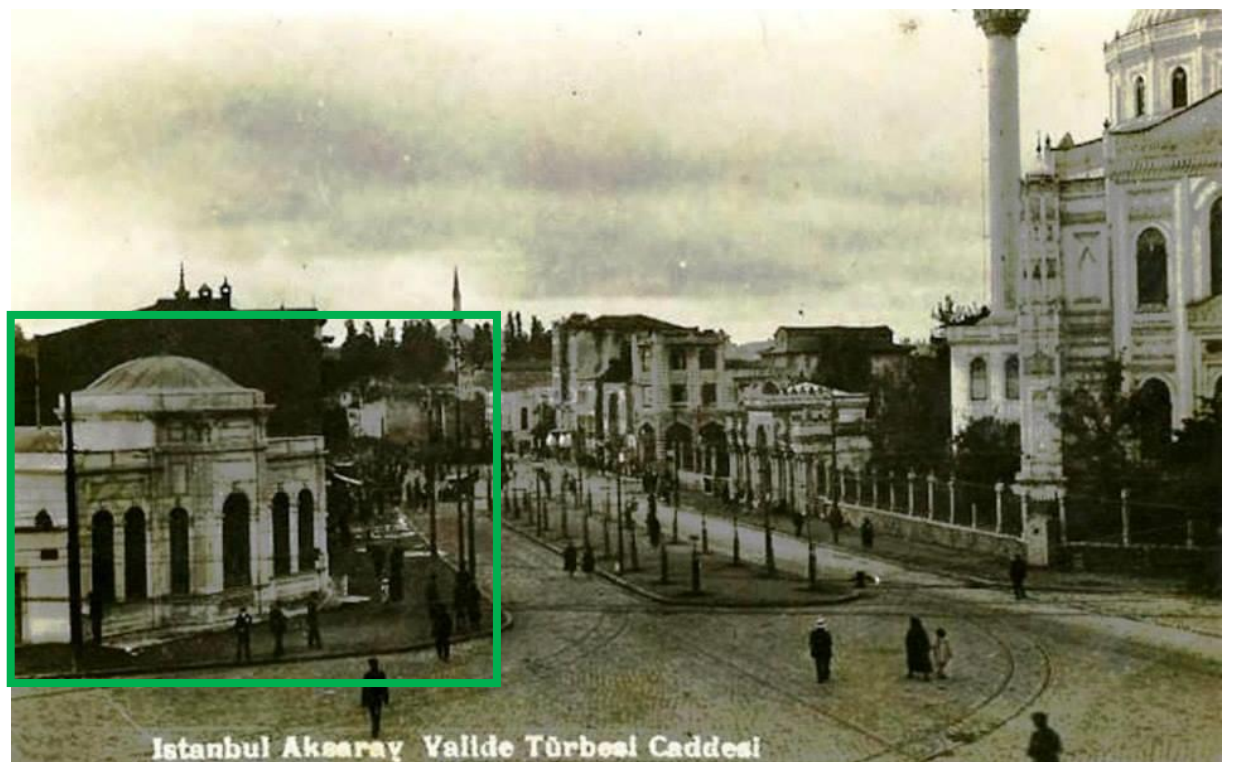


**Figure 10.** The location of the school and the mosque in 1936 (Pervititch, *Sigorta haritalarında İstanbul*, 194)

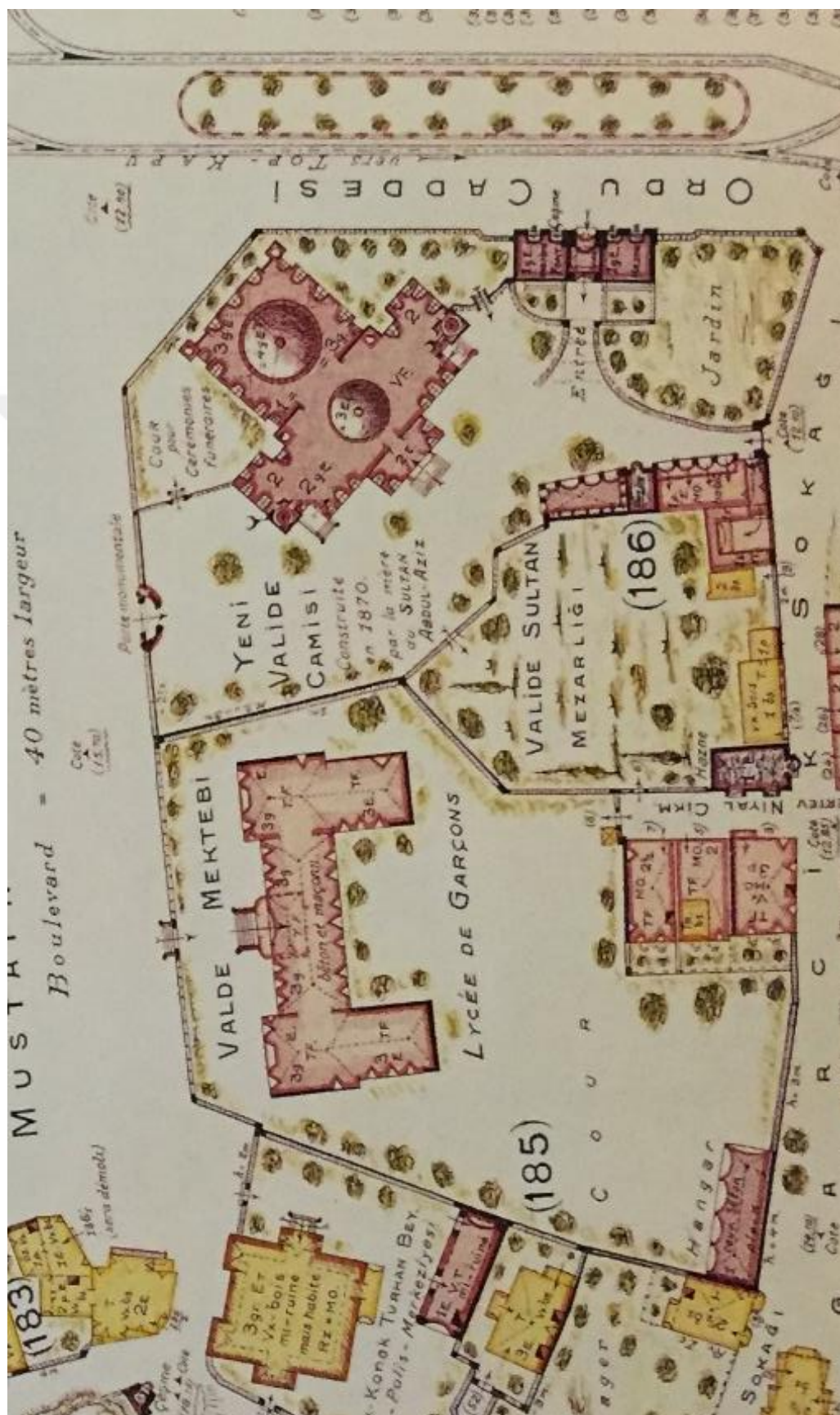


**Figure 11.** Aksaray, 1875, (top) (Kuban, “Aksaray,” 162)

**Figure 12.** Aksaray, 1993 (after the urbanization program of the 1950s-1960s), (bottom) (Kuban, “Aksaray,” 163)

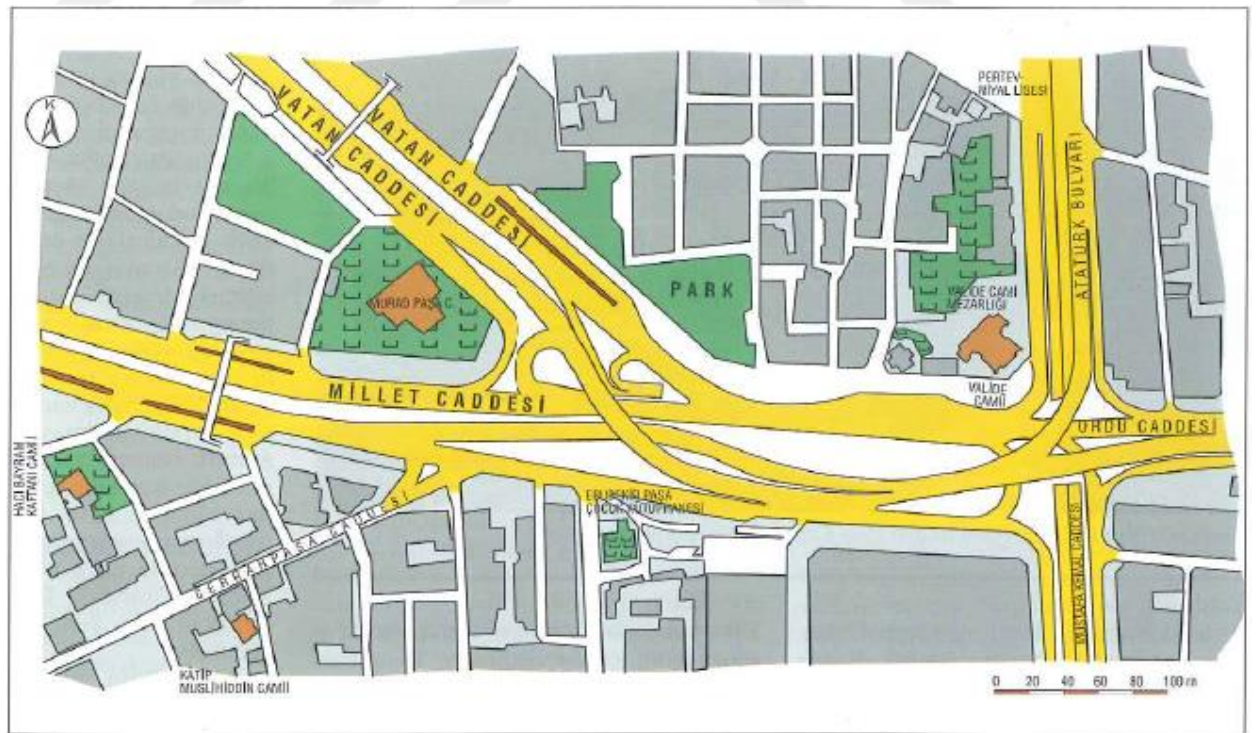
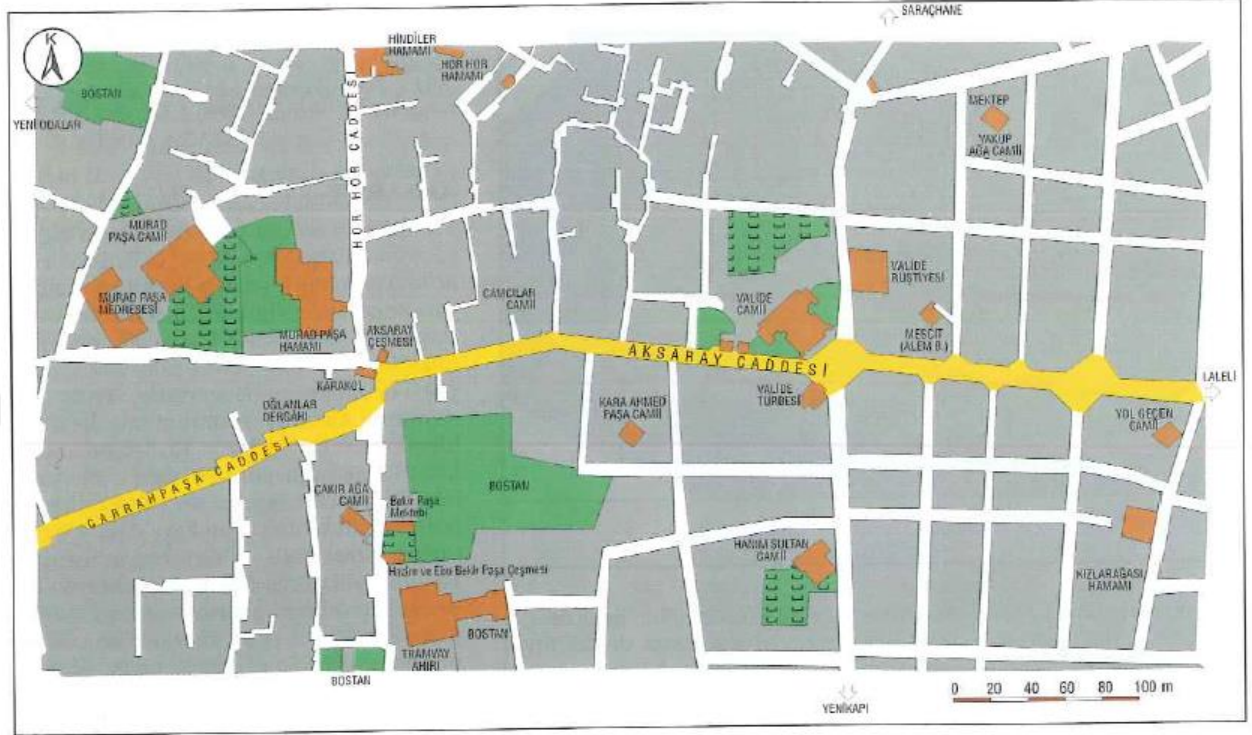


**Figure 13.** The tomb reconstructed in the courtyard of the mosque (Photograph by the author)



**Figure 14.** The fountains and the southwestern entrance in the nineteenth century, photograph by Sébah & Joaillier, (top) (İşli, *İstanbul'un Ortası*, Aksaray, 100)

**Figure 15.** The location of the southwestern entrance today, (bottom) (Photograph by the author)



**Figure 16.** The plan of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque by Afife Batur (Batur, “Valide Camii,” 360)

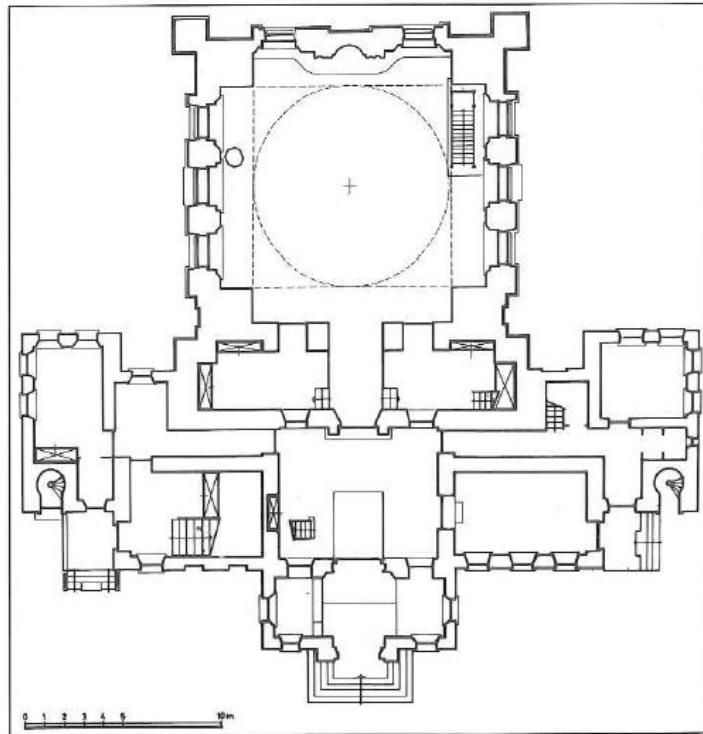


**Figure 17.** The dome of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (1978) (Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 539)

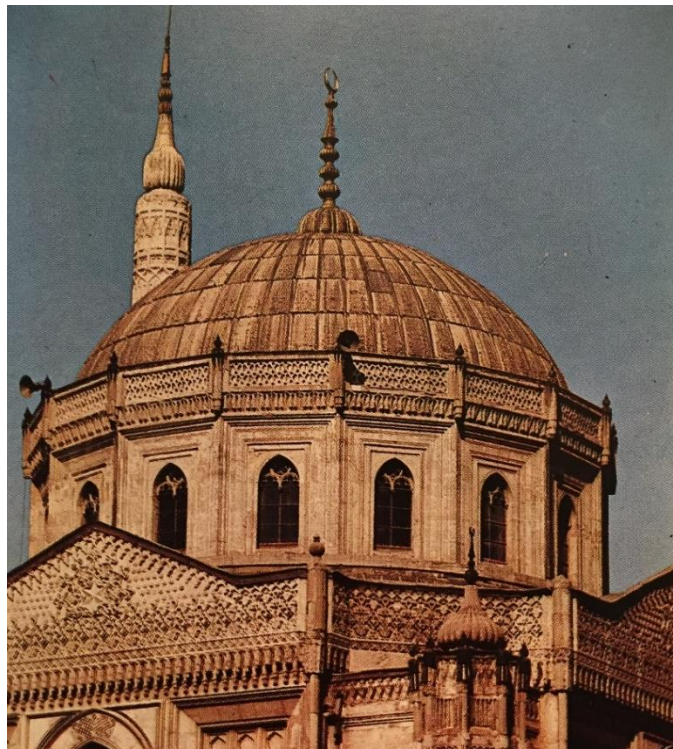


**Figure 18.** The main entrance gate of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque  
(Photograph by the author)



**Figure 19.** Two side entrances for *harem* (on the left) and *selamlık* (on the right)  
(Photographs by the author)



**Figure 20.** The entrance hall before the late prayer hall (left) (Photograph by the author)

**Figure 21.** A view from the late prayer hall (connecting to the main prayer hall) (right) (Photograph by the author)

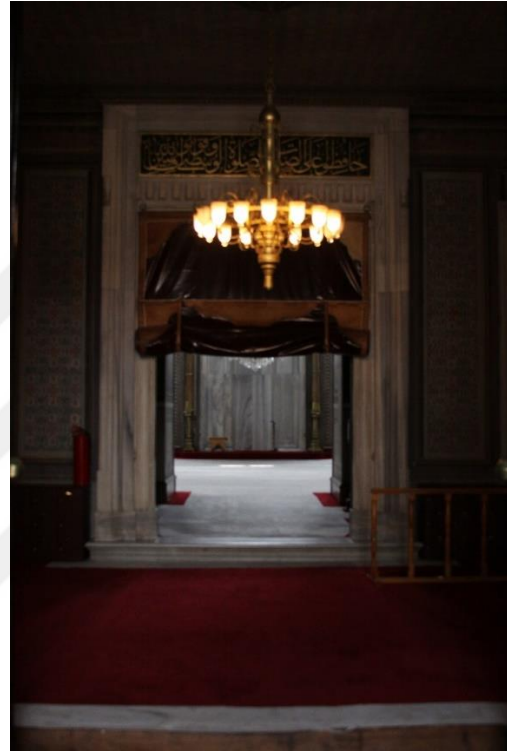


**Figure 22.** The location of the library (marked with green) (Photograph by the author)

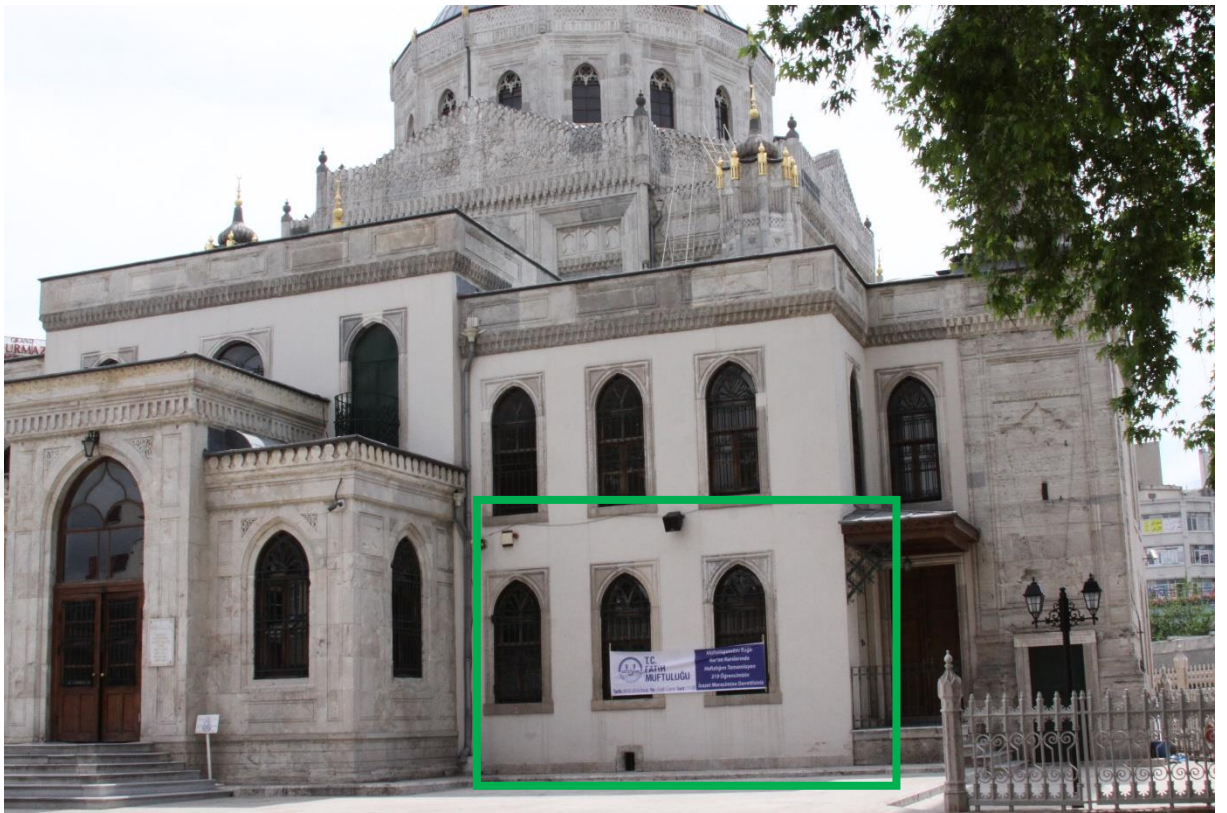


**Figure 23 & 24.** The entrance doors of the library, within the late prayer hall (left) & at the exterior (right) (Photographs by the author)

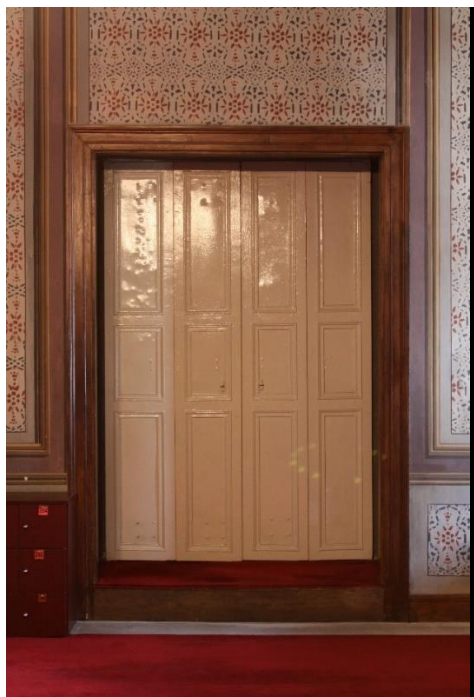


**Figure 25.** The staircase which led to the *valide* sultan's *daire-i hümayun* (imperial suite) and other galleries upstairs (Photograph by the author)



**Figure 26.** The seal of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan (Kut ve Bayraktar, *Yazma Eserlerde Vakıf Mühürleri*, 60)

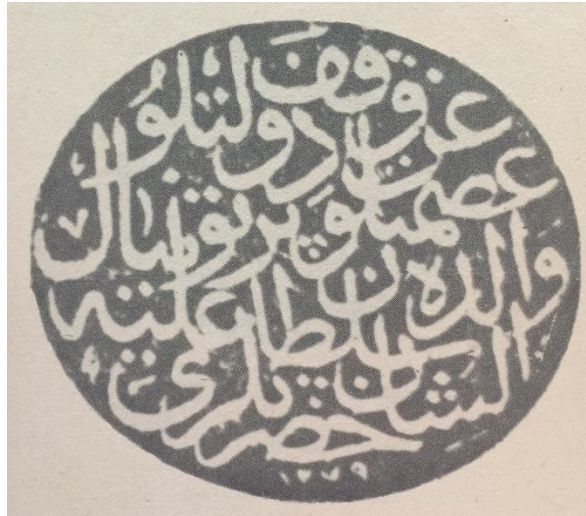


**Figure 27.** The Nusretiye Mosque in the nineteenth century, Photograph by B.Kargopoulo (Genç & Çolak, *Sultan II. Abdülhamid Arşivi*, 294)



**Figure 28.** The locations of some of the mosques built in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Uzun, “Caminin Kentsel ve Simgesel Dönüşümü,” 85); (The original map: 1863-1880 C. Stolpe İstanbul Haritası).



- Seventeenth century mosques
- Eighteenth century mosques
- Nineteenth century mosques
- The Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (Insertion by the author)

**Figure 29.** Plan of Constantinople showing the location of Forum Bovis (today's Aksaray) and Forum Tauri (today's Beyazıt Square); the blue point inserted by the author refers to the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque's location (Harrison, *A temple for Byzantium*, 35)

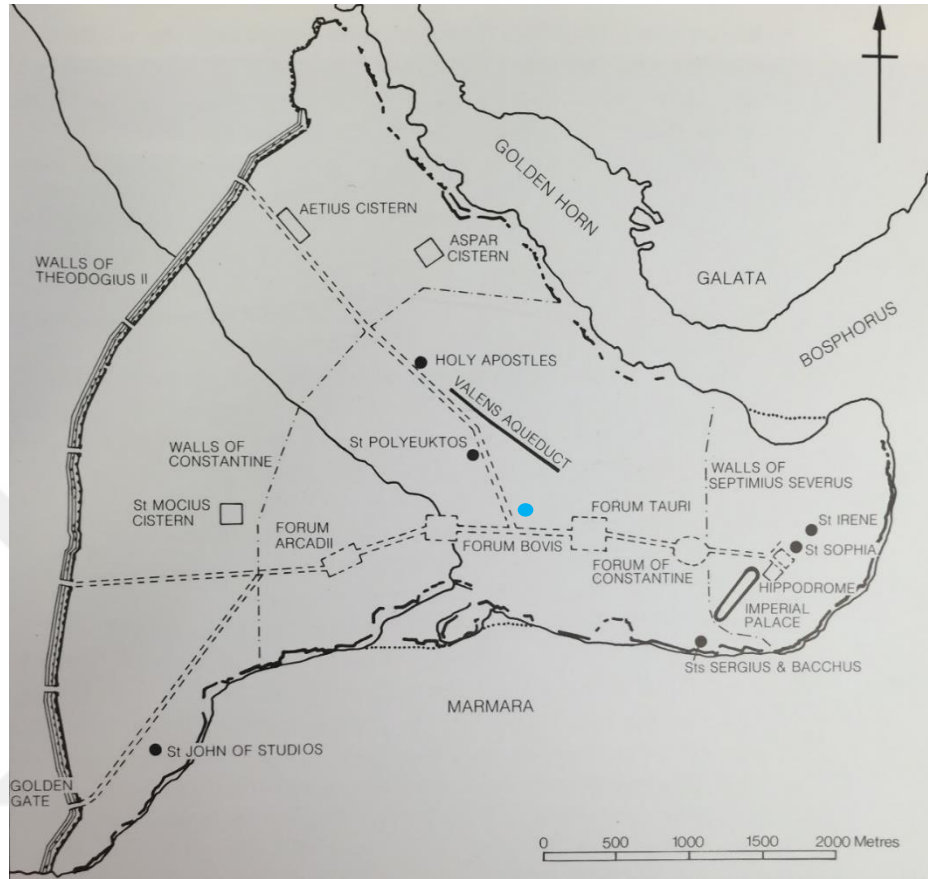


**Figure 30.** Plans of Aksaray before (circa 1850) and after the fire (circa 1870) (Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul*, 54)



**Figure 31.** The tram passing in front of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (beginning of the twentieth century) (İşli, *İstanbul'un Ortası*, Aksaray, 17)

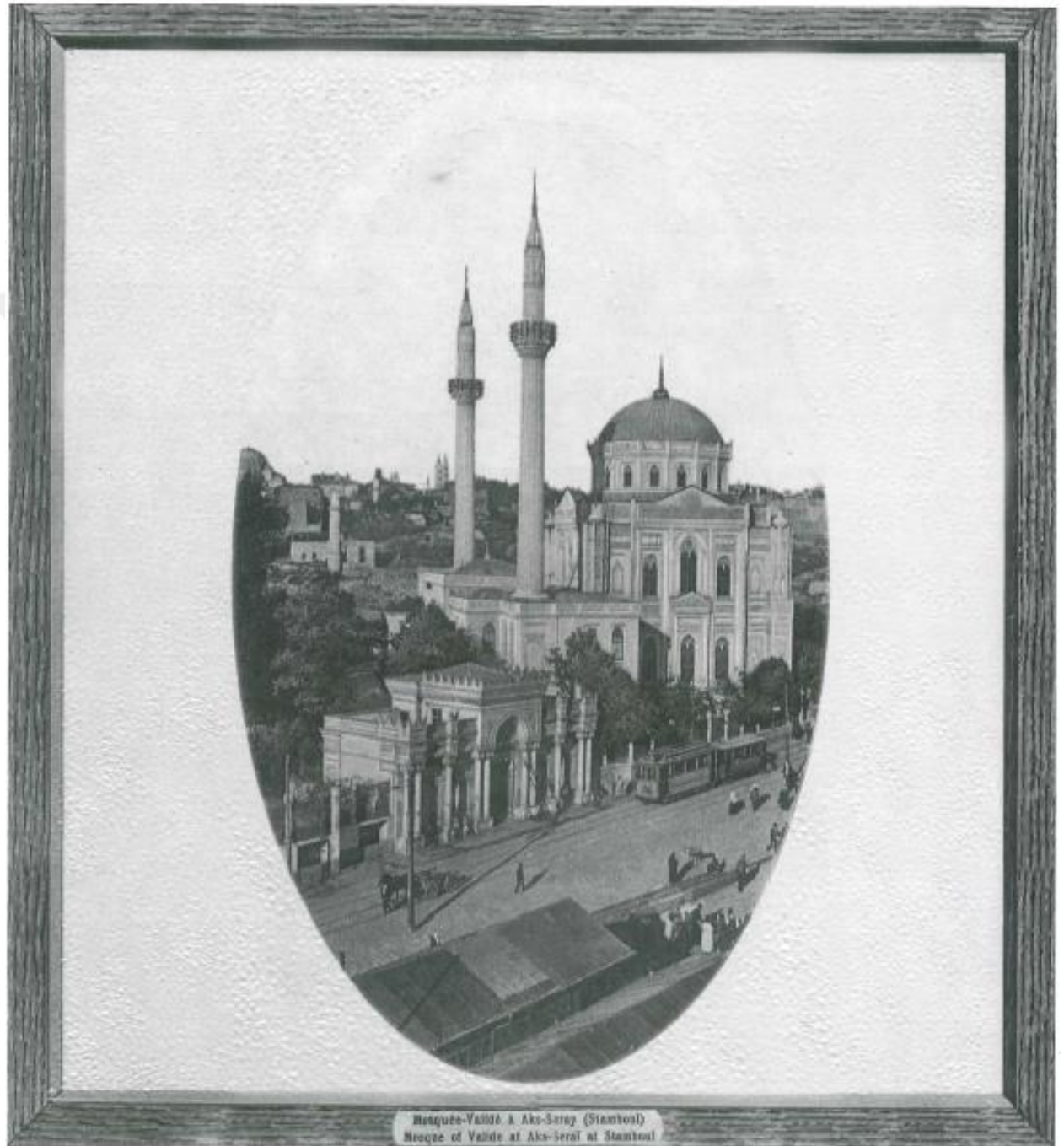


**Figure 32.** The Ortaköy Mosque, Photograph by Abdullah Frères (Genç & Çolak, *Sultan II. Abdülhamid Arşivi*, 300)



**Figure 33.** Plan of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan's tomb (TKSA D. 8214)

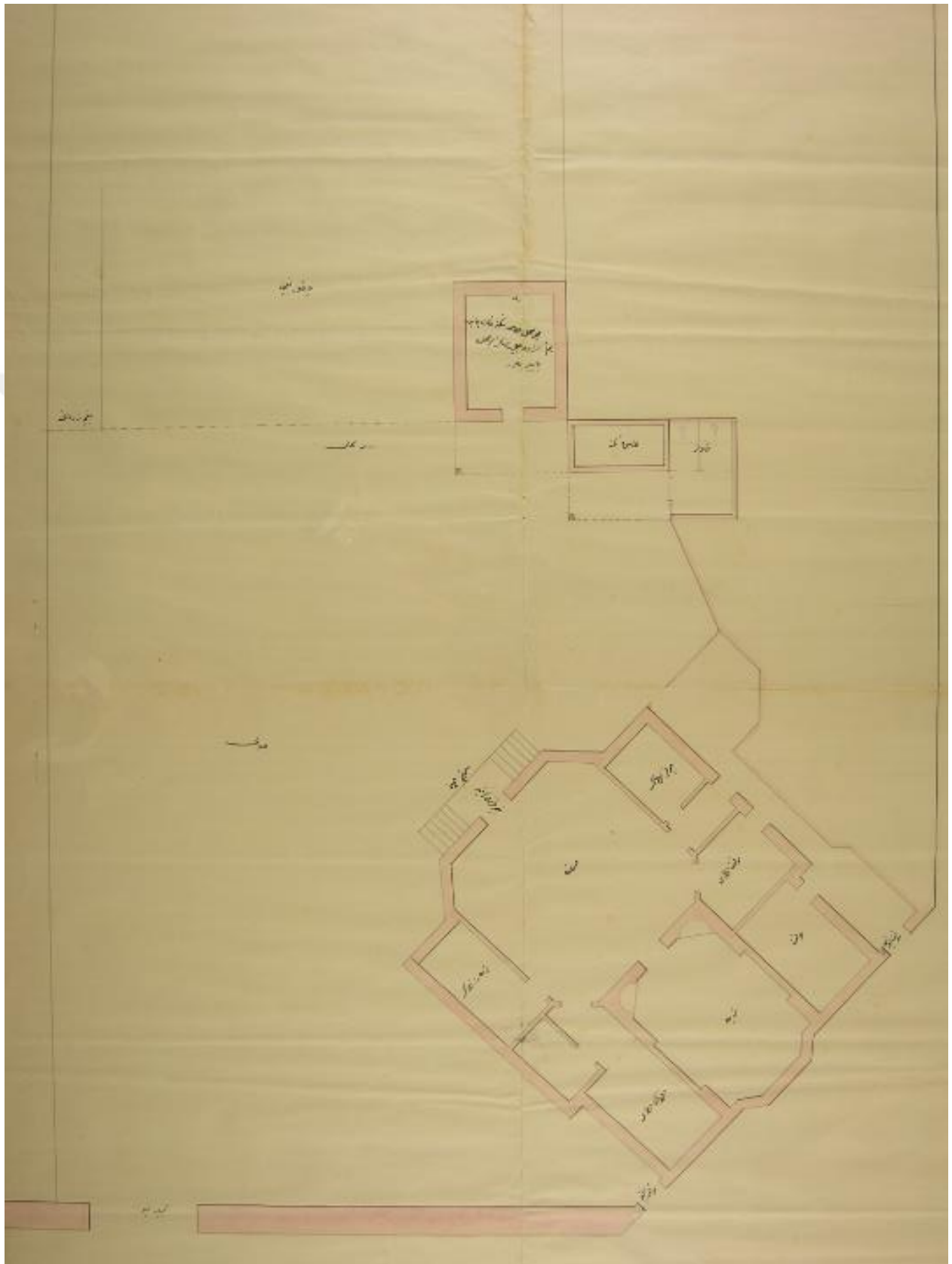


**Figure 34.** Plan of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (TKSA D. 8215)

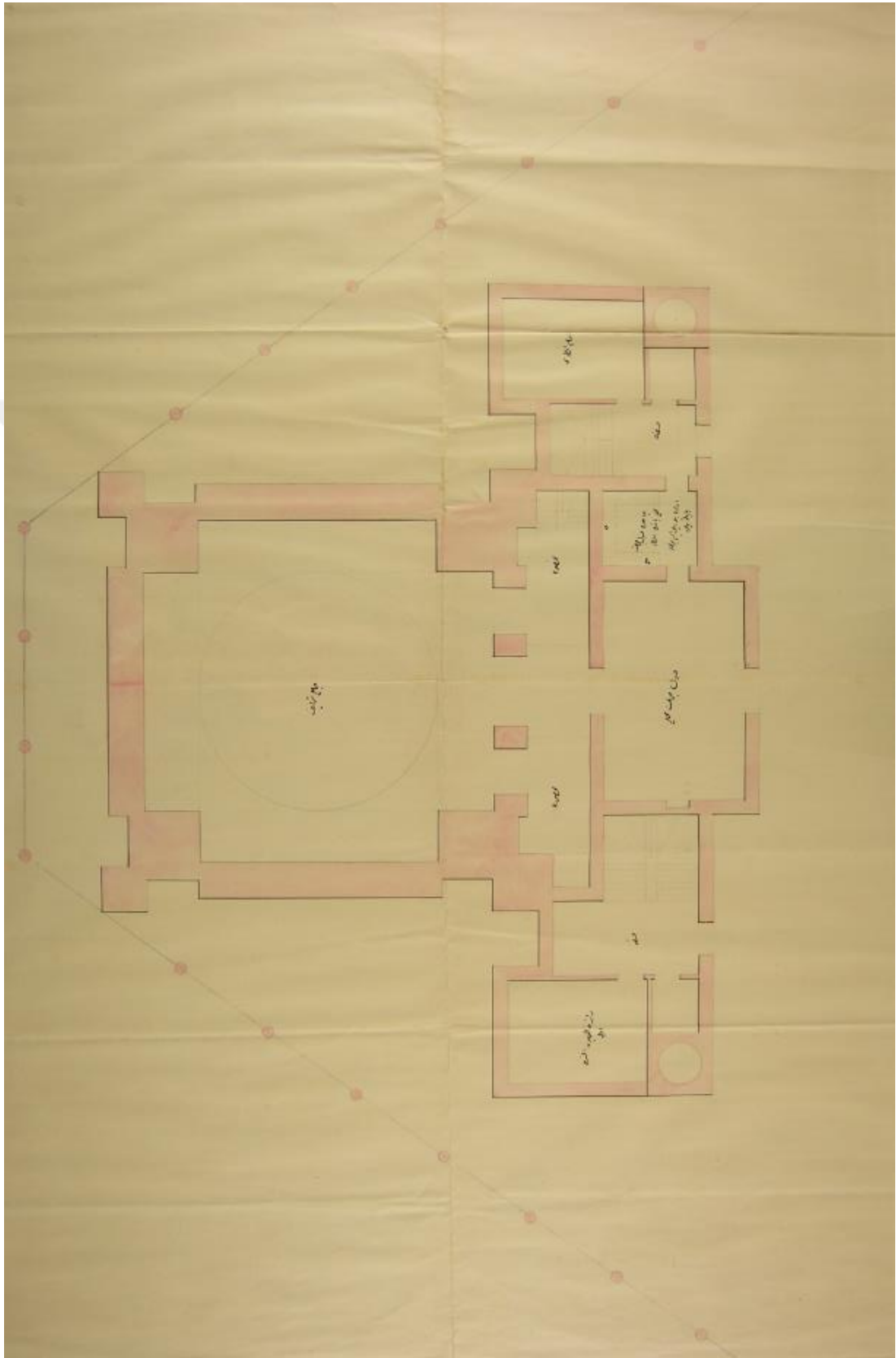


**Figure 35.** The note on the tomb plan, (top) (TKSA D. 8214)

**Figure 36.** The note on the mosque plan, (bottom) (TKSA D. 8215)

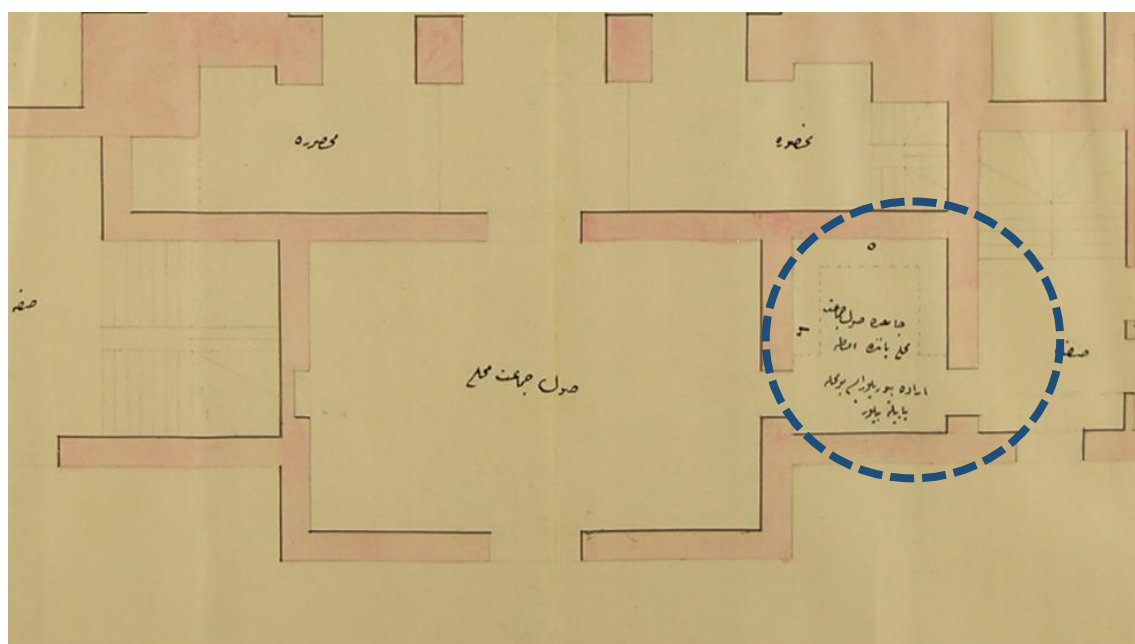
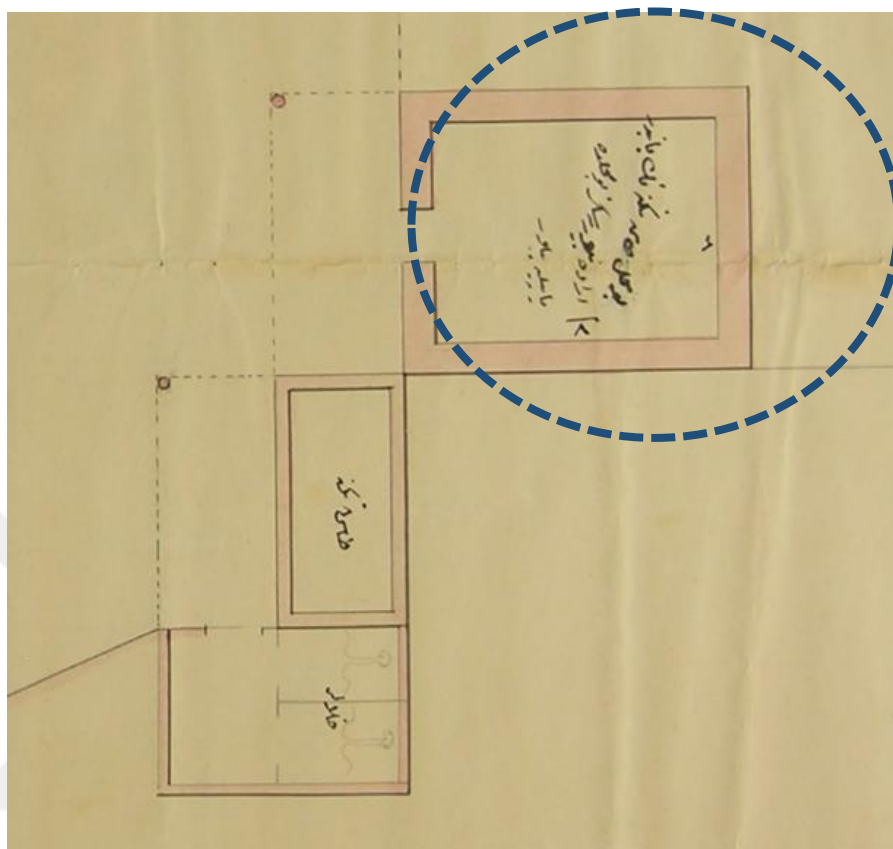


**Figure 37.** The Süleymaniye Mosque in the nineteenth century (Atasoy, *Yıldız Sarayı fotoğraf albümlerinden yadigâr-ı İstanbul*, 241)



**Figure 38.** The comparison of the minarets' diameters (TKSA D. 8218. 56)

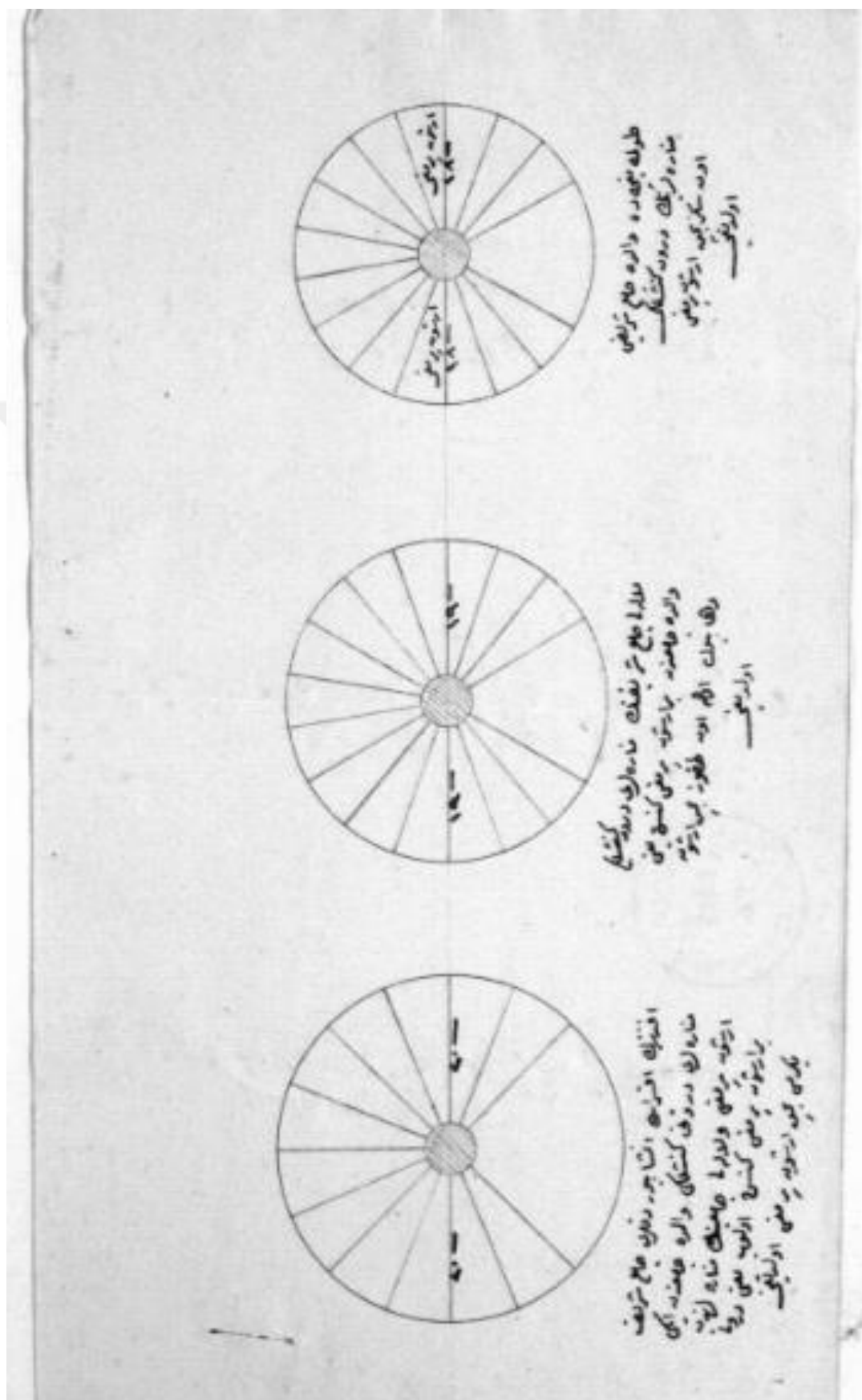


**Figure 39.** The Dolmabahçe Mosque, Photograph by B.Kargopoulo (Genç & Çolak, *Sultan II. Abdülhamid Arşivi*, 297)



**Figure 40.** The Laleli Mosque at the beginning of the twentieth century (the mosque seen at the furthest left is the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque) (“Taş İstanbul”)



**Figure 41.** Architect Serkis Balyan, Photograph by Phébus (Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 433)



**Figure 42.** Architect Agob Balyan, Photograph by Abdullah Frères.  
(Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 395)



**Figure 43.** The Beylerbeyi Palace, exterior, Photograph by Guillaume Berggren (“Eski İstanbul Fotoğrafları Arşivi.”)



**Figure 44.** The Beylerbeyi Palace, interior, Photograph by Basile Kargopoulo (“Eski İstanbul Fotoğrafları Arşivi.”)



**Figure 45.** The side façade of the Çırağan Palace soon after its completion (1871) (top) (Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 320)

**Figure 46.** The sea façade of the Çırağan Palace on an early twentieth century post-card (bottom) (Tuğlacı, *The role of the Balian family*, 320)

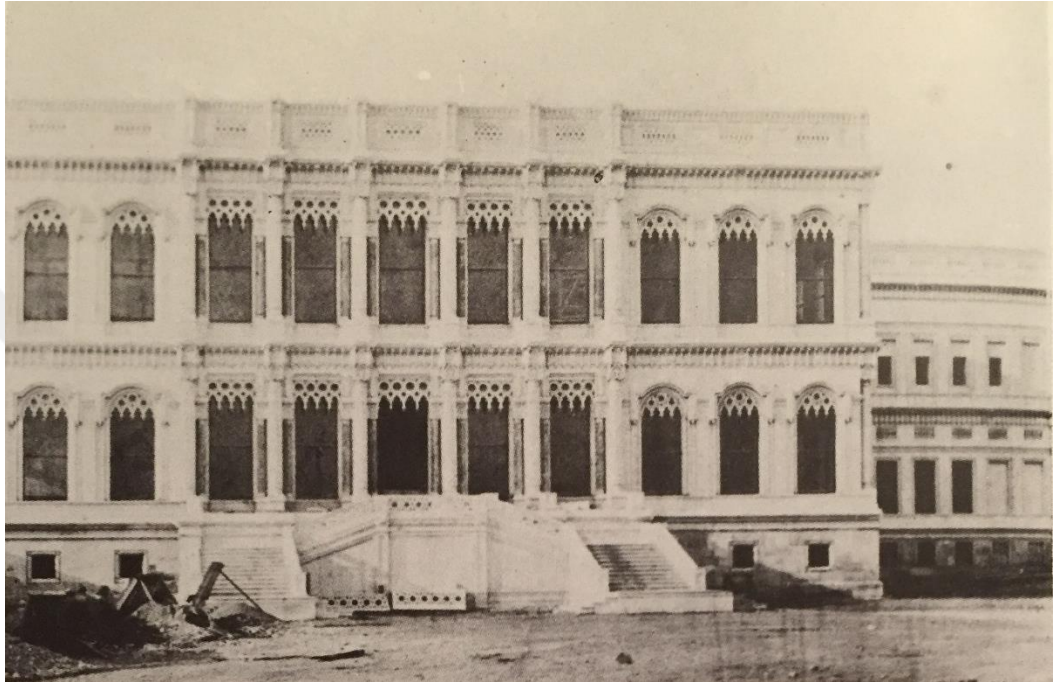


**Figure 47.** The Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque in the nineteenth century  
(Atasoy, *Yıldız Sarayı fotoğraf albümlerinden yadigâr-ı İstanbul*, 122)



**Figure 48.** The southern façade of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque, Photograph by Römmler&Jonas (Genç & Çolak, *Sultan II. Abdülhamid Arşivi*, 276)



**Figure 49.** The inscription on the western gate (Photograph by the author)



**Figure 50.** The inscription on the eastern gate (Photograph by the author)

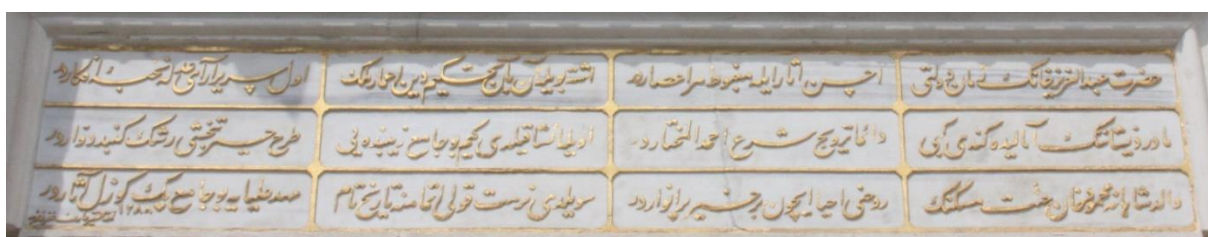


**Figure 51.** The minarets of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (“Taş İstanbul”)



**Figure 52.** The central prayer hall of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (Photograph by the author)



**Figure 53.** View of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque from the old Divanyolu  
(Photograph by the author)



**Figure 54.** A column in the corners of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque  
(Photograph by the author)



**Figure 55.** The minbar with an onion-shaped dome, the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (Photograph by the author)

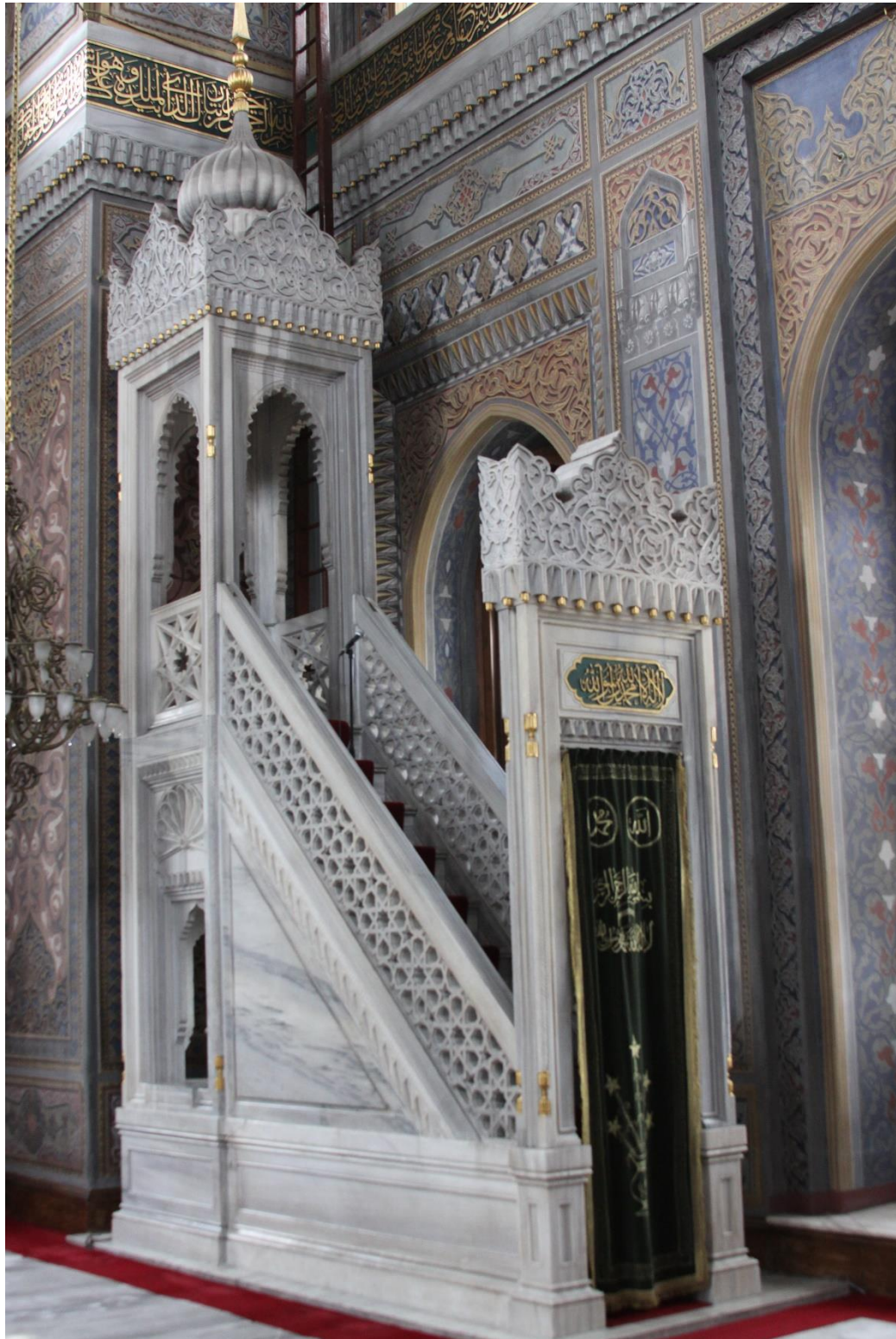


**Figure 56.** The southern façade of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (Photograph by the author)



**Figure 57.** The elongated windows of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque  
(Photograph by the author)



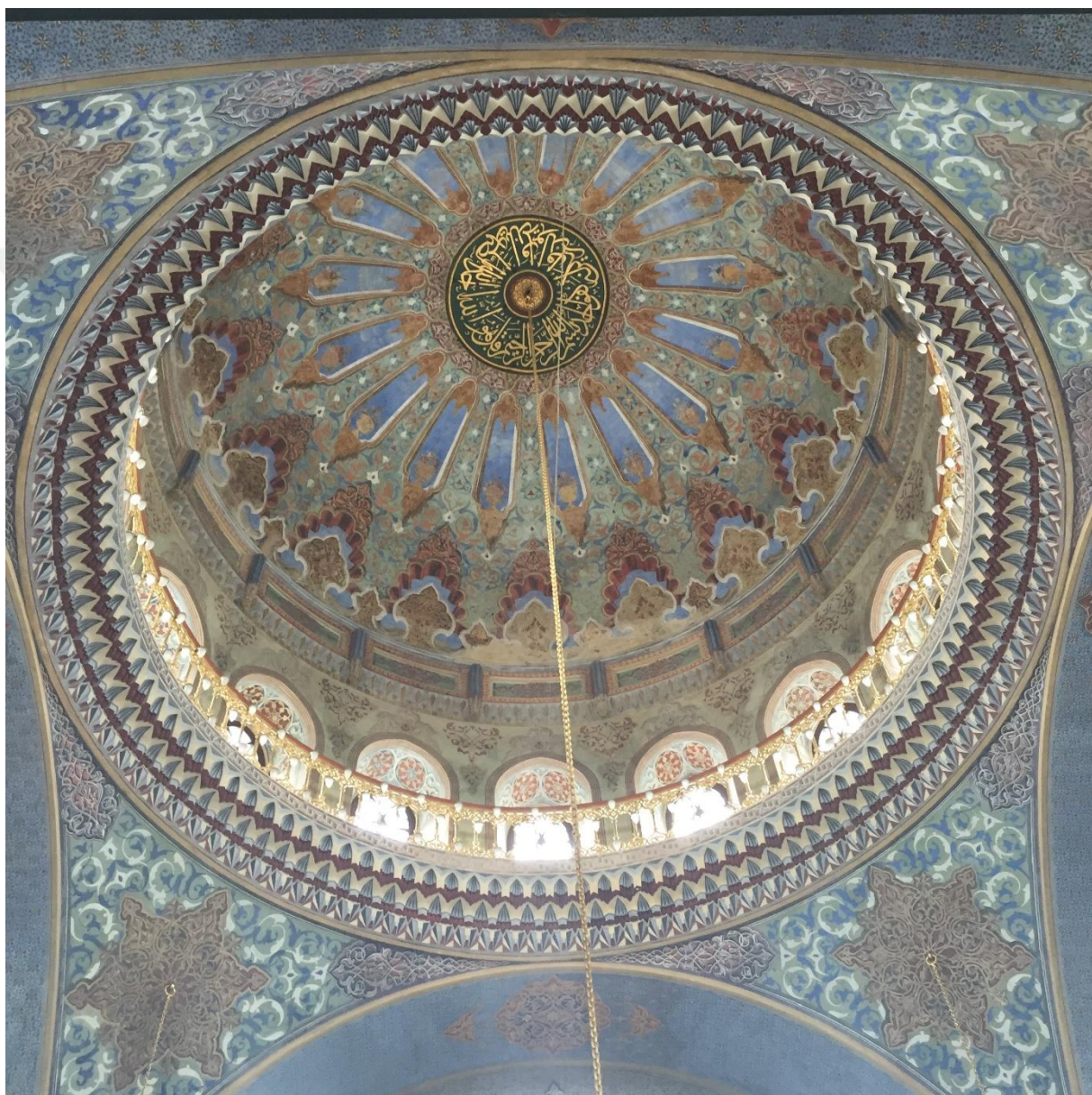
**Figure 58.** The Yıldız Hamidiye Mosque, Photograph by Römmler&Jonas (Genç & Çolak, *Sultan II. Abdülhamid Arşivi*, 303)



**Figure 59.** The interior walls of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (Photograph by the author)



**Figure 60.** The ceiling of the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (Photograph by the author)



**Figures 61 & 62.** The *İngilizkârî* standing clock in the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (top), a detail from the clock (bottom) (Photographs by the author)





**Figure 64.** The inscription above the fountain situated at the right of the eastern gate  
(Photographs by the author)



**Figure 65.** The inscription above the fountains situated at the left of the eastern gate  
(Photographs by the author)



**Figure 66.** The tughras on the eastern and western gates (Photographs by the author)



**Figure 67.** The location of the Al Mulk Surah within the prayer hall (Özkafa 2008, 309) (After the plan of Metin Sözen)

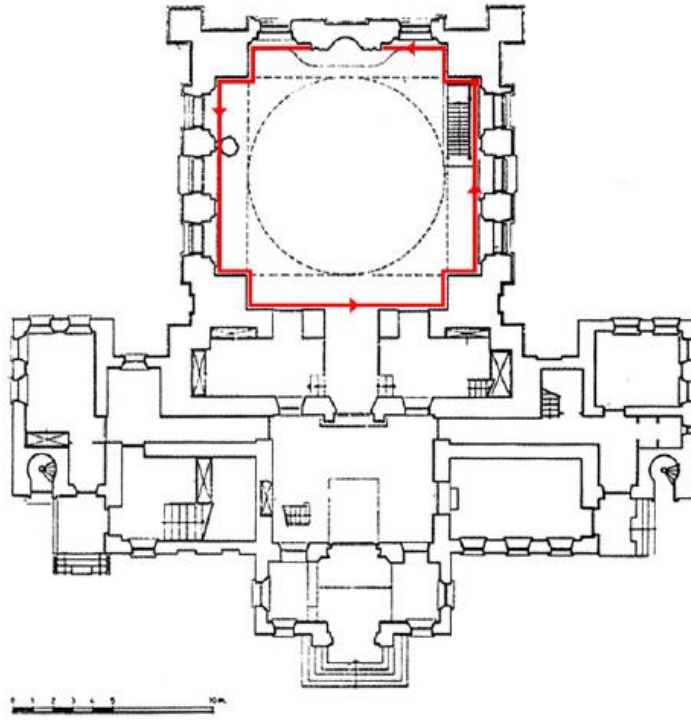


**Figure 68.** The Hidayet Mosque, Photograph by C.J. Fettel (Genç & Çolak, *Sultan II. Abdülhamid Arşivi*, 306)



**Figure 69.** The beginning and the end parts of the Al Mulk Surah in the Hidayet Mosque (Özkafa, “İstanbul Selatin Camilerinin Kuşak Yazıları,” 355)



**Figure 70.** The beginning and the end parts of the Al Mulk Surah in the Aksaray Valide Sultan Mosque (Özkafa, “İstanbul Selatin Camilerinin Kuşak Yazıları,” 310)



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