

REPRESENTATION OF POWER: THE FRIDAY PRAYER CEREMONY IN THE REIGN OF SULTAN ABDULHAMID II, AND ITS URBAN AND ARCHITECTURAL REFLECTIONS

İktidarın Temsili: Sultan II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Cuma Selamlığı Töreni, Kentteki Ve Mimarideki Yansımaları

Diğdem ANGIN * 

* Department of Architecture, Mersin University | Mimarlık Bölümü, Mersin Üniversitesi

Abstract

Ottoman Ceremonies organized by the palace are efficient instruments for analysing the social and ideological background of the era since they were the agents of the sultan to display his power to his subjects and foreign officials and to communicate with the public. Therefore, questioning the alteration in the ceremonies provides a more comprehensive understanding of the developments in society and the state. In thirty-three years of the oppressive reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876-1909), ceremonials evolved into propaganda instruments, like never seen before in the times of his predecessors. Since the public rarely caught a glimpse of the sultan, Abdülhamid invented new celebrations in the Ottoman ceremonial repertoire to communicate with and to show his power to the public and the foreign representatives. This study examines how Abdülhamid II utilized ceremonials to legitimize and impose his image as sultan, using them as propaganda devices without being seen and how this attitude was reflected in both architectural and urban scale through one of the most significant ceremonies of the era – Friday prayer (*Cuma Selamlığı*). Urban procession through the capital Istanbul every Friday, the palace buildings, - Set/Seyir Kiosk for the foreign audience, Grand Royal Gate, *Saltanat Kapısı*, where the sultan made his grandiose entrance - and Yıldız Hamidiye Mosque were the instruments of this performance. Among all of these constituents, Hamidiye Mosque since it was the most fundamental architectural component of the ceremony, will be thoroughly scrutinized in the study.

Keywords Era of Abdülhamid II, Late Ottoman Architecture, Yıldız Hamidiye Mosque, Ottoman Ceremonials, Friday Prayer Ceremonial

Özet

Osmanlı Sarayı tarafından düzenlenen törenler, padişahın gücünü tebaasına ve yabancı temsilcilere sergileme ve halkla iletişim kurma aracı olması sebebiyle, dönemin sosyal ve ideolojik arka planını analiz etmede etkili araçlardır. Dolayısıyla törenlerdeki değişimi sorgulamak toplumsal ve idari yapıdaki gelişmeleri daha kapsamlı anlaşılmasına yardımcı olur. Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in (1876-1909) otuz üç yıllık baskıcı iktidarı süresince törenler, seleflerinin dönemlerinde görülmemiş bir şekilde propaganda araçlarına dönüşmüştür. Halk padişahı nadiren görebildiği için, sultanın halkla ve yabancı mümessillerle temsil aracılığıyla iletişim kurması ve iktidarını sergilemesi için, bu dönemde bazı eski törenler daha coşkulu bir şekilde kutlanmış ve bazı yeni törenler icat edilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, II. Abdülhamid'in halka görünmeden sultan imajını meşrulaştırmak ve empoze etmek için,

propaganda aracı olarak törenleri nasıl kullandığı, bu tutumun dönemin önemli törenlerinden biri olan Cuma Selamlığı üzerinden hem mimari hem de kentsel ölçekte nasıl yansıdığı incelenmektedir. Başkent İstanbul’da her cuma günü yapılan askeri yürüyüş, yabancı seyirciler için inşa edilen Set/Seyir Köşkü ile padişahın görkemli girişini yaptığı Saltanat Kapısı gibi saray yapıları ve Yıldız Hamidiye Camii’nin kendisi bu performansın enstrümanlarıydı. Bunların arasından törenin ana mimari bileşeni olan Hamidiye Camii metinde detaylı bir şekilde incelenecektir.

Keywords: II. Abdülhamid Dönemi, Geç Osmanlı Dönemi Mimarlığı, Yıldız Hamidiye Camii, Osmanlı Törenleri, Cuma Selamlığı Töreni

INTRODUCTION

Ottoman ceremonies were the most appropriate instruments for the sultan to show his mercy (*ihsan-ı humayun*) to his subjects, to communicate with the public, to show his power to foreign representatives, and to distract the people by creating an illusionary atmosphere. Therefore, they cannot be evaluated apart from their political context, especially in the time of crisis. Ceremonies, after all, are utilized by the ruler to make his subjects obey, in other words, the state wants to legitimize itself through ceremonial (Karateke, 2015: 238).

The changes in administration and society have significant reflections on ceremonial tradition, thus questioning the alteration in ceremonies provides a more comprehensive understanding of the developments in society and the state (Deringil, 2022 [1993]: 53-54). Since the eighteenth century, royal ceremonies had begun to change, as the visibility of the sultans and the royal family was increased after building several palaces through the Bosphorus and Golden Horn. (Hamadeh, 2008: 17-75) In the nineteenth century these changes became more obvious with the relocation of the palace to the shores of the Bosphorus and modernization movements demanded by Tanzimat cadres, blending with European customs.

Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876-1909) is known for his absence from the public eye behind the high walls of Yıldız Palace unlike his predecessors. According to Deringil, “since Sultan Mahmud II, Ottoman sultans frequently appeared in public to support modernization projects as a consequence of efforts for creating a “Modern Monarchy” (2022 [1993]: 54). However, Abdülhamid II who had seen the dethronement and murder of his uncle Sultan Abdülaziz, had grown a paranoid behavior and was reluctant to leave his palace. Therefore, his public image was close to the sultans of the classical era who emphasized their rule by making their presence felt without being seen (Necipoğlu, 1991: 59). Although, Sultan Abdülhamid is labelled as a conservative sultan since he preferred the classical attitude as a ruler, promoted Pan-İslamism and frequently instrumentalised religious ideals and symbols, he also pursued the modernization efforts of his antecedents, and even more immensely.

Since the eighteenth century, Ottoman Empire faced many military failures and great amount of loss of lands, therefore, the sultans since Selim III, eagerly tried to gain their former power and position towards the West by applying remarkable modernization reforms, and Sultan Abdülhamid II was no exception (Cezar, 1995: 478). Although he abolished the parliament and constitutional

monarchy, declared himself as the one ruler of the empire, and silenced the opposition with censorships, he also prioritized the modernization reform started by his antecedents (Zurcher, 2016: 121-122). During his reign, new schools, institutions and universities were established, number of printed media was drastically increased, all branches of fine arts were flourished (Cezar, 1995: 478-489).

In thirty-three long years of the oppressive reign of Abdülhamid II, ceremonials evolved into propaganda instruments, like never seen before in the times of his predecessors. Apart from the religious festivals, weddings, and circumcision spectacles which were celebrated traditionally since the earlier periods, the events that were never celebrated or planned significantly, such as the anniversary of enthronement, inauguration, and Friday prayer - *Cuma Selamlığı* - were included in the ceremonial repertoire and organized even more emphatically. The Sultan who rarely left his palace, imposed his sovereignty to his subjects through ceremonies and symbols and his presence was all over the Empire through architecture, ceremony, imagery, and press (Erkmen, 2011: 76-237).

The Friday Prayer - *Cuma Selamlığı* - was a custom for Ottoman sultans to attend in a mosque outside the palace with the public since the earlier periods of the Empire (İpşirli, 1991: 462). The sultan and his entourage leave the palace with procession and reach to the Imperial Mosque revealing himself to his subjects. In the era of Abdülhamid II, the Friday Prayer evolved into a grand ceremony which penetrated to whole city through military processions and the number of observers drastically increased with new ceremonial buildings and the architectural elements in the palace. This study tries to examine how Abdülhamid II utilized ceremonials to legitimize and impose his image as the sultan, using them as propaganda devices without being seen and how this attitude was reflected in both architecture and urban scale through one of the most significant ceremonies of the era – Friday prayer.

CEREMONIAL OBSESSION IN THE REIGN OF ABDÜLHAMID II - VISIBILITY WITH ABSENCE ¹

(1) The term is derived from the article of Selim Deringil titled “II. Abdülhamid Dönemi Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Simgesel ve Törensel Doku: 'Görünmeden Görünmek', TB LXII (1993): 34-55.

One of the significant reasons for the change in ceremonial layouts since the eighteenth century, more conspicuously in the nineteenth century, is related to the increasing visibility of the sultan – an effect of the need to legitimize his position because of the empire's failures, and the result of modernization necessities. Mahmud II (1808-1839) embraced the theme of the ruler's visage as a diplomatic tool, even further he broadened both its purpose and target audience by mingling not only with the public but also with Western guests and having his portrait placed in government offices. Sultan Abdülmecid (1839-1861) and Sultan Abdülaziz (1861-1876) also followed his lead. Over time, the sultanic ceremonies created increasing and more regularized opportunities for imperial populations, near and far, to experience the centre, and consciously or not, situate themselves in relation to it, within the fabric of a rapidly changing Ottoman society (Stephanov, 2014: 148).

Abdülhamid II, on the other, differentiated from his predecessors who formed an image of a modern ruler and presented a personal manifestation of the state's

legitimacy, while involving with his subjects. He preferred to impose his dominance without being seen, just like his ancestors in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. He forbade his portraits in public buildings and did not leave his palace apart from the times of Friday prayer at the mosque of the palace – Yıldız Hamidiye Mosque and his annual visit to Eyüp Sultan Mosque during Ramadan. Therefore, he had to communicate with both his subjects and foreign authorities through a set of images and symbols which were generally based on Islamic motifs (Deringil, 2002: 31). Friday prayer parade, *Surre-i Humayun* – the procession to Mecca and Medina to transport gifts and aids, arches with the writing “Long live the Sultan” (*Padişahım çok yaşa*) built for ceremonies, the public buildings and monuments which bear the emblem of the empire (*Arma-i Humayun*) built or re-opened in the honour of sultan's enthronement anniversary were all representations of sultan's power, all over the Empire (Deringil, 2002: 31) (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. “Long live the Sultan”, Arch for 25th anniversary of Abdülhamid’s enthronement in Edirne (Servet-i Fünun, no. 500, 27 September 1900)

In the period when nationalist ideas were intensified, other empires were also using similar representational codes to legitimize their sovereignty (Erkmen, 2011: 88-89). Abdülhamid II was a ruler who ascended to the throne to share his administrative powers with the Parliament, however, he dissolved the established parliament in a short time, gaining a strong opposition against himself. Therefore, he clung into the glorious ancestors of the Ottomans and Islamic tradition to create an illusionary connection to the past. He polished some of the previous ceremonies generally connected to Islamic tradition and invented new ones. The ceremonies for the enthronement anniversaries and Friday prayer, which were not organized with such pompous before, started to be used as tools to restore the traditional image of the sultan in public, supporting the legitimacy of his monarchical dominance. These magnificent ceremonies, repeated regularly during the reign of Abdülhamid for more than thirty years, expanded the traditional boundaries of the Sultan's representation in public sphere (Erkmen, 2006: 8).

Epiphanies of dominance and social interaction leave traces, like in ceremonies or architectural culture. Deringil, reminds the anthropologist Clifford Geertz to read the dominion formulas of the ‘policy-makers’ in the Ottoman context. Geertz states that “Thoughts are not unobservable mental materials. These are instrumentalized meanings, tools as symbols. (...) a symbol is anything that expresses, defines, represents, exemplifies, labels, implicates, evokes, illustrates, describes in one way or another. (...) discussions, melodies, formulas, maps and pictures are not idealities to look at, but texts to read, just like rituals, palaces,

technologies and social formations” (Geertz, 1980: 135; quoted by Deringil, 2002: 34). Therefore, these ceremonies, such as Friday prayer and its architectural components, such as royal pavilion (*hünkâr kasrı*) in mosques, are the reflections of the social and political developments.

FRIDAY PRAYER PROCESSION – *SELÂMLIK RESM-I ÂLİSİ*

It was custom for Ottoman sultans to attend the Friday prayer in a mosque outside the palace with the public since it should have been performed in a public mosque with a congregation (İpşirli, 1991: 462). After Selim I acquired the title of the caliphate, the Friday prayer gained more political meaning apart from being a religious duty. According to Islamic law, the caliph should lead the Friday prayer personally or be performed by imams for whom the prayer was appointed, and the sermon should be recited on behalf of the caliph. The source of legitimacy for their reign depends on the recognition of the caliphate by other Muslim states (Karateke, 2015: 124). It is known that the sultan went to Friday prayers with processions as a gravure of Sultan Süleyman I’s Friday procession proves (Fig. 2), however, it was not a formal ceremony until the nineteenth century.



Figure 2. Friday prayer procession of Kanuni Süleyman (Rüstem, 2016: 266)

The Friday prayer, beyond visual contact between the Sultan and the public, formed a more direct relationship between the two, creating a platform where people could convey their requests and complaints about governance. They could burn a piece of cloth or straw which is known as *hasır yakmak* to get noticed then they could give their requests (*arzuhal*) to *kapıcılar kethudası* or even the sultan himself. After the eighteenth century, this tradition was planned more in order as attendants who prowled between the prayer lines in the mosque to receive requests of citizens (İpşirli, 1991: 463-466).

The Friday prayer procession became more ceremonial since the second half of the seventeenth century, but the real shift was in the nineteenth century when the modernization movements accelerated. Significant changes occurred in the royal palace including the relocation of the imperial family to the newly built palaces on the shores of Bosphorus, and the effects of the Western ceremonial protocol in imperial ceremonies (Karateke, 2015: 19). Increasing significance and changes in customs of these ceremonies embodied in new imperial mosques. The plan scheme and preferences in the location - generally close to the imperial palace where the current Sultan resided – drastically changed, which will be discussed later. However, the Friday prayer evolved into an incomparable event in the reign of Abdülhamid II, inspired by European ceremonial customs (Fig. 3).



Figure 3. A Friday prayer of Sultan Abdülhamid II (Istanbul University, Yıldız Photograph Archives)

FRIDAY PRAYER PROCESSION IN THE REIGN OF ABDÜLHAMID II AND ITS URBAN AND ARCHITECTURAL REFLECTIONS

Before the nineteenth century, a separate definition of Friday prayer processions was either mentioned slightly or not mentioned at all in Ottoman ceremonial books. Karateke explains the significance in reign of Abdülhamid by analyzing the difference in the definitions of *Selamlık* in the dictionaries of the era. Before Abdülhamid II, the *Selamlık* was defined as “salutational greeting” which refers to any kind of imperial procession, while Redhouse published in 1890 defined it as “a public procession of the sultan to mosque at noon on Friday,” abolishing other general meaning of it as a public procession of the sultan (Karateke, 2015: 125).

During the first years of Abdülhamid’s rule when he was residing in Dolmabahçe Palace, he went to various mosques in Beşiktaş region such as Dolmabahçe, Sinan Paşa, and Ertuğrul Mosque for Friday prayers (Güntan, 2007: 22). After some time, the sultan moved to Yıldız Palace, Hamidiye Mosque was built for Friday prayer in front of the palace in 1886, because he did not wish to leave the palace (Can, 2013: 541). After Friday prayers of the sultan were generally held in there, the Friday parade became a more rigid ceremonial, repeating the same structure every week. However, this stability caused an assassination attempt on Abdülhamid in 1905 (Yıldırım, 1989: 227; quoted from Osman Nuri, 2017).

Every Friday the police force occupied with intensive preparation, although the Sultan was hardly left the palace, because the distance between the palace gate and the mosque was too short (Fig. 4). Even though Abdülhamid was limitedly visible, his presence was all over Istanbul by procession of military forces. Hundreds of privates that would be attending the ceremony leaving their barracks in Rami and Davutpaşa, arrive at Beyazıt Square in front of the Ministry of War and dismount from their horses. Then Battalion of Plevne, the military band, and other battalions join them and begin to march through to Galata Bridge accompanied by trumpets, and then they arrive in Beşiktaş to wait for the Sultan (Karateke, 2015: 130).

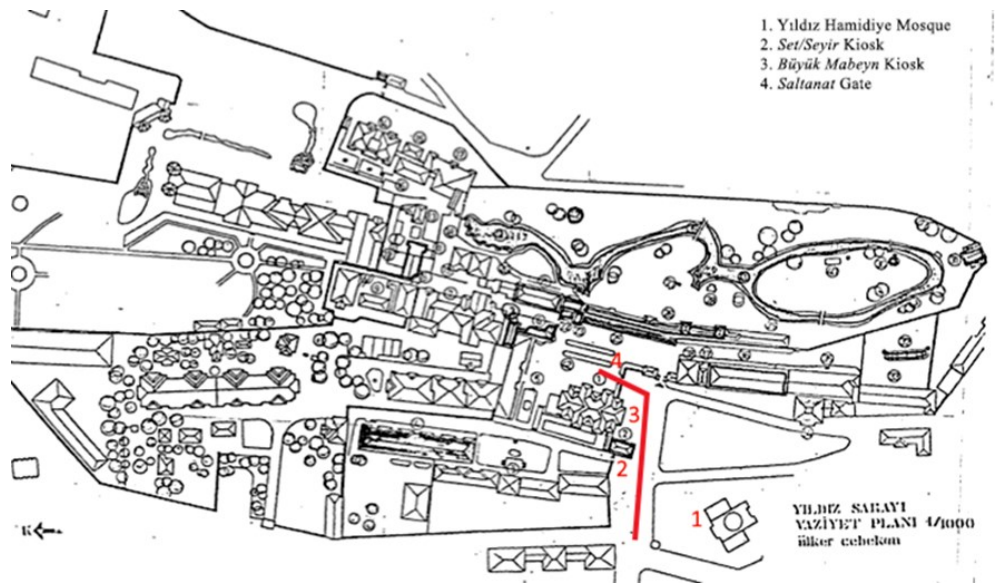


Figure 4. Plan of the Yıldız Palace (Yıldırım, 1989: 75)

Note: Red line, drawn by the author, is the short route of the Sultan’s procession outside the palace to Yıldız Mosque

At the same time, naval officers from Kasımpaşa Imperial Arsenal (*Tersane-i Amire*) accompanied by naval band arrive at Beşiktaş through Şişhane, Grand Rue de Pera (*İstiklal Caddesi*) and Maçka. Artillery infantry battalion from the Imperial Armory (*Tophane-i Amire*) passing through Dolmabahçe arrive at Beşiktaş Sinan Paşa Mosque to wait for the order to march through Yıldız Mosque (Şakir, 2008: 213-216). Even though Abdülhamid was hardly leaving his palace, the Friday procession of approximately 10.000-14.000 privates through the whole city from the outskirts to the historical peninsula and from Galata to Beşiktaş inform his subjects about his Friday prayer carrying his presence outside of the palace (Karateke, 2015: 130) (Fig. 5).

Half an hour before the sultan left the Palace for Friday prayer, the carriages of Harem including Valide Sultan, chief consort (*Haseki Sultan*), princes, and princesses arrive at Yıldız Mosque and wait for the sultan’s arrival. After the arrangements of the soldiers and high officials made following the rules of ceremonial, the Hamidiye Anthem starts to be played, and the soldiers salute and shout ‘Long live the Sultan’ three times. Then, the sultan’s regiment accompanied by the Albanian-origin guards (*silahşor-ı hassa*), leaves Yıldız Palace



Figure 5. Possible route for Friday prayer procession of the military forces.

Note: The map is produced by the writer, according to Karateke’s description.

★ Yıldız Hamidiye Mosque ● Rami Barracks ● Beyazid Square ● Imperial Armory ● Imperial Arsenal

from Saltanat gate with great pomp and arrives at Yıldız Mosque (Yıldıran, 1989: 438-440) (Fig. 6). The foremost, ceremonial director, behind him the two horsemen, and then the sultan's half-open carriage pass. The Sultan would greet everyone from his carriage, then he is greeted by Şeyhülislam in front of the entrance and enters the mosque, while attendants receive the requests from the public. After the prayer, the sultan generally would get on a light car and take his reins and return to the palace and the soldiers would return to the barracks (Yıldıran, 1989: 440-442; Deringil, 2002: 36). In fact, the public barely could see Abdülhamid with this short procession in his carriage surrounded by thousands of military forces.



Figure 6. Sultan Abdülhamid in Friday procession (IU, YPA)

Note: Istanbul University Yıldız Photography Archives, from here on it will be stated as IU, YPA



Figure 7. People watching a procession from *Seyir* kiosk (IU, YPA)



Figure 8. A procession in honour of Kaiser Wilhelm *Seyir* and *Büyük Mabeyn* Kiosks (IU, YPA)

This ceremony also attracted the attention of foreign guests, officials, and tourists, as it is understood from being frequently mentioned in travel books and memoirs of the era. Abdülhamid must have been aiming for this kind of Western attention, since a pavilion – Set/Seyir Pavilion - in Yıldız Palace was utilized for foreign guests who had invitations or acceptance letters from the palace (Yıldıran, 1989: 110). The ambassadors and their private guests were invited to *Büyük Mabeyn* Kiosk to watch the ceremony (Fig. 7). Set Pavilion was built for the visit of Kaiser Wilhelm in 1889 for accommodation, however, its location had a full view of the processional road and the mosque must have been purposely chosen for Kaiser to watch the ceremonies (Yıldıran, 1989: 110) (Fig. 8).

Therefore, it continued to be used for the same purpose afterward. Deringil states that Abdülhamid aimed to present his glory with ceremonies while legitimizing his rule against Western countries, and he also tried to prove the Ottoman's equality with Western countries showing that the Ottoman was no different than any other European empire (2022 [1991]: 50-51). He tried to cover up his bad reputation with ceremonial propaganda, using the similar instruments with West, portraying an illusionary advertisement.

The secular components of this religious duty also support this connection with the West: attendance of Valide Sultan and other woman-sultans contradicts the Islamic law that women cannot participate in the Friday prayer (Deringil, 2007: 38). Even though they do not enter the mosque, their very existence materializes this contradiction. In addition, besides the Hamidiye Anthem, the Imperial band also plays European operas during the Friday ceremony (Şen, 2019: 16). It is known that Abdülhamid II liked Western classical music instead of traditional Turkish music (Karateke, 2015: 23). However, it still creates a peculiar association in a religious activity. Friday prayer of that era was an event where Islamic tradition and Western-style protocol intertwined, in which notable foreigners and women from the royal family took part in the same ceremonial venue (Deringil, 2002: 39).

The religious service of the Friday prayer in Abdülhamid II era took place mostly in the background compared to its ceremonial side (Karateke, 2015: 124). Despite its religious nature, it defines a ceremonial rather than a ritual. Özbudun indicates the essential difference between ritual and ceremony in the presence or absence of a political and/or social institution of power. While acts that are egalitarian, non-hierarchical, participatory, sharing, and aiming to provide empathy, coincide with the concept of ritual, on the other hand, demonstrations aimed at consolidating and strengthening existing power relations come closer to the concept of ceremony (1995: 88). This is because these performances exclude those being governed from participation, while keeping them in the position of the audience, emphasizing and reproducing the existing hierarchy in the society (Özbudun, 1995: 88). Friday prayer parade in Abdülhamid era which was performed by the royal family, state officials and military not citizens was not a religious ritual, it was the representation of the sultan, display of his power, reminding his position to his subjects and the foreign authorities.

Reflection of the Ceremonial: Royal Pavilion (Hünkâr Kasrı)

Gradually changing in Friday prayer's ceremonial aspects since the eighteenth century can be observed in mosque architecture. Kuran indicates that in imperial mosques, the part called the sultan's personal prayer loge (*hünkâr mahfili*) has grown considerably since the eighteenth century. The appearance and evolution of the sultan's prayer lodge went beyond the prerequisites of architecture which arose as a tool for vanity and pomp (1990-91: 284). Batur addresses the most remarkable change in the plan scheme of the nineteenth-century mosques is combining of the sultan prayer loge and prayer hall's portico (*son cemaat yeri*) (1985: 1061). They formed a two-story pavilion (*hünkâr kasrı*) for the sultan, placed in front of the mosque's entrance (Fig. 9). The reason for this change can be seen in changing of the Friday prayer ceremony which bears fragments of ceremonial protocols of European monarchies and demands of more crowded

Figure 9. Beylerbeyi Mosque
(Rüstem, 2021: 407)



entourage for the sultan (Batur, 1985: 1061).

Apart from the effects of European ceremonial culture, the functional requirements also affected the plan scheme. Both the sultan’s crowded entourage and changing protocols, such as the utilization of the sultan’s prayer loge as *selamlık* room, necessitated the enlargement of this space (Batur, 1985: 1061). The royal pavilion emerged as a place where important political negotiations were discussed with the Ottoman high officials and foreign ambassadors. Even, it is said that imperial officials who could not contact Abdülhamid II inside the palace exploited the Friday prayer as an opportunity to consult with the sultan (Karateke, 2015: 19).

Figure 10. Royal pavilion of
Sultanahmed Mosque
(Rüstem, 2021: 386)



The first examples of the royal pavilion (*hünkâr kasrı*) which are encountered in the seventeenth and the eighteenth century, are not an inseparable component of the royal mosques (Nar, 2001: 7). Rüstem presents three major royal pavilions as three major steps in evolution of this building type, emphasizing gradually alteration in Friday prayer ceremonies. The first example of it is in the Sultan Ahmed Mosque (1609-1617) where the pavilion was designed as a separate building, both in style and location (Fig. 10). Sultan Ahmed Mosque which is also the first imperial mosque that was not built as a triumphal monument by the sultan, financed by spoils of war or in honor of achievement of the empire, also started a new tradition for imperial mosques, as not being depended on a triumph. Because of the unusualness of this situation, Sultan Ahmed I tries to legitimize himself and his mosque by using the ceremonial attitude (Rüstem, 2016: 253-344). According to the writer “the pavilion gave solid expression to the idea of the ceremony as a nexus between the courtly, public, and spiritual spheres. What made this symbolism all the more potent was that it endured long after the impact of the royal visits themselves had subsided, implying the sultan’s presence even in his absence” (Rüstem, 2021: 387).

The Royal pavilion of Nuruosmaniye Mosque (1738-1755) which is clad in stone like the rest of the monuments, consists evolutionary step with its stylistic unity (Rüstem, 2021: 398). As the last step, in Beylerbeyi Mosque (1777-1778), the royal pavilion, which instead of being attached to the corner of the mosque, like its premises, has been combined with the prayer hall’s entrance porch, replacing the courtyard and giving the mosque an entirely original – and secular – kind of facade (Rüstem, 2021: 387-407; fig. 09). Kuran states that this reconfiguration was probably a result of the mosque’s location (1990-1991: 282) – the north facade which includes the royal pavilion placed on the Asian shore –

however this plan and facade scheme faithfully applied to the other royal mosques wherever the location was. And this scheme concretizes the sultan’s position, his visibility even in his absence, and his competition with the mosque itself.

Friday Mosque of Sultan Abdülhamid II: Yıldız Hamidiye Mosque

After some time, Abdülhamid II moved to Yıldız Palace, he ordered building a mosque close to the palace and it was built in 1886. The reason possibly lies in the significance of the Friday prayer for Abdülhamid and he wanted a ceremonial mosque while staying close to the palace during this weekly repeated event. There are discussions about the architect of the building because of the complex construction relations in the late Ottoman period (Ersoy, 2010: 104). It was attributed to Sarkis Balyan who was the royal architect until recent years (Tuğlacı, 1990: 497; Kuban, 2007: 641). However, based on an archival document in Dolmabahçe Palace archive, Ersoy claims that the plan and the models of the mosque prepared by Nikolaki Kalfa, the chief architect of *Ebniye Müdürlüğü* during the construction years (2010: 104-117; Can, 2010: 84-85; Özmen, 2014: 110).

Batur defines this mosque as “an unusual building of the late Ottoman architecture with its mass, plan scheme and decoration” (1993: 514) (Fig. 11). Exterior of the mosque was designed in neo-Gothic style, with triple window arrangements, in a similar composition with Pertevniyal Valide Sultan Mosque of Abdülaziz era. On the other hand, the interior was decorated quite pompously in orientalist style (Fig. 12). Conventional Ottoman architectural historiography, using Westernization phenomenon, approaches this mosque as a degenerated imitation of Western historicism, as any other nineteenth-century mosques, and



Figure 11. Yıldız Hamidiye Mosque (Güntan, 2007: 122)



Figure 12. Dome of the mosque from interior (Can, 2013: 541)

labelled it as a production of European fashion, result of innovation endeavours of the sultans (Kuban, 2007: 638-641; Batur, 1993: 514). Ersoy, indicating the search for a new style in Abdülaziz era, claims that transitional periods, “the ‘impure’ moments of stylistic experimentation and diversity, preceding and succeeding periods of high classism are more instrumental for defining a progressive and synthetic design strategy for the modern era” (2015: 191). Therefore, examination of these stylistic choices, and questioning the conscious in these choices presents more productive perspectives to expose social and ideological subtexts.

Preference for Gothic style on the exterior and Orientalism, mostly medieval Islamic style in Andalusia, in the interior can be interpreted as a desire to connect to the pre-modern Medieval times (Ersoy, 2015: 98-129). Since Abdülhamid II was expected to share his ruling power in the constitutional monarchy, instead he dissolved the parliament, one of the solutions for legitimizing his position as the emperor was to connect excessively to Ottomans’ founding past, to medieval times. He ordered restoration of tombs of Osman I and Orhan I, organized an annual commemoration in the tomb of Ottomans’ founded father, Ertuğrul Gazi, paid special attention to the first settlement of Ottomans, Söğüt and its surroundings, and contributed to create an Ottoman creation myth (Deringil, 2002: 45-46). He also named his personal regiments *Ertuğrul Alayı* that played a significant part in the Friday prayer parade. It is known that Sultan Abdülhamid followed closely the application process of his new mosque, inspected and interfered in the application where he found it necessary (Ersoy, 2010: 108). Therefore, his ideological influences on the design and the process should not be ignored.

Hamidiye Mosque is the last example of the dominated sultan loge configuration in the Ottoman Mosques, implying the end of the sultans’ era. The royal pavilion occupies a space as much as the prayer hall as if the ceremony or the sultan is competing with the religion (Fig. 13). Rüstem defines this scheme as “treats the royal presence as a precondition of its design: the pavilion stands front and centre always ready to receive the sultan, forever concretizing his position among—and over—his subjects” (Rüstem, 2021: 414). The two sultan loges – the left one is Abdülhamid’s loge - are reached from both sides of the prayer hall’s entrance porch in front of the rectangular-shaped prayer hall. Şenyurt claims that in the reign of Abdülhamid II who was using imagery and symbols to

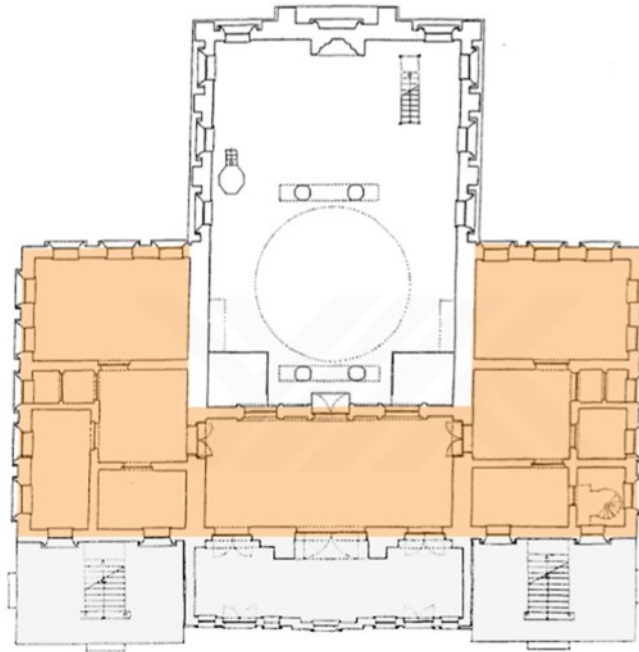


Figure 13. Plan of Hamidiye Mosque (Yıldiran, 1989)

Note: The orange area is the royal pavilion, highlighted by the author.

reconnect with the past and reanimate it, the old plan schemes that were abandoned for a long time, began to be discovered and re-used (2016: 199). Therefore, his obsession with medieval past has its traces in reverse T-shaped plan of this mosque, a plan scheme that was frequently used in the early Ottoman period in Bursa and Iznik examples. Moreover, the preference of early Ottoman repertoire is not limited to the plan scheme, the minbar of the mosque is also ordered as a replica of the one in Bursa Grand Mosque by Abdülhamid himself (Ersoy, 2010: 108).

The dome on a high drum which was apparently constructed not by technical necessities but its symbolism (Kuban, 2007: 640), was located close to the sultan loge centralizing not the prayer hall but the whole structure. From the outside, it gives the impression that the whole elevated mass including the portico constitutes the prayer unit entered from the grandiose portal, and two royal pavilions are beside it, not blocking the mosque (Fig. 11). The portal is, however, was not designed as a portal of a classical Ottoman Mosque but divided in two, upper part functioned as a window for sultan's loge. Therefore, its monumentality is disturbed by this division. In later photographs a vestibule built in front of the entrance disrupts the composition of the portal by hiding it (Fig. 3). The Portal certainly draws the attention to rectangular tectonic of the mosque with its monumentality. Even though in plan royal pavilion dominates the prayer hall, on the exterior emphasis is on the mosque. This relationship between the pavilion and mosque, perhaps, can be related with religious and ceremonial aspects of Friday prayer. On the outside with a conservative attitude, a religious duty is performed, it is seen as the mosque itself is emphasized, although its ceremonial aspect is far more dominating in function.

As for the composition of the masses, instead of continuing along the northern facade of the mosque, the royal pavilions are placed on both sides of the prayer mass. In previous examples of the mosques with royal kiosk (Fig. 9), the kiosk placed in front of the entrance, generates the whole northern facade, blocking

the mass of the mosque. Batur states that the duality of the composition in the nineteenth-century mosques, caused by civil character of the royal pavilion and traditional character of the mosque, embodies one of the most remarkable representations of the Tanzimat ideology (1985: 1062). “This alteration in which the secular building defines the entrance and positions in front of the religious building, compels ‘the most rigid fortress of the tradition,’ even though it does not affect the praying area, and makes the sultanate protocol an effective element of the planning” (Batur, 1985: 1062). Therefore, in Hamidiye example the mosque mass regains its dominance against the secular pavilion, but only on the exterior.

The minaret is another element that requires scrutiny. The custom about the minarets in royal mosques commissioned by the sultans was construction of at least two minarets, however, Hamidiye Mosque has just one. On the other hand, the clock tower built in the courtyard after the mosque was constructed, implies to symbolize the second minaret (Güntan, 2007: 121; fig. 14). The clock towers as a symbol of modernization were remarkably important in Abdülhamid’s era that in the 25th anniversary of his enthronement, he ordered governors to build clock towers in provincial cities (Acun, 1994: 8). The clock towers carrying royal emblem (*Arma-i Osmani*) were architectural agents to present Abdülhamid’s presence and power reaching through every city in the Empire. Locating a clock tower in the courtyard of the mosque – placing a secular and a religious monument together – also can be related to nature of the ceremonials of Abdülhamid’s era where Islamic tradition and Western-style customs intertwined.



Figure 14. Hamidiye Mosque and the clock tower (IU, YPA)

CONCLUSION

Ottoman Ceremonies are efficient instruments for analysing the social and ideological background of the era since they were the agents of the sultan to display his power to his subjects and foreign officials and to communicate with the public. Sultan Abdülhamid II also skilfully utilize ceremonials to legitimize his

position as the one true ruler of the empire. Friday prayer and its procession was one of the most effective events since it was repeated every week while the sultan was hardly leaving the palace grounds.

Epiphany of the altered public personality of the sultan was the architecture of the nineteenth-century mosques where the sultan’s presence and ceremonial attitude were embodied in the royal pavilion. Abdülhamid II also used this instrument to present his presence and included other tools in urban and architectural scales for the representation of power. Over-emphasis on Friday prayer, using the caliphate as a trump card, was reasonable for Abdülhamid, considering the time when the dominion of the empire was crumbling. However, the remarkable aspect of this emphasis was blending the traditional religion with secular components. Friday prayer was an event where Islamic tradition and Western-style protocol intertwined, in which congregation of Friday prayer and women from the royal family and foreign guests, the call to prayer and European operas, the minaret, and the clock tower existed together.

Abdülhamid successfully represented himself, and his power with architectural components and urban movement. The architectural components of the Friday prayer parade were the Monumental Palace gate – *Saltanat kapısı*, Hamidiye Mosque where the architectural preferences of the sultan presented, the clock tower at the corner of the courtyard as the symbol of the modernization in Abdülhamid’s imagination, Set/Seyir Kiosk where foreign diplomats and guests gazed the sultan in procession as Abdülhamid wished, and also the streets of Istanbul where the power of the sultan represented by soldiers’ marching. None of these elements were chosen randomly, it was all part of the great cause.

References

- Acun, H. (1994). *Anadolu Saat Kuleleri*. Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Yayınları.
- Batur, A. (1985). Batılılaşma Döneminde Osmanlı Mimarlığı. In *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* V.4. (pp. 1038-1067). İletişim Yayınları.
- Batur, S. (1993). Yıldız Camisi. In *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*, V.7. Kültür Bakanlığı ve Tarih Vakfı Yayınları.
- Can, S. (2010). *Bilinmeyen Aktörleri ve Olayları ile Son Dönem Osmanlı Mimarlığı*. Erzurum İl Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü.
- Can, S. (2013). Yıldız Camii. In *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi* V.43. İstanbul.
- Cezar, M. (1995). *Sanatta Batıya Açılış ve Osman Hamdi C.2*. Erol Kerim Aksoy Kültür Eğitim, Spor ve Sağlık Vakfı Yayınları.
- Deringil, S. (2002). *İktidarın Sembolleri ve İdeoloji – II. Abdülhamit Dönemi (1876–1909)*. İletişim Yayınları.
- Deringil, S. (2022) [1991]. II. Abdülhamid Dönemi Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Simgesel ve Törensiz Doku: “Görünmeden Görünmek.” In S. Deringil (ed.), *Simgeden Millete: II. Abdülhamit'ten Mustafa Kemal'e Devlet ve Millet* (pp. 19-51). İletişim Yayınları.
- Deringil, S. (2022) [1993]. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda “Geleneğin İcadı”, “Muhayyel Cemaat” (“Tasarımlanmış Topluluk”) ve Pan-İslamizm. In S. Deringil (ed.), *Simgeden Millete: II. Abdülhamit'ten Mustafa Kemal'e Devlet ve Millet* (pp. 53-91). İletişim Yayınları.
- Erkmen, A. (2006). *Mimarlık ve Hafıza: Osmanlı Dünyasında Geçmişin Yeniden Üretildiği Yapılar (1850–1910)* [PhD dissertation]. Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi, İstanbul.

- Erkmen, A. (2011). *Geç Osmanlı Dünyasında Mimarlık ve Hafıza: Arşiv, Jübile, Abide*. Akın Nalça Kitapları.
- Ersoy, A. (2010). Aykırı Binanın Saklı Kalfası: Hamidiye Camisi ve Nikolaos Tzelepis. In H. Kuruyazıcı & E. Şarлак (eds.), *Batılılaşan İstanbul'un Rum Mimarları* (pp.104-117). Zoğrafyon Lisesi Mezunları Derneği.
- Ersoy, A. A. (2015). *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary: Reconfiguring the Architectural Past in a Modernizing Empire*. Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Geertz, C. (1980). *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth Century Bali*. Princeton University Press.
- Güntan, Ç. (2015). *II. Abdülhamit Döneminde İmparatorluk İmajının Kamu Yapıları Aracılığı ile Osmanlı Kentine Yansıtılması* [Unpublished master thesis]. Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi, İstanbul.
- Hamadeh, S. (2008). *The City's Pleasures – Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century*. University of Washington Press.
- İpşirli, M. (1991). Osmanlılarda Cuma Selamlığı: Halk-Hükümdar Münasebetleri Açısından Önemi. In Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu (ed.), *Prof. Dr. Bekir Kütükoğlu'na Armağan* (pp. 459-471). İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi.
- Karateke, H. T. (2015). *Padişahım Çok Yaşa! Osmanlı Devletinin Son Yüzyılında Merasimler*. İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları.
- Katipoğlu Özmen, C. (2014). *Re-thinking Historiography on Ottoman Mosque Architecture: Nineteenth Century Provincial Sultan Mosques* [Unpublished PhD dissertation]. Middle East Technical University, Ankara.
- Kuban, D. (2007). *Osmanlı Mimarisi*. YEM Kitabevi.
- Kuran, A. (1990-1991). The Evolution of the Sultan's Pavilion in Ottoman Imperial Mosques. *IslamicArt*, Vol. IV, pp. 281-301.
- Nar, N. (2001). *İstanbul Camilerinde Hünkâr Kasırlarının Tarihsel Gelişimi ve Nusretiye Cami Hünkâr Kasrı* [Unpublished master thesis]. Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi, İstanbul.
- Necipoglu, G. (1991). *Architecture Ceremonial and Power. The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and the Sixteenth Century*. MIT Press.
- Osman Nuri (2017). *Abdülhamid-i Sani ve Devr-i Saltanatı*. Pergole Yayınları.
- Özbudun, S. (1995). *Ayinden Törene: Siyasal İktidarın Kurulma ve Kurumsallaşması Sürecinde Törenlerin İşlevleri* [Unpublished master thesis]. Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Ankara.
- Rüstem, Ü. (2016). The Spectacle of Legitimacy: The Dome-Closing Ceremony of the Sultan Ahmed Mosque. *Muqarnas*, 33(1), 253-344.
- Rüstem, Ü. (2021). Piety and Presence in the Postclassical Sultanic Mosque. In T. Krstić & D. Terzioğlu (eds.), *Historicizing Sunni Islam in the Ottoman Empire, c. 1450-c. 1750* (pp. 376-420). Brill.
- Stephanov, D. (2014). Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839) and the First Shift in Modern Ruler Visibility in the Ottoman Empire. *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, 1(1-2), 129-148.
- Şakir, Z. (2008). *Yarım Asır Evvel Bizi İdare Edenler*. Çatı Kitapları.
- Şen, İ. (2019). *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Merasim Musikisi* [Unpublished PhD dissertation]. Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, Samsun.
- Şenyurt, O. (2016). Selanik Hamidiye Cami: II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Mimaride Geleneksel Yaklaşımlar ve Oryantalizm. *Kocaeli Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 31, 185-208.

Tuğlacı, P. (1990). *The Role of the Balian Family in Ottoman Architecture*. Yeni Çığır Yayınları.

Yıldıran, N. (1989). *İstanbul'da II. Abdülhamid Dönemi Mimarisi* [Unpublished PhD dissertation]. Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar Üniversitesi, İstanbul.

Zurcher, E. J. (2016). *Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi*. İletişim Yayınları.

Conflict of Interest Statement | Çıkar Çatışması Beyanı:

There is no conflict of interest for conducting the research and/or for the preparation of the article. | Araştırmanın yürütülmesi ve/veya makalenin hazırlanması hususunda herhangi bir çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.

Financial Statement | Finansman Beyanı:

No financial support has been received for conducting the research and/or for the preparation of the article. | Bu araştırmanın yürütülmesi ve/veya makalenin hazırlanması için herhangi bir mali destek alınmamıştır.

Ethical Statement | Etik Beyanı:

All procedures followed were in accordance with the ethical standards. | Araştırma etik standartlara uygun olarak yapılmıştır.

Copyright Statement for Intellectual and Artistic Works | Fikir ve Sanat Eserleri Hakkında Telif Hakkı Beyanı:

In the article, copyright regulations have been complied with for intellectual and artistic works (figures, photographs, graphics, etc.).

| Makalede kullanılan fikir ve sanat eserleri (şekil, fotoğraf, grafik vb.) için telif hakları düzenlemelerine uyulmuştur.