Single, Poor Women in Istanbul, 1850-1915: Prostitution, Sexuality, and Female Labor

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Abstract

"Single, Poor Women in Istanbul, 1850-1915:
Prostitution, Sexuality, and Female Labor"

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for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University, 2017

Prof. Dr. Cengiz Kırlı, Dissertation Advisor

This dissertation focuses on the lives and experiences of single, poor women in late Ottoman Istanbul, along with new governmental policies controlling their urban mobility, sexuality, and labor. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, single, poor women closely associated with prostitution and vice emerged as a source of anxiety for the middle- and upper-class residents of Istanbul. Ideally, women were to remain in the private sphere of their houses, engaging in sexual activity only in the interest of maternity. Yet a number of sexually-active women who lacked customary familial relations and proper households increasingly appeared in the newly expanding public spaces of the Ottoman capital. The government formulated policies to exclude them from urban space and confine them to certain regulated spaces—to regulated brothels as prostitutes, to households as domestic servants, and to relief institutions as needy women. I argue that these institutions and administrative practices were designed in such a way to control female sexuality, labor, and mobility.The study also aims to provide a gendered analysis of some well-established concepts and topics such as urbanization, public order, social policy, and labor. For such an analysis, I examine single, poor women's presence in the newly emerging urban life in Istanbul.

77,500 words

Özet

"İstanbul'da Yalnız ve Yoksul Kadınlar, 1850-1915:
Fuhuş, Cinsellik ve Kadın Emeği"

Müge Özbek, Doktora Adayı, 2017
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Bu tez geç Osmanlı İstanbul'unda yalnız ve yoksul kadınların hayat ve deneyimleriyle birlikte kentteki hareketlerine, cinselliklerine ve emeklerine yönelik hükümet politikalarına odaklanır. On dokuzuncu yüzyıl ortalarından itibaren yoğun bir biçimde fuhuş ve ahlaksızlıkla ilişkilendirilmeye başlanan yalnız ve yoksul kadınlar orta ve üst sınıflar için büyük bir endişe kaynağı olmuşlardır. Kadınların evlerinin özel alanında kalmaları ve cinselliğe annelik için katlanmaları beklenirken, çok sayıda cinsel olarak aktif ve geleneksel aile ve cemaat bağlarından kopmuş kadın Osmanlı başkentinin gittikçe genişleyen kamusal alanlarında görünür hale gelmiştir. Bu dönemde hükümet bu kadınları kentsel mekanlardan uzaklaştırmak ve düzenlenmiş alanlara - fahişe olarak yasal genelevlere, hizmetçi olarak hanelere ve ihtiyaç sahibi olarak hayır kurumlarına - kapatmayı öngören politikalar formüle etmeye başladı. Tezimde bu kurumların kadın cinselliğini ve emeğini kontrol edecek şekillerde tasarladığını iddia ediyorum.Bu çalışma aynı zamanda kentleşme, kamu düzeni sosyal politika ve emek gibi bazı yerleşik kavram ve konulara toplumsal cinsiyet eksenli bir analiz öneriyor. Tezimde böylesi bir analiz için yalnız ve yoksul kadınların İstanbul'un kent yaşamındaki varlıklarını inceliyorum.

77.500 kelime

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To Ardıç and Üzüm

Table of Contents

List of Tables *xi*
List of Figures *xi*
Acknowledgements *xii*

1 INTRODUCTION 1

2 THE URBAN TRANSFORMATION OF BEYOĞLU AND THE REGULATON OF PROSTITUON 21

- 2.1 The Making of "Modern" Beyoğlu: From a Dockside City to a Nineteenth-Century Urban Center 26
- 2.2 Municipality of the Sixth District and the "Urban Reforms" 32
- 2.3 Class, Gender & Prostitution in the Late Nineteenth-Century Beyoğlu 39
- 2.4 Regulation: A Nineteenth Century Approach to Prostitution 44
- 2.5 The Introduction of the "Ordinance for the Sanitary Inspection of Some Private Houses" 51
- 2.6 Regulation in Action: The First Decades 57

3 THE EVERYDAY OF PROSTITUTION IN REGULATED BROTHELS OF BEYOĞLU IN EARLY 1900S: SPACES, PEOPLE AND RELATIONS 61

- 3.1 Places of Prostitution 64
- 3.2 The Brothel Keepers and the Middlemen in Sex Trade 72
- 3.3 The Private Lives in "Public Houses": Social profiles and Everyday Lives of Prostitutes under Regulation 85

4 NARROW STREETS MORAL CLAIMS: THE COMMUNITY PROTESTS AGAINST BROTHELS IN BEYOĞLU AND A NEW GEOGRAPHY OF PROSTITUTION (1900-1915) 98

- 4.1 Prostitution as an Urban Problem 104
- 4.2 Clearing the Streets for "the Respectful and Honorable Residents": The Spatial Regulation of Prostitution 112
- 4.3 A New Ordinance and New Spatial Regulations 119
- 4.4 New Geography, New Complaints 122
- 4.5 Conclusion 123

5 POOR RELIEF, GENDER AND SEXUALITY (1836-1915) 125

5.1 Female Poor Relief in the Ottoman Empire 127
5.2 Haseki Women's Hospital 131
5.3 Refugee Flood and Widow's Houses (Dulhane) 142
5.4 Darülaceze 153

6 "DISORDERLY WOMEN" AND THEIR TREATMENT IN EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY ISTANBUL (1900-1914) 165

6.1 Deportation to Provincial Cities 168
6.2 Confinement in Reformatories and Poor Houses 173
6.3 Criminalization of Prostitution 177
6.4 Conclusion 184

7 LIVES AND LABOR OF FEMALE DOMESTIC SERVANTS IN THE LATE OTTOMAN ISTANBUL (1900-1914) 186

7.1 Slaves, Adopted Daughters, Free Workers 190
7.2 Negotiating Women's Labor behind a Gloss of 'Benevolent Paternalism' 196
7.3 Purging Domestic Servants from the Urban Space 211

8 CONCLUSION 215

BIBLIOGRAPHY 221

List of Tables

Table 3.1 The brothels, their owners and location in 1920 73
Table 3.2 Prostitutes and the neighborhoods they are working 86

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Oldest surviving map of Constantinople designed in 1422 by Florentine cartographer Cristoforo Buondelmonti 28
Figure 2.2 General View of Beyoglu in 1830 30
Figure 2.3 Munucipality of the Sixth Distrcit Building 33
Figure 2.4 Karaköy Square and the Galata Bridge 35
Figure 2.5 Grand Rue de Pera 37
Figure 2.6 Yüksekkaldırım 40
Figure 3.1 Garden Bar at Tepebaşı 70
Figure 3.2 Brothels in Galata 89
Figure 4.1 Locations of Brothels in Beyoğlu, Galata 116
Figure 4.2 Locations of Brothels in Beyoğlu, Pera 119
Figure 5.1 Haseki Hürrem Sultan Külliyesi 133
Figure 5.2 Balkan refugees at Sirkeci Pier, 1912 144
Figure 5.3 Refugess in Edirne Hospital, 1878 145
Figure 5.4 Female refugees flooding to Ottoman lands 147
Figure 5.5 Darülaceze Buildings 155
Figure 5.6 Maternity Ward at Darülaceze 157
Figure 5.7 Girls weaving carpet at Darülaceze workshop 157
Figure 6.1 Homeless women at Üsküdar Cemetery 1909 167
Figure 6.2 Female beggar in front of an Istanbul mosque 170

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1

Introduction

By the late eighteenth century, a small though socially and economically significant group of single women had already joined the swelling ranks of the poor in Istanbul. Adrift from the customary family and community ties that would typically support and contain them, they entered the labor force of the city unbound by traditional gender expectations, and they engaged in sexual behaviors considered illicit by the standards of the time. Because of their "promiscuous" lifestyles, class origins, and spatial mobility in the new urban setting, they defied expectations of domesticity and contemporary models of proper womanhood. In the perception of the middle classes, single, poor women, who fell outside customary institutions were prostitutes or at least potential prostitutes.[1] And indeed, most of these young, poor women turned to prostitution as the most reasonable option, in both the economic and social senses, to earn their livelihood in the Ottoman capital. Female newcomers to the city competed for the few low pay, low status employment opportunities available to women primarily in areas such as domestic services, cleaning,

1 By middle class I mean the "middling" ranks, consisting of professionals, lawyers, physicians, officers in the military, manufacturers, merchants, tradesmen, and their families. While I emphasize middle-class anxieties, discourses, and representations, the point is not that these views could not be shared by people from the upper or lower ranks of society. What was definitive for middle-class discourses was anxiety about downward mobility.

laundry, and prostitution. Some among them also worked as street vendors, shop assistants, seamstresses, waitresses, singers, dancers, and actresses. Many of them resorted to prostitution as an occasional job or as a fulltime profession to supplement their limited earnings.[2]

On 14 January 1884, the Ottoman Council of State issued the Ordinance for the Sanitary Inspection of Some Private Houses within the Border of the Municipality of the Sixth District (*Altıncı Dâire-i Belediye Dâhilinde Bulunan Baʿzı Husûsî Hanelerin Hıdemât-ı Sıhhiyesine Dâir Taʿlîmâtnâme*). This first attempt to regulate prostitution in Ottoman Empire was geographically limited to the sixth district (Beyoğlu). Furthermore, only non-Muslim women were enrolled in the system of regulation. The advocates of the ordinance, led by Eduard Blaque, the renowned mayor of the district, presented the regulation as a pragmatic approach to maintaining urban order and public health. According to its advocates it was impossible to abolish prostitution in the area. Yet regulation of prostitution through the enrolment of prostitutes into a legal system that made them subject to compulsory medical checks would severely

2 For histories of poor women and female children in the Ottoman Empire see Fariba Zarinebaf-Sharh, *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul, 1700-1800* (Los Angles: University of California Press, 2010), Shirine Hamadeh, "Mean Streets: Space and moral Order in Early Modern Istanbul," *Turcica*, 44 (2013): 249-77, Nazan Maksudyan, "Orphans, Cities, and the State: Vocational Orphanages (Islahhanes) and Reform in the Late Ottoman Urban Space," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43 (2011): 493-511. Gülhan Balsoy, *The Politics of Reproduction in Ottoman Society, 1838-1900* (London: Pickering & Chatto Publishers, 2013). Farıba Zarinebaf, *Women on the Margins: Gender, Charity and Justice in the Early Modern Middle East* (Istanbul: Isıs Press, 2014). Yahya Araz, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Çocuk Olmak (16. Yüzyıldan 19. Yüzyıl Başlarına)* (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2013), Nazan Maksudyan, *Orphans and Destitude Children in the Late Ottoman Empire* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2014), Anastasia Falierou Köksal Duygu, ed., *A Social History of Late Ottoman Women: New Perspectives* (Leiden: Brill 2013). İkbal Elif Metinsoy Mahir, "Poor Ottoman Turkish Women During World War I: Women's Experiences and Politics in Everyday Life, 1914-1923" (Ph.D, Boğaziçi University, 2012). Ebru Boyar, "An Imagined Moral Community: Ottoman Female Public Presence, Honour and Marginality " in *Ottoman Women in Public Space*, ed. Kate Fleet and Ebru Boyar (Leiden Brill, 2016).

limit the harm to the society.[3] The regulation of prostitution in Beyoğlu was an experiment and exemplar. The district functioned as a limited case the specific religious, cultural, and economic context of which justified a certain form of legislation which would have been inappropriate in other parts of the city. The limitation of enrollment to non-Muslim women was also critical for the justification of the legislation. According to a well-accepted feminist approach, the regulatory mechanisms were not directed only at prostitutes, they were directed at all poor women - a troublesome component of urban poor in the ever-growing urban centers of the nineteenth century.[4] I argue that the establishment of a regulatory system in Beyoğlu was a milestone in governmental approaches to poor women in the urban space of late Ottoman Istanbul. However, a number of women fell outside the scope of regulation. As said, the regulation was limited geographically and Muslim women remained outside its scope. Until the promulgation of a new ordinance in 1915, Ottoman governments established various methods to control poor Muslim women. Only in 1915, with the Regulation for the Prevention of the Transmission of Contagious Diseases (Emraz-ı Zühreviyenin Men-i Sirayeti Hakkında Nizamname which was issued by the Young Turk regime, were Muslim women also brought under the authority of regulatory policy.[5] I argue that up to 1915 Ottoman governments pursued a policy that centered on limiting the visibility and mobility of Muslim women in the streets of Istanbul. Young, poor Muslim women were excluded from the urban space of Istanbul by way of deportation to provincial cities or closing in relief institutions. However, none of these efforts proved effective in the face of the realities of the period.

This dissertation focuses on the lives and experiences of single, poor women in late Ottoman Istanbul along with new governmental policies to control their mobility in urban space, sexuality and labor. From mid-nineteenth century on, the single, poor women who were closely associated with

3 Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye*, 9 vols., vol. 6 (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1995), 3297.

4 Judith R. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

5 Halim Alyot, *Türkiye'de Zabıta: Tarihi Gelişim ve Bugünkü Durum* (Ankara: İçişleri Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1947), 570-86.

prostitution and vice emerged as a great source of anxiety for Istanbul's middle- and upper-class residents. Ideally, women were to remain in the private sphere of their houses, bearing sexual activity only in the interest of maternity. Yet a number of sexually active women who lacked customary familial ties and proper households increasingly appeared in the newly expanding public spaces of the Ottoman capital. The ruling elite and the middle-class public were anxious that single working women-who were associated with prostitution in their eyes- contaminated their houses as well as "their" city with disorder, immorality, and disease.

On the other hand, the same women were central to the maintenance of urban life in Istanbul as well to the domestic lives of the middle- and upper-class residents of the city. Swarms of young male immigrants, sailors, and entrepreneurs entered Istanbul's port demanding sex. Furthermore, a new middle-class way of life emerged requiring the cheap labor of working-class women in the form of domestic service. Single, poor women comprised a group of laborers upon whom the urban life in Istanbul indispensably depended. Hence, controlling their labor was inherent to the moral discourses and governmental policies that targeted them. Administrative policies were designed to exclude them from urban space and confine them to certain regulated space - to regulated brothels as prostitutes, to households as domestic servants, and to relief institutions as needy women. I argue that these institutions and administrative policies were designed to control female sexuality, labor and mobility.

Importantly, images created by the middle classes to represent these women were often related to broader anxieties ridden by social, political, and economic crises that the empire underwent in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Frequently, single, working women were depicted as symbols of the loosening of paternal authority, which simultaneously evoked the authority of the father or other male figures in the family as well as the authority of the empire imagined as a political body. It was also a period in which gender, class, ethnic, and religious identities were still subjects of negotiation. As Istanbul underwent hasty urbanization, particularly in the second half of the nineteenth century, cultural constructions of gender and sexuality, family structures and paradigms of work changed as rapidly as the city itself. In this

context, questions of national and gender identities as well as issues of public health, religious hegemony, urban security, social order, and sexual politics were all played out in the debates concerning single, poor women.[6]

The second half of the nineteenth century was also a critical period in which new approaches to urban populations and urban space were constituted, and new institutions were created for the regulation and control of "dangerous classes." I contend that the treatment of single, poor women in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Istanbul was closely related to a conceptualization of urban space that redefined the boundaries of participation, security, and visibility. From the mid-nineteenth century on, Ottoman governmental agents tried to suppress the visibility of single, poor women and to control their sexual and vocational behaviors.[7]

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6 In Ottoman historiography, there is a growing literature gendering the issues of national and ethnic identities, family, public health, religious hegemony, urban security and social order, and sexual politics. See Beth Baron, *Egypt as a Woman: Nationalism, Gender, and Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), Nikki R. Keddie and Beth Baron, *Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), Alan Duben and Cem Behar, *İstanbul Haneleri: Evlilik, Aile ve Doğurganlık, 1880-1940* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1996), Nazan Maksudyan, ed., *Women and the City, Women in the City: A Gendered Perspective on Ottoman Urban History* (New York: Berghahn, 2014), Kate Fleet Ebru Boyar, ed., *Ottoman Women in Public Space* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), Elizabeth Frierson, *Mirrors Out, Mirrors In: Domestication and Rejection of the Foreign in the Ottoman Women's Magazines* (New York State University of New York 2000), Elizabeth B. Frierson, "Unimagined Communities: Women and Education in the Late-Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909," *Critical Matrix, The Princeton Journal of Women, Gender, and Culture* 9, 2 (1995): 55-90, Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm* (Istanbul: 2014).

7 For studies on urban policing and social policy in Istanbul in the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, see Ferdan Ergut, "Policing the Poor in the Late Ottoman Empire," *Middle Eastern Studies* 38, 2 (2002): 149-64, Ferdan Ergut, *Modern Devlet ve Polis: Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Toplumsal Denetimin Diyalektiği* (İstanbul İletişim Yayınları 2004), Noemi Levy and Alexandre Toumarkine, eds., *Osmanlı'da Asayiş, Suç ve Ceza, 18. -20. Yüzyıllar* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2007), Noémi Lévy-Aksu, *Osmanlı İstanbulu'nda Asayiş 1879 - 1909* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2017), İlkay Yılmaz, *Serseri, Anarşist ve Fesadın Peşinde: II. Abdülhami Dönemi Güvenlik Politikaları Ekseninde Mürur Tezkereleri, Pasaportlar ve Otel Kayıtları* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları 2014), Nadir Özbek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sosyal Devlet: Siyaset, İktidar ve Meşruiyet (1876-1914)* (İstanbul: İletişim

In this dissertation, I am writing -from a feminist perspective- a social history of single, poor women of Istanbul during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To this end, I first present a picture of the hardships encountered by these women; my concern is to recover their agencies and voices as they negotiated their survival were negotiating for their survival was my primary concern. Second, I focus on policies towards single, poor women designed to control their mobility, sexuality and lives. A study of the lives and experiences of single, poor women takes them out of the margins of history to which they had been relegated by the mainstream ideology and reconstitutes them as key actors in the historical narrative. Here, my goal is not limited to making a formerly invisible female group in Ottoman historiography visible. Rather, I provide a gendered analysis of well-established concepts and topics such as urbanization, public order, social policy, and labor. To this end, I analyze single working women's presence in the newly emerging urban life in Istanbul focusing particularly on the broader normative insights that informed governmental policies. What I call "single, poor women" in this dissertation is not a homogenous group. It is rather abundantly heterogeneous, composed of women coming from diverse ethno-religious and geographical backgrounds and having diverse urban experiences. Foreign and non-Muslim prostitutes working in regulated brothels in Beyoğlu, clandestine Muslim prostitutes arrested by the police, female inmates in relief institutions, young hired out by their rural families to middle- and upper-class households in Istanbul to work as domestic servants, and many others appear in the cases presented in the pages of this dissertation.

Though single, poor women cannot be treated as a homogeneous group, the category remains useful as a way of emphasizing the constraints and opportunities common to many women who lived in Istanbul adrift from established families and communities, even if their experiences differ greatly. I

Yayınları, 2002), Nazan Maksudyan, *Orphans and Destitude Children in the Late Ottoman Empire* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2014). Also for eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Fariba Zarinebaf-Sharh, *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul, 1700-1800* (Los Angles: University of California Press, 2010), Betül Başaran, *Selim III, Social Control, and Policing in Istanbul at the end of the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden Brill, 2014), Shirine Hamadeh, "Mean Streets: Space and moral Order in Early Modern Istanbul," *Turcica*, 44 (2013): 249-77.

consider single, poor women to be a category into which each woman mentioned in this dissertation can be differently positioned. However, their experiences had common points: Single and poor women were newcomers to the city, mostly young and expectant; they were free from the constraints and protection of customary family and community ties; and finally, they had to compete for poorly paid jobs. In separate chapters I scrutinize the experiences of different categories of single, poor women and the governmental policies towards each. Each chapter uncovers the experiences that bound each group. While examining each group separately, I also highlight the similarities and the permeability among them. I argue that this permeability was an important factor that shaped the experience of single, poor women as a broader category as well as governmental responses designed to control and regulate them.

The dissertation covers a period of roughly seventy years from the mid-nineteenth century to 1915. It starts in 1840s as mid-nineteenth century witnessed decisive changes in governmental approaches to urban population and urban space. It ends with the promulgation of the Ordinance for the Prevention of the Transmission of Contagious Acts (*Emraz-ı Zühreviyenin Men-i Sirayet-i Hakkında Nizamname*) by Union and Progress government in 1915, the first year of World War I. The time covered here was a period of tumultuous and unprecedented change for the Ottoman Empire and its capital. In these years, women assumed a new symbolic and role as a target of social intervention to a degree that differentiated them from the preceding decades. Public debates about the lives, sexuality, and labor of women were actually symbolic debates about the very nature of society - about the past, present and future of Ottoman culture and polity.

During the period under study, concern about single, poor women reached its peak. Bereft of family support and confronted with poverty, they created subcultures that directly challenged to the nineteenth- century conceptions of gender roles. The history of single, poor women is indeed integral to the history of urban change, social order, social policy, labor, and sexuality in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The lives of single, poor women in the late Ottoman Istanbul and middle-class representations of their existence revolve around the theme of prostitution. So do the chapters of this dissertation. The approaches to single, poor women were informed by a

particular image of the prostitute. In late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century middle-class discourses, the image of prostitute was ambiguous, oscillating between being a victim of social conditions and being inherently sinful. There is a direct link between this ambiguity in the representation of prostitute and notions of female weakness and sensuality.

The image of prostitution at this historical juncture was potentially extended to women who deviated from traditional codes of conduct. It provided men not only with a site for considering the larger question of morality and the regulation of women; also provided an instrument through which they could police and colonize female sexuality and behavior. At the same time the image of the prostitute, which was invariably associated with liberties and the liminalities, served as an instrument upon which anxieties about social and economic change and the fracturing of social boundaries could be projected. This dissertation explores several metaphorical deployments of the image of the prostitute within a broader discourse. These include the projection of prostitution onto all single, poor woman, the association of working in the streets with "falling into streets," and the connection of sexual relations outside of marriage with prostitution. Hence, this dissertation reveals the multiple ways that the discourse of prostitution relocating through the social layers of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Ottoman political culture operated: Shielding men from their fears of female agency, liquidating anxieties about the control of female labor, and shaping discursive systems within which gendered utterances could freely circulate.

On this point, the thesis is inspired by Michael Foucault's reflections on Victorian sexuality. In the *History of Sexuality*, Foucault challenges views that Victorian society suffered from sexual repression. Instead, he argues that despite amplified struggles to limit the visibility of sex, sex and sexuality emerged as a focal point of authoritative discourses in the nineteenth-century public sphere. For him, discourses of sex and sexuality are central to power relations.[8] Inspired by this Foucauldian insight, I emphasize how discourses on sexuality

8 Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality* trans. Robert Hurley, vol. 1-2-3 (New York: Vintage Books, 1988).

shaped urban life in late Ottoman Istanbul as well as the intimate experiences of individuals living in the city.

Feminist studies already reveal that how urban environments regulated female subjects while at the same time provide space for their creativity and action. Since the 1970s, the pioneers of feminist geography have identified the urban as a decisive framework through which gender is experienced and constituted. Many preliminary works focusing on diverse historical and contemporary contexts make women visible as urban actors while also demonstrating the characteristic sexism of the urban settings. These works highlight how urban space is constructed in ways to reinforce gender inequalities particularly by creating physical and social barriers to women's mobility. The scholars that followed this first generation include women's lives and labor as key components in urban development. In the 1990s the focus shifted from emphasizing the prevalence of gender hierarchies and oppression to examining of the ambiguities of the everyday experiences of women—which are full of constraints and hardships but offer radically different possibilities. In her path breaking article "The Invisible Flaneur," Elizabeth Wilson opposes the idea that in the city, which is constructed by gender difference, women are essentially disadvantaged, constrained, and excluded. She insists that feminist scholarship should diverge from approaches that highlight how cities restrict and oppress women; for her, one should rather explore the ways in which cities enable women to escape the constraints of normative expectations by providing them formerly unprecedented opportunities. According to Wilson, a city is "a contradictory and shifting space which can be appropriated by women."[9]

9 For example, see Elizabeth Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder, and Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York 1789-1860* (1987), Rachel Fuchs, *Poor and Pregnant in Paris: Strategies for Survival in thte Nineteenth Century* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1992). Sarah Deutsch, *Women and the City: Gender, Space, and Power in Boston* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), Jessica Ellen Sewell, *Women and the Everyday City: Public Space in San Francisco, 1890-1915* (London: University of Minnesota Press, 2011). Despina Stratigakos, *A wome's Berlin: Building the Modern City* (London University of Minnesota Press, 2008), Elizabeth Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder, and Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 83.

In this study, I use turn-of-the-century Istanbul as a case study to explore both the image and reality of single, poor women's experiences living apart from their families. I argue that in an era where Ottoman womanhood was defined only by family, these women—neither victimized nor liberated—created ways of coping with the conditions of urban life. While accounting for the experiences of single, poor women, I reject the widespread image that portrays them as helpless victims. Rather, I emphasize the significance of their urban experience in which their labor played a crucial role. However, such a picture must also reveal the their harsh conditions, the inadequacy of their resources, and limitations on of their options. This dissertation also examines government policies on single, poor women. At this point, the questions it answers are as follows: Why and how did single, poor women become objects of scorn and fear in nineteenth-century Istanbul? What were the gendered assumptions that were informing these approaches?

In the course of the nineteenth century, Istanbul experienced rapid urbanization as Ottoman markets were integrated into global capitalist networks. Although the scope of its industrialization was limited, the commercialization of the economy under the influence of world capitalist development and sharp population movements towards Istanbul brought about immense demographic, social, and economic transformations in the Ottoman capital. The population of the city increased from 359 thousand in 1829 to 895 thousand in 1884 and to 1,116 thousand in 1914.[10] Particularly after the Anglo-Ottoman Economic Treaty of 1838, the commercial life of the city flourished, attracting money, goods, and people from all across the empire and from the world beyond. Subsequent events such as the Crimean War of 1853-1856, the Reform Edict *(Islahat Fermanı)* of 1856, the commercial treaty between the Sublime Porte and Great Britain signed at Kanlıca, Istanbul, on 29 April 1861, and the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 deepened the process. The influxes of soldiers, refugees, and entrepreneurs emerged, as well as those of various categories of the poor. On one hand, the wealth coming from trade investments

10 Kemal Karpat, "The Population and the Social and Economic Transformation of İstanbul: The Ottoman Microcosm," in *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 104, Zafer Toprak, "Tarihsel Nüfusbilim Açısından İstanbul'un Nüfusu ve Toplumsal Topoğrafyası," *Toplum ve Ekonomi*, 3 (1992): 109-20.

supported the emergence of an urban bourgeois, on the other, immigrants lured by new job opportunities offered by the commercialized economy and refugees dislocated by the conflicts and wars in the Balkans and Caucasus mixed in Istanbul transforming into a mass of urban poor. The emergence of diverse social classes fostered new social practices and frictions in urban society.[11]

In the nineteenth century, the urban poor began to occupy a significant place in international public opinion and entered the agendas of political elites. In different parts of the world, governmental policies and middle-class perceptions increasingly tended to identify the urban poor occupying newly expanding public spaces as a distinct social segment that shared undesirable traits and posed a threat to the political order, public health and the social and moral fabric of "respectable" urban society. New apparatuses tried to regulate if not totally prevent the presence of these "dangerous classes" in urban space. Ottoman reformers and experts developed similar concerns about the urban poor who occupied newly expanding public spaces in in an ever-growing Istanbul.

In the face of urbanization, the nineteenth-century international public was anxious that the rapid growth of cities was being accompanied by an assortment of social ills, all of which could be traced to the destruction of traditional social relations. The association of the poor with social ills became more intense in the latter half of the nineteenth century as the generalized anxieties of earlier periods were translated into social fact on account of swelling urban populations and classes less attached to customary authoritarian structures. The dramatic changes that occurred throughout the nineteenth century

11 Kemal Karpat, "The Population and the Social and Economic Transformation of İstanbul: The Ottoman Microcosm," in *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985). Kemal H. Karpat, "Ottoman Population Records and the Census of 1881/82-1893," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 9, 3 (1978): 237-74. Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisinde Bağımlılık ve Büyüme, 1820-1913*, 2 ed. (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1994).

entailed, among other things, increased surveillance and organized policing of urban populations.[12]

In mid-nineteenth century, particularly after the promulgation of Tanzimat Edict in 1839, governmental treatment of the urban poor in the Ottoman Empire entered a decisive stage. In the latter half of the century, Ottoman governments adopted a set of institutional and legal changes to establish a modern, cohesive system of social control built upon interconnected apparatuses and institutions. To this end, new apparatuses such as a modern police force as well as institutions such as orphanages, reformatories, workhouses, asylums, prisons and maternity hospitals were established. These institutions were established under the authority of governmental officials and were expected to keep the urban society moral, healthy, and safe.[13] A new meaning of idleness and work, work with productive and disciplinary qualifications was emerging; and a reform policy of punishment was replacing corporal punishment. The government was gradually becoming more concerned with the population, with its health and welfare. Briefly, the changing attitudes and policies towards poor throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century reflect the early signs of an emerging 'social policy' in the Ottoman context. In 1890s, the Ottoman government issued two vagrancy acts in order to systematize efforts to control the urban poor. Darülaceze, the first modern poor house of the empire was opened in 1896 a few months after the introduction of the second vagrancy act. These acts defined a differentiation between

12 Thomas McStay Adams, *Bureaucrats and Beggars: French Social Policy in the Age of Enlightenment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), Kathleen Canning, "Social Policy, Body Politics: Recasting the Social Question in Germany, 1875-1900," in *Gender and Class in Modern Europe*, ed. Laura L. Reader and Sonya O. Rose (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 211-37, Felix Driver, "Introduction; Policing Society: Government, Discipline and Social Policy; Social Policy, Liberalism and the Mid-Victorian State," in *Power and Pauperism, The Workhouse System, 1834-1884* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1-31, Jose Harris, "Political Thought and the Welfare State 1870-1940: An Intellectual Framework for British Social Policy," *Past and Present*, 135 (1992): 116-41.

13 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage, 1977), Michel Foucault, *Madness and civilization : a history of insanity in the Age of Reason* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973).

the deserving and undeserving poor. While those unable to work, the disabled, the aged, and the very young were defined as the deserving poor. The unemployed, able-bodied, migrant man -the vagrant- was defined as the central problem of urban poverty. The offence of vagrancy was constructed out of a fear of disorder. Used as an governmental instrument to control the urban poor, the offence did not concern what a person had done, but what he appeared to be.[14]

Unemployed, unskilled male immigrants to Istanbul were assumed to be idle and were therefore susceptible to the charge of vagrancy.[15] For their female counterparts, however, the issue was not idleness, but their very presence in urban space. They were not scorned because they did not work, but they defied domestic ideals. In late Ottoman Empire, the image of single, poor women already oscillated among someone to be protected and a feared pathology, a danger to public health, and a threat to middle-class morality and family life. The issue was frequently discussed in the press, and administrative authorities tried to find ways domesticate them.

Informing and exacerbating the anxieties concerning single working poor women was a fear of gender chaos; women were becoming free of patriarchal authority. In diverse gender regimes, family security and wellbeing were typically constructed upon gendered assumptions. Likewise, in the Ottoman context, men were positioned as the main breadwinners of the family, whereas women were positioned as mothers/dependents bound to their homes -to be protected and supervised there by their male kin. We already know that these rigid gender models and social practices were invalid in many cases in actual life. They were particularly difficult to sustain against the immense pressures of the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire. The disruptions that occurred over of the century drew numerous Ottoman women far from their homes and communities. These women found their way to Istanbul; however, the city's economy and social circumstances did not yet provide them with many options to make a living. Given the social, legal, and economic restrictions of the time, the absence of a male breadwinner and the distance from their

14 Nadir Özbek, "'Beggars' and 'Vagrants' in State Policy and Public Discourse During the Late Ottoman Empire: 1876-1914," *Middle Eastern Studies* 45, 5 (2009): 783-801.

15 ibid.

homes and communities entailed extreme poverty for most female migrants to Istanbul.

Refugee women, poor widows, orphaned girls and women who came or were brought to Istanbul to work in the service sector - particularly in domestic service – found a few, low paid and socially-degrading jobs such as stay-in domestic service, daily cleaning, and laundry or resort to begging and prostitution. Nearly all women charged by Ottoman authorities for being disorderly were those choosing these restricted employment options. I contend that poor women who lived on their own in Istanbul were the hardest-pressed component of the urban poor. They were confined by a patriarchal economy predicated on their direct dependence on men as well as by a patriarchal society predicated on the assumption that a woman's space was the home.

I argue that the panic caused by the uncontrolled behavior of women was related to the failure of the patriarchal regime that constituted men as the providers of proper moral households and families for women. The female deviance implied familial disorder among the poor but also a moral crisis on an imperial level. Women in the streets were seen as prostitutes who threatened the social order and public health, but they were simultaneously considered innocent victims of patriarchal failure. This study argues that the concern for single, poor women were unequivocally related to contemporary anxieties about the moral breakdown of family, society, and the empire.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, interest in the family as an institution expanded. A morally upright family was perceived to be the solution to all kinds of issues from health and sexuality to regulating the urban masses, winning wars, and maintaining and enhancing economic production. Gender was an essential part of every approach to the family, as each of these approaches entailed a different understanding of masculinity and femininity and their roles in society. Public debate on women in the streets was integral to constituting a new moral order and embedding it into the fabric of a new governmentality. These discourses promoted a conception of family ruled by judicious, morally upright patriarchs; and in parallel, the empire was to be

ruled by a judicious, benevolent father.[16] The systematic and wide-ranging dramatization of the ambiguities, tensions, and contradictions that single, poor woman embodied on the part of the middle class constituted an important part of late Ottoman debates about female sexuality and women's presence in urban space. Single, poor women frequently became targets of social critique, police intervention, and governmental regulation aimed at excluding them from urban space and urban life. While examining increasing efforts to exclude the "city's 'low'—the slum, the rag picker, the prostitute, the sewer—" Peter Stallybrass and Alon White explain the process as such:

> The point is that the exclusion necessary to the formation of social identity at one level is simultaneously a production at the level of the Imaginary, and a production, what is more, of a hybrid fantasy emerging out of the very attempt to demarcate boundaries, to unite and purify the social collectivity.[17]

In this respect, the discourses and efforts also demarcated of decent women who were seen as the main constructors of upright families.

During the period under consideration, Ottoman administrative and middle-class approaches to female sexual deviancy changed. While in earlier periods female sexual deviancy was personalized and downplayed, from the 1850s forward it was constructed as a serious threat to urban order. The transition from projects to suppress personal immorality to a central preoccupation with prostitution in the late nineteenth century involved one of the most important paradoxes of the moral regulation of the population in the nineteenth century. With the emergence of a distinctive governmental rationality associated with modern methods to the control of urban population and urban space, the Ottoman government adopted regulatory strategies

This study contributes to a growing literature on sexuality and prostitution in the Ottoman Empire. Since the late 1980s, many scholars have contributed

16 Nadir Özbek, "The Politics of Modern Welfare Institutions in the Late Ottoman Empire (1876-1909)," *International Journal of Turcologia* 3, 5 (2008): 42-62.

17 Peter White Stallybrass, Allon, *The Politic and Poetic of Transgression* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1986).

to this specific field.[18] Despite an abundance of small articles, however, there are few monographs on the issue and none of them is on prostitution in the Ottoman capital.[19] The literature on early-modern era of the Ottoman Empire(which covers the period up to the mid-nineteenth century) generally focuses on themes such as the legal perceptions of prostitution and their punishment. This literature has brought forward the idea that the legal framework concerning prostitution in the Ottoman Empire was "governed by a general vagueness."[20] Semerdjian, in her study on law and illicit sex in Aleppo, for

18 Zafer Toprak, "Fuhuş-Osmanlı Dönemi," in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1993-1995), 342-45, Zafer Toprak, "Genelevler," in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1993-1995), 392-93, Zafer Toprak, "İstanbul'da Fuhuş ve Zührevi Hastalıklar, 1914-1933," *Tarih ve Toplum* 7, 39 (1987): 31-40, Khaled Fahmy, "Prostitution in Nineteenth Century Egypt," in *Outside In: On the Margins of the Modern Middle East*, ed. Eugene L. Rogan (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001), Elyse Semerdjian, "Sinful Professions: Illegal Occupations of Women in Ottoman Aleppo, Syria," *Hawwa* 1, 1 (2003): 60-85, Elyse Semerdjian, *"Off the Straight Path": Illicit Sex, Law, and Community in Ottoman Aleppo* (New York Syracuse University Press, 2008), Fariba Zarinebaf-Sharh, "Prostitution and the Vice Trade," in *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul* (Los Angles: University of California Press, 2010), 86-112, Fikret Yılmaz, "Zina ve Fuhuş Arasında Kalanlar: Fahişe, Subaşıya Karşı " *Toplumsal Tarih*, 220 (2012): 22-31, Malte Fuhrman, "Down and Out on the Quays of Izmir: 'European' Musicians, Innkeepers, and Prostitutes in the Ottoman Mediterranean Historical Review," *Mediteranean Historical Review* 2, 24 (2009): 169-85, Marinos Sariyannis, "Prostitution in Ottoman Istanbul, Late Sixteenth-Early Eighteenth Century," *Turcica*, 40 (2008): 36-65. Mark David Wyers, *Wicked Istanbul: The Regulation of Prostitution in Early Turkish Republic* (Istabul: Libra Yayıncılık, 2012), Liat Kozma, "Women on the Margins and Legal Reform in Late Nineteenth-century Egypt, 1850--1882" (Ph.D., New York University, 2006), Rıfat N. Bali, ed., *The Jews and Prostitution in Constantinople 1854-1922* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2008).

19 Elyse Semerdjian, *"Off the Straight Path": Illicit Sex, Law, and Community in Ottoman Aleppo* (New York Syracuse University Press, 2008). Liat Kozma, "Women on the Margins and Legal Reform in Late Nineteenth-century Egypt, 1850--1882" (Ph.D., New York University, 2006).

20 Marinos Sariyannis, "Prostitution in Ottoman Istanbul, Late Sixteenth-Early Eighteenth Century," *Turcica*, 40 (2008): 36-65, Fikret Yilmaz, "Zina ve Fuhuş Arasında Kalanlar: Fahişe Subaşıya Karşı " *Toplumsal Tarih*, 220 (2012): 20-9, Elyse Semerdjian, "Sinful Professions: Illegal Occupations of Women in Ottoman Aleppo, Syria," *Hawwa* 1, 1 (2003): 60-85, Fariba Zarinebaf-Sharh, "Prostitution and the Vice Trade," in *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul* (Los Angles: University of California Press, 2010), 86-112.

instance, frames her discussion of prostitution around the ambiguity observed in court registers. For her, the actual punishments for of the crime of prostitution differed significantly from the corporal sentences prescribed by Islamic jurisprudence. For instance, there is little evidence that prostitutes or their clients were whipped or stoned to death. Similarly, Semerdjian argues that, in contrast to the violent corporal punishments mandated by Islamic Juridical writings, prostitutes were merely banished from their neighborhoods or deported to other areas of the empire. To resolve this apparent conundrum, Semerdjian argues that Ottoman judges were able to pass judgements based on local custom rather than Islamic law.[21]

Ali Karaca's study of the sentences given to prostitutes in Istanbul between 1730-1830 also affirms the fact that prostitutes were not subject to corporeal punishment in Ottoman Empire.[22] Karaca demonstrates that Cafer Baba Prison (Hazreti Baba Cafer Zindanı) contained a ward devoted to female prisoners. He argues that the number of prostitutes imprisoned in this ward varied from nine to thirty-six - higher numbers corresponding to special periods such as the month of Ramadan or conscription months.[23] I argue that such imprisonments were not indeed actually punishments but temporary precautions to protect public order. Prostitutes in such cases were not considered criminals and their persistence in the society was not prohibited.

There is also a consensus among historians that the control of prostitution was mostly achieved by the neighborhood. Up to the late nineteenth century, authorities seem to act on the claims and complaints of neighborhood communities rather than to define comprehensive strategies and policies considering prostitution.[24] It is also important to note that, though rare, , Ottoman

21 Elyse Semerdjian, *"Off the Straight Path": Illicit Sex, Law, and Community in Ottoman Aleppo* (New York Syracuse University Press, 2008).

22 Ali Karaca, "XIX. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Devletinde Fahişe Hatunlara Uygulanan Cezalar: Hapis ve Sürgün," in *Hapishane Kitabı*, ed. E. G. Naskali H.O Altun (İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2005), 152-62.

23 ibid.

24 Başak Tuğ, *Politics of Honor in Ottoman Anatolia: Sexual Violence and Socio-Legal Surveillance in the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill 2017), Fariba Zarinebaf-Sharh, "Prostitution and the

authorities (particularly during the reign of of Selim II) occasionally ordered the exile of high numbers of prostitutes from Istanbul and even the hanging of a few of them. As Betül Başaran has argued, these attempts were part of a broader social regulatory concern that was to escalate.[25]

In 1840, 1851, and 1858, three penal codes were promulgated, none of which had any article pertaining to prostitution.[26] Until late 1850s, prostitutes remained in legal limbo. In 1859, the government issued an ordinance that required prostitutes and their procurers to be sentenced to between48 hours and three months imprisonment or to be exiled for between three and six months.[27] However, this ordinance was effectively not put into practice. This dissertation picks up the story from this point and documents the legal and institutional transformation necessary for the control of prostitution in Istanbul relating these efforts to the control of all single, poor women in Istanbul.

The following study consists of six chapters. The three chapters that follow the introduction (chapters 2, 3, 4) explore prostitution in Beyoğlu. Beyoğlu was the actual and symbolic center of urban transformation in nineteenth-century Istanbul. During this period, commercial sex was an everyday part of the life of the ever-changing district. It is also an indispensable part of the representations of nineteenth-century Beyoğlu even today.[28] Chapter 2 examines the implementation of the regulation of prostitution in Beyoğlu during the late nineteenth century. I answer the questions of why and how the regulation of prostitution in Beyoğlu became part of the agenda of the social and governmental elites of that particular period. To this end, I first provide a brief account of urban reforms initiated in Beyoğlu in the second half of the century.

Vice Trade," in *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul* (Los Angles: University of California Press, 2010), 86-112.

25 Betül Başaran, *Selim III, Social Control, and Policing in Istanbul at the end of the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden Brill, 2014).

26 Aydın; Yakut Yetkin, Kemal, "II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi'nde Toplumsal Ahlak Bunalımı: Fuhuş Meselesi," *Kebikeç*, 31 (2011): 275-99.

27 ibid.

28 İrvin Cemil Schick, "Nationalism Meets the Sex Trade:İstanbul's District of Beyoğlu/Pera During the Early Twentieth Century," in *Crossing Borders:'Unusual' Negotiations over the Secular, Public, and Private* (Amherst College: 2009).

The chapter then examines the linkages between the regulation of prostitution in the district and its beautification, clearance and sterilization. As Mona Domosh argues, built environments are visible representations of individual and group beliefs, values, tensions, and fears.[29] Chapter 2 demonstrates how the fears and anxieties that emerged as part of the rapid transformations of Beyoğlu was intertwined with a specific construction of an image of the prostitute.

In Chapter 3, I focus on the everyday life in and around regulated brothels inBeyoğlu. I argue that at the turn of the century, the regulated brothel came out of the imaginary of the newly rising elites and governmental bureaucracy. However, the social and spatial regime that the advocates of the regulation of prostitution imagined could not be attained given the social and political complexity of the everydayness. By exploring the everyday of prostitution in Beyoğlu, I portray prostitutes neither as fallen women or victims of harsh economic and social conditions, but as ordinary working-class women.

Chapter 4 turns to middle-class residents of Beyoğlu. By the early twentieth century, complaints from among the middleclass that "their" streets were occupied by prostitutes peaked. Many of these were communicated through petitions submitted to the police requesting the clearance of 'their' streets from prostitutes and prostitution. The chapter focuses on the moral discourse of the middle-class residents of the district which was aimed at shaping the district according to their needs and vision. The emphasis is on how relations of gender and sexuality are produced, negotiated, and contested.

In the three chapters that follow (chapters 5, 6, and 7) attention is turned to governmental efforts to control sexuality, labor, and mobility of poor Muslim women. It is important to note that Muslim women were not registered as prostitutes. Nor could they work in regulated brothels. Only after the promulgation of the 1915 regulation could Muslim women become registered prostitutes, but even then they could only work in brothels that served an exclusively Muslim clientele. In Chapter 5, I examine welfare institutions that provided services to poor women. During the period under consideration, keeping

29 Mona Domosh, *Invented Cities: The Creation of Landscape in Nineteenth-century New York & Boston* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

poor women in institutions was part of a policy to protect the urban order, public morality, and public health. As Donzelot argues, welfare and charity programs may be seen as forms of intervention into the lives of poor women. Though such interventions improved the conditions of poor women, the policy actually was informed by a concern for moralizing and controlling a threatening population.[30]

Chapter 6 examines police interventions with respect to young, poor Muslim women living and working in the streets of Istanbul. Archival documents demonstrate that from early 1900s onwards a number of single, poor Muslim women were arrested by the police for being "disorderly". In most of the cases, being disorderly connoted a connection to or a potential for prostitution. The chapter tries to answer the following questions: Who were these women? Why they were labeled as disorderly? How and why did they become objects of anxiety, governmental concern, and police intervention? And why they were not called prostitutes but rather disorderly women?

The final substantive chapter before conclusion (Chapter 7) examines the lives and labor of female domestic servants in late Ottoman Istanbul. In this chapter, I first examine how the relationship between servants and their employers changed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The chapter argues that in the late Ottoman Empire, domestic service functioned as an institution to control the lives, labor, and sexuality of single, poor women.

30 Jacques Donzelot, *The Policing of Families* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979).

2

The Urban Transformation of Beyoğlu and the Regulation of Prostitution

In nineteenth century, state regulation of commercial sex - the policy by which prostitutes were registered and compelled to undergo medical examinations and submit to administrative surveillance and spatial control - was a common characteristic of many cities throughout the world. In various settings ranging from industrialized European metropoles to colonial cities, governments gave up the policy of illegal toleration and regulated prostitution by granting brothels legal or quasi-legal status and giving prostitutes special licenses. Regulations across different contexts, their particularities notwithstanding, more or less fit into a rough schema: Licensed prostitutes were regularly inspected for signs of venereal diseases (i.e. gonorrhea and syphilis) and detained in to special lock hospitals if they were found to be diseased. All prostitutes had to be registered on a list maintained by specific municipal agencies or the moral police.[1]

1 For exemplary studies of the regulation of prostitution throughout the world in nineteenth century, see Alain Corbin, *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France after 1850* (Cambridge: Harward University Press, 1990), Judith R. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Mary Gibson, *Prostitution and the State in Italy 1860-1915* (Columbus: Ohaio State University Press 1999), Laurie Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters: Prostitutes and Their Regulation in Imperial Russia*

The first efforts to regulate prostitution in the Ottoman Empire started under the authority of the Municipality of the Sixth District of Beyoğlu in late 1870s.[2] In 1878 the Municipality of the Sixth District employed a medical commission responsible for the sanitary control of brothels within its borders.[3] In 1884, after several experimental years, the commission presented a draft ordinance to the Council of State (Şura-yı Devlet) that was meant to provide legal grounding for their operation. In 14 January 1884, after some moderate discussions, the council issued the Ordinance for the Sanitary Inspection of Some Private Houses in the Municipality of the Sixth District *(*Altıncı Dâire-i Belediye Dâhilinde Bulunan Ba'zı Husûsî Hanelerin Hıdemât-ı Sıhhiyesine Dâir Ta'lîmâtnâme*)*.[4] After the Council of State proclaimed the ordinance, the Municipality of the Sixth District employed a commission that regulated the brothels in the district and registered the prostitutes working in these brothels in special books.[5]

This chapter examines why and how the regulation of prostitution became part of the agenda of social and governmental elites late-nineteenth century Beyoğlu? The expert and popular discourses declared that regulation of prostitution was an impartial administrative precaution put in place primarily to protect public health and was modelled on the examples of "civilized countries

(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), Philip Howell, *Geographies of Prostitution: Policing Prostitution in Nineteenth Century Britain and the Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), Gail Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasure: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth Century Sanghai* (University of California Press, 1997).

2 The official borders of the district included Galata and Kasımpaşa to the northwest and Şişli and Nişantaşı to the Southeast. Throughout this study, the general name Beyoğlu is used to indicate the whole area defined i within the borders of the Municipality of the Sixth District for the sake of simplicity.

3 The borders of the district officially contained Galata and Kasımpaşa on the northwest and Şişli and Nişantaşı on on the Southeast. The district composed of Galata and Pera will be shortened to Beyoğlu from here on.

4 Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye*, 9 vols., vol. 6 (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1995), 3297.

5 For studies on the 1884 legislation, see Zafer Toprak, "İstanbul'da Fuhuş ve Zührevi Hastalıklar, 1914-1933," *Tarih ve Toplum* 7, 39 (1987): 31-40.,Mark David Wyers, *Wicked Istanbul: The Regulation of Prostitution in Early Turkish Republic* (Istabul: Libra Yayıncılık, 2012).

of the world."[6] However, this study refrains from presenting the Ordinance for the Sanitary Inspection of Some Private Houses in the Municipality of the Sixth District as either an objective public health measure or a replica of European exemplars put into practice by Ottoman reformers to catch up with "Western modernity."[7] Instead, the study places the regulation of prostitution among the urban reforms initiated in Beyoğlu during the second half of the century.

Istanbul experienced rapid urbanization in the course of the nineteenth century, and Beyoğlu, - the ever-growing cosmopolitan center of the city - emerged as the hub of the social, economic and demographic changes that were sweeping the Ottoman capital. The leading port and new financial center of Istanbul and the major market places that connected the Ottoman Empire to the world economy were all located in Beyoğlu.[8] The flourishing economy of the area attracted money, goods, and people from across the empire and around the world. By the second half of the century, the district was already an arena where people of various classes, ethnicities, religious backgrounds and nationalities—and from both sexes—confronted and negotiated the everyday complexity of urban transformation. As Francis Marion Crawford, a traveler who visited Istanbul and Galata in the 1880s, wrote: "There is no city in the world, where so many different types of humanity meet and jostle each other and the stranger at every turn. Every nation in Europe is represented, and every nation of Asia as well."[9]

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6 Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye*, 9 vols., vol. 6 (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1995).

7 For a critique of narratives of eastern belatedness and insufficiency that follow from teleological, Eurocentric conceptions of modernity, see Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000).

8 Kemal Karpat, "The Population and the Social and Economic Transformation of İstanbul: The Ottoman Microcosm," in *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985). Edhem Eldem, "İstanbul: From Imperial to Peripheralized Capital," in *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, İzmir, and İstanbul*, ed. Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Masters (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

9 Francis Marion Crawford, "Constantinople," *Scribner's Magazine* 15, 1 (1894): 3-22.

The second half of the century was also a period in which Beyoğlu was being rebuilt, re-planned, and reordered according to the needs of new market relations. This process, however, extended beyond transforming the streets and architecture of the district. The social, financial, and governmental elites of the period initiated a set of urban reforms that aimed to shape and order the urban space according to their own needs, desires, and visions. But they also targeted people who inhabited the streets of the city.

The plans proposed order the urban space were inextricably related to efforts to order the social and spatial relationships among various social groups. Urban reformers identified the increasing urban poor, mostly composed of male and female working-class immigrants, as potentially subversive or deviant. They associated the presence of "dangerous classes" in the district with urban disorder, crime and disease. Hence, keeping these groups out of the burgeoning middleclass everyday life of the district became an urgent task. The presence of the urban poor in the urban centers should be limited, constrained and regulated, if not totally prevented.[10]

Concern and criticism over the presence of dangerous classe in urban areas was no novelty for the Tanzimat administrators. Particularly from the late eighteenth century onwards, Ottoman governments tried to reduce the visibility and activity of certain groups –that is, bachelors and prostitutes - in urban areas.[11] However, from mid-nineteenth century on, these efforts became more systematic as urban reformers engaged in the problem of urban poor within a more comprehensive effort to modernize the city.

Prostitutes were considered disorderly in all senses. From the 1850s onwards, complaints about public behaviors of prostitutes deemed offensive to public morality and social order frequently appeared both in official documents and in the columns of the periodical press. Prostitution had always been

10 Nadir Özbek, "'Beggars' and 'Vagrants' in State Policy and Public Discourse During the Late Ottoman Empire: 1876-1914," *Middle Eastern Studies* 45, 5 (2009): 783-801, Nazan Maksudyan, "Orphans, Cities, and the State: Vocational Orphanages (Islahhanes) and Reform in the Late Ottoman Urban Space," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43 (2011): 493-511.

11 Shirine Hamadeh, "Mean Streets: Space and moral Order in Early Modern Istanbul," *Turcica*, 44 (2013): 249-77, Betül Başaran, *Selim III, Social Control, and Policing in Istanbul at the end of the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden Brill, 2014).

integral to urban life in Istanbul, especially to the dockside social life of the Galata neighborhood. However, because of physical growth and demographic transformations that the area had undergone by the mid-nineteenth century, the number of prostitutes increased and the neighborhoods favored by sex workers expanded. Prostitution had been considered an integral part of port life in Galata in earlier periods, but by mid-century it was seen as a large, overflowing problem for the modernizing Beyoğlu, where bourgeoning elites and the middle class had established their lives and businesses.

However, approaches to prostitutes were ambivalent. While prostitutes were unwanted on account of their disorderly presence, they were also an essential component of cosmopolitan urban life of the district. For both administrative authorities and the social elite, the issue was not to prohibit prostitution but rather to restrict prostitution but rather to restrict restricting its harm to public health and social order. Similar to other contexts around the world, the solution came in the form of imposing regulation. Medical and administrative authorities accepted the inevitability of prostitution as a social institution, yet they also believed it should be stringently supervised and separated from the everyday life of the developing middle class.

The concept of regulation came from European countries and mainly from France via the expert opinions of doctors and reform-minded municipal administrators educated in the western style. Ordinance for the Sanitary Inspection of Some Private Houses was a translation of the French System into the Ottoman context, particularly under the stimulus of the Crimean crisis of 1853-56. Ottoman Ordinance was indeed modelled on French exemplar. The French model in particular and other European models in general were clearly quite crucial to discourses supporting regulation in the Ottoman Empire. However, the political, social, and economic context of late-nineteenth-century Beyoğlu was more complex than the narrative of "example and emulation" suggests.

This study argues that from the second half of the nineteenth century on, Ottoman urban reformers, which were composed of diverse groups such as administrative officers, experts, and elites sought to design Beyoğlu as a modern urban center that compatible with the needs of global commerce. This necessitated reconciling investment in a modernizing urban center with the

desire for clear class, ethnic, religious, and gendered hierarchies. From the late eighteenth century on, appropriation of public space by the poor created a difficulty for establishing authority over a city that was being integrated into global markets. Administrators were aware that the management of the city necessitated the steady control of urban space and social practices in it. Ottoman urban reformers tried to systematize efforts to this end and concentrated on two interrelated issues: The regulation of the population and the ordering of the space. Prostitution constantly emerged within the spaces of modernizing Beyoğlu. Prostitutes -being poor, women, and present in nearly every street of the district -most forcefully represented the dismantling of existing social and gender hierarchies. I argue that the regulation of prostitution was part of Ottoman urban reformers' efforts to control space and social practices in Beyoğlu. Reform-minded administrators and elites of the area articulated the regulation of prostitution within the discourse of modernization.

In what follows, I first summarize the transformation of Beyoğlu into a nineteenth-century urban center, focusing on elite efforts to adjust the district to its new role in global capitalist market relations. Then I examine the confrontations and tensions that emerged in the changing and expanding public spaces of Beyoğlu, highlighting the troubles that the poor women, and other disorderly groups created for the bourgeoning elites and middle classes. Then, I explore the social and administrative elites' policies to limit the mobility and visibility of prostitutes in urban space.

§ 2.1 The Making of "Modern" Beyoğlu: From a Dockside City to a Nineteenth-Century Urban Center:

Nineteenth-century Beyoğlu emerged from Galata, a dockside city established near the most important port of Istanbul. Historically, Galata had been a Genoese extraterritorial colony surrounded by a medieval fortress near the northern shore of the Golden Horn. In 1453, when the Ottomans conquered Istanbul, Genoese administers of the city decided to submit without resistance and offered the keys of Galata to Mehmed II. This voluntary surrender prevented a battle with the Ottomans which would have inevitably devastated the city and its population. On the other hand, the Ottomans were aware of the

importance of the Italian merchants for revitalizing the economy of the city. They granted the Genoese, Venetian, and Florentine merchants of Galata special privileges later known as capitulations on 1 June 1453. Galata was granted a semi-autonomous status and the walls surrounding the city were kept intact until 1870 when they were demolished to expedite the expansion of the city.[12]

Although, in time Italian merchants lost their dominance over Galata,a distinct socioeconomic life and demography was maintained in the area until the end of Ottoman Empire. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Ottoman state granted capitulations to states such as France, Austria, and Russia in order to promote alliances and revitalize trade in the Eastern Mediterranean. Capitulations generally provided freedom of trade, lower tariffs, and legal privileges to European merchants and their local agents (mostly non-Muslim Ottoman merchants). Granting capitulations opened Ottoman markets to European goods and merchants and integrated them into global capitalist networks.[13]

12 Edhem Eldem, "Istanbul: From Imperial to Peripheralized Capital," in *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul*, ed. Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Alan Masters (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 135-227, 151. Fariba Zarinebaf, "Ottoman Guilds and the State in 18th Century Istanbul," in *All-UC Economic History Conference*.

13 Faribaf Zarinebaf, "Rethinking Ottoman Economic History: Guilds and the Impact of European Competition in Istanbul," in *XI International Congress of Social and Economic History of Turkey* (Bilkent University, Ankara: 2008).



Figure 2.1 The oldest surviving map of Constantinople, designed in 1422 by the Florentine cartographer Cristoforo Buondelmonti. The walls surrounding Galata, at the northern shore of the Golden Horn, are clearly featured.[14]

Galata had always been the center of ever increasing trade with Europe. Most trade ships, particularly those carrying goods between Istanbul and Western cities, used the port that lay on the northern shore of the Golden Horn. Inside

the fortification was a dynamic trade center, densely populated by people of diverse social and geographical backgrounds.[15] European merchants and residents as well as non-Muslim Ottoman merchants who acted as their local agents occupied an important place in the distinct urban and social fabric of Galata.

The establishment of three important state institutions -the Arsenal of Kasımpaşa, the Cannon Foundry of Tophane, and the Acemioğlan School of Galatasaray - drew a large number of workers and employees to the area. The pressure of this mostly Muslim population squeezed the non-Muslims of Galata into the central areas of the district and then forced them north of the wall of Galata, to Pera, which was covered with woodlands, cemeteries, and wine yards.[16] In the sixteenth century, the new residence of the French ambassador was established atop the hill of Pera, which remained until then unpopulated. English, Venetian, Dutch, and Genoese ambassadors and some of the wealthiest European and non-Muslim Ottoman merchants followed.[17] This elite move to Pera formed the nucleus of what would become the Pera of the nineteenth century.[18]

14 Source: Wikipedia, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/91/Map of Constantinople %281422%29.jpg. By Florentine cartographer Cristoforo Buondelmonte.

15 Edhem Eldem, "Istanbul: From Imperial to Peripheralized Capital," in *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul*, ed. Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Alan Masters (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 135-227, 151.

16 ibid., 152.

17 ibid.

18 Edhem Eldem, "İstanbul: From Imperial to Peripheralized Capital," in *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, İzmir, and İstanbul*, ed. Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Masters (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).



Figure 2.2 General View of Beyoglu in 1830.[19]

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Pera was still an upper-class residential district with buildings along the Grand Rue de Pera surrounded by wine yards and empty fields. The general appearance of the area remained more or less like this until the 1840s. The Anglo-Ottoman Commercial Treaty of 1838 increased the social and economic significance of the area and accentuated the grow of the city to the north.[20] The treaty granted important privileges to British merchants eliminating restrictions on trade. Within a year, similar agreements were signed with other European countries. The elimination of restrictions boosted foreign trade and led to the prodigious advent of machine-made goods from Europe. With the introduction of machine made goods from Europe, a new mercantile class, the majority of which were Greek and Armenian, emerged. It functioned mostly to distribute the manufactured goods of Europe. The subsequent events such as the Crimean War of 1853-1856, the Reform Edict of 1856 (the Islahat Fermanı) of 1856, the commercial treaty between the Sublime Porte and Great Britain signed at Kanlıca, (Istanbul,) on 29 April 1861, and the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 deepened the process.

19 Batur, Afife. "A Short History, Urban Development Architecture and Today." *ARI: The Bulletin of the Instanbul Tecnical University* 55, no. 1-10 (2001).

20 Sibel Bozdoğan, "The Remaking of İstanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 2, 1 (1988): 57-59.

The influxes of soldiers, refugees, and entrepreneurs emerged, as well as those of various categories of the poor..[21]The population of Beyoğlu increased more than twofold between 1848 and 1886. The Muslim population rose from 66,700 to 125 thousand, while the non-Muslim population increased from 70,700 to 190 thousands. Likewise, within just thirty years (1848-78), the total number of foreigners in Istanbul, increased from 66 thousand to 122, 202. [22] During the Crimean War, the inhabitants of Istanbul came into direct contact with French and British troops barracked in Istanbul.[23]

Most of the bourgeoning foreign and Ottoman elites and middle classes established their offices in Galata and their residences in Pera. Poor immigrants, on the other hand, mostly stayed in bachelors' rooms (*bekar odaları*) along the port area and searched for jobs to survive in the chaos of urban life. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Galata became the commercial and financial center of Istanbul, while Pera rapidly transformed from a quiet upper-class residential district into an economically and demographically mixed urban center crowded with people of various backgrounds. With the integration of neighboring non-Muslim villages like Tatavla and the founding of new ones like Şişli, the borders of the district physically expanded.[24] By the 1870s, the majority of prosperous merchants and bankers had established their offices in Galata. The old centers of finance and trade those concentrated around the Grand Bazaar lost their importance. Furthermore, the new elites invested the wealth they acquired from the thriving commerce with European

21 Kemal Karpat, "The Population and the Social and Economic Transformation of İstanbul: The Ottoman Microcosm," in *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985). Kemal H. Karpat, "Ottoman Population Records and the Census of 1881/82-1893," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 9, 3 (1978): 237-74. Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisinde Bağımlılık ve Büyüme, 1820-1913*, 2 ed. (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1994).

22 Mustafa Cezar, "19. Yüzyılda Beyoğlu Neden ve Nasıl Gelişti," in *XI. Türk Tarih Kongresi, Bildirileri* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1994), 2679.

23 Murat Gul, *Emergence of Modern Istanbul: Transformation and Modernisation of a City* (New York: I. B. Tauris), 41.

24 Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

countries in properties along the Grande Rue de Pera. The area developed into a lively hub that hosted prosperous residences, leisure centers, and shops that sold imported, readymade goods.[25]

Beyoğlu in particular and Istanbul in general was unable to adequately cope with this influx. Rapid urbanization was accompanied by disorder along with problems such as overcrowding, disease, pollution, and an increase in what was considered social vice. From the mid-nineteenth century on, the demands of the new social and financial elites - mostly composed of European and non-Muslim merchants and bankers - become more dominant in the shaping of the urban environment around Beyoğlu. These elites wanted to remake the district - claiming that it was backward and chaotic -into a modern and ordered city. Implementing programs for its modernization, they sought to impose an idealized urban form on Beyoğlu that would allow for the efficient, safe, and secure circulation of people, goods, and capital. Property values would rise even more and the area would acquire a form that compiled with emerging norms of consumption.

Urban reforms had occupied an important place on the agenda of Ottoman administrators since the late eighteenth century and took a new turn in the 1850s as the newly rising commercial and financial elite in Beyoğlu opted to actively participate in urban reforms. What was critical for them was to design Beyoğlu as a 'modern' urban center that was compatible with the needs of global commerce. This necessitated reconciling the investments ion a modernizing urban center with the desire for clear class, ethnic, religious, and gendered hierarchies. The Municipality of the Sixth District of Galata and Pera *emerged* as the main instrument to help them shape the area according to their own needs, vision, and desires.

§ 2.2 Municipality of the Sixth District and the "Urban Reforms"

The Municipality of Beyoğlu was established in 1857 as the first modern municipal organization of the Ottoman Empire. It was officially named the

25 ibid.

Municipality of the Sixth District, alluding to the Sixieme Arrondissement of Paris, which was perceived as the exemplar of urban wealth and order.[26] Through the next two decades, the Municipality of the Sixth District was dominated by a small group of people, most of whom were foreign and local non-Muslim men of commerce and finance.



Figure 2.3 Building of the Munucipality of the Sixth.[27]

By means of the legislation concerning the establishment of the Municipality of the Sixth District, Ottoman administrators provided significant autonomy to the newly flourishing elites. These elites, in turn were to find financial resources to enable them to carry out reforms. With the financial power of flourishing elites, Beyoğlu would be a testing ground for the efficiency of municipal services. The Municipality of the Sixth District would introduce a program of urban reforms in Beyoğlu, and in time, the same municipal services and

26 Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye*, 9 vols, vol. 3 (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1995), 1307-43, Nur Akın, *19. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Galata ve Pera* (İstanbul: Literatür Yayıncılık, 1998), 102-26.

27 ArkiTera Mimarlık Merkezi, http://galeri3.arkitera.com/var/albums/Gorus-2/Beyo%C4%9Flu-Beyo%C4%9Flu/06.jpg-1411418320.jpeg

reforms would be expanded to the remaining thirteen districts. "With a restrained budget, the municipality could only work with the financial contribution of its residents and the Galata Pera area which was inhabited by wealthy business men, foreign ambassadors or high rank officers acquainted with European practices, was considered to be suitable for the creation of an experimental setting."[28] Over the next twenty years, the flourishing elites of the area enjoyed anautonomy that enabled them to impose their needs, desires, and vision on the urban space via the municipality, which was the most important actor in shaping and implementing urban reforms in Beyoğlu.[29]

In 1868, Ottoman administrative authorities established the Municipality of Istanbul (Şehremaneti) in order to expand new municipal models to other districts and to introduce a program of centralized urban planning. This move would also curb the autonomy of the economic elites, which had become disturbing for the central government. In accordance with the initial plan proposed in 1856, fourteen districts were designated by the Regulation for the Municipal Administration of Istanbul *(*Dersaadet İdâre-i Belediye Nizamnâmesi*)*. Due to limited financial resources, this regulation was executed only in the municipal districts of Yeniköy, Beykoz, and Kadıköy. Adalar and Tarabya districts had been established prior to this date in response to the demands of their inhabitants, but these were the summer residences of people of European origin. Since the privileged position of the sixth district would remain intact until all other districts were created, the structure and organization of the municipal council of the sixth district remained unchanged at least on paper. In practice, however, the capacity of the municipal council of the sixth district decreased gradually, a process in which financial problems also played a part.

28 Lorans İzabel Baruh, "The Transformation of the Modern Axis of Nineteenth-Century Istanbul " (Ph. D., Boğaziçi University, 2009), 90.

29 ibid., 150.



Figure 2.4 Eminönü Square and the Galata Bridge.

Eventually, in 1877, the Regulation for the Municipal Administration of Istanbul was issued, changing the status of the sixth district making it subject to the same rules as the others. Though the sixth district continued to exist well after the regulation of 1877, the Regulation for the Municipal Administration of Istanbul was a final blow to its authority, taking away its semi-autonomous status. I argue that throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, the urban transformation of Beyoğlu proceeded in accordance with the development of the Municipality of the Sixth District. The administrative practices of the municipality in its first decades, even though they managed

only a part of what was envisioned from the beginning, had been decisive in the urban transformation of Beyoğlu.[30]

The regularization, cleaning, and illumination of streets were among the primary concerns of the municipal council. Various parties –social elites of the period, foreigners in the city, and state officers -raised numerous criticisms and complaints about the dirty, muddy, narrow, maze-like streets of Istanbul. The narrow streets were insufficient for the proper flow of the increasing human and vehicle traffic in the area, mud in the streets was said to render it impossible even to walk. The dirt and absence of sunlight and fresh air were considered the major perpetrators of the spread of disease. The narrow streets occupied by wooden houses all too close to one another increased the risk of fire and made it impossible to put out fires before they spread over vast areas. The same streets were also thought to provide safe haven for criminals and thieves.[31]

In 1859, the council issued the Regulation of Streets according to which the sixth district was sub-divided into three areas. The first was to be cleaned once a day – even twice in summer- while the second was to be cleaned once a week. The third, which was comprised of Kasımpaşa and Pangaltı, did not receive any services. The regulation forbade leaving trash on or disposing of wastewater in the streets.[32] In the period from 1858 to 1870, increasing numbers of streets were widened, many cul-de-sacs were eradicated, and a number of new streets were established. In the early 1860s, Karaköy, which by that time had become an important spot for international trade, was reorganized to include a square and a trade center (Borsa Han). Early on, the municipality had managed to widen the street of Yeni Çarşı, the road between Tophane and Galata, Karaköy, and Galata as well as Tarlabaşı and Grands Champs. The Genoese walls of Galata to make passage between Beyoğlu and Galata easier and to produce space for streets and new buildings.[33]

30 ibid., 90.

31 Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye*, 9 vols., vol. 5 (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1995), 1326.

32 Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 47.

33 ibid., 70.



Figure 2.5 Grand Rue de Pera.[34]

Increasing commercial activity also necessitated faster, and more efficient means of transport to allow greater freedom of movement for people and goods. One of the most important transportation projects in the area was *Tünel*, an underground railway project planned to facilitate the heavy traffic that flowed between Galata and Pera mainly through Yüksekkaldırım. The Galata Bridge, which facilitated the transport and the use of carriers on the Golden Horn, the main harbor of the city, was built in 1863.[35] Another issue was the lighting of the streets. In 1856, Gran Rue de Pera was lit with gas lamps. Street illumination was related to public security, criminality, and morality, all of which were considered indispensable parts of modern urban life.[36]

The concept of public parks was introduced to the Ottoman capital in the 1860s. In 1864, when the road between Pangaltı and Taksim was under

34 Salt Araştırma, https://www.archives.saltresearch.org/R/-?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=962006&silo_library=GEN01

35 Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

36 Nurçin İleri, "Geç Osmanlı İstanbul'unda Kent ve Sokak Işıkları," *Toplumsal Tarih*, 254 (2015): 30-37.

construction, the Christian cemeteries in Taksim were moved to Şişli and because middle- and upper- class residents of Pera had pressured the municipal administration for a Western-style public garden, one was planned for the area. The construction of this much advertised public garden was completed in 1869. Another public garden was planned for Tepebaşı. To make room for this project, the non-Muslim cemeteries near Taksim Barracks had to be moved to a new location.[37] By means of the construction of these two public gardens the newly emerging urban center of the Ottoman capital was provided with communal gathering spaces.

The fires that had long been a problem in Istanbul also provided an opportunity for the municipality to introduce and facilitate a new, systematic urban planning. With each burned patch of land, the municipality widdened the streets and removed cul-de-sacs. A milestone in this venture was the great Beyoğlu fire of 1870. This fire burned down many buildings on Grand Rue de Pera and in Tepebaşı, enabling the municipality to introduce a new, regularized look to the area. After the 1870 fire, the building stock of the Grand Rue de Pera, the main artery of Pera and the center of downtown, was enlarged and rebuilt with stylish, stone-clad buildings. Stone-clad buildings created a relatively uniform street front along the Grand Rue, lining the sidewalk of which was lined with plate-glass show windows that created a landscape suitable for window-shopping. In this form, Grand Rue de Pera became the main center for the consumption of ready-made goods imported from Europe.

The second half of the nineteenth century, urban sought to impose an idealized urban form on the district. Although there were many deficiencies in the application of the proposed plans, the area experienced immense transformations particularly in the third quarter of the century. Through the infrastructural transformation executed by the Municipality of the Sixth District - though they were limited in scope and not fully implemented the old port city surrounded by a medieval fortress and narrow, twisting streets was reordered into a busy urban center that encouraged commercial development through the circulation of goods, capital, and people.[38] The district became suitable for

37 Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 70.

38 ibid.

a middle-class culture of consumption and public sociability. Yet this urban order carried within it the potential for disorder. Who would be permitted to enter these spaces? How should they behave there? For what purposes should and could they use them?

§ 2.3 Class, Gender, and Prostitution in Late-Nineteenth-Century Beyoğlu

Beyoğlu as the new heart of the Ottoman capital was irresistible, drawing in vast quantities of food, produce, and most importantly, people. Most late-nineteenth-century accounts of Beyoğlu, whether appreciative or critical, suggest that there was a lively mixture of people in the streets. Likewise, in surviving photographs from the period, the streets of Beyoğlu are usually filled with men, women, and children from diverse social and economic backgrounds. Dogs are always present. Porters with huge baskets on their backs slowly descend the steep stone steps of Yüksekkaldırım, the main thoroughfare that connected Galata to Pera. Shopkeepers use sidewalks as extensions of their shops. In good weathers men and women have drink and watch the passersby from outdoor tables in front of the coffeehouses and beerhouses. Street vendors sell food and other things. Beggars pursue alms. The poor and unemployed loiter in desperation. Prostitutes call out for clients from the windows of brothels while others solicit in the streets.



Figure 2.6 Yüksekkaldırım.[39]

For the wealthy people of the area, the dramatic increase of the poor in their district was frightening. Complaints abounded about blind, disabled beggars disturbing the passersby with their ugly looks and of disrespectful vagabonds loitering around respectful families. Worried comments about unattended

children in the streets regularly appeared in the daily newspapers. Ottoman governmental officers as well as elites of the time perceived the poor in the streets as a serious threat to the urban order that they envisioned.

Probably most disturbing of all were unaccompanied poor women who increasingly appeared on the streets of Beyoğlu in search of a better life. However they came to the district, all of them found themselves in a situation in which they had to earn their living and survive outside of the customary family and community ties that strongly marked, in both positive and negative ways, their former lives. Their jobs as laundresses, street vendors, seamstresses, waitresses, entertainers, dancers, singers, saleswomen, and prostitutes added to the life and economy of the area. For many, even for those who did not choose sex work as a main profession, selling sex was a way of earning income in times of unemployment and crisis. Many opted for occasional prostitution in their lives. Their existence did not conform to the dominant standards of the female respectability and decency of the period. The unaccompanied and uncontrolled presence of poor women in the public spaces of Beyoğlu threatened the use of streets by the respectable people, especially respectable women. In this sense, drawing very clear lines between respectable and unrespectable women became an urgent issue for urban reformers.

In diverse socio-cultural contexts of the nineteenth century, the proper place of women was perceived to be the private space - her home - whereas men's place was perceived to be public space. This idealized, gendered perception of space, however, sharply contrasts the ways in which the nineteenth-century women interacted with urban space in the Ottoman capital. It was also the case in other parts of the world. Far from being imprisoned by the private, domestic sphere women of all classes were pouring into the public spaces of the modern cities of the nineteenth century. Similarly, women from diverse social and economic backgrounds became a part of the crowds in the expanding public spaces of Istanbul.

In the case of Beyoğlu, the establishment of Pera as a shopping district for new commercial products was a significant factor that provided a legitimate

39 Salt Araştırma: https://www.archives.saltresearch.org/R/-?func=dbin-jump-full&object id=962687&silo library=GEN01

arena for the public existence of middle-class and elite women. As expressed in different sources, including women's personal accounts, middleclass and elite women from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, Muslims included, inhabited streets, shops, public parks, trams, restaurants, coffee houses, and theaters with relative ease and comfort. This is clear in Francis Marion Crawford's comments on the social life of Beyoğlu in the 1880s:

> Its character is that of cosmopolitan Europe, with almost absolute exclusion of the East. The Mussulman state dignitaries, who sit at its formal banquets and with solemn courtesy attend its formal receptions, seem like exotics on a soil that is their own. Thousands and tens of thousands among the residents of Stamboul have never even trodden the streets of Pera. The Ottoman ladies, whom it allures by its Parisian goods, glance curiously through its windows of plated glass, hurriedly complete their purchases, and hasten home. Its distinctive features are its churches of many Christian creeds; its schools for both sexes, of every grade and of every European nationality; its palatial residences of the residences the European ambassadors; and its European shops, stocked with all the fabrics of the inventive West.[40]

However, women's presence in public was still problematic in the popular imagination. It was supposed that the heterogeneity of urban space seriously threatened female virtue and respectability. On this point, Elizabeth Wilson's discussion of women in cities explains how gendered notions of female respectability informed the gendered uses of urban space:

> The Prostitute was a 'public woman', but the problem in the nineteenth century urban life was whether every woman in the new, disorderly world of the city, the public sphere of pavements, coffeehouses and theaters, was not a public woman and thus a prostitute. The very presence of unattended-unowned- women constituted a threat both to male power and temptation to male 'frailty'.[41]

40 Francis Marion Crawford, "Constantinople," *Scribner's Magazine* 15, 1 (1894): 3-22.

41 Elizabeth Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder, and Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 74.

The line dividing proper and improper activities and pleasures for women were thin. Indeed, as the places designed to facilitate proper and beneficial pleasures to the middle classes such as shopping streets, public gardens, theatres became home to improper and illicit activities, a disturbing ambiguity emerged with respect to proper and improper behaviors and respectable and unrespectable women. Prostitution that appeared in modernizing spaces of Beyoğlu served as a particularly potent threat to a social order dependent on prevailing class and gender hierarchies. Women and men of diverse social and economic backgrounds negotiated for use of same spaces; the lines between proper and improper, licit and illicit, and respectable and unrespectable were anything but clear. Hence, drawing a clear distinction between respectable and unrespectable; women became urgent for urban reformers, as the ambiguity demonstrated that the hold elite men maintained over public space was more tenuous than they had envisioned.

Prostitutes present in nearly every street of the district represented the decay of existing social and gender hierarchies in modernizing Beyoğlu. They were moreover seen as the main source of venereal diseases, which had acquired social importance in the nineteenth century. Indeed, they were singled out as the most prominent representatives of the "dangerous classes" whose presence in public space was associated with urban disorder, crime and disease. However, it was thought that the treatment of prostitutes should be different from that of other constituents of the "dangerous classes". Prostitutes were indispensable for the urban life of Beyoğlu and any attempt to eliminate prostitution from urban life was thought to be inapplicable. Instead, prostitution should be kept invisible to the public eye and should be administratively and medically supervised in clearly delineated spaces. This would prevent both the moral and physical pollution of society by contact with prostitutes.

Also in this period, Ottoman physicians, bureaucrats, and the wider population became acquainted with modern scientific and medical discourses about marriage, sexuality, and family life among. Ottoman physicians, intellectuals, and bureaucrats started to write and talk publicly about matters that were formerly considered private. Ideas about prostitutes and their function in the society was a prevailing subject. Many Ottoman intellectuals and physicians in the late nineteenth century were convinced that prostitution, "the

oldest profession in the world" was indispensable and even useful for a healthy society. But its harms should be prevented.[42] Basiretci Ali Efendi wrote in the 1880s that "we are pleased to hear that the notorious prostitutes of Galata are being removed from that area…. Total abolishment of prostitution is hard, but its existence in one of the most honorable neighborhoods of our country is by no means allowable."[43] I argue that the regulation of prostitution was part of Ottoman urban reformers' efforts to control social practices and space in Beyoğlu. To safely demarcate honorable residents and keep the district safe, secure, the prostitute should be regulated. The solution came in the form of the regulation of prostitution, which was a modern nineteenth-century approach to prostitution.

§ 2.4 Regulation: A Nineteenth-Century Approach to Prostitution

The regulation of prostitution was not unique to Beyoğlu or the Ottoman Empire. In the nineteenth century, state regulation of commercial sex—the policy by which prostitutes were registered and compelled to medical examination, administrative surveillance and spatial control—had been a common characteristic for many cities and areas throughout the world. Across the nineteenth century, in various settings from industrialized European metropolises to colonial cities, governments gave up the policy of illegal toleration and regulated prostitution by providing brothels legal or quasi-legal status and by granting licenses to prostitutes. In various settings ranging from industrialized European metropoles to colonial cities, governments gave up the policy of 'illegal toleration' and regulated prostitution by providing brothels legal or quasi-legal status and giving prostitutes special licenses.

For each registered prostitute, a file was opened containing information on their name, age, family backgrounds, and changes of address as well as the results of their medical inspections. Registered prostitutes were obliged to undergo regular medical inspections by municipal or governmental doctors at least once but usually twice a week. Each prostitute had a license upon which

42 Şemseddin Sami, *Kamus-ı Türki* (Dersaadet: İkdam Matbaası, 1317).

43 Basiretçi-Ali-Efendi, *İstanbul Mektupları* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2001), 193.

the results of periodic examinations were recorded. They had to show this card to the moral police, and to any municipal inspector, doctor, or client who asked for it. If prostitutes were found to be contaminated, they were forced to undergo treatment in a special lock hospital. Women in these hospitals were kept under lock and key until they were considered to be recovered.

The advocates of regulationism justified the legal acknowledgment of prostitution as a pragmatic response to the epidemic threat of venereal diseases and public disorder that it caused. Two main arguments were used to defend the regulationist system. The first set of arguments focused on the issue of protecting public health. Regulations were meant to prevent the propagation of venereal diseases the main source of which was the prostitutes, but not their clients. The second theme was framed around the protection of public morality and order. The regulation was meant to put vice out of the sight of the innocent - women, children, and young boys. The administrative surveillance was designed to prevent the chaos and disorder caused by prostitution. The context that stimulated the nineteenth-century regulation of prostitution consisted of the following three dimensions: The emergence of urban spaces with new social conflicts, the availability of new governmental technologies, and the articulation of a legal discourse accompanied by a new administrative mentality.

The governmental regulation of prostitution first emerged in Paris and was therefore referred to as French system. In France, after some experiments in 1760s and 70s, the regulatory system was consolidated under Napoleon and gradually spread to other European countries and beyond. The most prominent promoter of modern regulationism was the French hygienist Alexander Parent-Duchelet, who introduced the theory of regulation. Duchelet considered prostitution a to be inevitable and its prohibition impossible. According to Duchelet, prostitution was a "necessary evil" that should be tolerated. Official toleration enabled governments to implement stricter controls on prostitutes and prostitution. Strict governmental control would protect public health, and defend the family and social order. Governments should regulate

prostitution in order to prevent its unwanted harms and maximize its utility to the society.[44]

Regulation, however, did not go unchallenged. The most important response to regulationist approaches was abolitionism. The abolitionists were composed of diverse groups ranging from social reformers to moralists to feminists. These groups fought, sometimes fervently, against state regulation of prostitution throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. From various social and political stances, abolitionists argued that prostitution needed to be banned. Moralists found the toleration of vice inacceptable. They believed that regulation of prostitution was tantamount to admitting its necessity and accepting of the sexual and moral imperfection of man – that is of human beings. On the other hand, progressive reformers sought to abolish prostitution not simply because it was immoral, but because it victimized women and families. According to reformers, prostitution symbolized the eroding effect of modern industrialism and urbanization on social and moral values. Some progressives, especially the doctors were more concerned about the negative impact of prostitution on public health. Progressive reformers who were part of the social hygiene movement argued that prostitution led to increased rates of venereal disease. This was, they argued, a problem that affected immoral and innocent women alike.[45]

On the other hand, many women, some of whom were feminists, thought that the regulatory legislation discriminated against women.[46] They criticized

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44 For a history of regulation in nineteenth-century France, see Alain Corbin, *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France after 1850* (Cambridge: Harward University Press, 1990), Alain Corbin, "Commercial Sexuality in Nineteenth Century France: A System of Images and Regulations," *Representations*, 14 (1986): 209-19.For the original text of Alexandre Parent-Duchâtelet see Alexandre Parent-Duchâtelet, *La Prostitution à Paris au XIXe siècle: Texte présenté et annoté par Alain Corbin.* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1981).

45 Eric J. Evans *The Shaping of Modern Britain: Identity, Industry and Empire 1780 - 1914* (New York: Routledeg, 2011), 404-05. David j. Pivar, *Purity Crusade: Sexual Morality and Social Control, 1868-1900* (Westport: Greenwood, 1973), 23.

46 For an account of the links between abolitionism and feminist movements, see Judith R. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 123, Judith R. Walkowitz, "Male Vice and Female Virtue: Feminism

regulatory approaches that considered women to be the only source of disease and did not include sanctions against men. In Britain, well-known female figures Josephine Butler and her friends led a campaign against the "contagious disease acts" by forming the Ladies National Association. Butler sympathized with prostitutes whom she believed had been forced into this line of work by low earnings and unemployment. Butler and Wolstenholme toured the country making public speeches calling for changes to the law. Many people were shocked by the idea of women speaking in public about sexual matters in public and forming solidarity bounds among the women of different classes.[47]

Yet, the contrarian arguments and responses did not prevent the emergence of regulation as the most widely-accepted solution to the vexing issue of prostitution throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Regulation was generally acknowledged as a neutral, scientific solution to the threat of prostitution and was applied in diverse socio-political contexts and geographies. Research focusing on a variety of historical contexts had already demonstrated that the regulation of prostitution, far from being a neutral and scientific approach to threats to public health and order, was marked by gender, class, race, and ethnic biases. First of all, the general idea behind regulationism depended on a double standard of sexuality. In the logic of this system, men's extramarital sexual relations were found normal and acceptable. On the other hand, middleclass women were expected to stay chaste and were strictly forbidden extramarital sexuality. The system depended on an assumption that men seeking sexual outlets were acting naturally, whilst for women, sexual drive was unnatural or confined to the unrespectable class of female prostitutes. Therefore, men were encouraged to expend their excess sexual

and Politics of Prostitution in Nineteenth Century Britain " in *Powers of Desire: The Politic of Sexuality* ed. Christine Stansell Ann Snitow, Sharon Thamson (Monthly Review Press, 1983), 419-38.

47 Eric J. Evans *The Shaping of Modern Britain: Identity, Industry and Empire 1780 - 1914* (New York: Routledeg, 2011), 404-05.

energy upon a class of "fallen women" in order to protect the honor of those respectable women who comprised the set of marriageable partners.[48]

Second, in the regulatory legislation, only women and not men were seen as the main source of contamination. Medical discourses articulated that women spread disease to men and the reverse was rendered invisible. In most cases of regulatory legislation, only women believed to be involved in prostitution or seen as potential prostitutes were subjected to forced medical inspections and detention in lock hospitals. In this sense, as Brayn S.Turner reminds us "modern medicine in practice took a distinctive moral outlook on what is moral behavior."[49] The medical practice and discourse, working with gendered moral perceptions, frequently endorsed culturally-accepted gender roles and tended to confine female behavior to recognized gender and sexual codes. Medical discourse put the blame and moral responsibility for venereal disease on women and subjected them to regular, compulsory medical examinations. On the other hand, men -including the clients of these regularly- inspected prostitutes - were free of this burden. In the cases of regulatory legislation, discriminative moral choices weakened the efficiency of the system, destabilizing the neutral medical goals that were articulated to legitimate the regulation of prostitution in the first place. While criticizing the contagious disease acts that were enacted in the second half of the nineteenth century in Britain, Judith Walkowitz states that:

> the practical medical goals that underlay the C.D. acts were in fact fused with, and at the same time undermined by, a set of moral and ideological assumptions. In pressuring for the medical inspection of prostitutes without imposing periodic genital examination on the enlisted men who were their clients, architects of the acts obliterated from the start whatever effectiveness as sanitary measures the acts might had. Just as important, regulationists reinforced a double

48 Judith R. Walkowitz, "Male Vice and Female Virtue: Feminism and Politics of Prostitution in Nineteenth Century Britain " in *Powers of Desire: The Politic of Sexuality* ed. Christine Stansell Ann Snitow, Sharon Thamson (Monthly Review Press, 1983), 419-38.

49 Turner Brayn S., *The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Science* (Los Angeles Sage 2008), 211.

> standard of sexual morality, which infused male sexual access to a class of "fallen" women and penalized women for engaging in the same vice.[50]

In the regulatory systems, gender worked in tandem with class to define who would fall under state surveillance. A prominent reason for the regulatory treatment of prostitutes was class-based anxieties. Working classes and immigrants in urban centers created their own social, professional, and sexual manners and lifestyles in order to survive. Hence, their actions and existence conflicted with those of the middleclass. Working-class and immigrant communities were viewed as dangerous, dirty, immoral, and deviant - including sexually deviant. Therefore, the regulatory system primarily targeted women from the lower classes and lower-class manners and lifestyles.

For contemporaneous European nations, the advent of industrialization and the rise of a bourgeois class coincided with the evolution of regulation. Scholars typically argue that the regulation of prostitution was part of a bourgeois attempt to supervise and control the working classes and the so-called "dangerous classes" in growing urban centers. Through transformations wrought in the nineteenth century, the bourgeoisie strove to strengthen its social, political, and economic hegemony maintaining itself as the ruling class.[51] However, these transformations also provoked anxiety which was represented in the fear of working classes and especially the "dangerous classes,"[52] - those individuals

> who had fallen out of the working classes into the lower depths of the new industrial and urban social environments and survived there by

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50 Judith R. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 23-24.

51 Mary Gibson, *Prostitution and the State in Italy 1860-1915* (Columbus: Ohaio State University Press 1999), 16-17.

52 "The concept of the dangerous classes was born in mid-nineteenth-century Europe and became famous after the publication in 1872 in New York of a book with the same title by the American social reformer Charles Loring Brace." CPF for Conference: The "Dangerous Classes" in the Middle East and North Africa, https://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/events/conference-"dangerous-classes"-middle-east-and-north-africa

> their wits and by various amoral, disreputable or criminal strategies. They included beggars and vagrants, gypsies, pickpockets and burglars, prostitutes and courtesans, discharged soldiers, ex-prisoners, tricksters, drug-dealers; the unemployed or unemployable…[53]

In this context, prostitutes presented a crystalized image of the "dangerous classes." The increasing visibility of a group of unattended women in charge of their own lives in the urban scene merged with and reinforced more general concerns about the female emancipation in nineteenth century. In this context, the prostitute was at the center of discourses about maintaining the social and moral order of nineteenth-century urban society. The image of prostitute represented a body out of control that posed a threat to moral and medical order. Prostitutes were in need of regulation in the interests of maintaining the sanity, cleanliness and security of the honorable society. Hence, the regulation of prostitution emerged as a mechanism of control (sexual, moral and spatial) of a segment of the female lower class population in.[54]

Another important aspect of the regulation of prostitution was its relation to colonial governance and race. As many post-colonial feminist scholars have argued, in regulationist policies in colonial contexts were considered part of the colonial disciplinary power in the sense that they forced social and sexual order on colonial subjects.[55] As Philippa Levine demonstrates, colonial states viewed the control of venereal disease to be a major issue because such diseases not only undermined the efficiency of soldiers and workers, but also because sexual contact between people of different races threatened to

53 CPF for *Conference: The "Dangerous Classes" in the Middle East and North Africa*, https://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/events/conference-"dangerous-classes"-middle-east-and-north-africa

54 Mary Gibson, *Prostitution and the State in Italy 1860-1915* (Columbus: Ohaio State University Press 1999), 4.

55 Philip Howell, "Prostitution and racialised sexuality: the regulation ofprostitution in Britain and the British Empire before theContagious Diseases Acts," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 18 (2000): 321-39, 321-22, Stoler. Ann L., "Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in 20th-century Colonial Cultures," *American Ethnologist* 16, 4 (1989): 634-60.

destabilize the dichotomies upon which the imperial system was built.[56] Regulations across contexts were framed by diverse socio-political assumptions and put into practice by a multiplicity of social and political actors.

§ 2.5 The Introduction of the "Ordinance for the Sanitary Inspection of Some Private Houses"

The regulation of prostitution appeared on the agenda of the governmental and the municipal authorities of Istanbul from mid nineteenth century on, , particularly under the stimulus of the Crimean crisis of 1853-56. There was growing awareness of social problems in the face of rapid urbanization and the increasing number of the urban poor. In line with this awareness, the image of the prostitute as a source of social disturbance and a threat to public health flourished. Prostitution was generally accepted as an unpleasant but inevitable fact of the new urban life. Osman Nuri Ergin described this new context as follows: "After the Tanzimat decree and particularly after the Crimean War of 1270 a freedom was observed in our country and the number of foreigners increased. And again upon the request of the foreigners, the establishment of brothels was permitted. However, they tremendously destroyed public health. Therefore, from the beginning, it was on the government's and the municipality's agenda to keep prostitutes under constant medical supervision in order to protect the health of these women and their clients and to prevent the transmission of diseases."[57]

During the second half of the century there was a growing interest in public health and public hygiene among Ottoman medical experts. The increasing social concern about prostitution converged with a growing interest in public health and public hygiene among Ottoman medical professionals. The interest of Ottoman Physicians in prostitution specifically originated from concerns

56 Philippa Levine, *Prostitution, Race and Politics: Policing Venereal Disease in the British Empire* (London: Routledge, 2003), 480.

57 Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye*, 9 vols., vol. 6 (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1995), 3296.

about controlling venereal diseases such as syphilis and gonorrhea. At the time, these two diseases were common and had terrifying, long-term effects.[58]

The initial steps towards regulating prostitution in Beyoğlu started with a collaboration between Doctor Michel, a private physician, and Eduard Blaque, the reform-minded mayor of the district. In 1878, Eduard Blaque welcomed Michel's suggestion to start periodic medical examinations of women working in brothels in the Sixth District. Blaque requested Professor Agop Handanyan, a respectful member of Civil Medical Association (Cemiyet-i Tıbbiye-i Mülkiye),[59] to supervise the conduct of these examinations. Under the leadership of Handanyan, a medical committee was founded. The committee was responsible of the sanitation of brothels, and the establishment of a hospital to treat inflected prostitutes under the authority of the Municipality of the Sixth District was planned.[60]

In 1880, Doctor Michel submitted a petition to the Council of State requesting personal authorization for the medical examination of prostitutes working in the brothels in the Sixth District. In the petition, Dr. Michel stated:

> As the horrible disease of syphilis has a great impact on human health and protecting the public health is one of the primary tasks of the government, the medical obligation of keeping the brothels of Beyoğlu and Galata under constant supervision and medical examination just like the brothels in civilized countries is indispensable.[61]

Throughout the petition, Dr. Michel legitimated his suggestion scientifically and medically with an emphasis on public hygiene and public health. The French example, in particular, and other European examples, in general, were crucial to the discourse he employed.

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58 For discussions of perceptions of syphilis in the Ottoman Empire, see Ebru Boyar, "'An Inconsequential Boil' or a 'Terrible Disease'? Social Perceptions of and State Responses to Syphilis in the Late Ottoman Empire? ," *Turkish Historical Review* 2, 2 (2011): 101-24, 19, Layla J. Aksakal, "The Sick Man and his Medicine: Public Health Reform in the Ottoman Empire and Egypt," (2003).

59 The Civil Medical Association was founded in 1869.

60 Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye*, 9 vols., vol. 6 (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1995), 3297.

61 ibid.

The Council of State agreed in principle on the necessity of periodic medical examinations for prostitutes working in brothels and on the establishment of a venereal disease hospital for the treatment of infected prostitutes, yet rejected authorizing Doctor Michel personally. The Ministry of Health declared such a personal authorization would be considered unfair and inappropriate among medical professionals . Instead, the council suggested that the Municipality of the Sixth District employ a certain number of doctors with fixed salaries. It was also suggested that the municipality stay in touch with the Ministry of Health.[62]

With the necessary permissions granted in 1880, a medical committee was established under the authority of the Municipality of the Sixth District. The committee started registering brothels in the area and hired doctors to conduct the medical examinations of prostitutes working in these brothels. In 1883, after a few years of experimentation, the committee prepared an ordinance for the regulation of prostitution in the district and presented the draft to the Council of State for sanction. The Council of State first conducted a primary deliberation on the draft. In the second meeting of the Council to discuss the draft two prominent members of the committee that prepared the ordinance, Doctor Hüsnü Paşa, also a member of the Council of Municipality, and Doctor Handanyan Agop, were also invited to provide further information to the members of the council.[63]

One of the concerns raised by members of the council was that such legislation would legitimize formerly illegal brothels since the appointment of official doctors would give the impression that they were sanctioned by the government. Another objection of the council concerned the possibility that official supervision of brothels would encourage vice; periodic medical examinations of prostitutes by officially appointed doctors might reduce the anxieties and health concerns of men who visited such places. In response, Doctor Hüsnü Paşa and Doctor Handanyan Agop emphasized the importance of the sanitary supervision of brothels in the interest of protecting public health. The precautions defined by the ordinance should not be understood as the

62 ibid., 3298.

63 ibid.

legitimization of vice, but as necessary efforts to protect public health. They claimed that the brothels had been established from long before and that it was impossible to completely eradicate them. Therefore, they argued, sanitary supervision of brothels was indispensable for preventing the spread of syphilis and other venereal diseases. There were also concerns about the effectiveness of the ordinance for bringing syphilis and other venereal diseases under control. For Hüsnü Paşa and Handanyan Agop, the proposed ordinance would guarantee the periodic medical examination of registered prostitutes and the operation of a hospital where infected prostitutes would be detained and treated. In their view, although the precautions defined in the ordinance would be unable to completely eliminate syphilis in a the short run, they would seriously restrict its dissemination.

Another issue about which some members of the council asked for clarification was the examination fees to be collected from the prostitutes. According to the ordinance, the commission would determine the examination fee. However, the criteria according to which the committee would determine these fees were not clearly specified. Members of the council wondered if fees would be taken from the poor and needy. In response, Hüsnü Paşa and Handanyan Agop stated that the fees would be determined according to the condition of the house in which the prostitutes worked and their personal status. For the needy and poor among them, examinations would certainly be free. The doctors also added that examination fees would decrease each year while the hospital that was planned to be built was completed. The members of the council also asked how women who resisted hospital treatment would be handled. Hüsnü Paşa and Handanyan Agop explained that infected women would voluntarily apply for hospitalization in order to relieve themselves of the terrible effects of disease. Therefore, resistance to hospitalization was not expected. However, if there were such cases, the resistant women would be taken to the hospital by force, which was crucial to protect the health of the other women and their clients.

Finally, council members raised concerns about unregistered brothels. According to the two doctors, it was perfectly possible to regulate clandestine brothels and subjecting their prostitutes to periodic medical inspection. If the committee was informed about the addresses of such places, they would be

taken care of, and the problem would be eliminated.[64] Although, there were some mild discussions among the members of the council there was no strong oppositions. The council sanctioned the first venereal disease ordinance of Ottoman Empire - Ordinance for the Sanitary Controls of Some Private Houses within the Sixth District - in 1884.[65] It is probable that some interest groups, led by the brothel keepers, objected to any kind of control over their business. However, there is no evidence that this resistance turned into a strong opposition or gained any public support.

The ordinance, which consisted of twenty-eight articles arranged in five chapters, resembles the regulations of some European nations. As such, Ottoman brothels within the border of the municipality of Sixth district would be regulated and prostitutes working in these brothels would be subject to compulsory medical examinations for signs of venereal diseases (that is, gonorrhea and syphilis) and detained in special lock hospitals if they were found to be diseased.

According to the first article, a medical committee would be established under the authority of the Municipality of the Sixth District. This committee would convene once a week and take precautions to improve the conditions of women working in brothels and to prevent the spread of venereal diseases. The second, third, and fourth articles detailed the registration of brothels and prostitutes. According to the second article, the committee would keep a register of the names of the women in the brothels: Moreover the keepers of the houses were also required to keep a log of the women working in their establishments. As described in the third article the committee would record the addresses of brothels and would be responsible for recording any changes to the addresses. These brothels, the names, nicknames, ages, nationalities, physical descriptions, complete addresses, and any changes in the addresses of both the keepers and the girls was to be recorded in the books.

According to the fourth article, each woman would be given a medical logbook that contained her photograph on the front page. Her age, nationality, and the medical examinations carried out would be recorded. If a woman was

64 ibid.

65 ibid.

infected she will be sent to the hospital for treatment and kept there until she was cured. As written in the salaries of the doctors that were employed for the medical inspections and the expenditures of the hospital were to be taken from the women in the form of examination fees. The fees would be decided according to the number of women in a house and their status. The fees collected would not be called a tax nor would it be used with the other revenues of the municipality.

The second chapter was titled as The Method of the Medical Examinations and contained the rules concerning the medical examinations of the prostitutes. The sixth article stated that the women would be diligently examined once a week by the doctors. The doctor in charge would register the date of the examination and the woman's condition into his own log-book. He would also copy the same information to his own log-book.

According to the seventh article of the ordinance, brothel keepers were also subject to medical examination whenever it was found necessary by physicians In many cases, that the brothels were but small houses where just a few women - including the owner – working or where a few women hired together and worked in. . In the eighth article the doctors were forbidden to take money from the brothel keepers or from women working in the brothels. They were also forbidden to treat any diseases in the houses and were obliged to send the infected women to the hospital.

The third chapter of the ordinance was titled The Sanitary Controls of the Houses. According to the ordinance, brothels in the district were divided into five groups depending on the total number of women working in each and their proximity to each other. A doctor and an appropriate number of municipal guards were appointed for each group. Each doctor would inspect women in their authority once a week. If a woman was found to be infected she would be taken to the hospital for treatment to prevent the spread of the disease to others. In the hospital, they would be treated diligently. If any resisted hospitalization, the case would be reported immediately to the directory of the municipality. The doctors were also responsible for the sanitary conditions of the brothels. Each doctor would present monthly reports to the committee specifying their achievements and also issues that need reconsideration. Every six months, the areas of the doctors would be changed.

At first, two clinics -one in Beyoğlu and one in Galata - would be established for the medical inspections of the women. As the number of houses increased, new clinics would be established in other neighborhoods. These clinics would be responsible only for the inspection of infected women; no one other than the appointed doctors would be allowed to work in these clinics.

The fourth chapter of the ordinance was devoted to explaining the duties of the medical inspectors. Mainly, they would periodically check the reports of the doctors and the logbooks of the women. They would also organize raids to the brothels to inspect the sanitary conditions. [66]

§ 2.6 Regulation in Action: The First Decades

The 1884 ordinance followed the general scheme of nineteenth century regulations being put into practice all around the world. It generally aimed to control of the public sexuality through controlling registered prostitutes. However, as case studies on various historical settings have demonstrated, the regulationist ideal of absolute control over a clearly delineated group of prostitutes was unattainable. Historical research illustrates that the lives of individual prostitutes were more variegated and that the prostitution network was more complex than for seen legislation. In many cases, identifying prostitutes in order to register them and locating places where prostitution was practiced were far beyond the reach of the authorities.

In Beyoğlu, too, the situation was complicated and problematic in its own ways. There were four major problems concerning the efficiency of the ordinance in practice. First, medical inspections and measurements were not carried out in an orderly way, so they were ineffectual. Corruption among administrative authorities, physicians and police was common. Hospitals, consulting rooms, and medical staff were inadequate. Secondly, the regulation was geographically limited to Beyoğlu, so prostitution in other districts of the city remained unregulated. This provided broad room to maneuver for unregistered prostitutes. Thirdly, Muslim prostitutes were excluded from the system as they were officially forbidden to work in Beyoğlu brothels. Unregistered

66 ibid.

prostitutes, particularly Muslim ones, continued to work in unlicensed houses, hotel rooms, and abandoned buildings, graveyards, burned out neighborhoods, and quarries as well as on the streets of the city, both inside and outside of Beyoğlu. Fourth, since brothels were not restricted to particular zones, prostitution flourished in newly developing residential areas of Beyoğlu, causing disturbances. Without spatial regulation, brothels constantly and haphazardly proliferated in the narrow, congested socio-physical geography of the area, prompting many conflicts over space.

The following cases demonstrate the situation of regulated prostitution in Beyoğlu during the first decades after the legislation was enacted. A text written by an informer and submitted to Sultan Abdülhamid II in 1892 complained about the "legally tolerated" prostitution in Beyoğlu. The informer claimed that although prostitution and public disorder had increased in Istanbul, the Minister of Police, Hüseyin Nazım Pasha, had refrained from taking the necessary precautions against unlawful actions. The police superintendent Hüsnü Efendi and the policeman Şaban Efendi, who were favored by the minister, accepted bribes of six lire per month. Moreover, they forced chaste women to have sexual relations with them menacing them. At the end these women fell into brothels. They dispatched women who resisted to police stations and defamed them.. They caused married ones to get divorced, while poor women became prostitutes and ended up in prison.[67]

In 1895, a syphilis epidemic broke out among the crew of a ship belonging to the Russian Embassy. The ship was anchored in the port of Fındıklı, threatening the crews of the ships of other embassies. Prostitutes working in the Galata quarter were suspected of having transmitted the disease to the sailors. Doctor Karakoniski, who represented the Russian Embassy in the Council of Health, requested that the Ministry of Health establish a special commission to investigate the sanitary conditions in Galata brothels and take the measures for any necessary improvements. The establishment of the commission was followed by official correspondence among the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of the Interior and the Municipality of Istanbul. In the end, the Ministry of

67 In Vahdettin Engin, "Geneleveden Korkma Fuhşun Gizlisinden Kork," http://www.akintarih.com/turktarihi/osmanli/genelev.htm.

the Interior issued an order to the municipality stating that because prostitutes working in the Galata brothels had already been targeted for periodic medical examinations, the more likely sources of the epidemic was clandestine prostitutes working in unregistered brothels in the area. Given these circumstances, the municipality was ordered to investigate the infected sailors with an appropriate manner to ascertain the women who were the conduits of the disease, and to do what was necessary to prevent them from further disseminating the disease.[68]This case exemplifies of the gender bias inherent in the regulationist policy. It is clear that prostitutes - not the sailors - were considered to be the conduits of the disease. Accordingly, plans were made to incarcerate diseased prostitutes while diseased soldiers were only to be investigated in "an appropriate manner."

After the ordinance was decreed in 1884, a lock hospital was planned to be established. A two-story wooden building on the upper side of Yüksekaldırım was rented and began operating as the Municipality of Sixth District Women's Hospital (6. Daire-i Belediye Nisa Hastahanesi). The first floor of the building was assigned to Emraz-ı Zühreviye Heyet-i Teftişiyesi. It was a small hospital with a limited number of beds. Women who were found to be contaminated were sent there and kept locked up until they were cured. The hospital took money neither from the municipality nor the government. Payments to physicians and other personnel, and the running costs of the hospital were taken from the brothels according to the number of women working in each. A total of seven doctors worked in the hospital. In 1892, the hospital had fifty beds and a the chief of the hospital was Dr. Hasan Bey.

The claim of the aforementioned document that medical examinations in licensed brothels of the area had been properly conducted is doubtful. The application of health measures proposed in the ordinance brought about deserved criticism concerning disorder and corruption. In 1902, Doctor Celal Muhtar Bey, who was working for the Municipality of the Sixth District, submitted a complaint in which he argued that the venereal disease ordinance had not been properly applied. Afterwards, he was ordered to report problems he

68 BOA, DH.MKT, 350/71, 1312.06.N (03.03.1895).

observed in a more detailed manner.[69] Doctor Celal Muhtar's warning is significant because he was one of two military doctors sent to Paris in 1889 to receive a scientific education on dermatology and syphilis.[70] But his actual report is unfortunately, currently inaccessible. However, another report on the issue sheds some light on the on the state of health measures taken by the municipal administration. We learn from another document that ten years after the foundation of the hospital it resembled a disorderly, profit-making organization more so than a municipal institution designed to protect public health. In 1902, a commission was established to investigate failures in the management of the hospital's affairs and its deplorable conditions. After the investigation, it was reported that the hospital had been established and was being operated in a disorderly manner by Doctor Morinio. The conditions were so deplorable that the existence of the hospital was declared harmful to public health. It was claimed that the hospital facilitated the spread of venereal diseases.. After the report was issued, the Ministry of Health decided to close it and ordered the Municipality of the Sixth District to establish a new, proper hospital under its own authority.[71]

Regulated brothels of nineteenth-century Beyoğlu emerged from the imaginary of reform minded elites and the governmental bureaucracy of the time. Ottoman urban reformers, like their contemporaries around the world, believed that prostitution was best policed through medical investigations and the physical discrimination of the body of the bodies of women. They also believed that controlling the body of the prostitute would be sufficient to get rid the city of disease and disorder. However, as implied by the cases examined above, there was a tension between the city imagined by the urban reformers and the everyday of the city.

69 BOA, DH.MKT, 577/16, 1320.08.Cemazeyilahir (12.September.1902).

70 BOA, DH.MKT, 1637/32, 1306.15.Zilkadde (15.July.1889).

71 BOA, DH.MKT, 577/16, 1320.08.Cemazeyilahir (12.September.1902).

3

The Everyday of Prostitution in Regulated Brothels of Beyoğlu in Early 1900s: Spaces, People and Relations

After midnight on 29 June 1906, Joseph Mariyani, a French soldier working on the steamboat of the French Embassy, injured a prostitute and her client with a revolver in the brothel of Augustine, in Şeftali Street, in Galata. The injured prostitute (her name is not provided in the document), the injured client, David the butcher, and the brothel keeper, Madam Augustin, were Austrian, Russian, and Romanian citizens respectively. Police officers from the Beyoğlu police station captured Joseph Mariyani and submitted him to the officers of the French Embassy as required by the capitulations. The Ottoman police were not authorized to take action against French citizens, neither were the courts authorized to judge them.[1] A few days later, the Ministry of Police, alarmed by the increasing violence and disorder in Beyoğlu, sent a note to the Municipality of Istanbul *(*Şehremaneti*)*. Referring to the case of Joseph Mariyani, the police blamed the recent proliferation of brothels in the area for the recurrent violence and disorder. They underscored the fact that the high number of brothels nearing one hundred at the time posed a threat to public health, public order, and the security of the area.[2]

1 BOA, ZB, 375/107, 1322.Haziran.17 (30 June 1906).

2 ibid.

On 28 August 1910, nine residents of Serkiz Street in Tarlabaşı submitted a petition to Beyoğlu police asking for the removal of Irmiya, the tenant of house number two on 'their' street. The petitioners claimed that the Ottoman citizen Irmiya - or Eleni as she was also known - was operating a brothel in the house to the annoyance of the "honorable" residents of the street. They complained about naked women sitting in front of the door and windows of Eleni's house, the day and night parade of Laz, Greeks, Kurds, and suspicious men on their street, and the nonstop, excessive music and noise coming from the house.[3]

The regulated brothel of nineteenth-century Beyoğlu emerged from the vision and needs of newly rising elites of the area and from the governmental bureaucracy of the time. While trying to shape the area according to their own vision and needs, this elite produced new forms of regulation and prohibition to control the sex trade. Ottoman urban reformers, like many contemporaries around the world, assumed that prostitution could be best regulated through medical investigations and the physical discrimination of the bodies of prostitutes deemed infirm or diseased. However, as the documents cited above indicate, the fully rational spatial regime envisioned by urban reformers was not manageable in the face of the realities of turn-of-the-century Beyoğlu. In the everyday realm, regulations could neither ensure the social and spatial order that urban reformers envisioned nor safely regulated population that they sought.

This chapter focuses on the everyday of prostitution in and around the brothels (mostly the regulated ones) in Beyoğlu examining how oppressive regulations notwithstanding, sex workers, brothel keepers, and other intermediaries in the sex trade participated in the making of turn-of-the-century Beyoğlu. I first examine the construction of space for sex work and its everyday use by sex workers. Secondly, I provide glimpses into the social profiles and everyday relationships of the people involved in sex work, mainly brothel keepers, procurers, and sex workers. I argue that while the newly emerging elites of the area and various governmental officers tried to impose regulations and disciplinary mechanisms on people involved in sex work, prostitutes,

3 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 47/36, 1328.Ş.21 (28 August 1910).

brothel keepers, and clientele understood, constructed, lived in and perceived Beyoğlu in specific ways that suited to their own needs and desires. Hence, Beyoğlu as a social production significantly diverged from the ordered space imagined by the advocates of regulation and urban reformers.[4]

It is already acknowledged that reconstructing the lived experiences of sex workers is difficult because sex workers, like every other non-elite group, did not usually record their own lives. We hear their voices through documents - highly distorted by male intermediaries.. As Gail Hershatter argues, sex workers "entered into the historical record when someone wanted to appreciate, castigate, count, regulate, cure, pathologize, warn about, rescue, eliminate, or deploy them as a symbol in a larger social panorama."[5]

Keeping in mind that retrieving a complete picture of the lived experiences of prostitutes is a nearly impossible task, I will provide glimpses into the everyday experiences of prostitutes in early-twentieth-century Beyoğlu and point to the diversity and complexity of their lives. One point I want to emphasize is that while their choices were circumscribed by the vagaries of social class, financial earnings and marital status, most had the capacity to make conscious choices for themselves. They certainly had control over their lives. Secondly, I focus on the social backgrounds and daily lives of prostitutes to situate prostitution within the world of working-class culture, I depict prostitutes neither as "fallen women" with moral deficiencies nor as victims of desperate conditions, but as ordinary working-class women who made "rational and sometimes desperate choices when confronted with limited possibilities."[6]

Similarly, brothel keepers and procurers are not portrayed as ill-mannered slave-traders, but as people who chose brothel keeping and procuring as the most sensible employment option among the few available to them. Aging prostitutes, who established small brothels and immigrant Jews who fled

4 The idea of space as a social production refers to Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson Smith (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1991).

5 Gail Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasure: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth Century Sanghai* (University of California Press, 1997).

6 Timothy J. Gilfoyle, "Prostitutes in the Archives: Problems and Possibilities in Documenting the History of Sexuality," *American Archivist* 57: 514-27, 523.

poverty and antisemitism and became procurers are examples. As Laurie Bernstein has also stated I argue that "Most middlemen and brothel keepers were not the evil slave traders that made the news; rather, they were men and women who ran the brothels, moved women between brothels and cities so that fresh merchandise was available to the customers, found new recruits, negotiated agreements, and kept up a circle of contacts."[7]

§ 3.1 Places of Prostitution

> *Following Perşembe Pazarı and its market, he finally reached Balık Pazarı or Fish Market Gate. He was about to enter that terra incognita on the fringes of civilization, the narrow strip of land squeezed between the city walls and the sea. He wasn't at all unhappy to be accompanied by his "shepherds" into this world of coffee shops, taverns, inns, and brothels housing the crews of incoming ships, the workers, and artisans of the harbor-sail and rope-makers, porters, barrel-makers, caulkers-and of course, the even more threatening crowd of sailors and workers from the nearby arsenal of Kasımpaşa.*[8]

The description are the observations of Dominique Fornetty, the second dragoman of the French Embassy in Istanbul, while descending the steep hill from Pera to Galata in 12 December 1693. In his account, dragoman Fornetty locates the brothels of Galata at the middle of the lively working-class port life of late seventeenth-century Galata, which he describes as the "terra incognita on the fringes of civilization."[9] In Ahmed Rasim's depiction below, however,

7 Laurie Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters: Prostitutes and Their Regulation in Imperial Russia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 166.

8 Edhem Eldem, "İstanbul: From Imperial to Peripheralized Capital," in *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, İzmir, and İstanbul*, ed. Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Masters (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 145.

9 ibid., 143.

prostitutes of the late nineteenth-century appear only in the middle of the "modernizing" urban center, their voices echoing alongside the jingle of coins counted in Borsa Hanı from the walls of the buildings of finance companies in Voyvoda Street. Ahmed Rasim provides a lively description worth quoting at length:

> We passed the bridge. At that time the street of Karaköy was not as wide. Just passing, on the left were a building called Aziziye Karakolu and intruding into the street was famous Borsa Hanı, in which money changers jingled five and ten mecidiyes in their hands until evening. Outside were the shops in front of which Jewish, Greek, and Armenian men screamed "the winner gets six hundred Franks" - again from the morning to the evening. There were stores for manufactured shoes and clothes and offices of fakebankers… It was understood from those moving in and out that Mumhane Street on the right and the street above it were noisy places. As we climbed up Voyvoda Street, the barber was looking around and changing words with women in colorful clothes leaning out the windows of a few houses along the route. I had never met with such a view before, for this reason, I was embarrassed. Faiz was also embarrassed, but as he was more blatant than me, he was tittering. Incidentally, three or four bawdy women holding up their skirts rushed out onto the street to the left of the slope. The sun was dawning. The barber explained: "Did you see? Those are the ones called the roses of Kemeraltı. Those in the street over are called the roses of Kömürcü Street…[10]

Although, Ahmed Rasim's accounts may be literary and imaginary, the ascension of prostitution from the "terra incognita on the fringes of civilization" to the "crest of civilization" by the second half of the nineteenth century is of utmost importance. Galata and Pera experienced a huge demographic growth and geographic expansion while transforming into a nineteenth-century urban center, and prostitution expanded in the area.

10 Ahmet-Rasim, *Dünkü İstanbul'da Hovardalık: "Fuhş-i Atik"* (İstanbul: Arba Yayınları, 1992).

By the turn of the century, there were streets and areas where the sex trade was ipso facto concentrated, but places of prostitution in its various forms had spread to most neighborhoods of Beyoğlu. For example, on 14 May 1906, the Ministry of Police sent an order to the Beyoğlu police *(*Beyoğlu Mutasarrıflığı*)* asking for a complete list of the brothels and other places related to prostitution in and around Galata. It was noted that several reports concerning the coercion of Muslim children as young as thirteen and fourteen into prostitution in some of hotels in the Galata quarter had been received. According to the police report, the abundance of complaints concerning prostitution in the area and the surge of petty criminal incidents was proof of an explosion of prostitution in the area. Through compiling a list of brothels, the police aimed to formulate the necessary precautions to secure the wellbeing of the area and prevent the dissemination of venereal diseases. The order recommended that Beyoğlu police conduct its own investigation and request information from the Istanbul municipality which was charged of registering the brothels in the Beyoğlu.[11]

In late nineteenth century, there were two types of registered space for prostitution: Brothels (*umumhane*) and hostels (*pansiyon*). Brothels were places where prostitutes were available any time of the day and which male customers visited to engage in sexual activity.[12] Entertainment facilities for drinking, eating, listening to music were also be provided in brothels, particularly in middle class ones. In some brothels, gambling and drug use also took place. In this sense, some late-nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century Beyoğlu brothels, particularly ones located in Pera and servicing a middle class-clientele, also functioned as social gathering places. They provided a kind of male club atmosphere in much the same way as coffeehouses or gambling establishments. A client could patronize a brothel for an evening, enjoying female companionship), the fellowship of male peers, alcoholic beverages, and perhaps gambling.

Financially, brothels operated in two forms. In the first, prostitutes were paid wages by brothel keepers. This was a standard employer-employee

11 BOA, ZB, 385/136, 1322.May1s.01 (14 May 1906).

12 Mustafa Galib, *Fahişeler Hayatı ve Redayet-i Ahlâkiye* (İstanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1338), 13-14.

relationship. In the second form, brothel keepers took a percentage of the earnings of prostitutes. In both forms, prostitutes lived and worked in the brothel.

> There are two kinds of oral contracts between mama and the prostitutes. In the first one, the prostitute gives all the money she gets from clients to mama, and for this mama pays all the prostitute's expenses. This is the most common type of contract. In the second type of contract, the prostitute takes some of the money she earns for herself and gives the remainder to the brothel keeper. In this type of contract, the prostitute must pay all her own expenses. Prostitutes usually do not prefer the second type because the burden of risk is put on the shoulders of the prostitute, if she cannot find sufficient clients, she can starve.[13]

Hostels were places in which separate rooms were hired to prostitutes and their clients temporarily. They were like small hotels for prostitution. Women who worked on their own solicited in public places or sought clients at various entertainment venues and whenever they found a client, they took him to the hostel where they paid a fee to the owner.[14]

The sex trade in Beyoğlu was a highly stratified sector. Although there was no official division with respect to class among the places of prostitution until the 1915 regulation, there was a natural division of status determined by a combination of factors such as location, the skills of the women, and the services provided. The brothels in the back streets of Galata, Yüksek Kaldırım or Pera served clienteles from different social classes.[15] The brothels of the lowest grade were located in the Galata quarter, mostly concentrated in the backstreets around Yüksekkaldırım -Beyzade Street, Şeftali Street, Karaoğlan Street and Zürafa Street. They served a lower-class clientele comprised of poor working men of the city and sailors from all around the world. Most brothel keepers

13 ibid., 14.

14 Mustafa Galip, *Fahişeler Hayatı, Redayet-i Ahlakiye* (İstanbul: Mahmut Bey Matbaası, 1338), 13-14.

15 Sermet Muhtar Alus, "Eski Beyoğlu Âdet ve Alemleri," *Resimli Tarih Mecmuası* 2, 16 (1951): 688-90. In Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm* (Istanbul: 2014), 128.

and prostitutes working in this area were Jews from Eastern Europe and cities aroud the Black Sea. Samuel Cohen, who visited Istanbul in 1914 as a representative of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women, prepared a report on Jews in the sex trade of Istanbul. He described what he saw in the streets of Galata with horror: Brothels were small, incredibly dirty, and scattered around dark, poorly-paved, labyrinthine streets.[16]According to Sermet Muhtar Alus, the brothels in Yüksekkaldırım - the main passage between Galata and Pera were in better condition. The majority of brothels around Pera served a middle-class clientele.

An ordinary Beyoğlu brothel was usually located in a modest two- or three- story house, with a narrow façade.As the author of the report "Prostitution in Turkey" (which appeared in *La Prostition Reglementee et Les Pouvoirs Publics Dans Les Principaux Etats Des Deux Mondes*, which was presented to the French government in 1909) wrote "a Beyoğlu brothel is an example of how miserable a brothel could be, they were quite different than renowned Western houses." He wrote that

> "They were located in small buildings with one or two stories and a narrow facade. The ground floor, its windows wide open, was "converted into a sort of lounge with a stage filled with carpet on which the women sat cross-legged and distributed smiles to passerby. At the background, small steps without a curtain indicates the ascent to the upper floors. The leno circulates in the ground floor or sits in front of the door, a fez on his head and a cigar on his lips."[17]

A police report concerning a small fire in a brothel also provides information about the physical conditions of a modest Beyoğlu brothel. The fire broke out at four o'clock at night on 3 May 1911 in Despina's brothel in Yeşil Street at Tarlabaşı. A lamp in the second floor of the building had ignited a wood bedstead. The mattress of the bed was burned up, yet fortunately the fire was

16 Samuel Cohen, "Report Of An Enquiry Made İn Costantinople On Behalf Of The Jewish Association For The Protection of Girls and Women," (London).

17 Louis Fiaux, *La Prostittion Reglementee et Les Pouvoirs Publics Dans Les Principaux Etats Des Deux Mondes* (Paris: 1909).

controlled before it caused more damage. The house was not insured and an official police report was not required..[18]

Besides a number of brothels occupying shabby or modest buildings in Galata and Pera, there were also brothels that occupied more handsome buildings in the prosperous streets of Pera and Şişli. In 1906, some residents of Gylavanni Street, one of the most prosperous streets on Grand rue de Pera submitted a petition to the Ministry of Police asking for the expulsion of the female tenants of several houses along the street, claiming that these women operated brothels under the auspices of hotels.[19] Sermet Muhtar Alus also mentions about European Prostitutes, who rent decorated rooms in Glavani Street and the food was provided to the rooms by Bartoli, one of the famous restaurants of the time.[20]

Middle class observers also found the brothels in the well-off streets of Şişli harmful and annoying.[21] The brothels in upper-class streets and buildings served an affluent clientele. They were more elaborately furnished. It was more likely that they provided special services which included expensive food and drink, music, gambling, and parties that took place in a private rooms or saloons. The most well-to-do prostitutes accepted clients in their private residences, providing more comfort and a privacy to a degree. For example, Camelia lived with her mother, her manservant and her dog in a private residence where she accepted her clients. Unfortunately, the inhabitants of her house, including the dog, fell victim to a violent attack (their throats were cut) in May 1896.[22] On the other hand, the poorest among the prostitutes took clients to graveyards, burned out neighborhoods, or deserted buildings.[23]

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18 BOA, DH.EUM.VRK, 8/21, 1329.Ca.04 (3 May 1911).

19 BOA, ZB, 387/146, 1322.14.Eylül (27.September.1906).

20 Sermet Muhtar Alus, *İstanbul Yazıları* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1994), 23.

21 "Muhtıra, Şişli Caddesi," *Sabah*, 10 Mayıs 1899.

22 The murders and life story of Camelia were covered in newspapers of the period such as *Ikdam*, *The Oriental Advertiser* and *Malumat*. See Roger A. Deal, *Crimes of Honor, Drunken Brawls and Murder: Violence in Istanbul under Abdülhamid II* (İstanbul: Libra, 2010), 134-35.

23 BOA, DH.İD, 46/70, 1330.Z.10 (20 November 1912).

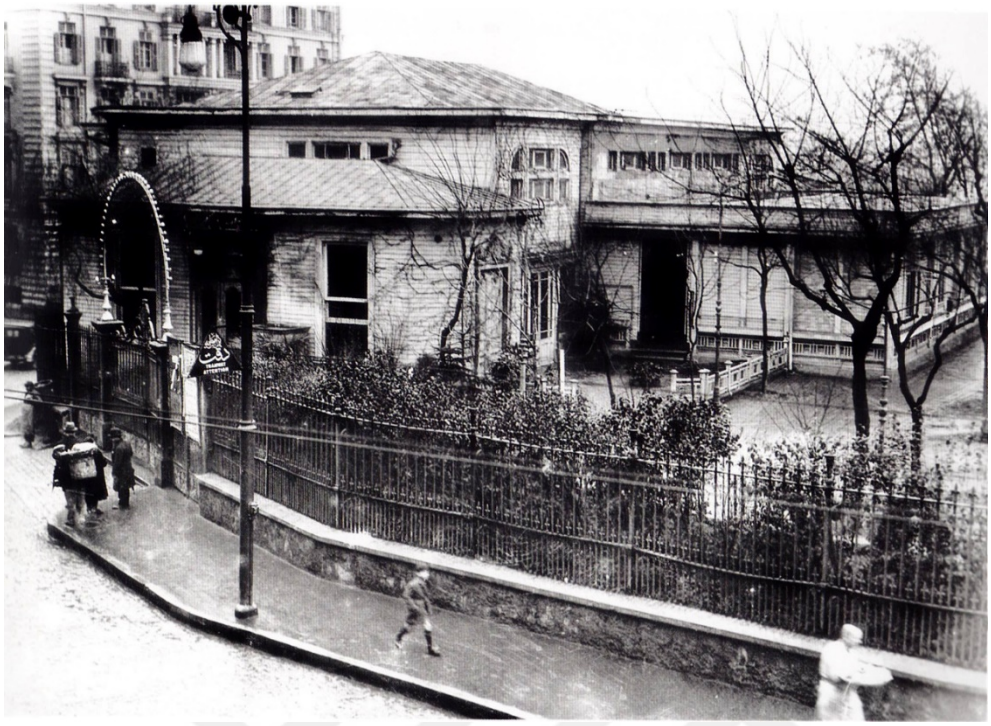

Figure 3.1 Garden Bar at Tepebaşı.

As both documents and personal accounts of the period indicate, the urban reformers were concerned about keeping the boundaries between the street and brothel prostitution clear-cut. Advocates of regulation tried to shape the brothel as a segregated place for prostitution that would keep the rest of the city secure from its harms. However, prostitutes' everyday use of space did not conform to their imagination. Prostitutes usually gathered in front of brothels where they lived and labored and called out to men as they passed by in the streets. The residents of Gylavanni Street complained about the prostitutes working in brothels in their street claiming that these women solicited men in the street, swore, threw dirty things from the windows, took in and let out their clients carelessly, openly revealed all kinds of vice and insulted the neighbors.[24] Prostitutes usually sat in the windows to attract their clients, annoying the people residing in these streets. For example, residents of Serkis Street complained about "naked women sitting in the door and windows of Eleni's

24 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 46/25, 1328.Ş.15 (22 August 1910).

house. Others from Tiriş Street complained about the music and noise coming from a brothel and that all of the "disgraceful behavior conducted in the house could be seen from the street through the tulle curtains."[25] The administrators of Galatasaray Mekteb-i Sultanisi, one of the most prestigious schools of the empire, were demanded the closure of the brothels in Yeniçarşı Street as the "naked women lingering in front of the windows and on the balconies" of these houses were visible from the classrooms of the school. This could harm the morality of the "privileged students into whose hands the fate of the nation and the country would be assigned."[26]

Back streets, boulevards, and even the Grand Rue de Pera and public parks and gardens were popular places for street-walking. Prostitutes moved freely in city parks, on the streets, and in various entertainment places - using these spaces to their own advantage.

> Venidik Street is fairly broad and bright. It's curios. I'm going to have a go. Hotel, hotel, hotel. Doors are open. Oil lambs are burning in the anklets. . Foreign women from countries such as Austria, Poland, Romania, Hungary, and Croatia rent rooms in these places; when the night falls, these women put on their makeup and spill to the street. They walk up and down between the corner of the street and the opposite corner of Galatasaray until late at night.[27]

Prostitutes also sought for clients in various entertainment venues, such as public parks, theaters, beerhouses, and bars, but they took coffeehouses their clients back to the brothels where they worked. Coffeehouses and bars were also places of solicitation.

> Let us talk a little of the pleasures of evening. We leave aside these melancholic, third-class cafe-concerts; they are only the antechambers of gambling dens. A respectable family cannot venture into these

25 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 47/36, 1328.Ş.21 (28 August 1910).

26 BOA, DH.İD, 65/42, 1331.Z.26 (26 November 1913).

27 Sermet Muhtar Alus, *İstanbul Yazıları* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1994), 22.

> entresols. The service is done by big girls, whose vast corsage conceals an insatiable stomach and a heart very hospitable.[28]

Street prostitutes who searched for clients in public spaces and escorted their clients to their lodgings, abandoned buildings, or graveyards were also available in the streets of Beyoğlu. Thus, residential and street prostitution were not always district operations. Many women worked in both venues - seemingly moving effortlessly between the various sites of commercial sex - to the annoyance of urban reformers, public observers, elites, and the middle classes.

The everyday lives of prostitutes and their occupation of space rebuffs the narrative of victimization of women in sex industry; it enables us to recognize their agency. As such, looking through the lens of the everyday makes it possible to acknowledge the individual and communal capacities of women in sex work to occupy and transform urban space. Prostitutes - who were prominent social actors in the contested everyday realm of Beyoğlu played - active role in the constitution of public spaces, to the alarm and disappointment of urban reformers.

§ 3.2 Brothel Keepers and Middlemen in the Sex Trade

Just as there were different kinds of places of prostitution in turn-of-the-century Beyoğlu, there were different types of brothel keepers in the world of sex trade. One prominent type among brothel keepers of the period were females. Archival documents indicate that most osmall scale brothels scattered in diverse neighborhoods of Beyoğlu were operated by women. These brothels were called by their owners' names even in official documents – for instance Eleni's brothel or Katina's house.[29] The majority of female brothel keepers continued to work as prostitutes in her own brothel until they were too old. It is probable that female keepers of many small-scale brothels had once been ordinary prostitutes. But they developed the financial power to own or rent a

28 Kesnin Bey, *Le Mal D'orient (Mcears Turques)* (Paris: C. Marpon & E. Flammarion), 315.

29 In most archival police documents concerning brothels, the keepers are female. See for example BOA, Y.PRK.ZB, 32/16, 1319.Za.14 (22 February 1902)., BOA, DH.MUİ, 117/18, 1328.B.23 (31 July 1910).,BOA, ZB, 71/17, 1318.Teşrinievvel.11 (24 October 1902)..

house and hire others. In some cases, a couple of prostitutes joined together to establish a brothel in which they themselves would work.

Table 3.1 The brothels, their owners and location in 1920.

	Abanoz	Ziba	Galata	Üsküdar	Kadıköy	Total
Greek	37	13	28	10	1	79
Armenian	19	10	6			35
Jewish	3		42			45
Hungarian			1			1
Egyptian					1	1
African				2		2
Bosnian				1		1
Turkish				7	4	11
Total	59	23	77	20	6	175

SOURCE: Trowbridge Riggs (1995), p.306.

Prostitution is usually defined as a dead-end job in which there is no chance of progressing to a better, more important, or higher position. The only business prostitutes could launch was brothel keeping, and very few women among the prostitutes had the chance to achieve this goal. Moreover, operating even a small-scale brothel in Beyoğlu required planning, the means to control and protect employees and knowledge of the real estate market.

Establishing the necessary relations to protect their business and labor force was particularly critical for the success of brothel keepers, as the sex trade could be risky and hard to manage without the necessary networks. An important form of relationship that brothel keepers established for the security of their houses was with the *kabadayıs*.[30] *Kabadayıs* were the strong and violent men, who collected tributes from the business owners in neighborhoods in return for the protection they provided. Violance t, although regulated by certain norms and customs was the main source that they based their

30 On *kabadayı* culture, see Noémi Lévy-Aksu, *Osmanlı İstanbulu'nda Asayiş 1879 - 1909* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 335-56.

authority over.[31] Although brothels were subject to legal legislation and control from late nineteenth century on, a brothel keeper still needed and was forced to establish a bond with *kabadayıs*, who remained important actors in the social life of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Beyoğlu. *Kabadayıs* protected the brothel and the women working there from abuse, harassment, and violence inflicted by people other than themselves. In return, the brothel keepers paid them tributes and treated them with special services.

> Prostitutes always required someone to support and protect them. Women took refuge in the guardianship of *kabadayıs* in order to escape the clutches of those who would give them trouble or bully them. In return for the protection they provided the women, the *kabadayıs* could frequent the brothels freely; the women did not accept other clients during their visits. They were respected by the keeper and the pals who accompanied them were also served. For New Year's eve and festivities, they were presented with valuable gifts.[32]

The *kabadayı* and his companions were regularly served in the brothel he protected. Maintaining a permanent emotional bond with one of the women working in the brothel or with the female keeper herself was an important part of *kabadayı* culture.[33] One night in 1895, for instance, Safranbolulu Mustafa attacked a group of people wounding some and killing one for no apparent reason. Paulina, a brothel keeper and prostitute in Beyoğlu, was said to be the one who pushed Mustafa to such a pointless violence. Paulina owned a brothel where she herself worked as a prostitute. According to newspaper accounts, Mustafa fell in love with Paulina and asked her to be his mistress. (In some versions, it was not Pauline, but another prostitute working in Paulina's brothel with whom Mustafa fell in love.) Paulina asked Mustafa to prove his

31 Refi Cevad Ulunay, *Eski İstanbul Kabadayıları Sayılı Fırtınalar* (İstanbul: Arma Yayınları, 2003).

32 Abdülaziz-Bey, Kâzım Arısan, and Duygu Arısan Günay, *Osmanlı âdet, merasim ve tabirleri = âdât ve merasim-i kadime, tabirât ve muamelât-ı kavmiye-i Osmaniye* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1995), 335-36.

33 ibid.

bravery. According to some accounts, Paulina said that he should become a troublemaker by wounding a few people (*birkaç kişi cerh ile belalı olmalısın*). The evening that Mustafa attacked several people in the streets of Pangaltı, Mustafa was not accepted into Paulina's brothel.[34] It is possible to interpret Mustafa's seemingly meaningless violence as concerning professional relations as well as romantic disappointment. Mustafa seemed to have been asking for to be asking to be the protector of the house, in return for which he would have had the privilege to enter freely and have a permanent relationship with a woman working there (whether Paulina or another). However, Paulina rejected him on the basis that he had not yet proven himself. She neatly reminded him that in order to be accepted to such a position, he needed to be acknowledged as a bully and troublemaker of whom others would beware.

Other groups with which the brothel keepers had to maintain good relations were police and other governmental officers. A police investigation report that I summarize below showcases the good relations between a successful female brothel keeper and the highest-ranking police officers in the district. At three o'clock on the evening of 10 December 1894, the director of police in Taksim (*Taksim Mutasarrıfı*) asked his officer Memduh Efendi to find out who was in the brothel of 'Katina of Beşiktaş' in the Bülbülderesi neighborhood at Tarlabaşı – probably because of a denunciation that had already reached him The report prepared by officer Memduh Efendi, who went to Katina's brothel upon the order of the director, provides detailed information. When Memduh Efendi arrived at Katina's brothel, he first saw İsmail Efendi, a police officer employed in Taksim Central Station, sitting behind the main door. Then, he climbed upstairs and found out Hacı Cemal Efendi and Ahmet Efendi, superintendents of the Taksim and Tarlabaşı police stations, Şemsi Efendi, a member of the Taksim Assembly of Police, Mehmed Efendi, an ordinary police officer employed in Tarlabaşı, and another Mehmed, a clerk of the Tophane Police Assembly, gathered around a table drinking alcohol. They were accompanied by Katina,, three Greek women, an Armenian woman, and a male musician.[35]

34 Roger A. Deal, *Crimes of Honor, Drunken Brawls and Murder: Violence in Istanbul under Abdülhamid II* (İstanbul: Libra, 2010), 92-93.

35 BOA, ZB, 70/18, 1310.Teşrinisani.28 (10 December 1894).

In his defense, Hacı Cemil Efendi claimed that night was the traditional name day for Katinas, widely celebrated in the Greek community. On name days, Orthodox Greeks gather in their houses and celebrate with food, drink, and music. His claimed that his intention was to check on the patrols on duty in the district. To this end, he first went to Tarlabaşı where he found that only one among five police officers was performing his duty while the others were absent. Then he went to the Tarlabaşı Station where he met with Ahmed Efendi, the superintendent of the Tarlabaşı Police Station. On their way back, while passing through Ziya Street, they met with Miço in front of the window of Katina's. Miço, the son of Katina, was an officer in an insurance agency, and had previously worked as a photographer at the Photography House for the Brothels. Since it was the name day of his mother and there was already music and entertainment in the house, Miço invited them in. Hacı Cemil Efendi and Ahmed Efendi entered the house upon Miço's insistence. After a while, Mehmed Efendi entered and they were served coffee. Already in the house were other female family members and the aforementioned Mehmed, Şemsi, and the other Mehmed Efendi.[36]

Şemsi Efendi also rejected the accusation that he and some other police officers had been served alcohol and entertained in one of the brothels of the Tarlabaşı district. He stated that he had taken the permission of his chief to meet a mason for the maintenance of his house which had been damaged in the earthquake. After he met the mason in Tatavla, he passed on his way through Ziya Street. There he met the former photographer Miço, who insisted he come into his mother's - Katina's - house and have coffee. As it was the name day of Miço's mother, there was already a celebration going on in the house. After a while, Cemal Efendi and Ahmed Efendi came and accompanied them. When their coffees were prepared, Memduh Efendi entered. While they were drinking their coffee, Memduh Efendi left. The rest of them left the house after having their coffees, and each went their own way.[37]

In this documents, Katina, the keeper of a small-scale brothel in Tarlabaşı, appear to be a successful business owner and manager who had created the

36 ibid.

37 ibid.

necessary networks to not only secure her business, but to provide her family and herself a better life. Her service to these prominent police officers was a gesture that strengthened or refreshed the already established connections with officers of the district. Most of the individuals gathered in Katina's brothel seemed to know each other, and in their self-defenses, they refer to Katina and her son as old friends. Importantly, Katina used this network to place her son into various jobs. Her son's former job in the Photography House of Brothels and his current job in the insurance company indicate that this fairly-strong network was functioned to Katina's benefit. It is also clear that Katina had the financial power to employ various men and women as prostitutes, servants, and musicians.

There are also many cases demonstrating how police officers of all ranks took bribes from brothel keepers. They also frequented brothels in Beyoğlu probably for free. Both the police officers and brothel keepers considered this acceptable. However, when the behavior of police officers became abusive, brothels keepers could put a stop to their bribes and even reject the concerned officer to enter ther brothels. For example, in August 1891, Arus, a female Armenian brothel keeper submitted a complaint to the directory of Police in Beyoğlu stating that two police officers from among the Beyoğlu police had illegally taken money from her.[38] In another case, Hacı Said Efendi, a police officer in Galata, went off duty and visited a brothel where he had a dispute with Hayganoş, the establishment's female keeper, and stabbed her.[39] It is likely that Hayganoş did not accept him into her brothel for free.

In another example, Ragıp Efendi, a police officer in the Taksim station, was arrested in a drunken stupor as he molested a brothel keeper in Macar Street, in Beyoğlu. Ragıp Efendi had been arrested previously on various occasions and he had been warned many times. He did not stop, however, and his drinking habit continued, he was incapable of properly performing his police duties.[40] Similarly, Ali Efendi of Arapgir, who was a police officer in Beyoğlu, was found drunk in a brothel and fought with Commissar Said Efendi

38 BOA, ŞD, 2571/16, 1309.M.21 (27 August 1891).

39 BOA, ZB, 71/17, 1318.Teşrinievvel.11 (24 October 1902).

40 BOA, ZB, 70/53, 1313.Ş.12 (28 January 1896).

who reprimanded him.[41] In another case, police officer Cavit Efendi, who visited the brothel of Madam Mari in Beyoğlu with his friend Abdülkadir Efendi, was involved in a dispute there.[42] The above cases indicate that it was normal for police officers in Beyoğlu to visit brothels. Only when they got in trouble or molest brothel keepers would the case grab the attention of authorities.

In most cases, brothel keepers opted to establish good relations with police officers of the district, did not shun serving them in their brothels for free, and bribed them frequently. For them it was a way to secure their business. In August 1910, the author of an article published in *Karagöz*, a satirical magazine of the time, claimed that the expense of the telephone lines set up for the Beyoğlu Police Station were covered by the brothels in the district through a campaign organized for this purpose.[43] The police authorities strongly rejected the accusation and *Karagöz* was obliged to publish fairly long refutation that was prepared by the police.[44]Another sarcastic article published in Dyojen, on the other hand, alluded to how important the taxes paid by brothel keepers to the Municipality of the Sixth District were for the urban reforms carried out by the municipal administration. Dyojen also implied that most of the time brothel keepers paid their taxes more regularly than other business owners of the district.

> We should first discuss this: What is the duty of the Sixth District? Isn't it charged with bringing civilization to our country? So how can a civilized life be attained? With the help of gas, pavement, and cleanliness as well as the beauty of the streets, right? And how can these be realized? Undoubtedly with money. So how much do these schools and clubs pay monthly to the District? Without a doubt, they refuse to pay anything, saying that "we spread knowledge," and they might even ask for donations from the district for themselves. Nevertheless, the

41 BOA, DH.MKT, 1008/34, 1323.B.19 (19 September 1905).

42 BOA, ZB, 388/6, 1322.Teşrinievvel.02 (15 October 1906).

43 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 53/6, 1328.L.18 (23 October 1910).

44 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 98/92, 1328.Za.10 (13 November 1910).

> madams that these papers deem morally corrupt pay their taxes every year. So don't you think the Sixth District would be right to put them first?[45]

To sum up, brothel keepers opted to establish good relations with police officers and other administrative authorties of the district. They served police officers of the district for free in their brothels and bribed them frequently. They choose protectors for their business and labor force among the brave and strong men of the neighborhood. They pay their taxes regularly. However, abuse came to be unbearable,, they did not shy away from confronting police officers or even administrators and applying to diverse legal offices. The legal status of their business made it possible granting them authority and turning them into legal subjects. We see that operating even a small-scale brothel in Beyoğlu required a long-range planning, calculation, and investment. It required the ability to control and protect a labor force.. At least some successful prostitutes of Beyoğlu ascended to a higher position through which they established diverse connections with people of diverse backgrounds and strata and managed to influence their choices and lives. They could also affected the transformations of the district.

Some brothels, especially large, luxurious ones were managed by male European owners. These brothels were also registered, hired of the only legislated prostitutes, and paid the necessary fees for the medical examination and treatment of the women they employed. Some of them were not registered as brothels, but operated as hotels. Still, capitulations provided a number of privileges and freed them of the legal interventions of the Ottoman police and government. Therefore, it was easier for foreign passport holders to manage such a risky business, as sex trade. In "Prostitution in Turkey," Louis Fiaux points out that some of the most luxurious brothels were managed by European keepers.[46] Some of European male entrepreneurs ran more than one brothels. In the related archival documents it is observed that the police was

45 Dyojen, 177 (Kanuni Evvel, 1288) In Işık N. Demirkan, "A Study of Ottoman Modernisation on the City: The Sixth Municipal District of Istanbul (1858-1877)" (Bilkent University, 2006).

46 Louis Fiaux, "La Prostitution en Turquie," in *La Prostitution Reglementee et Les Pouvoirs Publics dans les Principaux Etats des Deux Mondes* (Paris: 1909).

not effective in dealing with the problems created by the brothels ran by affluent European men because the Ottoman police did not have the authority to intervene their business. Hotel Belvodi in Rıhtım Street in Haydarpaşa was let by a German citizen, Hogel, and operated by his fellow citizen Hans. The residents of the neighborhood constantly complained to the local police that the hotel had been converted into a brothel. The investigation conducted by the police confirmed the accusations. Hence, the police in Üsküdar send a request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs via the Ministry of Police that it send a note the German Consulate requesting the evacuation of Hogel from the hotel. A similar request was sent with regard to another German citizen, Hofsman. The residents of the neighborhood complained that Hofsman had converted two houses he had let in Haydarpaşa into brothels. The police investigation carried out again verified the accusations. However, the police had no legal authority over German citizens. It was requested that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contact the German consulate and ask it to take necessary actions.[47]

A group of residents and the owners of companies in Feriköy submitted a petition to Beyoğlu Police department requesting the expulsion of three French citizens who operated brothels in their neighborhood. The request was conveyed to the French Consulate. In the answer of the Consulate the decision of the police to expel them was approved. However, it was also reminded that the concerned men still had a right to appeal the government about the decision. According to the French authorities the trade in which these French people operating was illegal, and if proved, it would be considered a crime. However, they argued, although the petitioners claimed that scandals frequently occurred in these brothels they could not provide proper evidence.[48] All these cases are characterized by a wealthy male European brothel keeper with the privilege of being free of the intervention (at least the direct intervention) of the Ottoman police and government. Particularly for wealthy foreign entrepreneurs, brothel keeping a form of profitable and secure investment at the heart of an ever-growing city.

47 BOA, ZB, 339/125, 1325.Mayıs.16 (29 May 1909).

48 BOA, Y.PRK.ZB, 2/72, 1301.L.26 (19 August 1884).

Another prominent group involved in the sex trade in the Beyoğlu district was Jewish brothel keepers and procurers. From the early decades of the nineteenth century up to 1939, Jews were perceived as the main agents of the international sex trade - known as white slave trafficking. Women were procured from a wide geography around the Black Sea and Eastern Europe, including from Russia, Galicia, Austria, Poland and Romania, and distributed to various places throughout the world as prostitutes. According to a report prepared in 1908 by the American Consul in Istanbul white slave trafficking in the Ottoman capital was almost exclusively controlled by Jews.[49]

Istanbul was an important hub of the international sex trade. It was both a large market for sex itself and a transition point for women recruited for sex work from neighboring regions. By the late nineteenth century, Istanbul was perceived as one of the two prominent centers of white slave trafficking, along with Buenos Aires.[50] Jews from Russia, Rumania, and Poland who fled to Istanbul to escape from poverty and antisemitism dominated the sex trade that flourished in Galata during the last decades of nineteenth century.[51] A French observer claimed that using Istanbul as a central hub for the sex trade was feasible for Jewish procurers in the Black Sea Region, because "Jewish brothel-keepers were already in place at the other end in Constantinople."[52] On the other hand, at the 1899 London Congress on white slave traffic, the Russian Secretary of State talked about Jewish men who sold their wives in Turkey and then returned back to Russia with a passport stamped "wife remaining abroad" or "divorced." They then found new women with which to arrange a false marriage.[53]Documents in the Ottoman archives also demonstrate the

49 Edward J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982).

50 ibid.

51 Related in Esther Benbassa, "Education for Jewish Girls in the East: A Portrait of the Galta School in Istanbul. 1879-1912," in *Studies in Contemporary Jewry: Volume IX: Modern Jews and Their Musical Agendas*, ed. Ezra Mendelsohn (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 163-75, 164.

52 Edward J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982).

53 Laurie Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters: Prostitutes and Their Regulation in Imperial Russia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 165.

existence if not dominance of Jews in the sex trade of Istanbul as brothel keepers and procurers.

Jews became visible in the sex trade of Istanbul in the mid-nineteenth century. When Jewish soldiers who had been taken prisoners in the Crimean War were brought to Istanbul, they chose established lives in the cheaper streets of Galata such as in Yüksekkaldırım and other streets in its vicinity. Many opened brothels in these streets or worked as procurers in the sex trade, probably because it was easier to establish connections with fellow Jews who were already significant in the long-distance sex trade. Moreover, many Jews from Russia, Rumania, and Poland were immigrating to Istanbul to flee antisemitism and poverty. Some among them also found jobs in the sex market. By the latter decades of the nineteenth century, brothels and the sex trade in Galata was already dominated by Jews who had migrated from Eastern Europe. Most women working in the brothels of Galata were also immigrant Jews.[54] Jewish trafficking, says Bristow, "was anchored in brothel keeping - omen freelanced or kept houses while their husbands procured."[55]

The dominance of immigrant Jews in the sex trade in Galata intensified the already existing tensions between the Sephardic and Ashkenazy communities as well as the tensions between the wealthy, middle-class local Jews and poor, working class immigrants. Local Jews had a generally negative attitude towards the newcomers and accused them of being involved in white slave trafficking.[56] While the Sephardic community defended the reputations of their communities, claiming that they were not in this business, Ashkenazi community was disturbed by the harm done to their reputation since Jews in the sex trade were usually Eastern and Central European just like themselves. To separate themselves from this group, they sought to prevent the individual Jews partaking in the sex trade from entering their synagogues. A separate

54 Rıfat N. Bali, ed., *The Jews and Prostitution in Constantinople 1854-1922* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2008), 8-9.

55 Edward J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 56.

56 Rıfat N. Bali, ed., *The Jews and Prostitution in Constantinople 1854-1922* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2008), 12.

synagogue was established for those who involved in sex trade. Despite the protests of local Ashkenazi community, the synagogue continued to operate until 1915. This synagogue was not the only one of its kind. In Warchovia, too, there was a small Synagogue for "prostitutes, madams, pimps, and thieves."[57]

Jewish prostitution not only created tensions among the different Jewish groups, it also gave way to several diplomatic crisis. As Malte Fuhrmann argues "contemporary discourses on gender, imperialism and nationalism combined to turn the issue of Austrian prostitutes in Istanbul into an issue that was strongly contested especially between the Ottoman authorities and the Habsburg diplomats at the beginning of the twentieth century."[58] The Ottoman government was usually accused of being tolerant to white slave trafficking - and prostitution in general - so as long as the prostitutes in question were not Muslims. For example, Samuel Cohen, who was sent to Istanbul in 1914 by the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women, complained about the double moral standards of Muslim Ottoman men, who were overly protective of Muslim women but remained resilient about the victimization of women of other nations through prostitution.[59] This was true to a point. According to the regulation of prostitution, Ottoman officers would not interfere sex trade so as long as prostitutes were registered and Muslim women not recruited to be prostitutes. Fuhrman claims, diplomats paid significant attention to the Austrian prostitutes in Istanbul as the matter became one of imperial prestige. In 1914 an international committee to fight against slavery was established. US ambassador, Morgenthau and his wife led the initiative. However, it was not very successful. The main blow to Jews in working the prostitution market of Istanbul came in 1915. At the beginning of the World War I, in 1915, the Union and Progress government abolished the capitulations. The Istanbul Chief of Police, Osman Bedri Bey, took this as an opportunity. More than 170

57 Edward J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 60.

58 Malte Fhurman, "'Western Perversions' at the Threshold of Felicity: The European Prostitutes of Galata-Pera (1870-1915)" " *History and Anthropology* 21, 2 (2010): 159-72, 159.

59 Quoted in Rıfat N. Bali, ed., *The Jews and Prostitution in Constantinople 1854-1922* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2008), 336-37.

foreigners, most of whom were Jewish, were rounded up and deported.[60] After this operation, many Jews who had lost their livelihoods and faced the risk of deportation applied for the Ottoman citizenship. For example, Yako Ibrameyovem Kaziçim was arrested during the crackdowns of 1915. Kaziçim submitted a petition demanding his release. Since his petition provides a graphic description of the situation, it is worth quoting at length."I migrated to the Ottoman Empire from the town Bender of Poltofeski Province in Russia in 1907. Since then, I have been living and earning my life in in Galata. Fifteen days ago, I was arrested because of the slander of an informant. I have been kept in the prison of the Directory General of Police for two weeks, although my denunciation untruthful.… I have been kept in prison without a reason. This is against the law since I have not done any wrongdoing." On the basis of an accusation that Kazıçim earned his livelihood illicitly by deceiving women to become prostitutes and permitting his wife to work inbrothels, he was deported.[61]

The citizenship application of Lize, the daughter of Mendel, was rejected on the basis that she managed a brothel in Beyoğlu.[62] Rolmes, the son of Volenfelek, also applied for Ottoman citizenship. Though born in Russia, he had been living in Karaoğlan Street in Galata for ten years. Rolmes' application was rejected on the basis that he earned his living through his girlfriend who worked in a Galata brothel.[63] Similarly, the application of Russian citizen Birkof Gerson for the Ottoman citizenship was rejected as he was accused of being involved in white slave trafficking.[64]

It is important to note that while exploring the Jewish role in international sex trade and Jewish participation in the sex trade in Istanbul, one should be cautious with regard to anti-Semitic biases towards Jews particularly concerning their relationship to the sex trade in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Laura Brenstein argues that "Jews did not dominate the trade of

60 ibid., 53,57.

61 BOA, DH.EUM.5.Şb, 8/56, 1333.Ra.27 (12 February 1915).

62 BOA, DH.İD, 61-1/44, 1333.S.23 (10 January 1915).

63 BOA, DH.İD, 61-1/46, 1333.Ra.27 (12 February 1915).

64 BOA, DH.EUM.ECB, 4/45, 1334.C.02 (6 April 1916).

prostitution in Europe, but they were visible enough in procuring and brothel-keeping—particularly within the Pale of Settlement—to reinforce negative stereotypes."[65]

Whether those engaged in the sex trade were predominantly Jewish or not, those who engaged as brothel keepers choose the sector as the most sensible way of earning a living - one option among the very few available to them. In this respect, they resembled the women who chose prostitution as a way of earning a living. Coercion and fraud played a role in some instances, but the individuals who became brothel keepers mostly considered their carrier paths to legitimate. As Brenstein reminds us, "Most middlemen and brothel keepers were not the evil "slave traders" that made the news; rather, they were men and women who ran the brothels, moved women between brothels and cities so that "fresh merchandise" was available to the customers, found new recruits, negotiated agreements, and kept up a circle of contacts."[66]

On the other hand, when brothels were registered to make their supervision easier, their keepers became answerable to the law. The ordinance imposed control over brothel keepers, but it also gave them responsibilities, granting them authority and legitimacy. They came to occupy strategic positions in the sex market as investors, facilitators, and distributors. They had the chance to legally complain about abuse and violence directed against them and sue.

§ 3.3 Private Lives in "Public Houses": Social profiles and Everyday Lives of Prostitutes under Regulation

In the early twentieth century, the great majority of prostitutes in Istanbul were recent migrants to the city and came from diverse ethnic, religious, and geographic backgrounds in parallel with the diversity of thousands people flooding Istanbul in search of better lives in the same period. There was little to distinguish them from the large body of poor women who had to make a living

65 Laurie Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters: Prostitutes and Their Regulation in Imperial Russia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 16.

66 ibid., 166.

in Istanbul's limited job market. Figures showing the number of prostitutes before 1914 is not available. According to police statistics, there were 2,125 registered and 979 unregistered prostitutes in Istanbul in 1915. There were also occasional prostitutes whose number was estimated by the police at over a thousand. According to the statistics of Sıhhiye Heyeti, there were 2,171 registered prostitutes. Among them 1,367 were Christians and Jews and remaining 804 were Muslims. Of 2,171 prostitutes, 770 worked in Beyoğlu (Pera), 643 in Galata, 135 in Eminönü, and 177 in Kadıköy and Üsküdar. 446 had no defined neighborhood. According to Sıhhiye Heyeti, the total number of prostitutes in Istanbul, including non-registered ones, was about 5,000. According to Mustafa Galip, the police superintendent in 1914 who also published a book on the lives of prostitutes, there were 774 Muslim, 691 Greek, 194 Armenian, and 124 Jewish prostitutes in Istanbul. There were also 171 Russian, 900 Greek, 23 Australian , 21 Romanian, and 12 Italian prostitutes.[67]

Table 3.2 Prostitutes and the neighborhoods in which they work.

	Pera	Galata	Suriçi	Kadıköy & Üsküdar	Unknown	Total
Christian or Jewish	714	643	1	9		1367
Muslim	56		134	168	446	804
Total	770	643	135	177	446	2171

SOURCE: Trowbridge Riggs (1995), p.308.

Although Ottoman men were more mobile than women, by the late nineteenth century the number of single women migrating to urban centers, particularly to Istanbul, increased considerably. One prominent reason behind this change in the migration patterns was a growing need for cash in rural areas and declining opportunities to earn it there. At the time, many families in Ottoman villages and towns started sending their daughters to Istanbul to work, mostly as domestic servants, even at a very young age.[68] There were many other reasons for the increase in female mobility during the late

67 Mustafa Galip, *Fahişeler Hayatı, Redayet-i Ahlakiye* (İstanbul: Mahmut Bey Matbaası, 1338).

68 Yahya Araz, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Çocuk Olmak (16. Yüzyıldan 19. Yüzyıl Başlarına)* (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2013), 155-75.

nineteenth and early twentieth century Istanbul. There were women who had to leave their homes and families because of ongoing wars and conflicts. Some women were escaping abusive or dysfunctional homes. Some simply left their homes for a better life or for the freedom that was said to be found in large cities. Foreign women from the Black Sea region and from some parts of Europe came to the flourishing capital of the Ottoman Empire in search of better lives.

Some registered prostitutes had been recruited as prostitutes even before they came to Istanbul to work in the sex market. This was the case for most Jewish prostitutes of the Black Sea region. Some newcomers to Istanbul worked in other low-paid and unskilled female occupations - mostly in domestic service and laundry, before transferring to prostitution. The female poor also could work as street vendors, shop assistants, seamstresses, waitresses, singers, dancers, and actresses. For most registered women, prostitution was a full time, and even twenty four hour a day job. The places they lived and worked were generally one and the same, and they worked whenever a client appeared at their door.

For some women in the sector, prostitution remained an occasional job adding to their limited incomes. Some of the women engaged in prostitution for not fulltime professionals. Many women in the sector worked as occasional prostitutes. When an unregistered non-Muslim woman was caught soliciting or prostituting, she was first sent for a mandatory medical inspection. If she was found to be diseased, she was directly sent to the Women's Hospital to be treated under lock. If not, she was registered. In the case of Muslim women, the situation was more complicated. They were also sent for mandatory medical inspection. Those found diseased were sent to Women's Hospital. The others were kept in the police station or in the women's prison for a while and then they were deported to another city or simply sent back onto the streets.

Poverty played an important role in women's decisions to turn to prostitution as a way to earn their lives. However, engaging in prostitution should not be considered as just an economic decision. Women considered pay among employment alternatives as well as the dangers or difficulties that came along with them. Most probably, many women opted for prostitution because it appeared easier or at least no worse than the difficult conditions under

which they already labored. Gender and class discrimination with respect to employment, concerns about stigma, and the economic dependence framed their choices, but most women chose to enter prostitution because they perceived prostitution as a means of fulfilling particular economic, social, or psychological needs.

Cases of forced prostitution were rare, in most cases move towards prostitution occurred on a voluntary basis. Still there are documents mentioning organized gangs that deceived women into prostitution. According to a document from the Ottoman archive, for example, some procurers deceived families on Limni and Imroz - islands dominated by Greek populations - with the false promise that their daughters would be placed as domestic workers in the houses of honorable families in Istanbul. They first took the girls to Alexandria and then transferred them to Europe or America to sell as prostitutes. Officers and police in these islands were warned of such incidents.[69] As stated in an another archival document, honorable families who visited Imroz and Limni for summer holidays could hire local girls to employ them as domestic servants in their houses. However, this employment arrangement should have first been registered with the Metropole of the island. [70]

In another case, Yanko, a tailor from the Hacı Ahmed neighborhood of Tatavla, deceived Mariye, the fourteen-years-old daughter of Angeliko from the same neighborhood. Yanko lured her to a brothel in Bahçeli Hamam Street near Ağa Cami in Beyoğlu. There, he raped Mariye and left her with the brothel keeper, Marienne, in return for two lire. According to Angeliko's account, Dimitri, the uncle of Yanko, and a police officer in Beyoğlu, tried to prevent him complaining about Yanko by threathening him.. In the meantime, Marienne sold Mariye to another brothel keeper, Memduh, in return for five lires. Finally, eight days later, the police found the girl and returned her to her family. Yanko was still missing.[71]

69 BOA, DH.MKT, 831/45,

70 BOA, DH.MKT, 884/47, 1322.C.17 (29 August 1904).

71 BOA, Y.PRK.ŞH, 2/61, 1304.R.24 (20 January 1887).



Figure 3.2 Brothels in Galata in n1914Bağçevan Yuvanidi, residing in Beirut submits a petition claiming that his wife and daughter were deceived by someone called Dimitri from Bursa, and was taken to Istanbul to work as prostitutes. Bağçevan Yuvanidi requested that her wife and daughter were found by the police and submitted to himself. The police found and arrested the mentioned women in Istanbul, working in a brothel in Beyoğlu and submitted them to Greek Patriarchy in Istanbul to be send back to Beirut.[72] Despite the claims of Yuvanidi, however, there was no evidence supporting his wife and daughters' move to prostitution was involuntary.

3.3.1 *Jewish Women*

The prevalence of Jewish women and procurers in the sex trade of Istanbul is mentioned above. Jewish women from the Black sea region usually worked in the brothels operated by Jewish owners. These were cheaper,lower-grade brothels compared to those in Pera. According to Bristow, prostitutes working

72 BOA, ZB, 408/8, 1320.Nisan.20 (3 May 1904).

in these brothels were very young women, pale, with tired looks in their eyes. They sat nearly naked in front of the brothels for which they worked. [73]

Malte Fhurman estimated the number of Austrian prostitutes, most of whom were Jewish, in Istanbul in early 1900s was about three hundred.[74] There were also Jewish women from other countries. Foreign consulates usually applied to Ottoman officers demanding information about Jewish women working as prostitutes. Ottoman reports prepared for foreign consulates provided information on the background of Jewish prostitutes coming from various countries. Marika - a Jewih girl from Russia - was working in the brothel of Yani, an Ottoman citizen, in Derviş Street. Upon the appeal of Marika's mother, the employees of the Russian Consulate raided the brothel and took the girl by force. Ottoman authorities claimed that this was inappropriate and argued that the Russian consulate should first apply to the Ministry of Police.[75]Miriam, a Jewish woman from Odessa, abandoned her parents and husband and came to Istanbul. She was working in a brothel in Beyoğlu. The Russian Consulate asked Ottoman authorities to return her. But Miriam had an Ottoman identityissued by the Nufus Daire-i Umumisi. Ottoman authorities carried out an investigation according in which it became clear that Miriam had arranged a fake marriage with an Ottoman citizen. The marriage ceremony was conducted by a Jewish rabbi. Since the marriage was not valid, her identity card was confiscated by the police and the investigation was turned towards those involved in the production of the fake documents.[76]In another case, a Romanian woman demanded information about the situation of her daughter, Mari Matilt, who had moved to Istanbul with the man she married. The Romanian Consulate contacted with the Ottoman police asking for information about her whereabouts. According to the Ottoman investigation, Mari

73 Charles Trowbridge Riggs, "Yetişkinlerde Suç," in *İstanbul 1920*, ed. Clarence Richard Johnson (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1995), 279-315.

74 Malte Fhurman, "'Western Perversions' at the Threshold of Felicity: The European Prostitutes of Galata-Pera (1870-1915)" " *History and Anthropology* 21, 2 (2010): 159-72.

75 BOA, DH.H, 64/40, 1331.S.07 (16 January 1913).

76 BOA, DH.MKT, 818/62, 1321.20.Za (7 February 1904).

was living Beyoğlu with her husband and working as a prostitute. She was arrested, handed over to the consulate, and deported.[77]

The case of a young Austrian Jewish girl, Sara Friedman, is striking. Sara's mother applied to Austrian authorities and claiming that her daughter was kept in a brothel in Galata against her and demadde her daughtre's release and return to her country. In December 1895 the Ottoman police arrested Sara Friedman in a brothel in Galata and brought her to the Habsburg Consulate in Istanbul, located in Pera. Surprisingly, Sara refused to be submitted to the Austrian authorities and keenly asked for her release by submitting her Ottoman papers. She was legislated as Sury Fischel, an Ottoman citizen. Ottoman police first refused to submit Sara to the Austrian consulate on the basis that she was an Ottoman citizen. But following the political pressure from Austrian authorities, they gave up and left her in the Habsburg Consolute. While she was kept in the consulate, Sara wrote a letter to her mother in order convince her to take back her complain. She wrote that she was not poorly-treated in Istanbul, stayed there at her own will and wanted to remain.

However, as she was a minor, the consulate sent her back to her home town to be returned to her mother. There, she submitted leghthy statement to the local police telling her life story in detail and explaining how she had taken the path of prostitution in Istanbul. She was one of six children of a poor Jewish widow. She had left her home six years before to earn her own living and had started to work as a prostitute in various small towns of Galicia. Then she met N. Goldstaub who offered her employment in Constantinople. She accepted his offer on her own free will and was handed over to Moishe Gottmann, a brothel owner. In Gottmann's brothel, Sara considered her life luxurious, particularly compared to the misery she had experienced in her mother's house. She emphasized that she received her own clothes and her own money. Sara claimed that the trafficker Goldstaub was not happy with the money he had received for the trafficking and sent a forged letter to Sara's mother deceiving her, and claiming that Sara was living in the condition of slavery. Moreover, she declared her decision to return to Constantinople and to her old job. Furhman states that Friedmann

77 BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 89/23, 1332.Ra.11 (7 February 1914).

> goes out of her way to stress that she chose her path consciously and had no illusions about the trade, and that she at all times believed this choice to be a good one, for material reasons. She effectively and confidently inverts the narrative of testimony, so that it is not she who must justify herself for her shortcomings, but the state, for intervening in her life. No one had offered her the means to escape her miserable living conditions, nor had she asked for help to do so.[78]

Furhman how Austrian prostitution in the Ottoman capital evolved into a diplomatic conflict between two states. Foreign consulates systematically pressured the Ottoman government to end Jewish prostitution in Beyoğlu. Until 1915, however, effective measures were not or could not be taken by Ottoman authorities. For example, the Austrian consulate sent a memorandum to the Ottoman government complaining that many girls from Austro-Hungarian Empire came to Istanbul with travel permits provided by Ottoman authorities and were subsequently found working in the brothels of the city. On such a complaint from the Austro-Hungarian Consulate Ministry of Police reported that there really were brothel keepers in the city who recruited foreign girls. The police ordered that from then forward, Austrian girls trying to enter Istanbul should be carefully investigated.[79] To this end, a special commission was established to investigate their origin, and the reason for their travel.[80]

There were also Jewish prostitutes who, like the Jewish brothel keepers and procurers, applied for Ottoman citizenship after the roundups of 1915. While some among them sought citizenship, if they were found to be working as prostitutes they were not granted it. For example, the police reported that Hayika, the daughter of Eşmil Kröeberk, did not deserve to be granted Ottoman citizenship as she had her livelihood from prostitution. Hayika, a Russian citizen, was born in Zobrovic in 1882. She had arrived in Istanbul five years

78 Malte Fhurman, "'Western Perversions' at the Threshold of Felicity: The European Prostitutes of Galata-Pera (1870-1915)" " *History and Anthropology* 21, 2 (2010): 159-72, 163.

79 BOA, ZB, 380/135, 1322.Kanunuevvel.15 (28 December 1906). BOA, HR.İM.. 107/76, 1924.06.12. BOA, HR.İM.. 108/86, 1924.06.23. BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 1/34, 1327.Ş.07 (24 August 1909).

80 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 1/34, 1327.Ş.07 (24 August 1909).

before, just after the death of her parents. From then on, she had been working as a prostitute in the brothel of Madam Sari at Yüksek Kaldırım No 35. She had neither relatives, nor husband, nor, a property in Istanbul.[81] The application of Elena, daughter of Yas, was rejected for the same reason. She was originally from Odessa and had arrived in Istanbul two and a half years before. Since then, she had been prostituting in Beyoğlu brothels. Like Hayika, she had neither relative nor property in Istanbul. Moreover, she had no official papers to prove her identity.[82] A woman called Panyota applied for Ottoman citizenship, but her application was rejected on the basis that she was one of the Jewish prostitutes of the city.[83] Madam Golda, daughter of Oşel Reydman, applied for Ottoman citizenship. Her citizenship was also rejected because she was a prostitute.[84] A group of women who lost their livelihoods as a result of the harsh policies directed at Jewish prostitutes but saved themselves from deportation refuged to synagogue used by immigrant Ashkenazi and turned it into an asylum for former prostitutes of Jewish origin.[85] The increasing control over Jews in the sex trade particularly after 1908 was directly linked to government concern about public security and urban order.[86]The Union and Progress government launched a veritable war against various marginal groups, including female prostitutes in Istanbul.[87]

3.3.2 *Muslim Women in Beyoğlu Brothels*

The 1884 legislation contains no articles concerning the registration of Muslim women as prostitutes. Though there was no rule forbidding their registration, in practice Muslim women were rarely registered. It is likely that there was

81 BOA, DH.İD, 61/-2/32, 1333.R.10 (25 February 1915).

82 BOA, DH.İD, 61/-1/43, 1333.S.23 (10 January 1915).

83 BOA, DH.EUM.ECB, 13 /22, 1335.Za.25 (12 September 1917).

84 BOA, DH.İD, 61/-2/68, 1333.Ca.09 (25 March 1915).

85 Rıfat N. Bali, ed., *The Jews and Prostitution in Constantinople 1854-1922* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2008).

86 Malte Fhurman, "'Western Perversions' at the Threshold of Felicity: The European Prostitutes of Galata-Pera (1870-1915)" " *History and Anthropology* 21, 2 (2010): 159-72.

87 Ebru Aykut, "Devr-i Hürriyette İstibdat Hayaleti: 1908 Çırçır Yangını'nın Ardından İstanbul'da Kundakçılık, Söylentiler ve Asayiş," 136 (2016): 5-39.

tacit consensus among the bureaucrats who prepared the 1884 legislation concerning the registration of Muslim prostitutes. that the registration of Muslim women and employing them as prostitutes were strictly forbidden. Yet, one could find Muslim women working as prostitutes in the streets, hotels, and unregistered and even registered brothels of Beyoğlu.

For example, in April 1914 the Beyoğlu police carried out an investigation of Luçika's brothel in Büyük Ziba Street following an accusation that a Muslim woman was working there. The police discovered that a seventeen-years-old Muslim girl was working in the brothel under the nickname Marika. The girl's real name was Fatma. It was learned that Fatma had once been with an elderly men. This marriage probably intended to provide care for the aging men. After the death of her first husband, Fatma married Mevlut, who according to the police was a vagrant. Although Fatma and others in the brothel declared that she was working there as an ordinary servant, not as a prostitute, this was unconvincing and Fatma was taken out of the brothel.[88] On another occasion, two Muslim women were expelled from a brothel in Karanfil Street in Beyoğlu and sent to the police station. Police officers carrying out the investigation believed that there were two more women in the same house, one of which was Muslim. It was ordered that the identities of these women be checked and if any turned out to be Muslim she should be sent to the police station.[89]

A collection of documents available in the Ottoman archives concerns the trafficking of Muslim Ottomans sent to various places around the world. For example, a man who was pushing Muslim women into prostitution by blackmailing them was deported to Musul.[90] There are also documents indicating that the trafficking of Muslim women to several cities such as Cairo, Port Said, and Alexandria - and even to India - was a part of the everyday life of prostitution during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[91] In Ottoman society of the time, there was a legal prohibition as well as a strong social

88 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 74/6, 1332.C.27 (23 May 1914).

89 BOA, ZB, 621/78, 1324.Ağustos.15 (28 August 1908).

90 BOA, ZB, 450/55, 1315.Mart.18 (30 March 1899).

91 BOA, ZB, 603/84, 1325.Haziran.20 (3 July 1909).,BOA, DH.MUİ, 81/35, 1328.Ra.25 (6 April 1910).,BOA, DH.MTV, 19/20, 1329.N.20 (14 September 1911).

stance against sexual relationship between non-Muslim men and Muslim women, at archival documents provide a different picture. There were cases in which Muslim prostitutes provided sexual services to non-Muslim men. For example, Melek, a Muslim prostitute, was caught with a non-Muslim client in a hotel in Galata.[92] The legal restrictions did not prevent Muslim women from prostituting. The increasing presence and visibility of poor, unaccompanied Muslim women, many of whom considered prostitution to be a sensible option for surviving in Istanbul, became a source of social and administrative concern. With the 1915 legislation, Muslim women started to be registered not only in Istanbul but around the empire.[93]

3.3.3 *Quitting the Job*

Regulation of prostitution led to its professionalization. In the cases of registered prostitutes, prostitution was no longer a transitory stage or occasional job, but acquired the status of a full occupation. More importantly, as Walkovitz argues, regulation separates the prostituting women from other sections of the lower classes.[94] Prostitutes were usually deemed to stay in the sector and it was hard for them to quit prostitution and start a new job. There were cases in which women acquired sufficient economic power to enable their exit from the job. But even in such cases, the exit was part of a negotiation between the women and the police. For example, when a woman who had worked as a prostitute for a time decided to quit prostitution and return to her hometown of Bursa. She applies to police and request her name deleted from the lists kept for prostitutes. Probably because she was an aging woman, the police deleted her registration as a prostitute, gave the necessary permissions for her move, and sent a note to Bursa police explaining her situation.[95] Eleni was another aging prostitute who quit the job. However, she was still obliged to pay some

92 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 34/70, 1326.Mayıs.15 (28 May 1910).

93 Halim Alyot, *Türkiye'de Zabıta: Tarihi Gelişim ve Bugünkü Durum* (Ankara: İçişleri Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1947), 488-89.

94 Judith R. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

95 BOA, DH.EUM.VRK, 12/47, 1332.Ca.18 (14 April 1914).

money to the police. She petitioned the Istanbul police concerning money she was still obliged to pay. In the petition, she stated that although she remained in Galata, she was not prostituting anymore, so she was unable to pay the money.[96]

Stories of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth- century prostitutes are not easy to recover. First, the available documents are limited, and like other non-elite groups prostitutes did not usually record their own lives. If we may have the chance to hear their voices, such voices are highly distorted by male intermediaries. Yet, accounts at hand are enough to recover a rough picture of their lives. To make this picture more accurate, we must go beyond the dualities of victimization and agency. Instead, we should acknowledge the constraints and hardships of their lives and perceive the ambiguity and diversity of their rich experiences. Some prostitutes prospered and lived fruitful lives. Others experienced disappointment and heartbreak. The historian should avoid placing these women in any particular category and see them instead as an immensely varied group of human beings brought together by the way they earned money - whether as a temporary expediency or as a long-term commitment. This study contends that while their choices may have been circumscribed by vagaries of social class, financial earning, and myriad other factors, many prostitutes nonetheless made conscious choices for themselves and had a certain control over their lives.

I argue that while newly emerging elites of the area and various governmental officers tried to impose new regulations and disciplinary mechanisms on people involved in sex work (prostitutes, brothel keepers, and clientele), the latter understood, constructed, lived, and perceived Beyoğlu in ways that suited their own needs and desires. Hence, Beyoğlu as a "social product" diverged from the ordered space imagined by the advocates of regulation of prostitution and other urban reform.[97] The prostitutes who worked in turn-of-the-century Beyoğlu were contrarian daughters of the nineteenth century. They violated every aspect of respectable womanliness. They lived without true homes and families. Beyoğlu was home to hundreds of them. They lived

96 BOA, DH.MKT, 1542/92, 1306.M.08 (14 September 1888).

97 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson Smith (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1991).

and worked in various neighborhoods of the district and actively participated in its production, though their participation was much lamented in their time and is neglected in historical writing.

4

Narrow Streets, Moral Claims: Community Protests against Brothels in Beyoğlu and a New Geography of Prostitution (1900-1915)

> The ones, who remember the condition of Şişli Street ten or fifteen years ago, will appreciate its progress and prosperity today. When you ascend to Taksim for a break, you cannot refrain from reaching out to Şişli. A wide, beautiful street, fresh air, a magnificent fountain… In short, it has all the qualities to make it a source of pride for a country.
>
> Yet there are some circumstances that may be a detriment to the prosperity and honor of Şişli Street. Therefore, their removal is of great importance with respect to the wealth of the country as well as public decency.
>
> First, gas lanterns are not available all along the street. There is presumably no need to mention how essential gas lanterns are. So much the more for a large street as Şişli Street the installation of gas lanterns is indispensable.
>
> Secondly, everywhere in Şişli there are open sewers. Sewers are very important for public health. Especially in a time of contagious diseases, open sewers become an utter risk to public health. Therefore, when establishing a street, one should first focus on building proper, closed sewers.

> There is one more issue that seems most destructive and notable for Şişli Street, such that any negligence in the removal of the situation may create recurring troubles in the future. The problem that we want to mention is the existence of some disorderly houses in Şişli Street.
>
> Today, Şişli has the potential to be a rental neighborhood - possess the capacity of being a rental neighborhood - a real-estate district. Permitting the increase of disorderly houses along such a large and ordered street is regretful for public morality. Besides, the possibility that this may cut short the process of progress and civilization is very serious. If the existing popularity of Şişli Street diminishes, not only will its progress pause, it will certainly lose its current standing.
>
> No heads of household will allow the existence of disorderly houses mixed in with the houses of honorable families. It is neccessary to pay attention that such houses be established in off streets or on the outskirts of the city, but a result of a little neglect, they have already increased in Şişli Street. We felt obliged to go the attention of the sublime Beyoğlu Mutasarrıfı and council to the removal of this situation that is harmful to public morals and propriety and harmful to the fortune of the country as it will curb the prosperity of Şişli.[1]

This article, published in *Sabah* in 1899 claims the existence of brothels in Şişli, one of the newly established and prosperous neighborhoods of Beyoğlu, is an obstacle to the development of the district into a more profitable real-estate area and as a threat to public decency. Though not vocalized, it also criticizes the Municipality of the Sixth District for granting permission for the establishment of brothels in central and upper-class areas of the district.

In the context of the nineteenth century in most places where regulationist policies were at work, the licensed brothels were confined to segregated areas. This not only made the medical inspections and administrative surveillance easier, but also keep prostitution out of public space and public sight. Phillip Howell, a scholar who works on the geography of prostitution, states that "regulation was fundamentally an exercise in spatial order." He adds:

1 "Muhtıra, Şişli Caddesi," *Sabah*, 10 Mayıs 1899.

> In the first place, prostitution was defined as a public problem. Prostitution's principal dangers arose from activities such as soliciting in the public streets, which introduced disorder into public space and tempted the unwary. It was felt by many to be better to contain prostitutional activity in segregated urban areas that might be more effectively policed, and in known brothels, which might be properly inspected.[2]

One prominent objective of regulation was to remove prostitutes from the public spaces and public sight through confining them to brothels or zoned areas. As Howell argues, "the intention was to domesticate prostitutional activity, to privatize its geography at the same time as it brought it under public regulation."[3]

In Beyoğlu, the 1884 legislation failed to separate prostitution from the daily middle-class life of the district and failed to put it out of the sight of "honorable" residents. Although sex work was confined to specified places such as brothels and hostels, no segregated areas were defined. Hence, the unrestricted proliferation of brothels in the highly congested geography of the district prompted conflicts among various parties. From the early twentieth century on, elite and middle-class residents of the district submitted collective petitions to the police demanding the ban of brothels in the vicinity of their houses, workshops, and shops. While articulating their complaints, petitioners employed social and moral discourses to reinforce their claims to space. They imposed particular notions of gender and sexual normality and tried to inscribe these notions on the geography of the area in order to shape the space to their own ends. Petitioners also frequently complained about noise, nuisance, and harassment, as well as the influx of strangers into their neighborhoods, and they pointed to the proliferation of brothels in the district as the cause of these problems.

Ottoman historians usually agree that in Ottoman cities in the mid-nineteenth century, including Istanbul, neighborhoods constituted the effective

2 Philip Howell, "A Private Contagious Disease Act: Prostitution and Public Space in Victorian Cambridge," *Journal of Historical Geography* 26, 3 (2000): 376-403.

3 ibid.

units of collective responsibility upon which the urban order depended. The members of neighborhood communities were given the right and responsibility to police others and inform authorities about those behaving contrary to the morals of the time. For example, prostitutes (in the most inclusive sense) were usually informed upon to authorities. They were banished from the neighborhood or exiled upon the demands of their neighbors.[4] In the mid-nineteenth century, as the formal, bureaucratic organization of police departments flourished, this decentered approach was replaced by a state-centered vision of policing.[5] However, as the cases below illustrate, the establishment of modern police forces did not end the operations of collective responsibility of neighborhood communities. Given the limited capacity of police departments, certain groups among the residents of particular neighborhoods could exert pressure upon authorities. I argue that these particular groups were pursuing their own class interests in the name of order and morality.

These petitions usually did not bring out direct results. The police could not effectively remove the prostitutes from their houses for various reasons. First of all, the legal basis for the regulation of prostitution was shaky. The regulations were limited to only one district of Istanbul. Municipal rules and priorities usually conflicted with those of the police. Occasionally, the brothels were licensed by the municipality, hence they had legal permission to operate freely as long as they obeyed the rules and fulfilled the obligations defined by the 1884 legislation. Secondly, in many cases brothel keepers had foreign passports which protected their premises from any legal intervention due to rights secured by capitulations. The principle of the immunity of the domicile , defined in the twenty-second article of the 1908 constitution prevented direct police raids of these brothels.[6]

Still, these petitions which were mostly submitted by middle-class residents of the area in order to defend their neighborhoods from "immorality"

4 Betül Başaran, *Selim III, Social Control, and Policing in Istanbul at the end of the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden Brill, 2014), 168-213.

5 Noémi Lévy-Aksu, *Osmanlı İstanbulu'nda Asayiş 1879 - 1909* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2017).

6 Suna Kili and Şeref Gözübüyük, *Türk Anayasa Metinleri (Sened-i İttifaktan Günümüze)* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2000), 45.

and "vice" played a crucial role in prompting governmental authorities to increase regulationist measures, bringing about a more restrictive spatial regime. The "clearing" of the streets from vice for the sake of "respectable citizens" was on the agenda of the Union and Progress authorities from the time they secured the authority. Accordingly, the 1915 ordinance prepared by the administrative and medical experts of the time specified zoned areas, and the long-term effects can be noticed through the geography of prostitution in Istanbul, even today.

With respect to the establishment of red-light districts in Birmingham, England, Phil Hubbard argues that

> the changing location of prostitution in the city is the result of a constant interplay between the ordering strategies enacted by police, council and community protestors and the resistive tactics adopted by sex workers. The net outcome of this process, it is argued, is that a space is created for prostitution so that its resistive potential can be contained within a heterosexually-ordered city.[7]

Hubbard's argument corresponds to Henry Lefebvre's notion that space does not exist a priori as an inert, neutral given, but is rather continuous, interminable production of spatial relations.[8] In similar fashion, Hubbard argues that the "conceptualized space tends to over code and dominate lived space, but concludes that sex work always threatens to create new 'spaces of representation' that challenge the heterosexual ordering of society."[9]

In this chapter, I explore the processes by which distinctive zones for prostitution were created in Beyoğlu in early twentieth century with reference to community responses against to flourishing of brothel prostitution in the newly developing commercial and residential neighborhoods of the district. Focusing on the production of restricted zones in turn-of-the-century

7 Phil Hubbard, "Sexuality, Immorality and the City : Red-light Districts and the Marginalisation of Female Street Prostitutes," *Gender, Place and Culture* 5, 1 (1998): 55-72, 57.

8 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson Smith (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1991), 73.

9 Phil Hubbard, "Sexuality, Immorality and the City : Red-light Districts and the Marginalisation of Female Street Prostitutes," *Gender, Place and Culture* 5, 1 (1998): 55-72, 61.

Beyoğlu, this chapter examines the conflicting relationship between the increasing acceptance of prostitution in late Ottoman Beyoğlu and persistent demands for four stringent controls. Focusing on the demands of residents who hoped to exclude prostitution from the everyday life of the district, the chapter scrutinizes how and why prostitution, though legalized and indeed accepted as part of urban life, remained powerfully stigmatized by some groups. On the other hand, the chapter points to the ways that prostitutes who lived and worked in Beyoğlu challenged the heteronormative everyday of Beyoğlu as imagined by its middle-class residents.

The chapter draws on a growing literature on gender, sexuality, and space. Space, as pointed out in many studies particularly in the field of geography, does not simply exist as a passive background for social action, but it is constantly produced by and contributes to the production of complex relations of culture, power, and difference.[10] This constructionist notion of space informs the studies that explicate the mutual constructions of space, gender and sexualities.[11] While the chapter traces the transformation of the geography of prostitution in late Ottoman Beyoğlu through debate among different parties such as its elite and middle-class residents, prostitutes, brothel keepers, police, and government officials, it also considers how relations of gender and sexuality are produced, negotiated, and contested in the streets of Beyoğlu over the issue of the place of prostitution.

10 Linda McDowell, "City Life and Difference," in *Unsettling Cities*, ed. Doreen John Allen and Massey and Michael Pryke (London: Routledge, 1999), 143-60, Kevin Hetheringon, *Expressions of Identity: Space, Performance, Politics* (London: Sage, 1999).

11 Lawrence Knopp, "Sexuality and Urban Space: a Framework for Analysis," in *Mapping Desires*, ed. Bell & Valentine (London& New York: Routledge, 1995), 149-61, Nancy Duncan, "Renegotiating Gender and Sexuality in Public and Private spaces," in *Bodyspace: Destabilizing Geographies of Gender and Sexuality*, ed. Nancy Duncan (London & New York: Routledge, 1996), 127-45.

§ 4.1 Prostitution as an Urban Problem

One of the early complaints about the public appearance of prostitutes in Beyoğlu came from the French Embassy. In 1860, the French Embassy in Istanbul sent a note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs *(*Hariciye Nezareti*)* calling attention to the increasing number of prostitutes in Helvacı, Hamamcı, Kemeraltı, and Tarfa Streets around Saint Benoit Church in Galata and requesting their removal.[12] The request was conveyed to the Beyoğlu police station *(*Beyoğlu Nizamiye Karakolu*)* via the Office of the Grand Vizier *(*Sadaret*)* and the Ministry of Military Affairs (Harbiye Nezareti). A week later, a second note was conveyed from the Office of the Grand Vezier to the Ministry of Military Affairs. The note conveyed that Bekir Bey, the head of Beyoğlu police station, successfully fended off the prostitutes from the area. Also, Bekir Bey and his staff were reminded that they should always be attentive to such situations and remain ready to deal with them.[13]

As declared by governmental officers, the reappearance of prostitutes in the streets of Galata was expected. Basiretçi Ali Efendi mentions the appearance and removal of prostitutes from the same area: "We delightedly hear that the notorious prostitutes in Galata were removed by the police officers in Beyoğlu. Although, the total elimination of prostitution from the world is obligatory as its harms are obvious, it is difficult as addicts are impelled by dreams and lust. In this sense, the efforts of the Mutasarrıf Paşa to eliminate this unacceptable existence from one of the most honorable districts of our country are worthy of appreciation."[14]

By 1900s, a high number of brothels -both registered and unregistered - had already spread throughout the newly developing residential and business areas of Beyoğlu. Even the most centralized commercial and residential neighborhoods of the district were not free of brothels. On 14 May 1906, the Ministry of Police sent an order to the Beyoğlu police to prepare a complete list of

12 BOA, HR.MKT, 357/90, 1277.Ca.14 (28 November 1860), BOA, A.MKT.NZD, 401/63, 1278.Ş.19 (19 February 1862).

13 BOA, A.MKT.NZD, 401/63, 1278.Ş.19 (19 February 1862), BOA, A.MKT.NZD, 402/90, 1278.Ş.25 (25 February 1862).

14 Basiretçi-Ali-Efendi, *İstanbul Mektupları* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2001).

brothels and other places related to prostitution in and around the Galata District. It was noted that several reports have been received concerning the coercion of Muslim children as young as thirteen and fourteen in some of the hotels in the Galata Quarter had been received. According to the police report, the abundance of complaints concerning the prostitution in the area and the surge of petty criminal inci-dents was a proof of the explosion of prostitution in the area. Through compiling a list of brothels, the police aimed toat formulating the necessary precautions which would secure the wellbeing of the area and prevent the dissemination of venereal diseases.. In preparing the list, it was recommended that the Beyoğlu police conduct their own investigation and demand information from the Istanbul Municipality, which was in charge of registering the brothels in the Beyoğlu district.[15]

Just five days later, the Ministry of Police issued a subsequent order to the Beyoğlu police that began with a description of the state of prostitution in Galata. The description in this second order slightly differed from the one in the first. The employment of orphaned children, both Muslim and Christian as prostitutes in brothels operating in the guise of hotels as well as the molestation of passersby were noted as the major problems caused by the proliferation of prostitution in the area. This time, the Beyoğlu police were ordered to investigate the situation. [16]

On June 20, the Ministry of Police sent a note to the municipality, in which the brothels in Galata were cited as the main source of the recurring, troublesome incidents in the area. As number of brothels in the area was around one hundred and the situation threatened the security and order of the area as well as public health, the municipality was asked to take necessary actions to restrict the increasing number of brothels.[17] The veiled criticism that measures already taken by the municipality on the issue were insufficient was repeated in a subsequent document.

On June 30, the warning that the number of brothels in the area was around one hundred and that the situation threatened public health was repeated, and the municipality was criticized for not taking necessary measures.

15 BOA, ZB, 385/136, 1322.May1s.01 (14 May 1906).

16 BOA, ZB, 385/146, 1322.May1s.06 (19 May 1906).

17 BOA, ZB, 373/98, 1322.Haziran.07 (20 June 1906).

An example of an incident that alarmed the police was conveyed. In June 1906, Joseph Mariyani, a soldier of the French Embassy's steamboat, fired his gun and wounded an Austrian prostitute and a Russian man in a brothel operated by Madam Augustine, a Romanian woman. Subsequently, the soldier was arrested by the Beyoğlu police and handed over to the French embassy.[18]

In a similar document, the Ministry of Police requested that the Istanbul Municipality count the brothels in the area, determine how many were licensed, and undertake the necessary operations to register the ones not already licensed.[19] Moreover, a note forwarded from the Ministry of Police to the Beyoğlu police station linked the trouble and annoyance caused by foreign soldiers in the Galata district to the excessive, ever-increasing number of brothels and entertainment venues in the area. The ministry asked the Beyoğlu police if it was possible to close some of these places and limit their numbers.[20]

By the early twentieth century, the complaints of middle-class residents whose lives and work were centered in Beyoğlu had increased. These complaints can be traced in the many petitions submitted to the police. In their petitions, middle-class residents were resentful that brothels corrupted public morality and endangered public peace and order by drawing together profligate and disorderly peaple. For example, on 27 September 1906 the Ministry of Police sent an order to the Beyoğlu police concerning a petition submitted by some residents of Glavany Street in Tepebaşı. The petitioners complained that tenants of houses number seven, eight, nine, ten, and twelve on their street were operating brothels illegally as hotels and requested the prevention of this situation. The ministry ordered the Beyoğlu police to take the necessary measures.[21] Glavany Street was one of the prosperous streets that connected Grand Rue de Pera to Les Petites Chaps (Tepebaşı Street). The street derived its name from a famous Levantine familys, the Glavany family, who had constructed their wooden mansion on the left corner of this street on the Tepebaşı side. The Glavanies were bankers. They also constructed a business center, Glavany Han, on Voyvoda Street and conducted their business from there. In

18 BOA, ZB, 373/107, 1322.Haziran.17 (30 June 1906).

19 BOA, ZB, 374/34, 1322.Temmuz.26 (8 August 1906).

20 BOA, ZB, 389/163, 1322.Şubat.15 (26 February 1907).

21 BOA, ZB, 387/146, 1322.Eylül.14 (27 September 1906).

1891 they left their house on the corner of Glavany street and moved to an apartment in Postacılar Street. Two partners, L. Adamopoulos and N. Aperghis, bought Glavanies' mansion and transformed it into a masonry building for use as a hotel. The hotel was called Le Grand Hotel de Londres and was one of the prestigious hotels of the time along with hotels such as the Pera Palace and Tokatlıyan in its vicinity. The neighborhood's vicinity to the center and the scenery of the Golden Horn and old Istanbul over Tepebaşı Garden made the area suitable for constructing luxury hotels that mostly served foreigners. The same area was also a center for entertainment and leisure for both foreigners and locals. There were many brothels and cheap hotels that served prostitutes and their clients in streets such as Abanoz Street, Kilit Street, Büyük Bayram Street, Küçük Yazıcı Street, and Daracık Street. These streets hosted cheap hotels and inns used for prostitution as well as licensed brothels. Prostitutes solicited on these streets and in the entertainment venues and parks in the vicinity. In some cases, the headmen (*muhtars*) would make petitions in place of the residents. For example, the Greek and Armenian headmen of the Hüseyin Ağa neighborhood submitted a joint petition to the police for the removal of prostitutes from "their" streets claiming that they were detrimental to the peace and security of the neighborhood.[22]

Another area that became a center of attraction for prostitutes and their clients was the Tarlabaşı neighborhood. In August 1907, six residents of two streets, Paşabakkal and Köprübaşı Streets submitted a petition to the Ministry of Police concerning the brothels established on their streets. The petitioners complained about men hanging around their neighborhood day and night and claimed that these people were involved in many outrageous and disgraceful behaviors and fired guns in the vicinity of their houses. Because of this, they were unable to go out of their houses. They requested the closure of these places.[23] The Ministry of Police forwarded the petition to the Beyoğlu police and ordered them to solve the problem. In response, the Council of Police in Beyoğlu declared that the brothels had been operating in the streets for a period of nearly ten years and that they were licensed by the municipality. The

22 BOA, DH.MKT, 2519/36, 1319.R.20 (6 August 1901).

23 BOA, ZB, 390/36, 1323.Ağustos.18 (31 August 1907).

council suggested the best solution would be to move the brothels to a particular district to be arranged by the municipality. They claimed if these places were closed without providing them an alternative location they would spread to other streets inhabited by decent people. This would only lead an increase in the number of complaints.[24]

Following the proclamation of the Second Constitution by the Union and Progress in July 1908, the Ministry of Police was abolished and replaced by the Department of Public Security under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior in 1909.[25] Hence, the new addressee of the petitions was this new police department. The petitions submitted after 1908 diverged from the ones submitted in earlier periods by their references to the rights of citizenship defined by the new constitution.

On 17 Augusts 1910, thirty-two local residents of Glavany Street again submitted a petition to the Department of Public Security regarding brothels on their street. Among the petitioners were six tailors, a shoemaker, three barbers, two coffeehouse keepers, three cooks, two restaurant owners, a baker, a tobacco seller, two doctors, a dentist, and a merchant. The petition began as follows: "In the blessed period of the Constitution, the efforts to ensure the comfort and improve the morals of the people are well-known and appreciated by all. Hence, we dare to articulate a repulsive situation that is opposed to the measures taken by the government in this respect." According to the petition, three adjacent properties on the street had been rented by three women, an Armenian and two Romanians, and turned into brothels, although the women claimed that they were hotels. A number of complaints were outlined: The prostitutes working in these houses solicited men on the street, swore, threw dirty things out the windows and openly revealed all kinds of vice and insulted the neighbors. The petitioners requested the brothels in Glavany be closed down and the establishment of new brothels on the street be banned.[26]

In a similar case, nine residents of Serkiz Street in Kalyoncu Kolluğu (Tarlabaşı) submitted a petition to the Beyoğlu police asking for the expulsion

24 BOA, ZB, 73/55, 1323.Eylül.11 (24 September 1907).

25 Halim Alyot, *Türkiye'de Zabıta: Tarihi Gelişim ve Bugünkü Durum* (Ankara: İçişleri Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1947), 488-89.

26 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 46/25, 1328.Ş.15 (22 August 1910).

of Irmiya, the female tenant of house number two . The petitioners claimed that Irmiya, who was an Ottoman Citizen and also known as Eleni, was operating a brothel in her house to the annoyance of "honorable" neighbors. They complained of naked women sitting in the door and windows of Eleni's house, the day and night parade of Laz, Greeks, Kurds, and suspicious men on their street, and the nonstop, and excessive music and noise coming from the house. The situation was unfavorable for the children, ill, elderly, and families living in the street. Moreover, it left residents of the street restless and sleepless. They underscored the unchaste and disgraceful acts were occurring in front of their daughters' and wives' eyes. The existence of this place in a neighborhood populated by chaste people and families was intolerable.[27]

The petition of the residents of Serkiz Street was transmitted to the Kalyoncu police station from the Beyoğlu police with a short order to investigate the claims of the petition. The investigation report subsequently prepared verified the petitioners' claims. Although the police had previously warned Eleni concerning the music and scandalous behavior her house, it was found that the trouble was continuing. Eleni, the other women in the house, and their clients did disgraceful things in the house with the windows and curtains open. Eleni's brothel faced the houses of honorable families. The situation was insulting to men of honor and it was particularly improper for such activities to be occurring in front of young women and girls. It was also noted that although there were no other brothels on Serkiz Street, there were four in the neighboring Daracık Street that also faced the houses on Serkiz Street.[28]

Seven residents of Fırın Street in the Feridiye district submitted a petition to the Beyoğlu police asking for the brothel on their street to be closed down. The petition holders complained that the female tenant of house number thirteen used her house as a brothel. The woman's presence among decent families of the street was claimed to be intolerable. It was underscored that the situation was particularly harmful to children and young people who lived in the street. The petitioners also complained about noise coming from the house.[29]

27 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 47/36, 1328.Ş.21 (7 September 1910).

28 ibid.

29 ibid.

An order for an investigation sent to the Kalyoncu police station from the Beyoğlu police involved the complaints of some residents of Tiriş Street concerning the brothel of Evrenya and Eliza. The petitioners complained about music and noise coming from the house and noted that the disgraceful behavior conducted in the house could be seen from the street through the tulle curtains. During the investigation, it was discovered that Evrenya had moved her brothel to another street; therefore, the brothel in question was not hers but that of woman who had moved to house number nine on Çukur Street. The situation annoyed the residents of Tiriş Street because the back windows of the house faced and were very close to the windows of some houses in Tiriş Street and there were no curtains. Under these circumstances, the illicit activities of the people in the brothel were visible from neighboring windows.[30]

In all of the petitions summarized above, the main points of reference for the petitioners while articulating their complaints were polarizations such as normal and deviant, moral and immoral, respectful and disrespectful, and honorable and dishonorable, which played on the social and spatial stigmatization of prostitutes.[31] The petitioners reinforced their claims of possession of the street by inscribing these differences in space. They demanded that the "deviant and immoral" existence and activities of the prostitutes be kept out of "their streets" and closeted from their respectable gazes, particularly those of honorable wives and daughters.[32]

The moral discourse effectively implemented by Beyoğlu residents to reinforce their claims over space was marked by a definite double standard: What was unacceptable was not the existence of prostitution, but its social visibility by "respectful" people, particularly by decent wives and daughters. Indeed, prostitution was accepted part of the "hetero-normal" urban order. Yet its vicinity to or visibility to "respectable" - people especially "respectable"

30 ibid.

31 For an elaboration of the stigmatization of prostitutes, see Gail Pheterson, *Prostitution Prism* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996).

32 Sanders Teela Hubbard Phil, "Making Space for Sex Work: Female Street Prostitution and the Production of Urban Space," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 27, 1 (2003): 75-89.

women - posed a threat to its structure, which was defined as "moral" and therefore as "normal."

Other places where prostitution was found inappropriate were in the vicinity of schools, religious spaces such as mosques, churches, synagogues, and graveyards, and barracks of soldiers and police. For example, in 1911, the Ministry of Education sent a note to the Ministry of Police demanding the removal of a brothel in the vicinity of Nikogosyan Girl's Boarding School which had been established in Zeki Efendi Mansion in Şişli. The note of Ministry of Education stated that the director and staff of the school had already complained that disorderly things were occurring in the vicinity of their school day and night. Particularly at night, guns were fired and because of their voice windows were broken. After complaints demanding the removal of this brothel, the police established a police point in front of the building and sometimes a police waited there. However, the director of the school reported that the occurrences were not prevented by the police presence and it was unacceptable that such a brothel exist in the vicinity of a girls' school. He asked for its removal a second time. The Ministry of Education transmitted the request to the Ministry of the Interior adding that it was actually inappropriate to maintain such a place in the vicinity of a place allocated to the education of girls. The police were ordered to evacuate the building. To this end, police encircled the house and locked all the entrances. They even did not allow ones who left the house to reenter. In the end , the house was evacuated. The brothel was closed and its owner, Nazif was expelled to Kastamonu.[33]

In 1913 the Ministry of Education sent a note to the Ministry of the Interior complaining of naked prostitutes behaving disgracefully on the balconies of houses facing the classrooms of the Mekteb-i Sultani. The note declared the situation unacceptable as it corrupted the morals of the hundreds of innocent students who filling those classrooms. It was also pointed out that although Beyoğlu police had been requested to close these improper establishments, no measures had been taken; hence, the Ministry of Education was once again

33 BOA, DH.İD, 65/33, 1331.Ca.22 (29 April 1913).

requesting that the Ministry of the Interior strictly order the Beyoğlu police to conduct the necessary action.[34]

§ 4.2 Clearing the Streets for "Respectable and Honorable Residents": The Spatial Regulation of Prostitution

Paralleling to the expectations of middle-class and elite residents, governmental authorities sought to enact regulations to spatially circumscribe prostitution, rendering it invisible to and separating it from decent society.[35]As observed in the response of the police to the petition of the residents of Paşabakkal and Köprübaşı Streets, spatial regulation was being mobilized by the governmental officials as early as 1907.

The documents examined below indicate that the issue continued to be debated among various governmental offices. A document sent from the Department of Public Security to the municipality in December 1909 referred to a proposal presented by a member of the General City Assembly. The note pointed to the necessity of establishing a zoned area for the brothels scattered around Beyoğlu's neighborhoods, emphasizing the troubles brothels in residential areas caused for public health and the morals of the people. He appreciated the attention paid to the problem by the police; nevertheless he claimed that police actions could never be satisfactory unless the municipality appropriated a zoned area for the brothels.[36]

Meanwhile, inspectors of the Ministry of the Interior prepared another report in which they criticized the Beyoğlu police for not taking measures that they had been ordered to take. After highlighting the nuisance and the complaints provoked by the brothels scattered throughout Beyoğlu, the inspectors

34 BOA, DH.İD, 65/42, 1331.Z.26 (26 November 1913).

35 For discussions on the construction of zoning areas for prostitution, see Angie Hart, "(Re)constructing a Spanish Red-Light District: Prostitution, Space and Power," in *Mapping Desires*, ed. Bell & Valentine (London & New York: Routledge, 1995), 214-28. Phil Hubbard, "Sexuality, Immorality and the City : Red-light Districts and the Marginalisation of Female Street Prostitutes," *Gender, Place and Culture* 5, 1 (1998): 55-72. Phil Hubbard, "Sex Zones: Intimacy, Citizenship and Public Space," *Sexualities* 4, 1 (2001): 51-71.

36 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 20/26, 1327.Za.21 (4 December 1909).

stated that to prevent these, the City Council had ordered the Beyoğlu police to close the brothels scattered around residential areas and move them to an area zoned just for them. However, the report stated, nothing had been done in this respect. Under these circumstances, inspectors suggested that the government should make a new pressing decision on the issue. This critical report was forwarded from the Ministry of Interior to the Istanbul Police Department to the attention of the Beyoğlu Chief of Police. The polis chief pointed out the existence of numerous brothels scattered in various neighborhoods not only of Beyoğlu, but also of Üsküdar and Suriçi indicating the sheer size of the problem and the difficulty of resolving it. He stated that he had already sent three papers to the governor requesting a plan of action to accomplish the task but had not yet received an answer. He added that the completion of the order was impossible unless the government scheduled a long-term plan. He suggested that various initial measures be taken, such as finding a suitable area into which brothels could be moved and opening vocational schools for poor girls.[37]

The documents examined make it clear that the police were unable to effectively enforce the proposed measures. The following particular cases also point to this fact. In the case of Galvany Street, the petition initially submitted to the Department of Public Security was later forwarded to the Istanbul Police Department for necessary inquiry and action. In response, the Dir. of the Istanbul Police Department submitted a short report highlighting some of the complications and the inability of the police to resolve them on its own. He declared that the police were well-aware of the many brothels scattered among the neighborhoods of Beyoğlu as they received numerous complaints on the issue. However, he added, although they did their best to minimize the nuisance caused by brothels, their actions could not lead to long-term solutions under the current legal framework. He underscored that the police could neither enter the brothels nor close any of them, and this situation strictly constrained their ability to intervene. The police constantly warned the people creating the disturbances, but these warnings almost never worked as they had

37 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 33/41, 1328.Ca.07 (17 May 1910).

no sanctions. According to the police, a lasting solution woulrd could be achieved only if the municipality arranged a zone for the brothels scattered throughout Beyoğlu.[38]

This report of the Director of Istanbul Police Department was based on information gathered from the Beyoğlu police station. The Beyoğlu police reported that the issue of brothels in the area was a headache for them; the residents and merchants of all Beyoğlu neighborhoods were complaining to their police stations concerning the issue. However, the report continued, the police was not authorized to take any effective action under the current legislation. The report also included a confession that is worthy of note: There were even brothels near the barracks where the employees of the Galatasaray police station slept, and this situation led to the corruption of police. The police emphasized that for an effective solution, the municipality needed to arrange a zoned area in which to collect all the brothels in Beyoğlu. However, it was noted, the municipality had taken no measures although the issue had been debated in several meetings.[39] In this short report/notice of the police chief avowed the inability of the police to undertake a long-term solution to the problem under the current legislation and pointed to the necessity of a new spatial regulation to be handled by the municipality.[40]

As indicated above, according to the police, who were often criticized for being inefficient, the key to solving the problem was spatial regulation. They also complained of their unauthorized position as an obstacle to initiating efficient solutions. Accordingly, in various governmental correspondence, the police requested that legal authority for the control of prostitution be handed over to them.

For example, at one point the Beyoğlu police applied to the Beyoğlu public prosecutor to authorize the police to intervene in the operation of brothels in the area. Two petitions expressing the nuisance caused by brothels were attached to the request. In the request, the police stated that as can be comprehended from the petitions attached, prostitutes in the brothels operating in the area annoyed Beyoğlu residents with their unchaste corrupt behavior.

38 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 46/25, 1328.Ş.15 (1 September 1910).

39 ibid.

40 BOA, ZB, 600/97, 1324.Eylül.14 (27 September 1908).

Although the police did not hesitate to inform prosecutors of such unchaste behavior, these warnings rarely led to effective solutions. Unfortunately, the police were not authorized to take further action. The police based their legal authority on the issue of establishing peace and security for Beyoğlu residents and requested permission from the public persecutor to act.[41]

41 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 47/36, 1328.Ş.21 (28 August 1910).



Figure 4.1 Locations of Brothels in Beyoğlu, Galata.[42]

On various occasions, this issue continued to be debated among various governmental departments. In 1911, the Directory of Police prepared a draft of an

42 Charles Eduard Goad, "Charles eduard Goad'ın Sigorta Haritaları," (Istanbul Istanbul Büyük Şehir Belediyesi Kütüphane ve Müzeler Müdürlüğü, 2007), 37.

additional penal code article concerning the punishment to be inflicted on individuals who prevented or resisted the police while the police were trying to protect the residents of the neighborhoods from the harmful effects of brothels. The draft proposed that "those who hinder the police from taking the necessary measures to protect the morality of the people, guarantee the security and order of the neighborhoods, and avoid the dissemination of venereal diseases and those who do not heed the warnings of the police in this respect… be imprisoned for from twenty-four hours to ten days and pay a specific cash fine."[43] However, this article which would have authorized the police to act on the issue to some extent was never put in to force.

Finally, in 1913, the transfer of the authority to regulate prostitution from the municipality to the police was put on the agenda of the Council of State. In April 1913, the Ministry of the Interior delivered a note to the Istanbul Municipality. The note stated that the dictates of the Venereal Disease Ordinance had not been conducted properly by the municipality. The Council of State was currently debating whether to issue a new sanitary ordinance. The note also warned while the municipality that the medical examinations of the prostitutes and control of the brothels had been entrusted to the police up to the time, this new ordinance became effective on the suggestion of the Department of Public Health. This measure was found necessary to protect the health and security of the people in a way that was practiced in civilized countries. The municipality was asked to adapt to this new situation.[44]

The draft of the new sanitary ordinance debated in the Council of State was prepared by the Department of Public Health, the director of which was a well-known authority on public health, Besim Ömer Pasha.[45] Besim Ömer Pasha also prepared a report criticizing the municipality for not implementing the commands of the venereal disease ordinance. He suggested in the same report that the responsibility for the medical examination of prostitutes and

43 BOA, DH.EUM.KADL, 7/15, 1329.S.08 (8 February 1911).

44 BOA, DH.İD, 46/82, 1331.Ca.16 (23 April 1913).

45 S. Ünver, *Dr. Besim Ömer Paşa'nın Hizmetleri*, Tıp Tarihimiz Yıllığı (İstanbul: İ.Ü. Tıp Fakultesi Tıp Tarihi Enstitüsü, 1966).

the control of brothels be up to the police until the new ordinance became effective.[46]

46 BOA, DH.İD, 46/82, 1331.Ca.16 (23 April 1913).



Figure 4.2 Locations of Brothels in Beyoğlu, Pera.[47]

§ 4.3 A New Ordinance and New Spatial Regulations

Finally, on 18 October 1915, the Union and Progress Government issued a new ordinance called the Ordinance for the Prevention of the Transmission of Contagious Diseases (*Emraz-ı Zühreviyenin Men-i Sirayet-i Hakkında*

Nizamname).[48] The new ordinance contained many major novelties in the administrative sense. First of all, the former ordinance for the regulation of prostitution (the 1884 Ordinance for the Sanitary Inspection of Some Private Houses Within the Borders of Municipality of the Sixth District) had been a municipal one. It had strict, special restrictions and was only valid in the Municipality of the Sixth District. On your hand, the new ordinance entrusted administrative authority for the regulation of prostitution to the Department of Public Security in Istanbul and to local governors in the provinces repealing the administrative authority of the Municipality of the Sixth District. It would be valid across the empire. In addition, with the 1915 ordinance, Muslim women would also be registered as prostitutes. The new ordinance also contained detailed, encompassing articles that affected the lives of prostitutes, such as the articles that defined restrictions about the attitudes of prostitutes during medical examinations.

The 1915 Ordinance for the Prevention of the Transmission of Contagious Diseases was valid throughout the empire. Yet in every city, police authorities would define the restricted zones for the regulated brothels. This would separate prostitution from the normal, everyday life of the city. After the 1915 ordinance was decreed, the Istanbul Police department demarcated five main restricted zones in Istanbul. Three of these were in the Beyoğlu district; one was in Üsküdar; and the last was in Kadıköy. The restricted zones in Beyoğlu were in the Abanoz, Zibah, and Galata quarters. Indeed, these zones were chosen according to previous concentrations of brothels. The Abanoz zone was already defined as an unofficial "red light district" and was comprised of Abanoz, Kasıcı, Lale, Fıçıcu, and Karnavula streets. The Zibah quarter, which was already densely occupied by brothels, was another zone defined for prostitution in Beyoğlu. The Zibah zone was comprised of Zibah, Küçük Zibah, Paşabakkal, and Ananik Streets. The biggest zone, however, was defined in the Galata quarter. This zone contained more brothels than the total number in the Abanoz and Zibah zones combined. The zone include Beyzade,

47 Charles Eduard Goad, "Charles eduard Goad'ın Sigorta Haritaları," (Istanbul Istanbul Büyük Şehir Belediyesi Kütüphane ve Müzeler Müdürlüğü, 2007), 38.

48 Halim Alyot, *Türkiye'de Zabıta: Tarihi Gelişim ve Bugünkü Durum* (Ankara: İçişleri Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1947), 570-86.

Şerbethane, Karaoğlan, Badem, Şeftali, and Oğlak streets. Through these zonings in Beyoğlu, the quarters where brothels densely existed were maintained as zones for prostitution.

The brothels in Beyoğlu district were non-Muslim ones. The owners and the prostitutes were non-Muslims, but both non-Muslim and Muslim clients could visit them. On the other hand, the zones in Kadıköy and Üsküdar districts were devoted to Muslim brothels. Only Muslim women could work in the brothels located in these zones and they could be visited only by Muslim clients. On the Anatolian side of Istanbul, there was a small zone in Bülbülderesi Street in the district of Üsküdar. The other restricted zone on the Anatolian side was in Kadıköy. The zone in Kadıköy was comprised of a total of six houses - four in Rızapaşa, one in Yeldeğirmeni, and the last in Orta Street in Moda. With the new regulation, places for prostitution were more precisely defined, categorized, and classified. In Beyoğlu, brothels in the Abanoz zone were first-class ones, while the Galata zone was comprised of second-and third-class ones. The Zibah zone, on the other hand, contained only third-class brothels. Most of the brothels on the Anatolian side were first-class ones.

A prostitute was free to quit her job and return home, transfer to another brothel, or move to another place. Indebting prostitutes to guaranty her stay in a brothel was forbidden by the regulation. If the prostitute wanted to quit or leave a brothel in which she was working, she had to inform the police at least two days before her leave and obtain a moving certificate. If a prostitute went missing, her brothel keeper should inform the police within twenty-four hours. While on the streets, prostitutes should carry their identity cards and licenses with them. It was forbidden for prostitutes to walk or linger on the streets to find clients, solicit, or invite anybody for prostituting.

Moreover, it was forbidden to operate any kind of brothel outside the neighborhoods defined by the Directory of Police in Istanbul. It was also forbidden to establish brothels next to or in front of the houses of honorable families. Prostitutes could not reside outside of the restricted zones defined for brothels. The brothels and rendezvous should have only one exit. The first-floor rooms on the street side should have shades on the windows. While serving alcohol in brothels was permitted if the keeper had the necessary liquor license, gambling and selling drugs were forbidden. Music was allowed.

However, if noise bothered the peace and comfort of the people or if the volume of the music was high after midnight, the party could be shut down by the police.[49]

§ 4.4 New Geography, New Complaints

The zones in Beyoğlu did not arouse severe complaints from the residents of the quarters defined as restricted for brothels. This was mainly because these quarters were chosen from among streets where brothels were already concentrated that were accepted as unofficial "red light districts." However, the zones in the Kadıköy district created complaints. According to the new legislation some streets in Kadıköy were set aside for Muslim brothels. Although this created public annoyance and residents of these streets and those in the vicinity objected to the establishment of brothels in their neighborhoods, the government did not retreat. This time residents of the neighborhoods designated as relocation sites for prostitutes resented the situation.

In 1919, the residents of Rıza Paşa Mahallesi in Kadıköy Duvardibi submitted petitions for the removal of brothels established in their district. However, they could not get a positive result. Finally, the name of the other residents, the commissioner of Anatolian Railways wrote a personal letter to the Ministry of Interior. The letter provides a graphic picture of the concerns of the inhabitants and is worth quoting in detail:

> Two years ago, in Rıza Paşa Street, where honorable and decent families resided, two brothels were opened with the permission of the Directory of Police. As soon as we heard this, we made the necessary applications to prevent the brothels. However, we achieved no result. From that time on, we continued applying to various authorities. They put us off or said 'close your windows.'
>
> Dear Sir!
>
> The residents of Rıza Paşa, Mühürdar, and Moda are most polite, gentle, and decent of Kadıköy. There are six houses that have been turned into brothels here. All of them are wood. Besides the music, song,

49 ibid.

> fights, screams of women, and gunfire heard throughout the night, these miserable women never submit to the rules of propriety and conduct ugly behavior. I am ashamed to say that they do everything openly. Does not this immorality, this misery, this corruption spread among honorable families have an effect on the young girls who are being prepared for life as flower buds?
>
> Cannot the youth, bachelors, married men, whoever they are, do their thing without music and noise? We swear on our honors that we cannot sleep in peace till mornings. There is always the risk of fire or gunfights. We prostrate ourselves before you requesting that you put an end to our agonies. Our demand is the removal of these brothels from these streets and their transfer to more suitable places.[50]

Upon this personal request, the Minister of the Interior ordered that the Directory of Police carry out an investigation and keep the commissioner informed about the situation. The reply from the Directory stated that to gather the brothels in the Duvardibi of Kadıköy have been decided by a previously-established commission. It was also stated that if these brothels were closed, prostitution would spread to other districts of Kadıköy and that this would only complicate the problem and increase the complaints. In the end, the brothels remained where they were.

§ 4.5 Conclusion

This chapter scrutinized the making of late nineteenth century Beyoğlu as a contested domain within which the issues of class, gender, and sexuality as well as the governmental "regulation of prostitution" played crucial roles. I have argued that by regulation, administrative elites did not aim to suppress prostitution in its entirety. "Regulation of prostitution" in Beyoğlu emerged as part of urban reforms that were invested in mounting voluminous legislative activities, whether in the form of public health acts, housing acts, or the multiplicity of major and minor projects of subjecting problematic social arenas

50 BOA, DH.EUM.AYŞ, 29/98, 1338.14.R (6 January 1920).

to conscious and purposive control under the imprint of a commitment to progress, reform and improvement.

The historical context of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Beyoğlu, in which a leisure economy and consumption occupied an important place in its everyday, provides a fertile ground for thinking the relationship among gender, sexuality, prostitution, and urban space. Though these two were not always in agreement, giving the area an "order" operated along the lines of gender and class. While focusing on the production of restricted zones in turn-of-the-century Beyoğlu, this chapter also examines the conflicting relationship between increasing acceptance and persistent demands for stringent controls that characterizes the perception of prostitution in late Ottoman Istanbul. Focusing on the demands of local people that aimed at excluding the field from "normal" everyday life, the chapter scrutinizes how and why prostitution, though legalized and indeed accepted as part of the urban life, remained powerfully stigmatized in some neighborhoods. Secondly, it answers how spatially-oriented regulation and control strategies were central to bourgeois gender and class orders.

5

Poor Relief, Gender and Sexuality (1836-1915)

By the late 1830s, Haseki Hospital (Haseki Sultan Darüşifası), which was founded in the sixteenth century as a part of Haseki Hürrem Sultan Social Complex (Haseki Hürrem Sultan Külliyesi), had already been converted into a lock asylum for poor women.[1] The exact date that the facility was allocated exclusively to female inmates is unknown. What we can infer from archival documents is that throughout most of the nineteenth century, a number of women with diverse characteristics were kept in the building, in most cases against their will. Lunatic women, the elderly and sick, poor widows, prostitutes, female beggars, and criminal women… any of them could have found themselves behind the walls of Haseki Hospital, insofar as far as they had no 'proper' home or household to shelter and contain them. This hospital was colloquially known as the Women's Prison (Kadınlar Zindanı). In the literature Ottoman medical history, this hospital is apprised as the first in the empire's history allocated to female patients.[2] However, throughout the

1 The külliye (social complex) constructed by the renowned architect Sinan also incorporated a mosque, a medrese (religious school), a soup kitchen and a primary school. In different periods the building was put into use for different purposes, and the official names used for the institution differed according to its usage.

2 Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 149, 53, 55, 56, 95-97.

nineteenth century Haseki Hospital was primarily a female lock asylum for detaining poor women who remained outside the control of customary family and community ties that would have kept them under patriarchal protection and surveillance.[3]

Towards the mid-nineteenth century, administrative authorities tried to transform Haseki Hospital, which suffered from overcrowding, poor conditions, and administrative and organizational intricacies, into a "modern" institution for poor relief for women. Although, most attempts to this end were deficient, governmental concern for the renovation and reorganization of Haseki Hospital is nonetheless worthy of attention as it signifies the emergence of social and governmental concerns about the increasing number of poor women as a well as the emergence of new legal and institutional perspectives on the control of urban space and the urban population.

Taking the effort to renovate and reorganize Haseki Hospital as a starting point, this chapter explores governmental attempts to establish 'modern' institutions for female poor relief in Istanbul during the second half of the nineteenth century. I particularly focus on connections between female poor relief and social and governmental concerns about female deviancy, mostly associated with prostitution and vice. I locate the establishment of institutions for female poor relief during the period under consideration in the broader context of efforts to limit the existence and mobility of the urban poor in urban space.

Towards the mid-nineteenth century, Ottoman governmental authorities, inspired by new legal and institutional perspectives that informed policy choices on urban space and the urban population, initiated efforts to found a modern, cohesive system of social control built upon interconnected institutions, such as orphanages, reformatories, workhouses, asylums, and maternity hospitals that were intended to maintain the health and morality of urban society while securing order. The institutions and administrative practices that came to accompany all aspects of social life were shaped by perceptions of

3 Gülhan Balsoy provides a gendered analysis of the functioning of Haseki Hospital in nineteenth century. Gülhan Balsoy, "Bir Kadın Hastenesi Olarak Haseki Hastenesi ve 19. Yüzyıl İstanbul'unda Bikes ve Bimesken bir Kadın Olmak " *Toplumsal Tarih*, 257 (2015): 80-84.

morality, frugality, and deviancy based upon prevailing class and gender hierarchies.

In what follows, I first briefly analyze poor relief in the Ottoman Empire focusing on the ways it was informed by gendered norms. Then, I examine three main institutions of female poor relief, founded in the nineteenth century: Haseki Hospital, the House for Widows (Dulhane), and the Poor House (Darülacaze). Darülaceze hosted both male and female inmates, while Haseki Hospital and the House for Widows were allocated exclusively to female inmates. My goal is not to provide intuitional histories of these three bodies. I rather explore the links among governmental approaches to the female poor as well as broader concerns for keeping urban space free of their increasing number since they were seen as a major source of urban disorder, disease, and vice.

§ 5.1 Female Poor Relief in the Ottoman Empire

Assuming that men are the protectors of women and children is a common characteristic of diverse gender regimes in various historical contexts. In many cultures in different geographies, family security and wellbeing have been stereotypically constructed as a gendered issue. Men are positioned as forming a protective outer shell within which women and children are taken care of. This discourse is translated to a larger, social level. Men are also praised as protectors of the community at large from outsiders, and they are considered responsible for the welfare of society.

The idealized male protector is a myth in the sense that it obscures the work women do for the security and wellbeing of families and society. However, this myth has always been part of the gendered constructions of power relationships in the family and society, contributing to the legitimization of men's institutional as well as private power over women. The ideal of paternal protection is a pillar of gender orders that give men the legitimacy to discipline women and confine them to certain social and physical spaces. Women, who lacked a 'male protector' posed a serious threat to this gender regime.

In the Ottoman context, too, family security and wellbeing were constructed on similar gendered assumptions. Men were positioned as the main

breadwinners of families, while women were positioned as mother-dependents bound to their homes; to be protected and supervised there by their male kin. Medline Zilfi defines the difference posits between men and women as "the most enduring, yet paradoxically fragile social difference" in Ottoman society. She argues that

> as a general rule, women were economically dependent to men and derived their social position from their relationships to male family members. The wives and daughters of *askeris* (military men) shared the status of their husbands and fathers. Unless women possessed wealth of their own and were of an age and disposition to remain unmarried, social expectations would have them bound to the authority of males, not only to obvious seniors like fathers and grandfathers but also to arguable compeers like husbands and brothers, and even to juniors, such as adult sons.[4]

Consequently, men and women in the Ottoman world faced different social, economic, and spatial constraints and opportunities, and they experienced and responded to poverty in different ways. In addition, discourses of gender influenced how those experiences were interpreted. Social perceptions of and governmental policies regarding men's and women's poverty also diverged along these gendered lines. Because men, fathers, husbands, and brothers were supposed to provide for women's and children's wellbeing and security, they were the primary recipients of poor relief in the case they were in poverty. Relief for women was on the agenda only in case of the absence of male protectors.

In the Ottoman world, there were three main types of aid for the poor: *Sadaqa* (charity), *zekat* (annual almsgiving), and services provided by waqfs (foundationss). These relief institutions took the universality of the stable family—primarily dependent on father's income—and the primacy of family as a source of welfare for granted. While men were the main beneficiaries of institutional relief, relief for women was considered the responsibility of male-led

4 Madeline C. Zilfi, *Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire: The Design of Difference* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 16.

families and societies. Widowed and divorced women or women without means returned to the households of their fathers, brothers or other male relatives. If needy women did not have relatives to support them on a permanent basis, or if close relatives themselves were too poor to provide support, the local community usually bore responsibility. Arranging a marriage for needy women or placing them in well-to-do households as live -in domestic servants were the most common forms of female poor relief. In some cases, women could get relief in their own right. Widows, orphan girls, and female Sufis could get *sadaqa*. The wives, sisters, and daughters of men on the list of a foundation could be accepted as recipients. Yet, almost exclusively, relief for women was considered agenda only in the absence of a male protector.

The male breadwinner model of maintaining family order worked among the permanent population of Istanbul to a degree through the end of the empire. However, these rigid gender models and social practices were invalid in many cases. They were particularly difficult to sustain against the immense social and economic pressures faced in the nineteenth century. Towards the mid-nineteenth century, it became obvious that customary paternal measures were unsatisfactory for the containment of the urban female poor. This was particularly true for women migrants to Istanbul, but also for poor women among the permanent residents of the capital—as their family and community bonds had loosened under the influence of the social and economic transformations, wars, and chaos of the time. As the disruptions that the century threw out left numerous Ottoman women far from their homes and communities, they lost the protection and relief that customary family and community ties had provided. In the Ottoman capital, they had to survive on their own in an environment in which legal, economic, and social circumstances did not yet provide them many options for making a living.

Given the social, legal and economic restrictions of the time, the absence of male breadwinners and being far from their homes and communities entailed extreme poverty for most female migrants to Istanbul. Refugee women, poor widows, orphan girls, and women who came to or were brought to Istanbul to work in the service sector—particularly in domestic service—all moved among a few low paid, socially degrading employment options such as domestic service, daily cleaning, laundry, begging and prostitution. The

middle-classes and governmental authorities began to find the social and sexual demeanor of these women, their occupational choices, and even their existence to be dangerous. They were perceived as a threat to the urban order envisioned by urban reformers as well as a threat to prevailing gender orders. They were thought to subvert the strict notions of female domesticity and propriety of the time. Moreover, they became the symbols of the loosening of paternal authority and the national degradation suffered by the empire.

In addition, the mid-nineteenth century was a critical period in which the perceptions and treatment of the urban poor entered a decisive new stage. Particularly after the Tanzimat (1839), governmental authorities started to reconsider concepts such as moral order, public security, and public health. With the creation of municipalities and new administrative technologies such as cadastral registration; private property laws; street alignment, paving, and lighting ordinances; and control of urban crime, prostitution, street begging, and immigration, Ottoman reformers sought to beautify and sterilize urban places. Attempts to limit the existence and mobility of the poor within this urban space was part of the new governmental trend. To this end, the government established a modern, cohesive system of social control built upon interconnected institutions such as hospitals for the poor, orphanages, reformatories, workhouses, and prisons. These institutions were under the control of governmental or municipal officials, and through them, all aspects of social life were influenced by perceptions of morality, frugality, and deviancy based upon prevailing class and gender hierarchies.

During the period under consideration, the Ottoman government was faced with a multitude of people in need. However, it had limited public and private resources at its disposal. Which group among the poor should be granted relief and under what conditions? Similar to their contemporaries around the world, Ottoman administrators, experts, and public commentators tried to differentiate between the deserving and the undeserving poor. What consistently underscored this distinction were stories of moral failing. The deserving poor were typically defined as those deemed worthy of public and private assistance as they were thought to be unable to work through no fault of their own. The sick, disabled, and elderly were most consistently defined as the deserving poor. Other groups fell in and out of the category over time. The

undeserving poor were believed to be poor due to their lack of virtue. They violated mainstream norms and ideals that governed work, family, and personal responsibility. In this sense, their life choices were subject to public scrutiny, and their faults were then used to justify withholding resources and subjecting them to punitive and surveillance-based mechanisms designed to control their behavior. The main question is whether governmental interventions were sufficient to pull these women up to the accepted patriarchal standards?

The ideological framework that informed conceptions of the deserving and undeserving poor was also marked by gendered assumptions. The definitions and workings of deserving/un-deserving duality structured and reinforced patriarchy. Able-bodied men were consistently viewed as undeserving of poor relief; poverty was assumed to be the product of laziness and the inability or unwillingness to live up to the ideal of the male breadwinner. And as discussed above, the male bread-winner model was the essence of the prevailing gender order. However, female groups characterized as undeserving changed over time as observed in the history of female relief institutions. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards relief and public protection of unattended poor women was seen as reasonable in some cases, but they came to be seen as less deserving over time. They were believed to be sexually promiscuous and to have failed as desirable domestic partners and mothers. I follow this transformation in the gendered perception of the deserving/undeserving divide by briefly examining the histories of three relief institutions.

§ 5.2 Haseki Hospital

Haseki Hospital was founded in the sixteenth century as a part of the Haseki Hürrem Sultan Social Complex (Haseki Hürrem Sultan Külliyesi) which was named after Haseki Hürrem Sultan, the wife of the Süleyman the Magnificent, who had commissioned the project. It was the first imperial project of the

renowned architect Sinan.[5] The complex was operated through a foundation and contained a mosque, religious school, soup-kitchen (*imaret*), elementary school, and hospital.[6] The construction of the complex began in 1538 and ended in 1550. The hospital, the last part of the complex to be constructed, had fifty beds and started to serve in 1550.[7] Up to the late nineteenth century hospitals mainly functioned as poor relief institutions providing shelter and care to the poorest strata of society. Generally, they were considered places of last resort for the very poor and desperate.[8] Evidence from the early seventeenth century suggests that Haseki Hospital housed and fed the impoverished in addition to offering an hospital for the sick and insane.[9] Patients were accepted without ethnic or religious discriminations The doctors provided medical examinations and medicine to outpatients twice a week.[10]

5 Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (London: Reaktion Books, 2005), 268-71.

6 ibid., 274.

7 ibid.

8 Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 149.

9 ibid., 195.

10 ibid., 155.

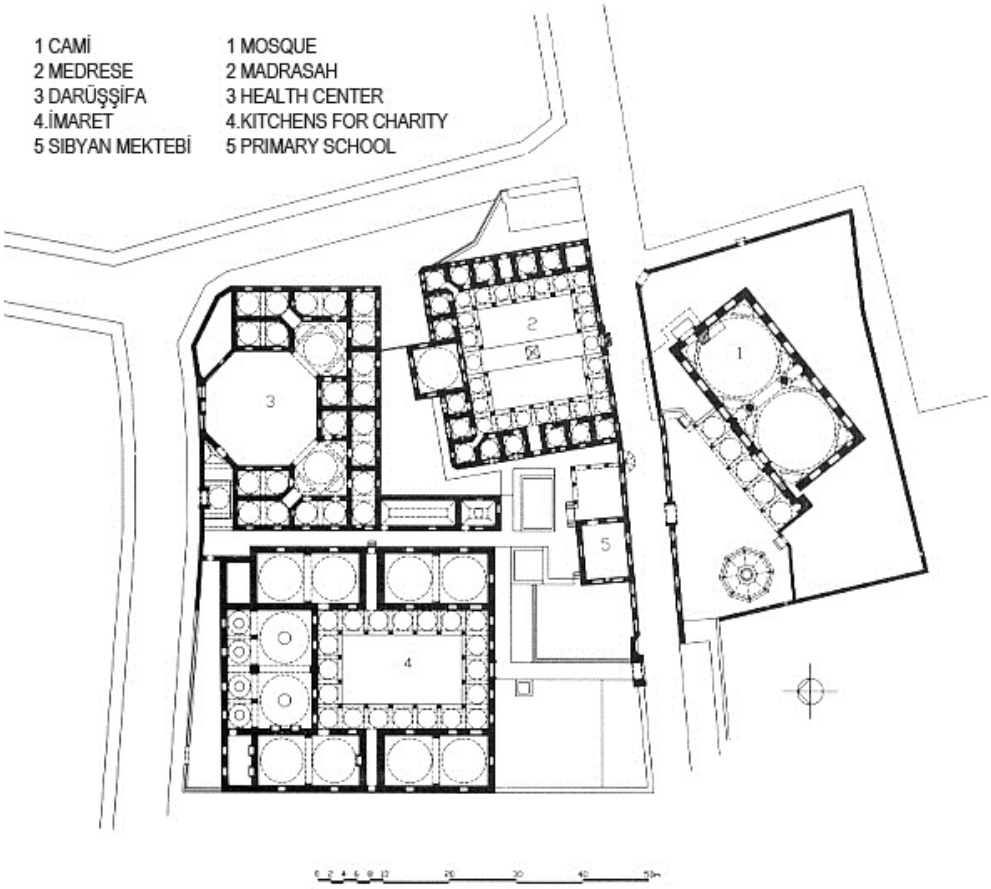

Figure 5.1 Haseki Hürrem Sultan Külliyesi.[11]

By the early nineteenth century, Haseki Hospital had lost its function as a medical institution. In the 1830s, the building was known as Haseki Prison (Haseki Zindanı) and hosted "lunatics," elderly, and sick women who had no one to provide them with care as well as women who were arrested by the police for being prostitutes. Some rooms of the hospital were allocated to female criminals detained for various crimes.[12] It is important to note that the category prostitute which was used in the documents to describe some

11 Source: http://www.mimarsinan.gen.tr/haseki-hurrem-sultan-darussifasi/

12 BOA, ZB, 3870/1250.Za.30 (30 March 1835). BOA, ZB, 3534/1255.Z.29 (4 March 1840). Also in Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 155.

inmates of the hospital, did not necessarily mean that they were selling sex for money.

Every single woman under a certain age from among the lower ranks of society could be categorized thusly regardless of how she earned a living. In the early 1840s, Haseki Hospital generally hosted women in three main categories: Lunatics, the elderly and sick, and the poor and unattended. Women in this third group were labeled prostitutes. Given this situation, the facility suffered from overcrowding and administrative inefficiency.

The transformation of the function of the hospital can be followed in archival documents and correspondences. In the face of rapid urbanization, as mentioned previously, Ottoman administrators initiated preliminary efforts for establishing a modern and cohesive system of incarceration that was built upon interconnected institutions, such as poor hospitals, lunatic asylums, orphanages, reformatories, workhouses, and prisons. For example, an imperial decree enacted in 1842 transformed Süleymaniye Hospital (Süleymaniye Darüşifası), which formerly housed male lunatics in miserable conditions, into a modern lunatic asylum.[13] In 1843, Sultan Abdülmecid ordered Chief of Medicine Abdülhak Molla to organize Haseki Hospital as a proper hospital for poor and needy women.[14] In response to this order, Abdülhak Molla prepared a report in which he neatly described the miserable conditions in Haseki Hospital. He stated that the main body of the hospital was allocated to imprisoned prostitutes. According to Abdülhak Molla, the building, which consisted of several rooms in very poor conditions needed to undergo serious renovation. And, as the building would need to be evacuated during the renovation, he suggested that the prostitutes kept in could be transferred to the Edirnekapı Poor and Bachelor's Hospital (Edirnekapı Gurebe ve Bekâr Hastahanesi),[15]

13 Süheyl Ünver, *Süleymaniye Külliyesinde Darüşşifa, Tıp Medresesi ve Darül'akakire Dair* (İstanbul: Vakıflar Dergisi, 1942), 205.

14 BOA, SH, 1351/1259.B.29 (25 August 1843). Also in Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 155.

15 BOA, SH, 1351/1259.B.29 (25 August 1843). Also in Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 155.

which had been converted into a lock hospital for male poor a few years earlier.[16]

In 1844, the female lunatics were transported to Süleymaniye Hospital while the other inmates remained in Haseki Hospital as authorities could not arrange an appropriate place to transfer them.[17] Edirnekapı Poor Hospital was deemed in appropriate for hosting prostitutes after and investigation conducted by Ferik Eyüp Pasha. After a visit in 1844, Ferik Eyüp Pasha conveyed that the facility consisted of wooden sheds placed in the courtyard of the Edirnekapı Mosque and had no suitable place to keep female inmates. Moreover, keeping prostitutes in the courtyard of a mosque was inappropriate.[18] As a low-cost alternative he suggested to convert the tabhane building in front of Şehzade Mosque into a poor hospital for female inmates.[19] This could be accomplished with a minor renovation. As the Tabhane was in the vicinity of Süleymaniye Hospital, the doctor and operator of Süleymaniye Hospital could also be responsible for the female patients kept there. This solution would save the government the expenses of hiring an extra doctor and operator and would significantly decrease the cost necessary to establish a separate female poor hospital. Prostitutes would remain in Haseki Hospital; since the tabhane was already used for the care of about 150 male inmates, there was no additional room for the prostitutes.[20]

After the lunatic women were transported to Süleymaniye Hospital, which was already organized as a lunatic asylum, the remaining inmates of Haseki Hospital were comprised of the elderly and sick, women arrested for being prostitutes, and women detained for various crimes. The authorities was

16 BOA, SH, 962/1252.Ş.20 (30 November 1836). Also in Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 155.

17 BOA, SH, 962/1252.Ş.20 (30 November 1836). Also in Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 155.

18 BOA, DH, 4379/1260.C.02 (19 June 1844). Also in Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 155.

19 *Tabhanes* were small buildings constructed in the vicinity of mosques to provide temporary shelter to visitors or people in need.

20 BOA, DH, 4379/1260.C.02 (19 June 1844). Also in Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 155.

trying to organize separate destinations for these three categories. Finally, in the end of 1847, Abdülhak Molla notified the Ministry of Foundation that Haseki Hospital had been evacuated and was ready for renovation. In the same note, he indicated that many homeless women were sleeping in the streets of Istanbul. The pregnant among these destitute women were giving birth in abandoned buildings, while some among them were trying to abort their babies by taking medicine.[21] Emphasizing that this misery did not befit the dignity of the sultan, Abdülhak Molla suggested that sick homeless women be treated in Yenikapı Poor Hospital for free, while pregnant women be kept in Haseki Hospital until they gave birth to or aborted their babies. Haseki Hospital should be renovated for this purpose, and a pharmacy and kitchen should be added to it. Following these suggestions, the Council of State decided that 60 thousand kuruş were needed for the renovation, an amount to be supplied by Royal Foundations (Evkaf-ı Hümayun).[22] In 1847, Haseki Hospital was sufficiently renovated to start functioning again. The inmates of the asylum were mostly homeless women arrested by the police for being prostitutes—which is to say, they were young, single, and homeless. Some among them were pregnant and some were accompanied by newborns. Moreover, a specific room was used as female penitentiary for the confinement of women arrested for various crimes.[23] Haseki Hospital was mentioned in an 1856 document concerning sick female patients kept in the Police Penitentiary (*Bab-ı Zaptiye Tevkifhanesi*). The police demanded space in Haseki Hospital be allocated for the treatment of these sick, female penitents. In the document, the place was referred to as Haseki Female Penitentiary.[24]

In 1869, Haseki Hospital was under the authority of the Ministry of Foundations (Vakıflar Nezareti) but was operated as a penitentiary by the Ministry

21 BOA, SH, 650/1264.M.20 (28 December 1847). Also in Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 155.

22 BOA, SH, 650/1264.M.20 (28 December 1847). Also in Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 155.

23 BOA, MKT.MVL, 90/63, 1273.S.01 (1 October 1856). Also in Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 155.

24 BOA, A.MKT.MLV, 90/63, 1273.S.01 (1 October 1856). Also in Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 155.

of Police (Zaptiye Nezareti). The women kept were treated by doctors from the Ministry of Police. Since the building was damp and its facilities were limited, the treatment of sick women was usually unsuccessful. Authorities allocated a place in Yenibaçe Hospital for female patients, but by that time, Yenibaçe Hospital was deserted and in bad condition. It was decided that until a new hospital for such women was constructed, a clean, fresh room in Haseki Penitentiary be refurbished and allocated to sick women. For this purpose, the chief physician of the Ministry of Police, Yusuf Bey, suggested that thirty wool mattresses and sixty gowns be sewn for female patients in Haseki. The cost was to be covered by the Ministry of Foundations but the ministry did not agree to pay. For the Ministry of Foundations, the responsibility belonged to the Ministry of Police as the building was already used by them. In order to renovate the hospital wing, reported Kostin Kalfa, they needed 26,650 kuruş—while an additional 18,295 kuruş was necessary for beds and clothing. The operating expenses for personal, one chief, and five ordinary servants totaled 950 kuruş. It was finally decided that the Ministry of Police would pay the salaries of the staff and that the construction costs would be paid from the coffers of the Royal Treasury. The money needed for beds and other equipment would also be provided by the police.[25]

As noted in one *Takvim-i Vekayi* report, dated 3 October 1869, a women's hospital at Haseki Penitentiary, similar to the one allocated to male penitents in Bab-ı Zaptiye, was to be built. Based on the investigation of Zaptiye Nazırı, physical conditions of Haseki Hospital were found sufficient; with just the hiring of female servants, part of it could be transformed into a hospital. Although the hospital was meant to house women arrested by the police for various reasons, needy women would also be treated there, as ordered by the sultan.[26]

Following this imperial order, two rooms of Haseki Penitentiary were renovated and converted into a hospital with thirty beds. The salaries of six servants employed there were paid from the Hapishane-i Umumi Tahsisatı, a money allocated from the budget of the police. Since no doctor was yet

25 BOA, I. DH, 41661/1286.C.05 (12 September 1869). Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 156.

26 "Wome's Hospital," *Takvim-i Vekayi* 1869.

available, patients were to be examined by police doctors who were to visit on a frequent basis. As we understand from the 1873 report of Eczacı Yüzbaşı Yakub Bey and Doctor Kiryoka after their visit to the hospital, which was then officially called the "Haseki Female Hospital in Haseki Penitentiary," the government had not been successful in putting the planned program in to practice. At the time of their visit, the hospital was host to homeless and pregnant women. The number of beds had increased from thirty to eighty. Doctor Kiryako was granted with an honorary rank (*rütbe-i sâniye*) for his services, honesty, and loyalty.[27] In this period, we see an effort to establish a modern maternity hospital. Gulhan Balsoy argues that these efforts demonstrate the increasing concerns related to healthy pregnancy and parturition. However, despite the efforts to provise "medicalized parturition and postnatal care to married and weel-off women", Haseki Hospital continued to serve to destitude women and was noriously known as bastad hospital. [28]

In 1880, a prison regulation was issued. As Kent F. Schull argues, the central government played an "important role in the production of space in Ottoman prisons. In fact, prison authorities spent a considerable amount of time and energy creating female gendered space." The 1880 regulation gave clear instructions regarding the creation of gendered spaces in Ottoman prisons.[29] With this regulation, penitent women in Haseki Hospital were transported to a penitentiary constructed in the courtyard of Mehterhane. Haseki Hospital under the authority of municipal administration (*Şehremaneti*), and the expenses for the poor women kept in Haseki Hospital were paid by the municipality.[30]

Meanwhile, constructing a separate hospital for poor and sick women remained on the municipality's agenda. In 1880, municipality inspectors

27 Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye*, 9 vols., vol. 5 (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1995), 417-18.

28 Gülhan Balsoy, *The Politics of Reproduction in Ottoman Society, 1838-1900* (London: Pickering & Chatto Publishers, 2013), 48.

29 Schull Kent F., *Prisons in the Late Ottoman Empire: Microcosms of Modernity* (Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 2014), 123-24.

30 Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye*, 9 vols., vol. 5 (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1995), 418.

investigated the Haseki Hospital building to see if it was possible to convert it into a modern women's hospital. They reported that the building was composed of small vaulted rooms without windows. In addition, the dampness of the building was so high that it could raise death rates among inmates. For these reasons, inspectors strongly suggested findind a different place. However, given the financial conditions of the administration, buying a new plot and constructing a hospital from scratach was unfeasible. Instead, the stone mansion of Moralı Ali Şefik Paşa (Taş Konak), which was located in the vicinity of Haseki Hospital, was bought and converted into a hospital for the female poor. The project cost 4.200 gold liras, which had already been accumulated for that purpose. Female patients were transferred to the new hospital, called Taş Konak, in 1884, while the other poor women remained in Haseki Hospital.[31]

By the 1880s, the elderly and sick inmates of the facility had already been transported to the poor hospital established by the municipality, while female convicts had been transported to the female penitentiary that was under the authority of the Ministry of Police. The remaining inmates were those young, unattended working women who had been arrested in the streets of Istanbul for being prostitutes' Some were mothers accompanied by their children while others were pregnant and waiting to give birth. The function of Haseki Hospital in the 1880s resembled the female reformatories that had emerged in various parts of the world to host and reform young women who were prone to prostitution or vice. The most prominent among these were the Magdalene asylums. The first of such institutions, named for the Biblical figure Mary Magdalene who herself was characterized as a reformed prostitute, was established in mid-eighteenth century in England. Then, similar institutions emerged in Ireland, Scotland, Austria, and North America. Some of these institutions survived up into the late twentieth century, and the last was closed in 1996. Not all inmates of Magdalene hospitals were sent there by force; some entered on their own, especially those who had nowhere else to go. Still, historians of these institutions have demonstrated that most inmates were forced there by governmental authorities or by their own families. Young women who were

31 ibid., 417-23.

considered deviant or potentially deviant were incarcerated in Magdalene and subjected to moral education and industrial training in order to make them conform to middle-class standards of femininity and vocational propriety.[32]

In 1892, Haseki Hospital had a total of 145 inmates, forty of whom were the children of women staying there. Most of the mothers among the inmates were unwed. A total of 5,000 lira, from the annual budget of the municipality was allocated for the operating costs of the hospital. The grown boys of the inmates were sent to work in Infantry Divisions (Sanayi Taburu) while the girls were married to candidates arranged by the institution.[33] Inmates were expected to earn their subsistence by their labor. Those who left the institution were placed in proper patriarchal institutions of family and work. To teach basic handcrafts to the female inmates, a female teacher was hired. In March 1891, twenty-two items of hand craft were sent from the Directory of Hospitals to the municipality.[34] This work was probably not a significant financial resource for the institution; however, it was deemed crucial for shaping the inmates as industrious people and compelling to them learn a profession to earn a proper living.

On 10 July 1894, the dome of the building was seriously damaged. The inmates were transferred to already completed pavilions of Darülaceze even as the construction of the complex continued and the institution had not yet officially opened.[35] It is significant that these women and children were the first inmates of Darülaceze, the most prominent welfare institution of the late Ottoman Empire.[36]

For about fifty years, from the 1840s to the 1890s, Haseki Hospital hosted single, poor women of diverse backgrounds. Dark, damp rooms of the aging building was far from providing the female inmates a healthy, cheerful life.

32 For general information on the history of Magdelene Hospitals, see Linda Mahood, *The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1990).

33 Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul'un Sağlık Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstabul Üniversitesi, 2010), 156.

34 ibid.

35 ibid.

36 Nadir Özbek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sosyal Devlet: Siyaset, İktidar ve Meşruiyet (1876-1914)* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002).

However, the architecture of the building was remarkable as it provided a suitable place for the confinement of its inmates. It had separate entrance from the street behind the Haseki Sultan Complex to north, and it was comprised of rooms around an octagonal courtyard.[37] Up to the mid-1840s Haseki Hospital was used to lock up various groups of women whose existence in urban space was found unfavorable for various reasons.[38] During the mid-nineteenth century, with the prevailing new perspectives concerning the control of urban space and the urban population, efforts to build a modern, cohesive system of social control through interconnected institutions such as poor hospitals, orphanages, reformatories, workhouses, and prisons were placed on the agenda of the government. Along with such efforts, governmental officials tried to differentiate among the inmates of Haseki Hospital, categorizing them as lunatics, the sick and elderly, female criminals, and prostitutes. By the 1880s, various institutions to contain these different categories of women had already been established, though they were inadequate in number and capacity.

With the transfer of women who fell into the categories of lunatics, the elderly and sick, and criminals to specific institutions established to detain them, Haseki Hospital evolved into a lock asylum for women categorized as prostitutes. Though the facility suffered numerous deficiencies and never acquired the qualities of a proper reformatory, the effort to establish such an institution is important as it signifies the governmental trend of limiting the existence and mobility of young, single working women in Istanbul.[39] I argue that that the regulation of prostitution—the other important component of governmental attempts to control the urban existence of working-class women was put on the agenda of the ruling elite in the same period in a parallel fashion.

It is important to note that up until the 1880s, Haseki Hospital was used simultaneously as an asylum, hospital, penitentiary, and reformatory. This situation signifies the limits of Ottoman institutional capacity in establishing differentiated institutions for the confinement of different groups of women. Yet

37 John Freely, *A History of Ottoman Architecture* (Boston: Wittpress, 2011), 219-20.

38 Gülhan Balsoy, "Bir Kadın Hastenesi Olarak Haseki Hastenesi ve 19. Yüzyıl İstanbul'unda Bikes ve Bimesken bir Kadın Olmak " *Toplumsal Tarih*, 257 (2015): 80-84, 80.

39 ibid.

I argue that this also resulted from a governmental mentality that did not distinguish among poverty, delinquency, and crime, particularly with regard to single, poor women. The inmates of Haseki Hospital throughout the second half of the nineteenth century were certainly single, poor women. The confinement of these women against their will indicates that for the ruling Ottoman elite, the boundary between a refuge and a prison was too narrow and fussy.

§ 5.3 Refugee Flood and Widow's Houses (Dulhane)

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century the alarm caused by the existence of single, poor women and by their visibility in the public spaces increased. Intense floods of refugees due to ongoing wars and territorial losses marked the second half of the nineteenth century, particularly in the period following the Russo-Ottoman war of 1877-78, which gave the problem a new dimension. People dislocated by political conflicts sought refuge in Ottoman territories. Istanbul was hit by these flows, first during the Crimean War and later during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1876-1878. Thousands of refugees, many of whom were women and children, filled the streets of Istanbul. During one of these influxes Basiretçi-Ali-Efendi writes:

> The day before, I went to the Sirkeci Pier in the evening. A few barges, with children, women, and some goods in them, approached. I understood that these were refugees who had come on the Varna Ferry. I walked towards them. The oppression was embodied in their helpless faces. The condition of those children and women was heart-breaking.[40]

During the Crimean War, refugees were immediately settled in the provinces. During the Russo-Ottoman War, however, refugees reached Istanbul first and many of them could not be provided a shelter. A lot of refugees , who could not be provided shelter, were clearly visible in the streets of Istanbul.

40 Basiretçi-Ali-Efendi, *İstanbul Mektupları* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2001).

Since the late eighteenth century, existence of unattended, single, working-class women in the streets of Istanbul had already been a source of governmental concern. These women were already defined as a deviant, or potentially deviant, group to be removed from public spaces and out of the sight of 'honorable' residents. Nevertheless, there was something unique and particularly worrisome about the appearance of refugee women in the streets of the Ottoman capital. Refugee women had lost their shelters, the ability and resources to feed themselves and their children, and the paternal protection and supervision that was essential for women to live virtuous lives. These women came from "honorable" families. What was deeply felt but not explicitly articulated was that the failure of the empire to defend its lands was tantamount to its inability to defend these women. The misery of the virtuous daughters of the empire made clear the precariousness of the empire's honor and dignity, both of which were directly related to the patriarchal rights over and responsibilities for dependents.



Figure 5.2 Balkan refugees at Sirkeci Pier, 1912.

Restricting the existence of poor women in the streets and providing them shelter were important for two reasons. First, as in the case of Haseki Hospital, reclaiming women from the streets was deemed urgent because they were viewed as prone to social disorder—particularly sexual transgressions and crimes—given their destitute, defenseless situation. Their unattended existence challenged the nineteenth-century understanding of female domesticity and propriety. Therefore, poor relief for women was directed at providing them shelter or enclosing them in institutions. Such policy was believed to eliminated the potential threat to the prevailing social order, particularly by eliminating sexual transgressions.



Figure 5.3 Refugess in Edirne Hospital, 1878.[41]

Anxiety among males emerged from their apparent inability to protect women from poverty. As mentioned previously, patriarchal authority was based on the assumed role of men as protectors of women and children. By means of this positioning, family security and wellbeing have were stereotypically constructed as male responsibilities. This discourse is also reflected on a larger social level. Men have also been praised as protectors of the larger community from outsiders and they are considered responsible for the welfare of society. This was particularly true for the protection of women during wartime. During the refugee flows in late Ottoman Empire, the misery of refugee women in the streets symbolized the failure of both the empire and of male citizens to protect the virtuous women of the empire. As Mine Ener also underscores, "the refugees were clearly visible in the streets and mosques of Istanbul (unlike those of the Crimean War, who had been resettled almost immediately along the Black Sea and in Anatolia). European travelers described them taking

41 Source: Le Mond Illustre.

shelter in mosques, their scant belongings piled up at their feet."[42] The visibility of destitute females threated masculine self-perceptions among elite and middle-class men and was considered a harm to national pride. Although, these women were not from their own families, supporting them was still considered their responsibility within the gender regime discussed above.

This situation also made clear the precariousness of the Ottoman "welfare system" which depended on paternal family structures in times of crisis such as conflicts and wars. The limits of governmental measures to protect the virtuous daughters of the empire also became apparent. The Ottoman Empire had no social security system to automatically take care of those unable to support themselves, whether male or female. In normal conditions, families and communities, by law and by custom, bore the responsibility for their supposedly weaker members such as the elderly , disabled, children, and women. However, during the refugee flows, many women who had lived normal lives were at risk of becoming deviant. The families, communities, and nation in general were unable to protect their virtuous daughters. It became urgent to establish institutional responses to contain these virtuous daughters of the nation before they fell prey to the streets of Istanbul. This responsibility to protect women, and thereby the honor of the nation, that is the 'honor of the men of the nation, was one of the pillars of the Imperial authority. This study contextualizes the establishment of Widows' House (*Dulhane*) within such a framework.

Widows' House (*Dulhane*) was established under the authority of the Refugee Commission (Muhacirin Komisyonu). The refugee commissions established during the intense wave of Crimean migration between 1861-1864 and the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78 were charged with providing relief to and settling immigrants. As the refugee flows continued in ensuing decades, once again intensifying during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1977-78, a well-established commission became a necessity. The tasks that the Refugee Commission carried out ranged from providing emergency assistance to institutions such as orphanages, health clinics, hospitals, and shelters; providing

42 Mine Ener, *Managing Egypt's Poor and The Politics of Benevolence, 1800-1952* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

immediate relief to widows and entire families; and resettling refugees in various provinces of the empire. Since many immigrants were women and children, a great extent of the work of the commission was devoted to working with this group.



Figure 5.4 Female refugees flooding into Ottoman territory.

For the relief of poor widows, two main measures were employed: Providing shelter in specific institutions and providing cash advances to those shelters. The Widow's House was one of the institutions that—like orphanages, health clinics, and schools for refugee children—the Refugee Commission institutionalized for the relief of refugees.[43] The commission established several houses in Istanbul and in provincial cities to shelter female refugees without male relatives. In Istanbul, Ahmediye Medrese in Üsküdar and Kırmızı Kışla in the vicinity of Topkapı Palace were transformed into widows' houses in the late 1870s.[44] Widow's Houses provided shelter and basic subsistence to refugee women and their children. However, the resources of the government were limited and the buildings were usually in poor condition.[45]

43 BOA, A.MKT.MHM, 492/57, 1304.S.20 (18 November 1886).

44 BOA, DH.MKT, 1343/105, 1301.R.15 (13 February 1884), BOA, DH.MKT, 2054/84, 1310.S. 04 (28 August 1892).

45 BOA, DH.MB.HPS.M, 27/12, 1335.R.09 (2 February 1917).

Unlike Haseki Hospital, which mostly functioned as a lock asylum to intern the already "fallen" women who had been arrested on the streets of Istanbul, most of the women, who were accepted to a widows' house applied on their own. Many women who submitted petitions to the Refugee Commission were desperately searching for shelter for themselves and their children in widows' houses. In their petitions, they usually expressed their deprived situations and helplessness in graphic language, highlighting the fact that they have no one to care of them. For example, Eda Kadın, a refugee from Crimea, submitted a petition to the Refugee Commission requesting she be accepted to a widows' house on the basis that she was poor, unable to work because she was sick, and lacked shelter. Ayşe and her small daughter, refugees from Vidin, were accepted to the institute following Ayşe's petition in which she emphasized that she had no one who could shelter and protect her and her child.[46]

The women were not forced to stay in widow's houses, but they usually prefer to and considered it a privilege in the face of their desperate situation. When they were dismissed from the houses, they usually asked to be readmitted. For example, Fatıma Hatun, an immigrant from Batum, was dismissed from a widow's house for disharmonious conduct. However, she returned from Bursa where she had been sent to settle following after her dismissal and demanded to be readmitted into the widow's house. The authorities granted her a second chance only after she was warned about her conduct and the possible reprimand that she would face if her offenses were repeated.

In some cases, female refugees hat had already been settled in provincial towns by the Refugee commission were sent back to Istanbul on the grounds that their male relatives had been lost or that they had nowhere to stay. In general, the commission tried to prevent local commissions from sending single female refugees back to Istanbul to be placed in the widows' houses, most of which were already overcrowded. Ayşe Hanım, a refugee from Tirnova, was settled in Çatalca, a town close to Istanbul, along with many other refugees who had fled to Istanbul. However, local authorities in Çatalca sent her back to Istanbul to be placed in one of the newly established widows' houses on the basis that she could not find a place to stay in Catalca. Likewise, Gülsüm

46 BOA, DH.MKT, 1521/61, 1305.Za.05 (14 July 1888).

Hatun, a refugee from Bosnia, was settled in Adapazarı with her family. However, after she lost her husband, she came to Istanbul and applied to the Refugee Commission to ask for admittance into a widows' house. Her application was accepted. Nevertheless, as the widows' house was overcrowded, the authorities of the commission declared that local authorities should meet the needs of the Institute refuges in their own towns and prevent them from coming to Istanbul.[47] Similarly, Emine Hatun, a refugee from Karinabad who had been settled in Silivri, was sent to Istanbul to be located in Widows's House. On this occasion, the commission warned local authorities once more. Needy women should be kept in the towns in which they had already been settled, and their needs should be met by local authorities.[48]

In some cases, applicants requested to be admitted into a widow's house on a temporary basis. Ayşe Hatun, a refugee from Filibe, submitted a petition to the Refugee Commission and requesting temporary shelter in a widows' house for herself and her children until her husband Mustafa, who had been imprisoned for burglary, was released. Ayşe Hatun's request was rejected. The commission decided to provide for the mother and her daughter's subsistence until her husband was released. She was advised to stay with her relatives.[49] Widowed women who came to Istanbul for official residence documents were also hosted in widows' houses on a temporary basis. For example, Emine Hatun from Edirne and Gülsüm Hanım, the wife of Ali Rıza Bey, a former teacher in the Maraş Secondary School, were both hosted in the Widows House until they completed their pension applications.[50]

Since only Muslim women were accepted into widows' houses, there were cases in which non-Muslim women converted to Islam to guarantee their acceptance into a shelter. An Armenian woman who had nobody to care for her and nowhere to stay was placed in Widow's House after she was converted to

47 BOA, DH.MKT, 1672/54, 1307.Ra.14 (8 November 1889).

48 BOA, DH.MKT, 1723/61, 1307.N.22 (12 May 1890).

49 BOA, DH.MKT, 1447/56, 1304.Z.27 (16 September 1887).

50 BOA, DH.MKT, 1549/70, 1306.M.25 (1 October 1888). BOA, MF.MKT, 102/61, 1306.S.16 (22 October 1888).

Islam.[51] Another Armenian woman, who had come to Istanbul from Çölemerik, a village near Van, was accepted to the Widow's House as she had already converted to Islam and had taken the name Fatma.[52] Refika Hatun, who was once a French citizen, converted to Islam when she married a Muslim man. Even after her husband divorced her, she was accepted into the Widow's House.[53] In a similar case, Zehra Hatun, a woman who had already converted to Islam, and her small daughter were accepted into the Widow's House.[54]

Many women who were accepted into the Widow's House were caring for children. In their applications and in their interaction with staff of the relief bureaucracy they negotiated on behalf of their kids, too.[55] Male children were usually placed in various public schools. Zahide Molla, a refugee from Filibe, submitted a petition to the Refugee Commission and requesting her son Nuri Efendi be accepted to Darüşşafaka along with her admission to a widows' house.[56] Gülsüm, who was already in the Widow's House, wanted her son Eşref Efendi, who was a student at Kuleli Mekteb-i İdadisi, to stay with her in the house for one night.[57]

The Ottoman government also provided houses and pensions to poor, needy women. The abundance of documents concerning such a policy implies that this was usual. The women provided with monthly pensions or houses were mostly immigrants. For example, Hasene and Fatma, immigrants from Mora, and Hasibe Hatun, an immigrant from Crimea, were provided monthly payments on the basis of their poverty.[58] On the other hand, non-immigrant women also demanded and in some cases received such relief. Havva Kadın, who was very poor and staying in tenement, was provided a small stipend for

51 BOA, DH.MKT, 1662/17, 1307.S.05 (21 October 1889).

52 BOA, DH.MKT, 1842/91, 1308.Za.10 (17 June 1891).

53 BOA, BEO, 620/46477, 1312.Za.18 (13 May 1895).

54 BOA, DH.MKT, 372/39, 1312.Z.01 (26 May 1895).

55 BOA, DH.MKT, 1745/6, 1307.Z.05 (23 July 1890).

56 BOA, DH.MKT, 1860/105, 1309.M.14 (20 August 1891).

57 BOA, DH.MKT, 387/12, 1312.Z.27 (21 June 1895).

58 BOA, İ.MVL, 270/10381, 1269.B.19 (28 April 1853). BOA, İ.MVL, 411/17895, 1275.C.03 (8 January 1859). BOA, İ.MVL, 269/10354, 1269.B.09 (21 April 1853).

her survival. In another case, Emine, a non-immigrant homeless woman with children, was provided with a house.[59]

Unlike women kept in Haseki Hospital who had been arrested by the police and locked up, that utilization of women in the Widow's House was voluntary. As far as widow's houses were concerned, the authorities found themselves dealing with women who fell outside the protection of conventional family and household structures but were usually trying to maintain the norms of 'respectability' and 'chastity' that these institutions bore on them. They also sought better futures for their children and to secure them a proper education. As we can infer from hints about their economic and social backgrounds (titles before their names and the positions of former husbands are helpful in this regard), these women usually came from "better" families. They were kept within "well protected" limits until their lives were dramatically reversed overnight. Therefore, they were less prepared to adapt to the new conditions of refugee life on the streets. Their move into a shelter was the result of a compromise.

Based on the documents examined, the Refugee Commission apparently interpreted that part of its mission was to force a gendered social role upon refugee women; immorality and misbehavior were the criteria used to make decisions with regard to their acceptance into widows' houses and the granting of widows' pensions. The staff of the institution positioned themselves as, in some way, responsible for the moral surveillance of female refugees. The documents also illustrate how a new bureaucratic relationship developed between the governmental elite and needy women. Interestingly, women usually built up their cases on the identity and position of their fathers or former husbands. Widows of respectable soldiers, bureaucrats, and men with respected names were able to request their acceptance into widow's houses and ask for pensions or education for their children. In the absence of their husbands, the state was expected to take over patriarchal duties of their husbands.

However, even a fleeting glance at the petitions examined above demonstrate the diverse ways that poor women without male custodians assumed new and often formerly "male" responsibilities to ensure their wellbeing and

59 BOA, İ.MVL, 411/17895, 1275.C.03 (8 January 1859).

that of their children. These responsibilities ranged from finding shelter to appropriating food to negotiating with state authorities for poor relief. Although women's relations with the state had traditionally been mediated by men, this arrangement was broken in the absence of men to "care" for them. Women without men, whether immigrants or not, addressed the state directly in many cases and negotiated their situation with state authorities on their own. Our examination of petitions submitted to the Refugee Commission and Widows' House demonstrate the ways in which poor women strove for their survival and that of their children negotiating their situations with state authorities.

The Refugee Commission was dissolved in 15 January 1894 as the flow of refugees slowed.[60] With the dissolution of the Refugee Commission, the administration of the Widow's House was transferred to the Municipality of Istanbul.[61] However, the municipality was unwilling to accept this responsibility particularly due to the estimated cost of the takeover. The two offices corresponded extensively to negotiate the situation.[62] At one point, the women staying in the Widow's House found themselves facing the risk of starvation as the Refugee Commission had cut funds but the municipality not yet borne responsibility.[63] It was only after an order from the Ministry of the Interior that the municipality started to provide for the subsistence of the women in the Widow's House.[64] Finally, in June 1894, the women of the Widows' House were transferred to Darülaceze.[65]

The Widows' House was an exceptional institution established in case of an emergency. However, it is still informative about the ways that being poor in the late nineteenth century Ottoman Empire poor was gendered. As mentioned above, the institution differed from Haseki Hospital as its inmates were not young, single, poor women who had been arrested by the police and who, in most cases, were being kept there against their will. Single, poor women were usually perceived as less deserving and sexually promiscuous. They were

60 Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul Darülaceze Müessesesi Tarihi* (Istanbul: Darülaceze, 1997), 8.

61 BOA, BEO, 557/1312.B.26 (23 January 1895).

62 BOA, DH.MKT, 1819/135, 1308.Ş.07 (18 March 1891).

63 BOA, BEO, 560/41991, 1312.Ş.01 (28 January 1895).

64 BOA, İ.HUS, 33/1312/B-122, 1312.B.29 (26 January 1895).

65 Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul Darülaceze Müessesesi Tarihi* (Istanbul: Darülaceze, 1997), 8.

believed to be responsible for their own situation as they rejected becoming appropriate domestic partners and mothers. The intervention of government thus came in the form of punishment or at least in the form of the restriction of their mobility. The inmates of widows' houses, on the other hand, were comprised of mostly middle-class widows who had lost their husbands, houses, and sources of revenue because of the inability of the empire to protect its borders. Their destitution harmed national pride and their relief was a prioritized for this reason. The government intervened in the role of a surrogate for the breadwinning male head of household. The household was perceived as the union of a breadwinning man and dependent woman and children.

Government approaches to these two group of women also differed according to their social backgrounds. The refugee women who had lived in conventional families and household structures did not have the knowledge, or experience to survive in Istanbul, and they willingly applied to the Widows' house and perceived it as a privilege for them and their children to stay there. Maintaining their respectability and preparing their children for a middle-class future by providing them an education still mattered to them. On the other hand, young, single, working-class women did not want to compromise; they could only be put in an institution by police force. One can argue that they had more confidence with respect to their ability to survive on their own and had a greater desire to enjoy life in the city. Here, it is important to remember that these two groups of women demonstrated differing forms of agency. Refugee women used their relative advantage to negotiate their situation with governmental authorities, positioning themselves as respectable widows who had the right to be taken care of after the loss of their 'respectable' husbands. Young, single, working-class women had diverged from the standards of middle-class propriety and rejected relief provided to them through a patriarchal bargain. In this respect, prostitution was as an opportunity for them to continue their lives free of the patriarchal power of men and the state.

§ 5.4 Darülaceze

Darülace (poor house) was officially opened in 31 August 1896. Establishing a poor house up to modern standards was on the agenda of the Ottoman

government from mid-nineteenth century forward. However, the first official discussions on the issue in the Council of State were held in September 1886. In these discussions, the proposed institution and its operation were modelled on the related articles of the French Penal Law. By the end of the meeting it was decided that a new ordinance for the prevention of poverty should be prepared and that a poorhouse up to the modern standards of the time should be established in Istanbul. The construction of the facility started four years later, in 1890 and conclude in 1896. Darülaceze was not imagined as practical solution to round up some of the poor in Istanbul; it was designed as a grand project that would symbolize the transformation of Ottoman Empire into a modern state and portray Sultan Abdülhamit as a modern, benevolent patriarch.[66] There is an established literature in the Ottoman historiography on the practical and symbolic function of Darülaceze.[67] Yet the analytical category of gender is from these studies, even from those searching for new perspectives on social history.[68] Although recent feminist scholars have extensively documented how modern social policies were informed by and served to reproduce prevailing gender hierarchies, historical studies of Darülaceze in particular and studies of social policy in late Ottoman Empire in general have remained silent on the issues of sex and gender. In this section of the chapter, I demonstrate the ways that sex and gender were critical for both the practical and symbolic functioning of Darülaceze.

66 Nadir Özbek, *Cumhuriyet Türkiyesi'nde Sosyal Güvenlik ve Sosyal Politikalar* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, Emeklilik Gözetim Merkezi, 2006), 37-38.

67 Nuran Yıldırım, *İstanbul Darülaceze Müessesesi Tarihi* (Istanbul: Darülaceze, 1997), Nuran Yıldırım, "Darülaceze'nin Kuruluş ve İşleyişi," *Toplumsal Tarih* 6, 32: 16-30, Nadir Özbek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sosyal Devlet: Siyaset, İktidar ve Meşruiyet (1876-1914)* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002).

68 Nadir Özbek, "The Politics of Poor Relief in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1876-1914," *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 21 (1999): 1-33, Nadir Özbek, "Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Sosyal Devlet," *Toplum ve Bilim*, 92 (2002): 7-33, Nadir Özbek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sosyal Devlet: Siyaset, İktidar ve Meşruiyet (1876-1914)* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002).



Figure 5.5 Darülaceze's buildings.

As mentioned previously, Ottoman governmental officers who strove to handle the problem of urban poverty by establishing a modern, cohesive system of social policy in the second half of the nineteenth century were faced with multitudes of poor people, but with extremely limited resources to deal with the issue. They had to define the criteria for who should receive resources and under what conditions? Like many counterparts in other settings in the nineteenth century, they subscribed to the paradigm of 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor. Indeed, the Ottoman conceptions of "deserving" and "undeserving" provided a broader ideological framework that informed the establishment and functioning of Darülaceze. According to the ordinance promulgated in 1896, Darülaceze would serve those who "born and settled in Istanbul, disabled or unable to earn a living, do not have any properties that will provide them any income, and do not have close relatives, and also those poor found wandering in the streets."[69] Although there was no gendered distinction at the textual level, practically gender was critical for the identification of proper applicants. Determining which women were worthy of assistance became increasingly critical in face of the institution's limited resources and patriarchal norms always undergird these determinations. However, as the examples below make clear, the resources and capacity of the institution was so limited to handle ever-increasing urban poverty that the institution frequently rejected applicants who would normally be accepted.

In November 1908, Fatma, a young widow with a child, submitted a petition to the Ministry of the Interior to be accepted to Darülaceze. However, her application was rejected on the basis that she could earn a living herself. In the

69 BOA, Darülaceze Nizamname-i Dahilisi/,

rejection note, the authorities of the institution highlighted that Darülaceze was overcrowded because inmates of recently closed the Widow's House were transferred ther. In June 1909, Fatma submitted a second application to Darülaceze. In her application, she repeated that after her husband was martyred, she was left destitute without anybody to support her. She was desperately looking for a job as a domestic servant, but she was consistently rejected because she had to care for a small child. She also had a disability and could not use her right arm properly. Finally, she asserted that if she was not accepted to Darülaceze she would start to beg in the streets as her situation was desperate.[70] Fatma's application was rejected a second time. This time, however, the administrators of Darülaceze offered her an alternative. The imam of the mosque in Darülaceze sent a brief note to Fatma's landlord (who was perhaps the closest to being a male representative for Fatma) and declared that a certain Celallettin Efendi was willing to marry her. The imam suggested that if there was no obstacle and both parties were in agreement, the two should marry.[71] Fatma and Celalettin Efendi married in 1909. The ceremony was performed by the imam of Darülaceze in the absence of both Fatma and her new husband. Celalettin Efendi was probably an elderly gentlemen in need of care, and the marriage between two was arranged as a kind of work contract.[72]

70 BOA, DH.UMVM, 119/53, 1329.Haziran.12 (25 June 1913).

71 ibid.

72 ibid.



Figure 5.6 Maternity ward at Darülaceze.



Figure 5.7 Girls weaving carpets at the Darülaceze workshop.

We neither Fatma's age nor where she was from. We have no details about her daily life, either. She would have remained one of the anonymous poor rendered individually invisible by virtue of class, gender, and poverty if she had not come into contact with the authorities of Darülaceze to negotiate relief for herself and her child. Nevertheless, in some important respects, her situation illustrates important dimensions of poverty as experienced by women in the late Ottoman Istanbul as well as the social and institutional responses to women's poverty in this period. Fatma, like many of her female contemporaries, faced extreme poverty on account of the loss of her husband on whom her and her child's wellbeing depended. One of the few options for Fatma to earn a living was domestic service, but as she stated, her various applications were consistently rejected because she would have to bringh her child with her. Still, the authorities of Darülaceze thought she could earn a living because she was able bodied. In Fatma's case, perhaps because of the limited capacity of the institution, authorities preferred to overlook the fact that finding a job for a woman with children was nearly impossible. Indeed, in the nineteenth century context, poor women with children were usually counted among the "deserving" poor. Fatma realized that her widowhood and child were not enough to be accepted to Darülaceze, so she also underscored her disability, implying that she "would fall into the streets" if she was rejected again. The hidden implication is that the blame would fall on the shoulders of the authorities who continually rejected her. Fatma—or those who helped her prepare—seemed to be aware of the criteria to be counted among the deserving poor, so she underscored her position as a widowed mother with a disability. Fatma's second rejection may have had to do with the limited capacity of the institution rather than a distinction based on the notion of "deservingness." Authorities, aware that Fatma fell into the category of deserving poor by definition, tried to find a solution in the most customary way—that is, that is by arranging a marriage.

Another applicant, Tevfika, was also a widowed mother. She was a refugee from Filibe who had been placed in Turgutlu, Aydın with her family. After her husband's death, she came to Istanbul to seek relief for herself and her children. They stayed in Ismail Ağa Hotel in Sirkeci. She submitted a petition to the Ministry of the Interior requesting the acceptance of her two sons,

fourteen-year-old Mehmed Ali and nine-year-old Osman, to one of Darüşşafaka, Darülhayr-ı Ali, or Darülaceze. The Ministry of the Interior conveyed the petition to the Ministry of Education. However, officers at the Ministry of Education accepted Tevfika's two sons neither to Darülhayr nor to Darüşşafaka on the basis that Darülhayr was reserved for poor children found loitering in the streets, while Darüşşafaka was overcrowded. After the petition was returned from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior conveyed it to Darülaceze. Darülaceze, too, rejected her application on the basis that it provided assistance only to Istanbul residents and to immigrants settled in Istanbul by officials—and only to those too disabled to work who had no one to care for them.[73]

The patriarchal gendered welfare regime of the nineteenth century, based on the duality of the breadwinning man and the dependent woman, usually considered widowed mothers to be the primary recipients of poor relief. It is apparent that the rejection of the applications of widowed mothers by the authorities of Darülaceze was a sign of the institutional incapacity, rather than ideological preference. Given the increasing number of applicants and the overcrowding of the institution, the administrators of Darülaceze eventually decided to adopt children to appropriate families and place young, able bodied women as domestic servants in respectable houses.[74] Allocating a separate pavilion at Darülaceze for immigrant women, providing them with basic training, and then placing them in proper houses as domestic servants was put on the agenda of the Municipality of Istanbul a couple times. This, it was suggested, would save these immigrant women from misery and, interestingly, would also resolve the difficulty of finding suitable domestic servants on the job market.[75]

There were cases in which widows with children were accepted to Darülaceze. Such decisions can only be explained by the conditions of the institution at the moment of application. Sofya's case is one such example. She was a poor widow with three children. She claimed that she was unable to care

73 BOA, MF.MKT, 1020/14, 1325.N.25 (1 November 1907).

74 BOA, ZB, 11/11, 1324.Kanun-i Sani.01 (14 January 1909).

75 BOA, DH-ID, 161/16, 1329.Ağustos.03 (16 August 1912).

for her daughter, who had a mental illness, and to feed the other two. After an investigation was carried out with no negative conclusions, the ministry suggested that Sofya be accepted to Darülaceze.[76]

In the cases of single and childless women, the bargain was harsher. Such women were expected to earn their livings regardless of the pay or the poor conditions of the labor market for women. Otherwise they should find for themselves proper households in which to be sheltered. Ayşe had grown up in Darülaceze as she was an orphan. She was married to a certain Celaleddin bin Fazıl upon the initiation and permission of the authorities of the institution. However, Celaleddin was conscripted into the army and sent to Caucuses front, where he was martyred. Ayşe claimed that upon the death of her husband she was drugged into misery as she had nobody to support her. She requested that she be reaccepted to Darülaceze. However, Ayşe's request was rejected on the basis that she did not meet the required conditions: She was considered able to earn a living. The increased number of inmates following the closure of Dulhane was presented as another reason for the rejection of her application.[77]

Fatma, a poor immigrant who had been residing in Darülaceze had been sent to Siroz to be cared for by her relatives there. However, after a while the police captured her in Istanbul. It was apparent that she had not stayed with her relatives and had returned back Istanbul by herself. Police submitted her to Darülaceze, but the authorities at Darülaceze sent her back to Siroz a second time. The officers of Darülaceze declared that the police should immediately return these kinds of women to the provinces from which they came and warn authorities in the provinces to prevent their return to Istanbul.[78]

Indeed, the only group of women accepted to Darülaceze without much bargaining were the elderly and sick. For example, Mehmet from the Yenibahçe village near Istanbul submitted a petition to the Ministry of the Interior asking that his mother, Hatice binti Abdullah, who was black, be accepted to Darülaceze. In his account, he explained that he himself was poor and needy

76 BOA, DH.MKT, 2256/1, 1315.Eylül.15 (27 September 1899).

77 BOA, ZB, 71/17, 1318.Teşrinievvel.11 (24 October 1902).

78 BOA, DH MKT, 2403/94, 1316.Ağustos.28 (10 September 1900).

and was incapable of sheltering and feeding his mother.[79] The application was accepted. Gülfidan, a black woman, had been working as a servant in Darülmuallimat for ten years, but when she lost her eyes to disease, she became unable to work. She was kept and cared for in Darülmuallimat for a while, after which the administrators of the school requested her acceptance into Darülaceze, to which they received a positive response.[80]

Our examination of archival documents suggests that the sick, disabled, and elderly were most consistently defined as deserving poor. Other groups fell in and out of the category over time. The undeserving poor were considered responsible for their misery, which was mostly due to their lack of virtue. They violated mainstream norms and ideals governing work, family, and personal responsibility. In this sense, their life choices fall under public scrutiny, and their failings are then used to justify withholding resources and subjecting them to punitive and surveillance-based mechanisms designed to control behavior.

Moral failings and sexual promiscuity were the most important criteria that made a woman undeserving. Particular places were allocated for these women to prevent the harms they could inflict upon respectable people. They should be reformed if possible, if not they should be kept away from the deserving poor. Hence, stories of moral failings consistently informed the deserving/undeserving distinction and the decisions concerning which women would be accepted into Darülaceze. For example, Tefo, a 'morally suspect' woman, was not accepted since she was found inappropriate by the authorities of Darülaceze. While Tefo was dancing for Boşnak (Bosnian) Faik Hamdi, Tatar Osman, Abdullah, and Hasan in a house on the outskirts of a town near İzmit, some other men—Boşnak İzzet Bey, Ali and Mustafa—raided the place. İzzet Bey killed Abdullah with his gun, while Hamdi and Hasan injured Ali with a knife. All the men except İzzet Bey were arrested. İzzet Bey was permitted to go to Dersaadet for the treatment of his injury. The police of İzmit sent Tefo to the Istabul police expecting her to be placed in Darülaceze claiming that "as this terrible incident occurred on Tefo's account, releasing her would

79 BOA, DH.MKT, 2613/75, 1323.Ca.19 (22 July 1905).

80 BOA, DH.UMVM, 120/20, 1340.S.27.

be inappropriate from the point of security." The response of the Istanbul police was short and clear: İzzet Bey, who was responsible for a murder, should be arrested immediately. Why such a person was released and permitted to escape to Dersaadet needed an official explanation. According to the Istanbul police, Tefo's acceptance into Darülaceze would be improper.[81]

The case of Bedriye was striking in the ways that it demonstrated how stories of moral failing informedthe identification of women as deserving or undeserving. Bedriye had been a young woman residing in Beşiktaş with her family. It was understood that she had had an affair with a Greek man of the same neighborhood. This created indignation among Muslim residents of the neighborhood, and they killed her lover. After the incident, Bedriye's father disowned her. For one year she was kept in the women's prison. However, police inspectors found it inappropriate and illegal to keep her there any longer. As Bedriye had been disowned by her father, she had no shelter, so the police officers sent a note to Darülaceze demanding her acceptance into the institution. Yet, the demand was rejected on the basis that many men and women from diverse nations were residing in Darülaceze and that to accept Bedriye among them would be inappropriate due to her 'known' past.[82]

In the late Ottoman Empire, paternalism was an important ideological underpinning of welfare provision. This mental and ideological framework informed relief policies towards women in the imperial capital. Controlling poor women in the capital was urgent for two major reasons: First of all, they could be viewed as prone to any kind of social disorder, particularly sexual transgressions and criminalities in their destitute and unguarded situation. Therefore, poverty relief policies towards women can be understood as a disciplinary practice that aimed at eliminating possible threats to the prevailing social order, particularly the sexual transgressions. It had also something to do with male gender anxiety that emerged from the apparent inability of men to protect women from poverty. This was particularly true with regard to immigrant women whose poverty was annoyingly apparent in the streets of Istanbul. As Mine Ener indicates "the refugees were clearly visible in the streets and

81 BOA, DH MKT, 2694/42, 1324.Kânunuevvel.09 (22 December 1908).

82 BOA, DH.MKT, 2669/53, 1324.Teşrinisani.12 (25 November 1908), ibid.

mosques of Istanbul (unlike those of the Crimean War, who had been resettled almost immediately along the Black Sea and in Anatolia). European travelers described them taking shelter in mosques, their scant belongings piled up at their feet."[83] The visibility of destitute females posed a threat to masculine self-perceptions. Although, these women did not belong to their own families, supporting them was still considered as their responsibility within the gender regime discussed above.

Elizabeth Thompson, in her book on the French Mandate in Syria and Lebanon, argues that the loss of men's honor and control over their family due to their inability to protect them during the famine caused by World War I, caused a paternity crisis.[84] For Thompson, the inability of men to provide for their wives shook the basis of "the classical patriarchal bargain." While the war undermined the material basis of security for most families, even those of the stable elite, it altered expectations of gender roles. Memories of a world turned upside down produced both nostalgia for lost norms and a revolutionary spirit. The gender crisis, which Thompson called a crisis of paternity, would, on the one hand, cause an urge to rebuild male authority and, on the other, would ultimately alter gender expectations.

Gender anxieties of similar sort were valid in the cases of extreme female poverty, particularly when such poverty became explicitly visible on the streets of the Ottoman capital. Immigrant women on the streets prompted the alleviation of their poverty and the elimination of male anxiety simultaneously. The elimination of this anxiety renders it possible to discipline women and to rebuild male authority. On the other hand, this experience of poverty inevitably changes the gender perceptions in society, not only for the women who experience poverty without a man next to them, but also for the rest who witness this.

My study of Ottoman documents implies the diverse ways in which poor women without men assumed new, often formerly "male" responsibilities to ensure their wellbeing and that of their children. These responsibilities ranged

83 Mine Ener, *Managing Egypt's Poor and The Politics of Benevolence, 1800-1952* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

84 Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

from finding shelter to appropriating food and negotiating with state authorities. Although women's relation to the state had traditionally been mediated by men, this arrangement was broken in the absence of men to "care" women. Women without men, whether they were immigrants or not, addressed the state in many cases and negotiated their situation with the state authorities on their own. A detailed examination of the petitions submitted to the Refugee Commission and the Widow's House demonstrates the ways in which poor women strove for their survival and that of their children by negotiating their situations with state authorities.

Here we may reconsider the question of women's agency. To an extent, women seemed to conform to or compromise with the boundaries of the "benevolence" provided them. However, the ostensible compromise should not be read as the conventional submissiveness of women to patriarchal norms. Indeed, even in a rough examination of the archival documents, the negotiations of women regarding their situation are apparent, even though these negotiations were defined by material, social, and emotional constraints on women's identities and voices. Indeed, intertwined with these plaintive voices were strategies that women adopted to recover their situation and to reform the order in which they were trying to survive.

6

"Disorderly Women" and Their Treatment in Early-Twentieth-Century Istanbul (1900-1914)

Archival documents demonstrate that from the early 1900s, the police frequently arrested women in Istanbul for being "disorderly" (*uygunsuz*). In most cases, the label "disorderly" connoted a "connection to" or a "potential for" prostitution. Frequently, the women arrested for being "disorderly" were accused of "prostituting here and there", "soliciting in the streets," or "behaving immorally." Yet still, police refrained from calling these women "prostitutes" and consistently used the label "disorderly woman" to identify them. A closer look at the documents concerning "disorderly women" starting in the early twentieth century demonstrates that the label was used to identify young, single, working-class, Muslim women not bound by customary the medial and community ties who moved freely in urban space.

The term "disorderly" differentiated unregistered Muslim "prostitutes" from their registered, non-Muslim sisters. "Disorderly woman" was a flexible term, providing the police and other governmental staff the opportunity to include all single, working–class immigrant women separated from their families in this category whenever they wanted to interfere with their lives and existence in the city. As discussed in preceding chapters, the population of single, working-class women became significant in Istanbul from the mid-nineteenth century onwards as a part of the wandering poor of Istanbul and they became the targets of particular policies of exclusion and confinement,

such as the regulation of prostitution and confinement in poor relief institutions. However, in the early twentieth century, attempts to control them remained ineffective. In the perception of the middle-, these young, single, working-class women were categorized as prostitutes whether or not they sold sex for money. Their ever-increasing numbers were considered a serious threat to public order, public health, and morality. In addition, the unprotected and uncontrolled existence of young single women in the streets was perceived as challenge to the patriarchal gender regime. In the case of Muslim women, this was also considered harmful to national pride by the Muslim society.

In the daily newspapers and periodicals of the period, one easily finds traces of a perception that correlated the female poor with prostitution and vice. For example, in an article published in Sabah, the author divided beggars into four subcategories, one of which was children, young girls, and unattended women. He claimed that as young beggar girls frequently concealed their illicit activities guys of begging, that they should be treated as prostitutes, and that they should be subjected to laws valid for prostitutes. According to the author, these female beggars were harmed the morality and chastity of society as well as public health. The author suggested that that "child beggars" (meaning the male) should be put to work in proper reformatories (*ıslahane*) emphasizing a widely accepted idea of the nineteenth century: The "disciplinary power of work." The author dwells on this belief and argues that disciplinary education would save these children from becoming adult criminals. What is attention grabbing in the article is the distinction between 'young female beggars' and 'young male beggars'. According to the author, female beggars might be "truly poor;" however, it was also possible that they engage in 'some immoral activities'. Immoral activities implied prostitution. The author further warned that 'prostitution' was not only a moral problem, but that such 'young female beggars' also posed a threat to public health and order. Therefore, the police should deal with the issue of 'female beggars.'. In another article, the author advocated for the fair treatment of female house servants, claiming that girls who were treated badly in the homes in which they worked would run away at some point and be obliged to live corrupt lives on the streets

of the city, which was in turn a moral and social threat to the residents of the city.[1]



Figure 6.1 Homeless women at Üsküdar Cemetery 1909.[2]

I argue that "disorderly woman" was the female counterpart of the "vagrant" for males Like their male counterparts, "disorderly women" were poor, unskilled, and away from their homes. However, single, poor women were the hardest-pressed component of the "wandering poor" of Istanbul. They were confined by a patriarchal economy predicated on their direct dependence on men as well as by the fact that patriarchal society was predicated on the assumption that a woman's space was the home. Yet those systems were severely strained, and single, poor women increasingly became more apparent in the urban scene. Moreover, they were finding unprecedented ways to survive, constructing new kinds of social, sexual, and occupational relations, and inventing new ways to use public spaces. Towards the late nineteenth century, the

1 Nadir Özbek, "'Beggars' and 'Vagrants' in State Policy and Public Discourse During the Late Ottoman Empire: 1876-1914," *Middle Eastern Studies* 45, 5 (2009): 783-801, 787.

2 Source: Library of Congress.

image of single, poor women—once perceived as a group to be protected—was already transformed into an image of fearful pathology, a danger to public health, and a threat to middle-class morality and family life. The issue was frequently discussed in the periodical press as administrative authorities tried to find ways to remove single, poor women from the urban scene. It was stressed that the removal of "disorderly women" from Istanbul was vital for protecting public morality, health. And order. The question was how.

Unlike "vagrant," "disorderly woman" was not legally defined. Police frequently arrested women who were supposed to have been "disorderly," yet did not know what to do with these women. In many cases, local police in the neighborhoods of Istanbul sent notes to the police asking what to do with "disorderly/homeless" women arrested here and there. The police knew that if they released the arrested women, they would immediately return to streets—they had no other place to go. The police officers were also concerned that some of these women were contaminated with venereal diseases.

§ 6.1 Deportation to Provincial Cities

Police documents from the early 1900s indicate that the most frequently-used method to contain "unsuitable women" was to send them to provincial cities. For example, in 1903, the Ministry of Police transferred Hayriye and Sadriye, who were arrested while soliciting in the streets, to Izmir for rehabilitation. According to police, for Hayriye and Sadriye to stay in Istanbul was "inconvenient and unsecure" as they were "of the unsuitable sort;" moreover, they had nowhere to stay and nobody to protect and supervise them in Istanbul. The governorship of Izmir was ordered to accommodate these two women in its city.[3]

Indeed, transferring prostitutes to provinces was not a novel practice, but a traditional method often applied in history. Yet the anxieties and concerns that prompted this traditional practice to be revised in the early 1900s were specific to the time and differed from those of earlier eras. Sources from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to just that prostitution was usually

3 BOA, ZB, 400/101, 1320.Eylül.22 (5 October 1904).

delineated as a local nuisance of a neighborhood or small community. Prostitutes were usually transferred to some remote island to appease local complaints.[4] On the other hand, documents from the early twentieth century indicate that prostitutes wandering in urban space in an uncontrolled manner were perceived not as local nuisances, but as a threat to the gendered and class-based order of the city. The deportations were thus part of a conscious effort to impose a certain gendered and class-based order the city.

However, the method of expulsion was not free of problems. Deported women were deprived of the means to earn a living and usually fell into extreme poverty. Although prostitution remained one alternative, it was not easy to accomplish as the women were more or less under police scrutiny. Local authorities saw these women, who frequently knocked at their doors for handouts, as an annoyance. They had to find shelter for these women, provide for their sustenance, and eliminate the sexual and moral threats they posed for locals. In many cases, provincial governorships sought to return exiles to Istanbul, requested their transfer to other cities, or demanded money for the provision of their sustenance.

For example, the governorship of Kastamonu returned Feraset, who was deported to Kastamonu by the Ministry of Police for being "unsuitable," , to Istanbul noting that she persisted with her miserable conduct in Kastamonu and that according to her own statement, she had property in Istabul. Yet these excuses were far from convincing the Ministry of Police. Feraset was immediately sent back to Kastamonu. In the accompanying note, the Ministry of Police stated that Feraset had nothing and no one in Istanbul. For her to stay in Dersaadet was declared "inappropriate and unsafe." The note of the ministry also included a warning: Returning women who were deported for being "unsuitable," when it was perfectly possible to accommodate them caused extra work and costs.[5]

4 During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Ottoman governments frequently deported prostitutes to its islands such as Cyprus, Sakız, Limni, and Bozcaada. BOA, C.ZB, 3139, 1233.Za.4.1233 (7 September 1818). BOA, C.ZB, 402, 1162.B.6 (22 June 1749). BOA, C.ZB, 1236, 1150.L.12 (2 February 1738), BOA, C.ZB, 594, 1134.Ş.18 (3 June 1722), ibid.

5 BOA, ZB, 437/68, 1320.Teşrinievvel.23 (5 November 1904).



Figure 6.2 Female beggar in front of an Istanbul mosque.

On 30 July 1904, the government of Edirne conveyed the petition of Nikdar and her two daughters, Dürdane and Suna, who had been exiled from Dersaadet to Edirne by the Ministry of Police. The family requested permission to return claiming that they were originally from Istanbul. The Ministry of Police rejected the request. Although it was admitted that the family was actually

from Istanbul, their return was impermissible as they were of the inappropriate sort and had no one in Dersaadet.[6]

In another case, the governorship of Hüdavendigar sent a telegram to the Ministry of the Interior concerning the annoyance caused by ten female exiles in Bursa. The governorship stated that these women, who were deported to Bursa for being "unsuitable," had no relatives there and were unqualified for employment in the factories of the city. Lacking someone to care for and supervise them and lacking the qualifications to earn their livelihood, they were fell into misery. They occupied the local police with their demands to a degree that the police were unable to find time to deal with other, more important issues. Hence, the governorship of Hüdavendigar asked the Ministry of the Interior what to do about these women and requested a solution for the awkward situation.[7] The Ministry of the Interior relayed the telegram to the Ministry of Police as it had been the police who deported these women to Bursa. However, the response of the Ministry of Police contained no solution. It was noted that these women were deported to Bursa as their stay in Dersaadet was found hazardous and their return would lead to serious problems. The Ministry of Police requested that the Ministry of the Interior remind the governorship of Hüdavendigar of these issues and to order it not to allow the women to return to Istanbul.

The correspondence between the offices continued. The governorship of Hüdavendigar sent a second telegram indicating that the misery of the exiles had led to their inappropriate conduct and requesting an emergent solution. The Ministry of the Interior again conveyed this second telegram to the Ministry of Police asking if it was possible to provide sustenance for these women. In reply, the Ministry of Police repeated the formerly-stated concerns and expressed that the Ministry of Police had nothing to do or say about providing for the sustenance of these women. The Ministry of the Interior should decide what was best and what was possible and convey this to the government of Hüdavendigar.[8]

6 BOA, ZB, 400/69, 1320.Teşrinievvel.21 (3 November 1904).

7 BOA, DH.MKT, 2868/26, 1327.C.17 (6 July 1909).

8 ibid.

Sometimes young, poor women were deportated to other cities forother reasons such as begging. But the concern was similar. It was argued that young beggar girls frequently concealed their illicit activities behind begging and that they should be treated as prostitutes. Three young women--Fatma, daughter of Muhammed Ali, Esma, daughter of Mehmet and Esma, daughter of Ali—were tried in the Üsküdar Bidayet Mahkemesi on the grounds that they were vagrants. The court testimony that these women were vagrants as it was for sure that they begged. Hence, the court sentenced them according to the Ordinance on vagrancy. Accordingly, it was decided that these women would be sent to their own cities, if possible, or to some other city where it was possible for them to find a job. The police then decided to send them to Izmit. It was also decided that tribunal expenditures amounting to 800 kuruş would be paid by the women.[9]

On 30 June 1909, the government of Kastamonu sent Dürdane back to the Ministry of Police. She had been deported to Kastamonu for being "unsuitable.. Her residence in Istanbul was found impermissible, because of her inappropriate behavior, and she had no one to supervise her and nowhere to stay there. However, the government of Kastamonu claimed, Dürdane was not from Kastamonu and she had no one there, either. Through and investigation conducted by the Kastamonu police, it was discovered that she was from Edremit, a town of Hüdavendigar. She had an uncle who was working in Directory of Forestry and a sister named Fatma in her hometown. The governorship of Kasatmonu requested her deportation to Edirne.[10] On 2 September 1909, the Ministry of Police deported Emine to Bursa (as she was known as 'Emine from Bursa'). Emine was determined to have behaved against the morals of Islam and had no one to supervise her in Istanbul; hence, her stay in Dersaadet was found hazardous. However, she was sent back to Istanbul five days later. The government of Hüdavendigar stated that through its investigation, it was learned that Emine was actually from İnebolu, not Bursa. Given this information, the Ministry of Police sent her to İnebolu on 11 September 1909.[11] Şükriye was deported to Kastamonu because of her unsuitable

9 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 3/17, 1327.S.25 (18 March 1909).

10 BOA, ZB, 496/40, 1325.Haziran.24 (7 July 1909).

11 BOA, ZB, 497/60, 1325.Teşrinievvel.29 (11 November 1909).

behavior. In Kastamonu, she stated to police that she had been married to Boşnak Hacı Ömer who lived in a neighborhood near Üsküdar. Six years before, he had applied to the court and divorced her. Kastamonu police requested an investigation by Istabul police to see if such a divorce really took place. Probably the intention of the Kastamonu police was to return Şükriye to her husband if she was still married.[12]

§ 6.2 Confinement in Reformatories and Poor Houses

As the examples provided above demonstrate, transportation to other cities proved inefficient and costly. Most of the time, arrested women were released, to the frustration of police. They returned to streets as soon as they were released. Other alternatives for controlling lower-class Muslim prostitutes were publicly discussed. In an article in the daily newspaper *Sabah*, dated 1903, the author argued for the necessity of establishing a reformatory where young girls who prostituted themselves would be kept and trained to earn livelihoods in honorable ways. He dramatically described the miserable conditions under which these girls lived, highlighting that these girls, most of whom fell into misery at very young ages were innocents. They were victims of immoral, ignorant parents. The people of the country were responsible for saving these innocent children from misery and providing them with safe places to live. However, he warned that placing them in vocational schools with innocent girls would be inappropriate as it would harm the other girls. The best solution, according to him, was to establish separate reformatories for them. He also reminded readers that police action was not a satisfactory way of saving these girls soliciting in the streets. Although the police frequently collected the children soliciting around Galata Bridge and Karaköy, they were compelled to release them as there was no proper place to contain them. And as soon as they were released, the children returned to the same miserable habits. As it was not possible to keep them in jail forever, establishing a reformatory was indispensable for solving the problem[13]

12 BOA, ZB, 486/17, 1324.Ağustos.31 (13 September 1908).

13 (ref sokak kizlari sbah)

Such alternative methods for the containment of "unsuitable women" were also on the agenda of the police. Given the financial conditions of the government, the establishment of a special reformatory was far from a practical alternative. The police considered sending women who were arrested to Darülaceze. On 10 October 1908, the Ministry of Police conveyed a request from the Istanbul Directory of Police to the Ministry of the Interior. It was stated that many homeless women caught while prostituting had been sent to the Directory of Police from local stations. The directory was having trouble deciding what to do about these women. Releasing them was not ideal as it meant that they would return to the streets and to prostitution. Moreover, those among them who were contaminated with various diseases should be kept in hospitals and treated. The issue was discussed in the Assembly of Police which suggested that these women be sent to Darülaceze while the contaminated ones among them be sent to hospitals as was being done in other civilized countries.[14] Yet the Ministry of Police rejected this suggestion on the basis that accepting homeless prostitutes into Darülaceze was inappropriate.[15]

On 4 November 1908, the Ministry of Police sent another memorandum to the Ministry of Interior stating that the acceptance of homeless prostitutes into Darülaceze was inappropriate. However, releasing the women would cause all kinds of trouble. In addition, their misery was noticeable. Therefore, the Istanbul directory of police requested that the Ministry of the Interior order the Şehremaneti to allocate a place for these women.[16] Following this request, the Ministry of the Interior sent an order to the Municipality of Istanbul on 8 November 1908. The order stated that the acceptance of homeless prostitutes into Darülaceze was inappropriate but because releasing the women back onto streets would cause various problems, the police were requesting the Municipality of Istanbul allocate a place for these women.[17]

14 BOA, DH.MKT, 2632/61, 1326.N.21 (17 October 1908).

15 ibid.

16 BOA, DH.MKT, 2653/24, 1326.L.15 (10 November 1908), BOA, ZB, 327/113, 1324.Teşrinievvel.22 (4 November 1908).

17 BOA, DH.MKT, 2653/24, 1326.L.15 (10 November 1908).

The Municipality of Istanbul replied negatively, stating that there was no appropriate place that the municipality could allocate for such women. In the reply it was also noted that in civilized countries such women were kept in special wards of women's prisons, separate from other women staying there. These places were under the authority of the police. Therefore, it was suggested that the police do the same.[18] The Ministry of Interior conveyed this reply to the Ministry of Police a day later.[19] The police repeated that the municipality should arrange shelter for homeless prostitutes.[20]

There was no general settlement between the police and municipality. Yet the issue was negotiated for individual cases. For example, the police seized Melek while she was prostituting herself in a hotel room in Derviş Street in Beyoğlu. Her client was the servant of the lawyer Yanko, who had an office in Valide Han. In the police inquiry, Melek related her story as follows: She was originally from Arabia and was brought to Istanbul by Şeyh Ibrahim, a slave commissioner, five or six years earlier. Immediately after her arrival, she was sold to Mustafa Rukneddin Bey. Mustafa Rukneddin Bey died a few years later and she was then sold to Nazmi Bey, a notable from Edirne. She lived in Nazmi Bey's house in Edirne until 1908. Upon the proclamation of liberty in 1908, she was freed. After gaining her freedom, she left Nazmi Bey's house and returned to Istanbul. In Istanbul she worked as a domestic servant in several houses under the supervision of Kolcu Emin. However, for some fifteen days, she was unable to find any work. Melek also claimed that she was forced into the hotel room against her will. She was not registered in the records of the census department, had relatives neither in Istanbul nor in Edirne, and did not know where exactly she was from. After the inquiry, the police wrote to the authorities of Darülaceze requesting it accept Melek into the institution. [21]

On 16 January 1911, the Ministry of the Interior sent the municipality a request about the acceptance of Hacer into Darülaceze. Hacer was originally from a town in Bulgaria. She had come to Istanbul eight or ten years earlier. She had been in the business of prostitution since then. Currently she was kept

18 BOA, DH.MKT, 2695/3, 1326.Z.05 (29 December 1908).

19 ibid.

20 BOA, DH.MKT, 2653/24, 1326.L.15 (10 November 1908).

21 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 34/70, 1326.Mayıs.15 (28 May 1910).

in Women's Penitentiary (*Nisa Misafirhanesi*). It was learned that she had no relatives remaining in her hometown, so it was not possible to send her back. It was appropriate to place her in domestic service or in a philanthropic institution, but it was not possible for her to continue in the *Nisa Misafirhanesi*. It was requested by the Directory of Public Security that Hacer be accepted into Darülaceze.[22]

An alternative policy was to send women to their families. For example, on 27 August 1910 the Istanbul Police reported that on 13 August 1910, three women—Ayşe, Fatma, and Resmiye—were seized by police who raided a hotel on a denunciation and found them in a room accompanied by two military officers and two vagrants. The police took three women to the station. Resmiye was surrendered to the Beyoğlu police as it was discovered that she had been residing in the house of the imam behind the barracks of Tophane. The stories of the other two women that emerged from their inquiries were related in the police report. Fatma was from Istanbul. Her father, Refik Efendi, a former officer in the Directory of Forestry, and her mother had died ten years before. Her only relative was her brother, Muhammed Ragıp Efendi, who was working in the consulate of St. Petersburg. Fatma started prostituting herself after the death of her parents, and she had quitted two years earlier when she married Abdullah from Sivas, Divriği. At the time, Abdullah had been working in a brickyard in Eyüp. The year before, Abdullah left his job in Istanbul and returned to Divriği taking Fatma with him. However, after a while he sent Fatma back to Istanbul. Ayşe was brought from Cide of Kastamonu province to Istanbul to work as a domestic servant. After working in several houses, she married Şeyh Hasan, an adopted child (*besleme*). As her husband had recently died, she was left alone without a livelihood. For ten days she had resided in the house of the imam of her neighborhood. The day she was seized, Feride and Fatma deceived her to join them while prostituting. Her parents were still alive in Cide. According to the police, releasing these two women would cause them to dare to continue with their immoral conducts The best solution was

22 BOA, DH.ID, 47-1/11, 1320.M.15 (24 April 1902).

to send Ayşe to Cide, and Fatma to Divriği; however this was more than the Hasköy police could afford to do.[23]

In most cases, finding women's families was not possible. On 18 April 1910, the Directory of Public Security sent a note to the Trabzon Police department asking it to resettle Hayrünisa, who was being sent to Trabzon for the second time, and to prevent her return to Istanbul. It was noted that the request was presented on an order sent to the governor of Trabzon by the Ministry of Interior about preventing the return of women sent to provincial cities.

The final request examined above concerned an individual case of a runaway domestic servant, Hayrünisa, who had been working in the mansion of the governor of Izmir, Mahmud Muhtar Bey, and was caught by the police while "soliciting in the streets" of Istanbul after she had escaped from his mansion. The police sent Hayrünisa to Trabzon where—she stated in her inquiry—she had some relatives. However, the police of Trabzon sent her back to Istanbul, stating that, contrary to Hayrünisa's claim, she had nobody there to care for and supervise her. However, this did not satisfy the police of Istanbul, and she was sent to Trabzon for a second time. A note from the governor of Trabzon to the Department of Public security dated 7 March 1910 stated that the settlement of this morally-deprieved woman in Trabzon, where she had no relatives to care for and supervise her, was improper.[24]

§ 6.3 Criminalization of Prostitution

As the examples above illustrate, the police had trouble finding shelter for women arrested while prostituting. They could not detain them, yet when the women were released, they returned to the streets. After 1908, a more systematic policing of the poor in Istanbul was on the agenda of the police. A new Law on Vagrancy was issued and work effectively put into practice. Parallel to this development, a draft law criminalizing unregistered prostitutes was also prepared by the police.

23 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 50/61, 1328.N.17 (22 September 1910).

24 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 96/7, 1328.R.07 (18 April 1910).

After 1908, the police sought a more systematic policing of the single, poor women in Istanbul. On 21 December 1910, an order was sent by the Directory of Public Security to the Istanbul police: Men who come to Dersaadet looking for a job, women not attended by a male guardian, and children of young ages should not be allowed to enter the capital city.[25]

On 23 May 1910, the Directory of Public Security presented a proposal to the Ministry of Interior and requested adding an extra article to the penal code that would define the penalties for women illegally prostituting. According to the police, these women behaved repulsively on the streets and had impudent relationships with lower-class men. It was pointed out that this left a bad impression in the thoughts and feelings of the people, violated the rules of religion and common decency, and was harmful to public morality and health. Considering this, the prevention and limitation of the detrimental behaviors of such women was necessary to establish and protect the public order. The police were doing their best to prevent the harmful effects of the situation through whatever means available even though a legal framework to permanently resolve the issue was missing. The legal means at hand, such as levying fines or reprimands based on regulations that concerned interfering with the police were insufficient. The police proposed that the penal code be revised and a more serious punishment be introduced for these women.[26]

In a memorandum on 9 June, the Ministry of the Interior asked why Article 254 of the penal code was insufficient. The police sent back a lengthy letter of explanation and stated that the new article was necessary for the police to put the new policy into practice in an effective way. fine was defined for those who did not obey governmental warnings in the Article 254 of the penal code, but from the perspective of the police, this was not sufficient in order to prevent the harms of prostitution. Article 254 addresses petty offenses rather than crimes against public order and security. Therefore, the police found it necessary to add a new article to Article 113 of the penal which would mandate detention from twenty-four hours to ten days or a fine from one to five Ottoman

25 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 98/104, 1328.Z.19 (22 December 1910).

26 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 58/48, 1328.Z.23 (31 December 1910).

gold lira for those who behaved against the peace of the people, public security, and public health.[27]

The ministry approved the proposal and the police prepared a draft law to be added to Article 113 of the penal code, presenting it to the Ministry of the Interior on 28 June.[28] The draft law stated:

> Those who do not obey the instructions and warnings of the police or other public officers, those involved in any kind of mischievous conduct or circumstance that is determined by the police to be as detrimental to public morals, to the stability of the security of the country, to the state of discipline and order, that threatens the peace and rest of the people, and is detrimental to efforts to prevent the dissemination of contagious diseases are to be sentenced to detention between twenty-four hours and ten days and a fine from one half to five Ottoman gold liras.[29]

The Ministry of Interior transmitted the draft law to the Ministry of Justice on 2 July 1910. In the accompanying note, the Ministry of Interior stated that the proposed draft was prepared on the request the Department of Public Security and was meant to put an end to the problem of clandestine prostitutes already scattered throughout residential neighborhoods and to limit the various problems caused by these women. The Ministry of Interior also underscored the vitality of the proposed law for the protection of public health as well as for general security and requested its inclusion in the penal code.[30]

On 28 November 1910, as no response had been conveyed to the police, the Directory of Public Security sent a note to the Ministry of Interior to ask whether there was any progress regarding the formerly submitted draft law and reminded the ministry of the urgency of the issue by stating that the police needed to apply the law every passing day and was waiting for its approval.[31]

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27 BOA, DH.EUM.KADL, 7/15, 1329.S.08 (8 February 1911).

28 BOA, DH.İD, 76/22, 1331.Ca.07 (14 April 1913).

29 BOA, DH.EUM.KADL, 7/15, 1329.S.08 (8 February 1911).

30 BOA, DH.İD, 76/22, 1331.Ca.07 (14 April 1913).

31 ibid.

Three days later, on 1 1 December, the Ministry of the Interior passed on the concerns of the police to the Ministry of Justice and once more requested the immediate inclusion of the draft law in the penal code.[32]

The Ministry of Justice replied the Ministry of Interior on 19 December, simply rejecting the draft. In the rejection letter, the Ministry of Justice pointed out that prostituting women were in fact victims of poverty, who deserved protection—they were not criminals who deserved punishment. As most of these women have been dragged into prostitution because of poverty, it was the duty of the government to protect these women by placing them into proper institutions designed to protect and provide for people in need, such as Darülaceze, or to provide for their livelihoods by other means. While trying to avoid the undesirable and annoying situations, all these aspects should be taken into account. Only then, would the treatment of these women be fair. If some women continued to behave in non-chaste and indecent ways despite the hand lent them by the government, levying a fine would be a more effective punishment since most suffered poverty. Such a penalty was already included in Article 251 of the penal code, so the Ministry of Justice determined that adding a new article to the penal code was needless.[33]

The Ministry of Interior transmitted the Ministry of Justice's memorandum to the police on 24 December 1910. The police administration, however, found the explanation unsatisfactory, and on 22 January 1911, it wrote a letter to the Ministry of Interior requesting permission to act in accordance with the submitted draft law. In the reply dated 28 January, the Ministry of Interior reminded the police that the Ministry of Justice had declared that Article 251 of the penal code provided the requested legal framework and ordered the police to act in accordance with it.[34]

To resolve the problems caused by the proliferation of clandestine prostitutes in the capital, the Istanbul police proposed on 13 September 1911 to apply the third paragraph of Article 99 of the penal code to prostituting women and their associates. The situation, according to the police, was alarming: Women were renting houses in the residential neighborhoods of Üsküdar, Beyoğlu,

32 ibid.

33 ibid., BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 58/48, 1328.Z.23 (31 December 1910).

34 BOA, DH.İD, 76/22, 1331.Ca.07 (14 April 1913).

and Istanbul and prostituted themselves in these houses. Many other unchaste women often joined them in these houses. As their immoral behavior offended common decency and public morality, the honorable residents of these neighborhoods frequently complained to the local police. However, the police were unable to act efficiently because they lacked the necessary legal support. As no punishments were legally defined for such women and their associates, the police could not arrest or detain them. Secondly, the police could not raid these houses because the inviolability of the was assured by the constitution. Therefore, these women who were free of any supervision or control caused many scandals. Sometimes honorable residents of these neighborhoods were provoked by these scandals and the coming and goings of morally suspicious men in their neighborhoods. Moreover, as these unregistered women were not undergoing medical inspections, they were the cause of the dissemination of contagious diseases.[35]

On 14 October 1911, the Ministry of Interior asked the Directory of Istanbul Police for an explanation whether the application of Article 80 of the Police Regulation—ordering the closing and prevention of brothels found troubling by the police as well as houses in residential neighborhoods that had been turned into brothels—was sufficient to impede the prostituting women and their associates. The police replied on 12 November 1911 stating that it police points were put in front of brothels that were found troubling and those that operated in residential neighborhoods. If a given house did not belong to the brothel keeper, he was forced to leave the house. However, if a house belonged to the brothel keeper, it was not possible to force him to leave his own house. On the other hand, forcing a brothel keeper to leave a given house was insufficient since prostitutes and their associates were constantly on the move. When they realized they would be forced to leave a house, they easily moved to another in another part of the city and would even return to the same neighborhood a few weeks later. Also, women prostituting in houses generally resided in other places, coming to these houses only when invited. Closing a house was effective only when the prostitutes themselves were residents of the house. Otherwise, the article was not sufficient to enforce a policy of

35 ibid.

preventing these women from prostituting. Indeed, no article in the criminal law targeted prostitutes and their collaborators and the police regulation enabled only the closing of registered brothels, so given this limited legal framework it was not possible to prevent prostitution.

After this correspondence, on 4 February 1912, the Directory of Police proposed another draft of an act to the Ministry of the Interior to protect general public morality and maintain the peace of the people.[36] The efforts of the police to locate prostitutes within a legal criminal framework was futile. On 29 March 1913, the Istanbul Directory of Police sent a slightly different proposal to the Ministry of the Interior that conserned the treatment of clandestine prostitutes. This time, the director of the Istanbul police defined prostituting women as helpless and in need of protection and suggested establishing a reformatory where these women could be placed and trained in new skills to earn a livelihood. He explained that the prostitution that went on in residential neighborhoods and fired up neighborhoods provoked discomfort and complaints on the part of honorable citizens. Although the police tried hard to prevent this situation and often arrested prostituting women, they had trouble deciding what to do with them after the arrest.

The police were at pains to release these women back onto the streets. As these women were in deprived situations, had nowhere to stay, and had no one to supervise them, releasing them resulted in the continuation of not only their immoral behavior and misery, but of the many problems they caused them. On the other hand, the police were unable to find a place where these women could be kept and protected. The director pointed out that some of these women were contaminated and threatened public health. Moreover, this issue was important for the establishment of public order and security, as the existence of these women caused many problems. According to the police director, it was necessary that the government take action to prevent these dilemmas and rescue these helpless women from the poverty and misery they suffered. On this point, the police director proposed establishing a reformatory where these women would be protected and trained to earn their livelihood. He informed the ministry that he had already contacted the Şehremini

36 ibid.

Pasha on the issue and that he had agreed to provide a pavilion for these women in Darülaceze. However, a monthly stipend of two liras for each woman should be allocated by the government. This money would save many helpless women from misery and would be needed for only one year as the work of these women were expected to gain the money they needed for themselves in the following years. According to the police director, this reformatory would prevent immoral situations, rescue many lives, and end the miseries being suffered, and he requested to be authorized to conduct the necessary actions emergently.[37] On 5 April 1913, the Ministry relayed a copy of this letter to the Municipality of Istanbul noting that the Directory of the Istanbul had requested that a place be allocated for clandestine prostitutes in Darulaceze.[38]

In the reply sent on 8 April 1913, the authorities of the municipality admitted that they had previously agreed to allocate a place in Darülaceze for these helpless women who suffered poverty and misery However, he added, there was no longer any appropriate place in Darülaceze to place them. It would be necessary for the government to allocate five thousand liras to construct a separate pavilion that would be allocated to these women. Moreover, two liras per month for the sustenance of each woman was also necessary. Only then it would be possible to accept them into Darulaceze and employ them with handicrafts.[39]

On 13 April 1913, the Ministry of the Interior informed the Istanbul Directory of Police of the situation and the conditions laid out by Şehremini for the acceptance of clandestine prostitutes. However, the Ministry of the Interior declared that it was impossible for the government to allocate such an amount for the settlement of these women. It was even impossible for the ministry to find money for such a project. Then the ministry brought forward another solution which was used on the fact that most of these women were not residents of the capital. Those found contaminated after a medial inspection would be sent to the hospital in Kastamonu, and others would be sent to their hometowns. The few from Istanbul would remain in the capital. The third

37 ibid.

38 ibid.

39 ibid.

group could be placed in Darülaceze or employed in the private sector, saving them from prostitution and misery. The police were ordered to conduct actions accordingly.[40]

§ 6.4 Conclusion

Deliberations among authorities and public discussions in the press continued without reaching a reconciliation. What was common in these discussions was a particular conception of urban space defined primarily as male space. Women who ventured into it, particularly single, poor ones, were seen as endangering not only their own sexual reputations and purity, but also public morality, public health, and security. Governmental authorities and public intellectuals alike argued that single, poor women should be excluded from the urban life of Istanbul in one way or another.

Like the streets of Istanbul, police archives are overrun with "disorderly" women, and, just as society struggled to find a suitable place to settle them, the police were equally troubled with the issue of containing them. "Disorderly women," both as victims (completely dependent on paternal society) and has potentially dangerous outsiders, were figures that disrupted the idealized gender regime upon which patriarchal authority depended. Disorderly women appeared as familial societal others upon whom insecurities regarding the stability of both entities could be projected. Their existence continued to provoke the fear, anxiety, guilt, and inadequacy of society by its very presence.

We have no direct access to how lower-class women actually experienced urban life in its many forms. Most of what we know about the lower-class female population of Istanbul points to the hardships and sexual dangers that faced them. The isolation from kin and community left them vulnerable to sexual and other kinds of abuse, and the absence of male breadwinners confined them to extreme poverty as the job market in late Ottoman Istanbul provided only a limited range of poorly-paid, exploitative choices to women who lacked skills.

40 ibid.

However, we know from the documents that many poor women tried to reach Istanbul, tried to return when they were sent to other places, and escaped from the houses for which they worked or from the houses of their fathers and husbands, in order to establish a life in the capital on their own. Istanbul provided these poor women at least the hope of personal freedom and of the ability to shape their own lives. In the Ottoman capital, some found freedom from the constraints of custom and community, and unprecedented opportunities for redefining and expressing the self. Even the fear they provoked in the ruling elite and middle-class society implies that late Ottoman Istanbul should be understood as an urban space offering a set of opportunities for the everyday negotiation of self and identity.

7

Lives and Labor of Female Domestic Servants in the Late Ottoman Istanbul (1900-1914)

> *The personal history of women who wander around as prostitutes is curious. These girls come [to Istanbul] to work as domestic servants in the mansions and houses. However, as victims of their own ignorance, they lose their chastity and honor and are dragged into vice. When a girl loses her chastity and honor, either the employer dismisses her or she herself flees from the house she works in. Then…*[1]

In late Ottoman Istanbul, domestic service had an important presence in the economic, social and cultural life of the city. With regard to income generating activities, lower-class women were restricted in the early 1900. Domestic service, that most traditional form of female employment, occupied the largest share of females working in Istanbul. According to the 1907 census, eight percent of Istanbul households hired at least one live-in domestic servant, most of whom were young females. Eighty percent of domestic servants

1 Mustafa Galip, *Fahişeler Hayatı, Redayet-i Ahlakiye* (İstanbul: Mahmut Bey Matbaası, 1338).

were female, while sixty percent were under thirty years of age.[2] There were also women engaged in domestic work in the households in which they lived but were defined as kin or omitted from the census records altogether. This means at least seven thousand women worked as live-in domestic servants. In addition, another group of women, though it is impossible to estimate their numbers, worked in daily services such as cleaning and laundry.

Alongside their numerical significance, female domestic servants gained a symbolic importance in that period. Vivid public discussions emerged concerning the recruitment and working conditions of domestic servants, particularly female ones. The social control and moral discipline of female domestic servants was also a recurrent theme among late Ottoman literary elites.[3] Authors complained about the shortage of competent, committed servants and lamented the moral and material risks they carried both for the households for which they worked and for the Ottoman society as a whole. Along with dispensing a great deal of advice on how to exercise proper authority over domestic servants, this literature burdened employers with the duties of social and spatial control and the moral discipline of female servants.[4] Female domestic servants were also prominent figures in late Ottoman fiction, populating a considerable number of novels and stories from the period.[5] The growth of this literature was a sign of an emergent "servant problem" among the Ottoman middle classes in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In this chapter I argue that the constellation of anxieties inherent in the expression "servant problem" emerged from the ambiguities brought out by the redefinitions of the Ottoman public and private spheres—particularly in the second half of the nineteenth century—which paralleled social, economic, and demographic changes that Ottoman Empire was undergoing . The demise

2 Alan Duben and Cem Behar, "Haneler ve Aileler: Yapı ve Değişim," in *İstanbul Haneleri: Evlilik, Aile ve Doğurganlık, 1880-1940* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınevi, 1996), 61-100.

3 For the representation of female domestic servants in Ottoman somen's magazines, see Yavuz Selim Karakışla, *Osmanlı Hanımları ve Hizmetçi Kadınlar*, Akıl Fikir Yayınları (İstanbul: 2015).

4 ibid.

5 Osman Gündüz, *Meşrutiyet Romanında Yapı ve Tema 2* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1997), 767-878.

of slavery and its replacement with other forms of domestic labor also brought about additional ambiguities and anxieties.

As discussed in previous chapters, young, single, working-class women in late Ottoman Istanbul was a particularly troubling component of the ever-increasing urban poor. Being free of patriarchal relations that would have controlled their spatial existence, social behavior, labor, and sexuality, they were perceived as the primary sources of prostitution and vice in the city. Indeed, for a certain number of young women deprived of the financial support of their families and communities, prostitution was the most sensible and even the only option to which to turn. The figure of the female domestic servant embodied a particular set of nineteenth-century middle-class anxieties about young, single, working-class women. Unlike their sisters in the streets, they were supposedly confined to middle-class houses. However, their situation in the houses in which they were confined was ambiguous in many ways. Indeed, early twentieth-century Istanbul, they were suspended on the edge between the middle-class household for which they worked and the streets. The domestic servant was in the home, but not of it; her labor and very existence in the household was essential for the remaking of the middle-class family to which she remained an outsider. She was indispensable for the workings of urban, middle-class houses, but also a continuous source of discontent and unease in those same houses. She could money, secrets, and honor leaked out of the house if she was not properly controlled and disciplined. She was also a conduit from outside who could bring disease, immorality, and corruption with her into the home. And last, although female domestic servants were dependent on the households for which they worked in many, complicated ways, the goalie they were free people who could choose to leave. They were perceived as "marginal insiders and intimate outsiders" with respect to middle-class domestic life and thus feared.

In what follows, I first examine how the relationship between servants/domestic employees and masters/employers changed in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. I argue that given the demise of slavery in late nineteenth century, the great majority of female domestic servants were legally free. Yet, they were bound to the households or which they worked through a discourse of paternal protection. Hiring a domestic employee was often portrayed as a

benevolent act through which the employer provided shelter and subsistence to a needy woman. The discourse of benevolent paternalism not only allowed employers to exploit the labor of domestic servants, but to control her social and moral behaviors, and sexuality. I argue that in late Ottoman Istanbul domestic service functioned as an institution that controlled the lives, labor, and sexuality of young single working-class women.

Depending on the role of beneficent patriarch that was attributed to employers in the prevailing gender regime, the employers tended to view their female servants as dependents--entirely under their authority. However, the same gender regime allowed other parties—such as the government, kin, fathers, husbands, and lovers—to claim control over the lives, labor, and sexuality of the same women. Usually, fathers perceived themselves as the real authorities over the labor and sexuality of their daughters. Through paternalistic, mostly customary, contracts, they transferred this authority to the masters of their daughters for specified periods. When a more advantageous offer presented itself or when they felt that the situation was no longer favorable, fathers reappeared, claiming the right to renegotiate or renege on contracts with their daughters' masters. Hence, I focus on conflicts among men who claimed their own "paternal rights" over the labor and sexuality of female domestic servants. In doing so, I demonstrate how the idea of paternal protection shaped contests among employers, families, male friends, and the female domestic servants themselves with respect to determining the terms and conditions of household relationships in late Ottoman Istanbul. Covered with discourses of paternal protection, the struggle was at its core for control of domestic workers' lives, labor, and sexuality.

Sexuality was often a site of exploitation for Ottoman domestic servants. However, this chapter moves beyond his observation and focuses on the conjunctures where sexuality emerged as a realm of social mobility and work. Young women working as domestic servants in middle-class households of the early twentieth century frequently left the houses they worked. These women left with male partners or simply left in pursuit of survival and pleasure. Although runaway were usually depicted as victims, who put their lives and chastity at risk, I argue, while running away they created moments, which they took the control of their labor and sexuality in their own hands. Moreover, I

suggest that they were aware of the opportunities that the rapidly urbanizing Istanbul of early twentieth century could present them with. At these moments, sexuality was a potent instrument for the empowerment of young domestic servants. Prostituting themselves or finding sexual partners, who could support them increased their ability to survive out of customary households. Overall, this chapter is concerned with the relationship among sexuality, gender, and labor processes. I focus particularly on the discourses of the paternal protection of young women and the symbolic and actual transitions between female domestic service and prostitution.

A brief note on terminology: I define domestic worker as a person performing domestic chores in the home of a third party, with or without remuneration. This is distinct from people performing household chores in their own homes. In the Ottoman world, female domestic servants were called different names, such as *evlatlık*, *besleme*, *ahretlik*. Throughout the chapter I prefer the term domestic worker. Yet I discuss the usages, meanings, and the connotations of diverse terms such as *evlatlık*, *besleme*, *ahretlik* used in the late Ottoman discourse. I also use them if they appear as such in original documents and articles. In so doing, I give an idea of the frequency of their usage—at least in the literary culture and official language of the period.

§ 7.1 Slaves, Adopted Daughters, Free Workers

Up to the late nineteenth century, slavery continued to be one of the main sources of domestic labor in elite households of the Ottoman Empire. The abolition of slavery in the Ottoman Empire was first declared in 1846;[6] however, the demise of slavery was slow and gradual. Until the mass migration of Circassians to Anatolia after the Crimean War of 1853-56, the Ottoman government did not see domestic slave trade as an issue provided that the slaves were imported from outside the empire. What prompted a turn in Ottoman slavery policies was the reappraisal of domestic slavery after Circassians refugees

6 Hakan Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and its Demise, 1800-1909* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1996).

started to sell their children, particularly females, as domestic slaves depending on the existence of a hereditary slave caste among Circassians.[7] Former Circassian landlords managed to maintain their rights as slaveholders after their migration to Anatolia, and soon, selling Circassian children as slaves to elite households became prevalent among Circassian immigrant communities. Alongside legitimacy provided by the existence of a hereditary slave caste, the poverty of immigrant families and their desire to secure better lives for their children contributed to turning young Circassian girls into a prolific source of domestic slaves.[8] However, the sudden return of household slavery created alarm among reform-minded social and governmental elites; as the prolongation of slavery implied backwardness in the face of the aspirations for a modern state. In late nineteenth century, the Ottoman government started to seriously restrict the slave trade, particularly the Circassian slave trade. In the early 1900s, slavery was restricted to a small number of elite households. Finally, after the Revolution of 1908, a law mandating its abolishment was issued to purge the empire of slavery.[9]

However, the demise of slavery as an institution did not bring out the immediate replacement of slave labor with free wage labor. Processes of domestic labor in late Ottoman world continued to be informed by domestic slavery. Medline Zilfi points out that female domestic work in the Ottoman Middle East was informed by

> evaluative perceptions that were also common to other places and cultures throughout the world. The ambiguity defined between women's duties and socially recognized "work," or between female kin and female servant was definitive for female servants' situation in the households throughout the world. In addition, the persistence of slavery into the late nineteenth century as a prominent form of female domestic

7 Ömer Şen, *Osmanlıda Köle Olmak* (İstanbul: Kapı Yayınları).

8 Ehud Toledano, *Osmanlı Köle Ticareti 1840-1890*, trans. Y. Hakan Erdem (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1994).

9 Ömer Şen, *Osmanlıda Köle Olmak* (İstanbul: Kapı Yayınları).

work had been a keynote in definition of female domestic labor in the Ottoman context.[10]

As Toledano points out, "the gradual, yet resistant, decline of the established practice of domestic slavery did not easily bring about wage-labor arrangements for servants and frequently *beslemes* took their place."[11] In most households, slaves were substituted by bound workers that were usually called as *beslemes* (feedlings) and *evlatlıks* (adopted children). Though, *beslemes* and *evlatlıks* were legally free individuals, in many ways their dependence on the households for which they worked and their vulnerability were comparable to that of domestic slaves. As Ferhunde Özbay argues, the practices that took the place of domestic slavery such as adoption as a continuation of slavery in domestic work. According to Özbay "slavery as an institution" disappeared, but not the slavery itself in domestic work. It transformed to other practices such as *evlatlıks*, in which the master-slave relation was reproduced.[12]

The official demise of slavery did not radically alter labor processes in late Ottoman households. Neither did it change the lives or working conditions of female domestic servants. Most of the vulnerabilities and insecurities suffered by domestic slaves in earlier periods haunted the lives of domestic servants in later decades. The hardships faced and abuses suffered by women working in domestic jobs continued in similar ways. In most cases, female domestic work continued to be forced and unpaid. Yet we should refrain from equating early-twentieth- century domestic service to the domestic slavery of former periods and from restricting the world of domestic labor solely to a site of victimhood. This attitude prevents us from recognizing the richness and diversity of the lives and experiences of female domestic laborers and, devaluing female agency and female domestic labor.

It is important to acknowledge that the notion of slavery continued to inform the nature of domestic labor and women's role in it in the periods

10 Madeline C. Zilfi, *Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire: The Design of Difference* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

11 Ehud R. Toledano, *As if Silent and Absent: Bonds of Enslavement in the Islamic Middle East* (New Haven: Yale Univerity Press, 2007), 73.

12 Ferhunde Özbay, *Turkish Female Child Labor in Domestic Work: Past and Present* (İstanbul: Project Report prepared for ILO/IPEC, 1999).

following the abolishment of slavery. However, it is also important to emphasize the increasing social and economic agency of female domestic workers in the late Ottoman world. I ask the following: What changed in the recruitment processes and working conditions of domestic workers with the abolishment of slavery? To what extent was the control of masters/employers over female domestic workers restricted in this process? In what ways were domestic workers empowered by the new situation? In what ways were the mastery of the employer over female domestic workers constructed given that they no longer legally "belonged" to him? And who were the other parties that started to benefit from the exploitation of "free" female domestic labor? Through the guidance of such questions, it becomes possible to trace the richness and diversity of the lives and experiences of female domestic workers and explore the extent of their control over their own lives. Moreover, it also becomes possible to recognize the effect of female domestic labor on the social and economic life of the late Ottoman capital, as well as its effects on both poor, rural households and communities as well as on urban middle-class households

The abolishment of slavery did not prevent most domestic workers in the early twentieth century from being forced to start working in domestic service. Most female live-in domestic servants in late Ottoman Istanbul were hired out as temporary workers or officially given up for adoption by their own families to work in other households while they were still small children.[13] What was the reason for this? Why did parents themselves sell or hire out their small children to work in others' houses? First, sending out small children to service reduced the number of mouths to feed. Moreover, parents were paid for hiring out or selling their children, and this money was important for the subsistence of remaining family members. Probably, families also thought that these children would grow up in better conditions and become better trained for married life during the period in which they worked in well-to-do households. The intermediaries between the families and employers of the children also made profits in this process.

13 Yahya Araz, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Çocuk Olmak (16. Yüzyıldan 19. Yüzyıl Başlarına)* (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2013).

In some cases, finding work as a domestic worker was a good solution for destitute children and orphans. Working as domestic worker was considered a suitable way of finding a shelter and a suitable living for women without families, such as widows or unmarried women. In this sense, domestic service was constructed to be a "refuge" for people without a supporting family. Hiring a domestic servant was frequently masqueraded as a foster care arrangement or as charity, as names such as *evlatlık, besleme,* or *ahretlik* imply. However, women and female children (who could be poor relatives, destitute children, orphans, widows, etc.), who were accepted into the household were openly expected to work as domestic servants in exchange for their sustenance. They were fostered or accepted into families mainly so that they spend their days occupied with various types of domestic labor.[14]

Although jobs accomplished by domestic servants varied, especially in elite households that employed more than one domestic workers the majority of domestic workers (those working for the middle-class families) were "maids-of-all-work" and the only live-in staff.[15] They were responsible for cleaning, bed making, laundry, ironing, mending, shopping, cooking, serving meals, carrying water, washing dishes, child care—including dressing, diapering, feeding, taking to and from school, and babysitting—and care for the ill, disabled, and elderly, including the most intimate types of care. It was hard, demanding work. They had no time for leisure. They worked seven days a week and were "on call" twenty-four hours a day. It was their labor that made it possible for middle-class Ottoman women to become educated, read, write, attend public events, participate in organizations, and care and educate their own children in ways that reinforced class distinction.

As Cem Behar and Alain Duben argue, "in late Ottoman Istanbul domestic service had a clear lifecycle. Frequently, very young girls were preferred. When they were the proper age, they left the house in which they worked to marry. The ones who left the house were replaced by younger ones."[16]

14 ibid., Nazan Maksudyan, "Foster-Daughter or Servant, Charity or Abuse: Beslemes in the Late Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21, 4 (2008): 488-512.

15 Alan Duben and Cem Behar, "Haneler ve Aileler: Yapı ve Değişim," in *İstanbul Haneleri: Evlilik, Aile ve Doğurganlık, 1880-1940* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınevi, 1996), 61-100.

16 ibid., 77-78.

Although in some cases the state of being domestic servant could endure. In 1907, only 15-percent of female domestic servants were over fifty. The young ages of domestic servants allowed employers to consolidate their strong power and control over them. Most probably, domestic servant suffered from the severe control exercised by employers over their dress, speech, use of leisure time, and contact with family and friends. The girls grew up in unfamiliar, isolated environments far from their own families and communities. Living isolated in another family's private space made them subject to every kind of exploitation and abuse. While writing about *beslemes* Nazan Maksudyan argues,

> employment was regarded as a form of charity: They performed household chores, and the employers, in return, pledged to supply the child's basic needs – shelter, food, and clothing. The employers paid no wage relying on the assumption that taking custody of a child was a benevolent act that did not result in an employer-employee relationship.[17]

The work of these children in other people's households was regarded as an apprenticeship for married life and a chance for social mobility in the form of a better marriage. Nezahat Hanim, who lived in an upper-class household in pre-First World War Istanbul recalls that "there was a continuous circulation; they were trained, made their dowries, grew up, and then left. They were replaced by newcomers." Anything associated with domestic service was undervalued and perceived as unimportant, whether it domestic worker's labor or identity.[18]

A new middle class and bureaucracy in Istanbul, changing lifestyles—a transformation of family structures and the status of middle-class women in their households, and new consumption habits were emerging. Hiring cheap domestic labor was crucial for the construction of elite and middle-class urban families. In a period when slavery had been abolished, families were smaller and lost the help of (female) extended family members. The responsibilities

17 Nazan Maksudyan, "Foster-Daughter or Servant, Charity or Abuse: Beslemes in the Late Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21, 4 (2008): 488-512.

18 Alan Duben and Cem Behar, "Haneler ve Aileler: Yapı ve Değişim," in *İstanbul Haneleri: Evlilik, Aile ve Doğurganlık, 1880-1940* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınevi, 1996), 61-100, 79.

and duties of middle-class women increased as educators of their children and as public representatives of their husbands outside the home. In urban, middle-class households, rural female children were employed to fill the gap left by former slaves, extended family members, and middle class-women themselves. This is particularly true for child workers disguised as fostering arrangement. Child domestic workers living with their employers were most vulnerable to work related abuse.

§ 7.2 Negotiating Women's Labor behind a Gloss of 'Benevolent Paternalism': The Employer, The Father, His Daughter and Her Lover

Slave masters held an almost, legally mandated authority and control over the lives, labor, and sexuality of their female domestic slaves. Although, the abolition of slavery restricted the legal basis of such absolute authority and control, employers of late-nineteenth-and early-twentieth-century female domestic servants tried to maintain similar rights through implementing a paternalistic discourse. In accordance with the prevailing gender regime, masters viewed female servants as dependents entirely under their authority. However, the same gender regime gave some other parties such as the state, fathers, kin, husbands and lovers to claim control over the life, labor and sexuality of the same women. Often masters had to negotiate their rights over domestic servants with other parties who disputed the terms, duration, and wages for the service. Usually fathers perceived themselves as the ultimate authority over the labor and sexuality of their daughters, emphasizing their paternalistic rights. Through mostly oral contracts, they transferred this authority to their daughters' employers for roughly-specified periods. When a more advantageous offer presented itself or when they felt that the situation was no more favorable for themselves, they reappeared with a claim of the right to renegotiate, or renege on, their contracts with their daughter's employers. These conflicts sometimes ended up in police stations and courts, the records of which reveal similar conceptualizations of paternalistic rights over the labor and sexuality of women. In this section, I use archival documents to answers the following questions: How was the authority of an employer constructed? With

which mechanisms was this authority played out? And how it was negotiated and challenged by different parties?

As I emphasized on various occasions in previous chapters, the late Ottoman cultural perception contained within it the notion of a male head of household who serves as a paternal protector and benefactor. In late Ottoman domestic service, the power of employers over domestic servants was consolidated through an ideal of benevolent paternalism inherently linked to patriarchy and the subordination of women to men, both within the family and in society. The patriarchal authority of the master over domestic servants was consolidated through this ideology which led to the exploitation of their labor and maintained their infantile status as people to be protected, disciplined, and controlled. Thus, age-old paternalism that had been espoused for centuries was carried into the middle-class home in the nineteenth century. As Davidoff argues, "wives, children, servants, laborers, all could be described in the language of paternalism as the dependents and children of their father, their master, their guardian."[19] Again Davidoff reminds us that the supreme position of the patriarch was not achieved, but ascribed through class, racial, and gender ideology.[20] The employer, who played the role of protector-guardian, was to shelter and protect those in the household as well as to surveille, control, and discipline them. Female domestic servants, like other dependents of the household, needed constant supervision. They had to consign control over their lives to their masters in return for the protection and shelter they were provided and enjoyed. In this gendered regime, the devaluation of women's identities went hand-in-hand with the devaluation of women's labor. Although servant work was crucial for the making the of households for which they worked and for the making of the identities of their masters and mistresses, domestic service was conceived as something other than work.

In late-nineteenth-and early-twentieth-century Istanbul, the master's power over domestic servants was neither absolute nor unconditional. In many cases, other men—like fathers, brothers, fiancées, and other potential masters—challenged the authority of the master and claimed rights to the

19 Leonore Davidoff, Hall, Catherine, *Familiy Fortunes* (London and New York: Routledge, 1987), 21.

20 Leonore Davidoff, *Family Story: Blood, Contract and Intimacy* (London: Longman, 1999), 166.

labor and sexuality of women. In this part of the chapter I focus on the conflicts among men who claimed "paternal rights" over the labor and sexuality of female domestic servants for themselves. By focusing on these conflicts, I demonstrate how the idea of paternal protection shaped contests among employers, families, male friends and the female domestic servants themselves to determine the terms and conditions of household relationship in the late Ottoman Istanbul. Covered with notions of paternal protection, the struggle at its core was for control of the domestic workers' life, labor and sexuality.

Azime started to work as a domestic servant in the house of Hakkı Bey in Heybeliada when she was just eleven years old. In the six years' time she worked in the house, her father appeared a few times to see his daughter and take some money from the householders. Yet in his last visit, the father was banished from entering the house and seeing his daughter. The resentful father then went to the local police station and returned accompanied by policemen. They were told that Azime was not at home, though the father insisted that he saw his daughter crying in one of the windows of the house.

The next day, the father submitted a petition to the police requesting that his daughter be returned to him. In the petition, he stated that Azime had been working in the house of Hakkı Bey for six years. In the meantime, he had visited her just a few times. He granted that on his first visits, he received a satisfying amount of money from the householders who paid for the expenditures of his trip to Istanbul from his hometown. Last year, however, he was paid very little–not even enough to cover his travel expenses. This time, he bitterly complained, he was banished from seeing his own child. He highlighted that he came for nothing just because of his parental love and affection for his daughter. He also claimed that it was no longer appropriate for a girl of his daughter's age—Azime was then seventeen years old—to continue working as a domestic servant. And he requested that his daughter be surrendered to him and that her salary be paid to him. However, Azime was not surrendered to his father. She, herself preferred to stay in Hakkı Bey's house and did not want to return to her village with her father.[21]

21 BOA, DH.EUM.VRK, 21/50, 1329.Ca.07 (6 May 1911).

İbrahim Efendi, an officer in the Directorate of Revenue, submitted a petition to the Ministry of Interior concerning his domestic servant Ayşe. He stated that twelve-year-old Ayşe, who had been staying in his house for more than three years, had fled a month ago. He was recently informed that she was staying in the house of a certain Sait Efendi who lived in a neighborhood around Şehzadebaşı. He requested that she be taken from that house and sent to Izmir to be returned to her father. İbrahim Efendi stated that Ayşe had been trusted to his custody by her father on his own promise that he would return her to her father whenever the father asked. Yet, İbrahim Efendi continued, as Ayşe had fled his house, he requested the police hand over Ayşe to her father. He was worried that she would get into trouble if she continued to stay with Sait Efendi. He added that she stole some money from his house when she escaped. It was not possible to prove this. He warned that he was afraid that if she stayed in Istanbul, where she had no relatives, it could lead to trouble. The police started an investigation. Ayşe was found in the house that had been indicated by İbrahim Efendi. She stated that she escaped from İbrahim Efendi's house because his family beat her frequently and she requested to be handed over to her father in Izmir. In the end, the police sent her to Izmir to be handed over to her father.[22]

Ten-year-old Vesile, who was an orphan from a village near Kayseri, worked as a domestic servant in the house of İsmail Hakkı Paşa, the governor (*mutasarrıf*) of Kayseri. Two years after she started, when the paşa was appointed to Yozgat, Vesile moved to Yozgat along with the family. However, shortly little after the move, a man from Vesile's village, Talaslıoğlu Hasan, submitted a petition to the police of Kayseri. Hasan argued that Vesile was his fiancé and that their engagement had been arranged with the permission of Vesile's father while he was still alive. According to Hasan, her master took Vesile to Yozgat against her will. Hence, he requested that the police return Vesile should to Kayseri and submit her to him. He stated that he was planning to marry her in a short time. However, İsmail Hakkı Paşa refused to send the girl. He stated that Vesile was under his supervision and was currently being trained by his mother, Münire, in his house. He asserted that the engagement

22 BOA, ZB, 405/62, 1325.Teşrinievvel.09 (22 October 1909).

was not legitimate as the girl had been under his supervision for nearly two years. He declined to return Vesile as she was not ready for marriage and she had nobody to supervise her in her village.[23]

In all the cases summarized above, the main conflict was among the men who "paternal rights" over the labor and sexuality of the women for themselves. In the case of Azime, the employer claimed to have paid her father enough for her work though the father found it insufficient. To reinforce his "paternal rights" over his daughter, the father evokes Azime's age, arguing that it was time for her to move on from domestic service to marriage. In the case of Ayşe, the employer sites a promise between Ayşe's father and himself to reject the authority of another over Ayşe. He was ready to give up his own authority, but only if it was replaced by her father's, not by another man's. He reinforces his position by recalling the "trouble" that await Ayşe if she lived with another man. Indeed, we see authorities of three different men in conflict. In the case of Vesile, who was an orphan, the parties in conflict were an employer and a man claiming to be Vesile's fiancé. While the fiancé based his argument on his right to marry her, the employer based his argument on the fact that she was too young to get married. Fathers usually recalled their daughters when the opportunity to make money from their daughters' labor was lessened by physical distance.

Ottoman officers and bureaucrats frequently recruited girls in in the cities in which they were stationed and took these women with them when they moved to another locality. In such cases, the fates of girls were also negotiated by other parties. Take, for example, the story of Leyla from Tavas, a town near Denizli. She started to work as a domestic servant in the house of Emin Paşa when he was the mutasarrıf of Denizli. When the Paşa and his family moved to Istanbul, they took her with them. After a while, Leyla's father submitted a petition requesting the return of his daughter to him in Denizli himself. The police took Leyla from the mansion of Emin Paşa and sent her to Denizli to be submitted to her father. She was accompanied by police on her trip to Denizli from Istanbul.[24]

23 BOA, DH.MKT, 1018/43, 1323.Ş.20 (20 October 1905).

24 BOA, ZB, 401/142, 1321.Eylül.06 (19 September 1905).

İsmet, a young girl from Porvi, a town near Edirne worked as a domestic servant in the house of a doctor in the Edirne Military Hospital. İsmet's father, İsmail Çavuş, worked in the municipality of Porvi and submitted a petition to the local police. İsmail claimed that his daughter was taken to Istanbul without his consent and put to work in the house of the father-in-law of the aforementioned doctor. He requested that his daughter be returned to Porvi and submitted to him. The doctor granted that İsmet was indeed working in his father-in-law's house in Aksaray, Istanbul. Yet he argued that it was a temporary situation. Yet, since İsmail Çavuş insisted that his daughter be returned to him, Aksaray police went to Memduh Bey's house and took the girl. However, this was not the end of the story. 175 guruş were needed for Ismet's trip to Porvi. Memduh Bey and his family refused to pay this money claiming that they owed the girl nothing; they just gave her a 30 guruş stipend. They also refused to accept the girl into their house again. İsmet was temporarily placed in the house of an officer in the local police station, and the money for her trip was requested of her father.[25]

In the context of paternal protection, the employer was burdened with responsibilities other than providing shelter and subsistence—social and spatial control and sexual discipline prominent among them. The following case sheds light on how employers were expected to provide paternal protection to domestic servants. Elizabeth, a young girl working as a domestic servant in a Muslim household, was seized by a police patrol in Beyoğlu and taken to the Beyoğlu police station on the basis that she had been strolling with a man in the streets behind hotel Pera Palas Hotel. The man with her wore a black women's *çarşaf* as camouflage, yet police determined that he was a man because of his mustache. At the police station, Elizabeth stated that she was working as a domestic servant in the house of Ziya Molla in Kızıltoprak. She claimed that she had not fled from the house in which she worked but had permission from the women of the house to go out. The *çarşaf* worn by the man accompanying her was also provided by a woman from the house in which she worked. After the information Elizabeth provided was verified, she was sent to Kızıltoprak

25 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 49/31, 1328.N.05 (10 September 1910).

to be surrendered to the house in which she worked. However, before she was released, the householders were warned with respect to the repetition of such incidences.[26]

Even in the cases of claims for the slavery on the part of the masters, fathers and brothers could reclaim their "paternal rights" based on the fact that slavery had been abolished. For example, a Circassian man complained to the police that a Circassian from Aziziye, Hasan Bey, had submitted his daughters to Esirci Mehmed Ağa who, in turn, sold them as slaves. He demanded that his daughters be returned to him claiming that since slavery had been abolished, he possessed paternal rights over his daughters.[27] In another case, Bekir, a man of Circassian origin, applied to the police claiming that his sisters and their children were being been kept in Çifteler Farm in Eskişehir as slaves. He stated that one of his sisters was already dead and that the other one had been sold to another master. The owner of the farm was now planning to sell their children. He called upon the police to take action with respect to the situation which was he argued was against the law.[28]

Sometimes mothers claimed authority over their daughters, but these were cases when the father had died and the mother had replaced him as the head of the family. For example, Atiyye from Kütahya submited a petition to the police of her town to recall her daughter who had been taken to Istanbul by Hüsna Hanım, the wife of Nuh Efendi from Bursa. Although Atiyye claimed that her daughter had been adopted by Hüsna Hanım and went to Dersaadet with her, Hüsna Hanım rejected the claim that she had adopted the girl.[29]

Fathers perceived their daughters as laborers over which they held absolute paternal authority. Through mostly oral contracts, they could transfer this authority to the masters of their daughters for a roughly specified period. When a more advantageous offer presented itself or when they felt that the situation was no more favorable for themselves, they reappeared with a claim of the right to renegotiate, or renege on, their contracts with their daughter's masters. Fathers owned the labor and sexuality of their daughters. They

26 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 47/54, 1328.Ş.10 (17 August 1910).

27 BOA, DH.MKT, 181/34, 1311.C.03 (12 December 1893).

28 BOA, DH.MKT, 1674/25, 1307.Ra.21 (15 November 1889).

29 BOA, DH.MKT, 54/2, 1311.C.04 (13 December 1893).

temporarily gave their paternal rights to the employer, but it was always possible for them to return to the scene. Employers, on the other hand, tried to conceal unpaid domestic labor behind a curtain of paternalist protection and relief. Such conflicts could end up in police stations, whose records reveal the similar conceptualizations of paternalist rights over the labor and sexuality of women claimed by opposing parties. In such cases, the police sided with one or the other depending on the local circumstance. However, one thing was sure: A woman's paternal control should be secured.

The need for domestic labor on the part of the Istanbul middle-class and elites overlapped the need for money on the part of the poor, rural families and communities of the children. What was regarded as charity towards these women was in fact exploitation of their labor. It conceals the significance of female domestic labor for the survival of the poor, provincial families who hired out their daughters. Moreover, although domestic service was portrayed as a site of paternal protection, sexual harassment and physical abuse are recurring themes in historical accounts of late Ottoman Istanbul.[30] The young ages of domestic servants provided the employers with an opportunity to consolidate a strong power and control over them. Most probably, the domestic servant suffered from the bitter control exercised by their employers over their dress, speech, use of leisure time, and contact with family and friends. The girls had to grow up in unfamiliar and isolated environments, away from their own families and communities. Living isolated in another family's private life made them open to every kind of exploitation and abuse. Domestic work was carried out in private homes and was thus hidden from public scrutiny and eluded public supervision and control. This made domestic workers particularly vulnerable to exploitation, as well as physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. They were secluded in their employers' homes, beaten, overworked, and unable to leave or report their difficulties to kin or the police. Nazan Maksudyan also claims that

30 Nazan Maksudyan, "Foster-Daughter or Servant, Charity or Abuse: Beslemes in the Late Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21, 4 (2008): 488-512.

> *beslemes* were victims of sexual assault and abuse, since many of them entered service upon losing their parents and a vast majority had left their community of origin. They were, in short, separated from the structures that would normally look out for their honor, and those who harassed them were aware of this.[31]

For example, the police of Büyükada started an investigation following a letter complaining that a child domestic servant was seriously wounded by her employer, Namık Bey, a member of the Commission for Medical Matters and the brother of Ferid Paşa, the former grand vizier. The letter was written in French and was signed "a foreign woman." Since it provides a graphic depiction of the incident, it is worth quoting in detatail:

> Dear Director,
> Three days ago in the house of Namik Bey, a member of the council of health and at the same time the brother of former Grand Vizir Ferid Pasha, a little servant girl, the favorite of Namık Bey, was wounded with a knife. The other two servants in the house fled for fear that they could be wounded the same way. Following the incident, they appealed to the mayor of the town, Suphi Bey, and asked for justice. But in all likelihood the mayor of the town will return the poor creatures to Namık Bey to cover up the incident. The poor girls are semi-slaves. Who knows how treated these poor creatures were that they quit. If the girl survives her injury, she will never say anything because she is so young. Dear director, I urge you in the name of the humanity and the abolition of slavery in Turkey to conduct an investigation into the matter and verify that my declarations are the unvarnished truth. Modern Turkey must ensure the rights that those poor creatures are lacking.[32]

It is most probable that sexual abuse and rape of servants, as well as physical and emotional violence against them, were prevalent in Ottoman domestic service. It is reasonable to assume that most rape and sexual abuse cases were

31 ibid., 499.

32 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 48/3, 1328.Ş.24 (31 August 1910).

hidden by the abuser, the whole household, or the community given the gap in the social and economic positions between the abuser and the victim. As domestic work was carried out in private homes, and thus it was hidden from view and eluded public supervision and control. This made domestic workers particularly vulnerable to exploitation, physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Still, many cases of rape and abuse were brought to police and before the courts.

Two brothers who were Circassian immigrants, Mahmud and İbrahim, submitted a petition to the police for the return of their sister Fatma, who was working as a domestic servant in the house of Reşad Bey, the mutasarrıf of Lataika. Two brothers argued that their sister was raped and deflowered by her employer. Though they wanted her back, Reşad Bey rebuffed them and continued to keep her in his house. Mahmud and İbrahim pled and demanded that their sister submitted to them.[33] In another document the former telegram inspector of Biga, Hilmi Bey, was accused for raping a domestic servant and injuring Artin, a male servant who tried to stop him.[34] Female domestic servants were also raped or abused by men other than their employers, such as neighbors, kin, or other employees of the families for which they worked. For instance, Kazım, a coppersmith, raped Şadiye, the fourteen-year-old domestic servant of his neighbor, Ayşe Fitnat Hanım.[35] A private investigator, Ali, who was serving as the commissioner of the Major Agah Bey, raped the Agah Bey's very young domestic servant.[36]

Documents examined give the impression that rape and sexual abuse of female domestic servants were socially acceptable behaviors. From a

33 BOA, DH.MKT, 386/20, 1312.Z.24 (18 June 1895), Nazan Maksudyan, "Foster-Daughter or Servant, Charity or Abuse: Beslemes in the Late Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21, 4 (2008): 488-512.

34 BOA, DH.MKT, 361/29, 1312.L.14 (10 April 1895), Nazan Maksudyan, "Foster-Daughter or Servant, Charity or Abuse: Beslemes in the Late Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21, 4 (2008): 488-512.

35 Nazan Maksudyan, "Foster-Daughter or Servant, Charity or Abuse: Beslemes in the Late Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21, 4 (2008): 488-512.

36 BOA, DH.EUM.KADL, 3/13, 1328.S.26 (13 February 1910), Nazan Maksudyan, "Foster-Daughter or Servant, Charity or Abuse: Beslemes in the Late Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21, 4 (2008): 488-512.

patriarchal perspective, it was controversial for male heads of households to have sexual relationships with female domestic servants. Female sexual agency played a central role in the public perception of he domestic servants. The close association of domestic service with sex, mostly illicit sex, was tacitly acknowledged. This created an ambiguity. On one hand a sexual relationship with domestic servants was considered legitimate by the men in the household for which they worked and by others. On the other, the domestic servant was perceived as a seductress and hence a threat to the welfare and veracity of the house for which they worked and for society as a whole, as well. The close association of domestic service with sex was a longstanding one. With respect to Ottoman female domestic slaves, Madeline Zilfi states that the "incidence of sexual relations between male owner and female captives fell somewhere between customary and expected."[37] Although they were not slaves, sexual service was a generally accepted as a part of domestic workers' life in late-nineteenth-and early-twentieth century households . Their young ages and their isolation in other peoples' houses far from their own families and communities made domestic servants vulnerable to sexual abuse.

In popular novels we hear the outcry of the victims:

> It can't be helped, my girl. Since we are poor…since we are all alone…Since we are deprived of a shelter—we have to endure all these. things" "Servants like us, the ones who work hard from dawn to the darkness of the night all the days God just to survive, just to find shelter to sleep under, who suffer ill fates, whose honor is demolished...May we have the conceit of appreciating the value of chastity and honor? May we have the power to protect and defend these values? Is it really possible?[38]

As domestic work was carried out in private homes, and thus it was hidden from view and eludes public supervision and control. This made child domestic workers particularly vulnerable to exploitation, physical, emotional and

37 Madeline C. Zilfi, *Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire: The Design of Difference* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 104.

38 Osman Gündüz, *Meşrutiyet Romanında Yapı ve Tema 2* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1997).

sexual abuse. However, the story is not merely about victimhood. Sexuality was a potent instrument for the empowerment of young domestic servants. Their mobility advantage, chance of having their own houses, and ability to survive in the streets when they escaped laid in the realm of sexuality. For many women, the only alternative occupation to domestic service was prostitution. I argue that this potential caused female domestic servants to be perceived as transgressive figures who would eventually if not immediately disrupt the social, sexual, and moral standards of the middle-class households in which she lived and worked. The female servant appeared in literary works as almost helplessly sexual creatures. Either as victims of the men around her or victim of her own wayward thoughts and impulses, female servants were suspended on the brink of sexual transgression, always ready to lapse into vice. The middle-class household supposedly provided her the protection she needed.

In most cases, domestic servants themselves struggled to negotiate their places. The story of domestic servants is not merely about their low status, vulnerability, and sexual exploitation. Archival documents prompt a revision of the historiography and due attention to their diverse practices and experiences. Some of these young women rejected the role forced upon them from the beginning; some gained power in the household relations as time passed; for some, appropriate marriages were arranged and dowries were provided; some found husbands themselves, while others left the houses in which they were 'sheltered' to pursue undetermined futures; and some even said those houses ion fire.[39] Unlike with slavery, the continuity of the exploitation of the labor of women depended on a contract with respect to the paternal rights and duties of male employers. And the most important of the duties was to keep them in the houses—the point at which domestic workers most troubled the "paternal ideal."

Emine, the daughter of Hasan Ağa from Ereğli, had been working in Istanbul as a domestic servant. In June 1910, she began working in the mansion of İshak Cevdet Paşa; however, just in the first three months, she tried to

39 For examples of such cases, see Ebru Aykut Türker, "Alternative Claims on Justice and Law: Rural Arson and Poison Murder in the 19th Century Ottoman Empire" (Ph.D, Boğaziçi University, 2011).

escape several times. In each escape attempt, she was seized by police and returned to the mansion. Following her last attempt, she submitted a petition to the police stating that she did not want to return to the mansion of İshak Cevdet Paşa, where she claimed to have been mistreated. Instead, she asked the police to send her back to her father Hasan Ağa's house. Emine also requested that her unpaid salary be paid to her. İshak Cevdet Paşa, on the other hand, argued that Emine had fled more than once without providing any reason. He argued that her escape demonstrated that she was "a woman of that type" (*o türlü bir kadın olduğundan*). Each time she fled, he accepted her back into his house upon the request of her father, but this last time he was not willing to do so. He also added that in the meantime, Emine's father had come to Istanbul a few times and that he had paid her salary to him. So, he claimed, he did not owe any money to her. The police decided to send Emine to Ereğli to be submitted to her father.[40]

The agendas of women who escaped were not identical and the constraints and opportunities they faced in the streets were diverse. Twenty-year-old Cemile, the daughter of Abdullah, was seized by police while strolling around Çukurçeşme. At the local police station to which she was brought, Cemile stated that she was from Bandırma but had been brought to Istanbul to work as a domestic servant a few years before. A certain Mehmet Ağa had taken her from her town with the consent of her parents and placed her in a mansion, in Istanbul. However, the day she was caught by the police she had been dismissed from the mansion. She claimed to neither know the name of the neighborhood of the mansion nor the full name of the owner. A black woman who saw her strolling around helplessly brought her to just in front of Çukurçeşme. Unsurprisingly, she stated that she did not know who this woman was.

Other domestic servants depended on available networks. Take, for example, the case of Fatma who was adopted by Niyazi Bey, a student in the fourth year of the Royal Medical School who employed Fatma as a domestic servant in his house. When she fled, Niyazi Bey appealed to the police and requested that Fatma be found and returned to him. He also claimed that Fatma had been deceived by two other women who should also be found and a legal

40 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 28/65, 1328.Ra.12 (24 March 1910).;

procedure the was conducted about them. However, police could not find Niyazi Bey's domestic servant Fatma. The other woman that Niyazi Bey mentioned was found Küçük Çekmece working as a domestic servant in Namık Bey's house. The local police in Küçükçekmece was asked to carry out an investigation into the woman.[41]

Hacer Hanım, who lived in Mahmutpaşa Yokuşu in the Şişhane District in Istanbul and was the widow of a gendarmerie commander, Faik Bey, submitted a petition concerning her runaway domestic servant, Ayşe, to the Department of Public Security, on 14 July 1910. Hacer Hanım's petition starts by asserting that she had hired a twelve-year-old Ayşe from Cide to work as a domestic servant for a salary of ten kuruş for one year and had also paid a fee to Ayşe's father. On 16 June 1910, Hacer Hanım, accompanied by her servant Ayşe, went to Bursa where they resided in the house of Çerkes Ömer Bey in the Beşikçiler neighborhood. In Bursa they frequented the Kaynarca hot water baths. However, on the morning of 26 June, Ayşe escaped from the house of Çerkes Ömer Bey. Hacer Hanım claimed that the *natırs* of the Kaynarca bath, Emine and Hatice, had encouraged and assisted Ayşe's escape. Although the local police were immediately informed about the incident, Hacer Hanım stated that there was no indication of effective, satisfying action on their part. She requested that the necessary action be conducted for Emine and Hatice, and that Ayşe be found and returned to her.

On 16 July 1910, the Department of Public Security sent the petition of Hacer Hanım to the Directory of Police of Bursa ordering that the necessary investigation and action be taken. On 23 July 1910, the Bursa police reported that on the order of the Department of Public Security concerning the petition of Hacer Hanım, they had conducted an investigation. In the investigation, the police were informed that Ayşe had not escaped because she was deceived by Emine and Hatice, but because she was tired of abuse from of Hacer Hanım.[42]

There were also occasions that domestic servants tried to find a way to return to their families. Tevfika worked as a domestic servant in the house of Asaf Bey in Şehzadebaşı. One Friday morning she left the house and did not

41 BOA, ZB, 490/101, 1324.Teşrinievvel.26 (8 November 1908).

42 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 43/57, 1328.B.02 (10 July 1910).

return. After a police investigation was carried out, it was understood that after she had left the house, Tevfika met with relatives and went to Bursa with them. She was set free to stay with them.[43] In another case, Zehra, who ran away from the house for which she worked, also returned to her hometown. She was not forced to return to her job either, as was the general procedure applied in similar cases.[44]

In some of the cases documented in the archives, domestic servants stole money while they were escaping. Eliza, who had been working as a domestic servant in the house of Manyaszade Feridun Bey in Moda, fled the house taking with her some money and gold (a total of 176 guruş and two golden bracelets) belonging to Eftelya, the other domestic servant working in the house. On Feridun Bey's request, the police started an investigation.[45] Both had been recruited by an agency for placement of domestic servants. Another interesting case concerns a woman who ran away from her husband, who lived in Manisa, and began working as a maid in Istanbul. The dossier ends just as the legal process concerning the the case was starting.[46]

Fatma, who worked as a domestic servant in the house of Mahmud Nureddin Bey, an officer of the Legislation Bureau of the Council of State, fled the house. Later, when she was found, she stated that she fled because of mistreatment and hardships that she suffered in the house. After her flight, police conducted an investigation to find Fatma and to return her to her mother. Probably, Mahmud Nureddin Bey refused to reaccept Fatma into his house. During the investigation it was discovered that after she had fled, Fatma first started working in the house of Muhlis Bey, an employee at Ceride-i Mehakim-i Adliye, in a neighborhood of Unkapanı. Then she married Vapur Ambarcısı Halil Ağa who lived in Zeyrek. She remained with her new husband.[47]

As all these documents illustrate, young female domestic servants could escape the houses in which they were "sheltered," just as Emine, Ayşe, and many others did. In late Ottoman Istanbul, where jobs available to women

43 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 7/21, 1327.N.22 (7 October 1909).

44 BOA, DH.EUM.KADL, 13/3, 1329.R.03 (3 April 1911).

45 BOA, DH.EUM.KADL, 17/45, 1329.Ca.21 (20 May 1911).

46 BOA, DH.EUM.KADL, 13/19, 05/R /1329

47 BOA, ZB, 319/58, 1322.Teşrinievvel.09 (22 October 1906).

were limited, prostitution was a major alternative for poor women trying to survive on their own. How many women transferred from domestic service to prostitution and what proportion of prostitutes in late Ottoman Istanbul were initially recruited to the city for domestic service can unfortunately not be ascertained. What we know for certain is that they either had a right to leisure, nor to quit their jobs of their own volition. When they left their workplaces, it was not considered quitting, but escaping. Yet still, in late Ottoman Istanbul, Emine and many other young female domestic servants struggled for some control over their own lives. They caused trouble for their contemporaries from different classes and sexes, managing to become prominent figures in the literary conventions as well as in the social reality of late Ottoman Istanbul.

The social and economic mobility gained by escaping to work in the sex labor sector, ironically, provided many women with the ability to transcend some of the gender-based social and economic constraints that limited their opportunities in the households in which they had lived. Archival documents present stories of many women who came or were brought to Istanbul from the provinces of the empire to work as domestic servants in the houses of elites yet ended up as prostitutes in the streets of the city. The documents examined here provide information, though scant, about the actual conditions of those women who transitioned from domestic service to prostitution. When a young woman quit a job as domestic servant, it was hard to find another job. She was left on the streets and prostitution was sometimes the only alternative to survive. This transition from domestic service to prostitution became a concern for the middle classes.

§ 7.3 Purging Domestic Servants from the Urban Space

On 18 April 1910, the Directory of Public Security sent a telegram to the Trabzon Police department and asking them to resettle Hayrünisa, who was being sent there for the second time, and to prevent her from returning to Istanbul. The request concerned the case of a runaway domestic servant, Hayrünisa, who had been working in the mansion of the governor of Izmir, Mahmud Muhtar Bey. She was caught by police "soliciting in the streets" of Istanbul after she escaped Mahmud Bey's mansion. The police sent Hayrünisa to Trabzon,

because she claimed that she had relatives there. The police of Trabzon sent her back to Istanbul on the basis that Hayrünisa actually had nobody in Trabzon to take care of and supervise her. The Istanbul police then sent her to Trabzon a second time. The Trabzon police were also insistent, returning Hayrünisa to Istanbul once more. A note written from the governor of Trabzon to the Department of Public Security dated 7 March 1910 stated that settling this morally deprived woman in Trabzon where she had no relatives was improper.[48]

Curious point revealed in the archival documents is the zeal of the government to clean public space of free domestic servants. Single, poor women were allowed to live in the Ottoman capital only when confined by a patriarchal institution. A girl who worked as a domestic servant in a house in Kumkapı was fired as her employers had suspicions about her morality. They submitted her to the police. In her interrogation at the police station, she stated that she was from the Jewish community of Edirne. She escaped her parents' house a few years before and came to Istanbul. From then on, she had worked as a domestic servant in several houses in Istanbul. Meanwhile, she converted to Islam. She had nobody to supervise her in Istanbul, but he had a sister, who was also working as a domestic servant in a Muslim house in Edirne. She had also converted. The police decided to send the girl to Edirne, to the house where her sister worked. The police believed that the girl would fall into misery if set free in Istanbul.[49] Fifteen-year-old İkbal worked for Hanife Hanım, an old woman from the famous Bedirhanoğlu family who was the mother of Bedirhanoğlu Abdülrezzak Bey. İkbal's father was a worker in a tobacco factory in Bursa. When Hanife Hanım died, İkbal was left alone in the streets. The police sent her to Hüdavendigar to be submitted to her father.[50] Arife worked in the house of Server Bey, a government doctor. When she fled the house, she was found by police. Server Bey refused to reaccept Arife into his house and requested she be sent to Kastamonu to her parents' house. The

48 BOA, DH.EUM.THR, 96/7, 1328.R.07 (18 April 1910).

49 BOA, ZB, 422/157, 1323.Teşrinisani.27 (10 December 1907).

50 BOA, ZB, 429/26, 1322.Şubat.20 (5 March 1907).

expenses of her trip were paid by Server Bey.[51] Dudu fled from the house in which she was working as a domestic servant in Eyüp. She was found by police a short while after her flight. However, as her employer refused to reaccept her into his house, Dudu was sent to her hometown of Kastamonu to be submitted to her father, Rençber Ahmed.[52]

Dilber was a young girl working as a domestic servant in the house of Hüsnü Bey (*Musiki-i Hümayun hademesinden*) when she fled from Hüsnü Bey's house and started to live in another. When Hüsnü Bey learned the address where she lived, he sees Dilber and submitted her to the police to be returned to her parents. He claimed that as Dilber's parents had entrusted her to him, he could not permit her to go to another house. The police sent Dilber to her hometown of Trabzon.[53]A fourteen-year-old Greek girl worked as a domestic servant in the house of İsmail Bey. Her mother appealed to the Ministry of Police through the Greek Patriarchy and demanded her daughter. However, İsmail Bey refused to submit the girl to the local polic. He insisted that he would only release the girl in the presence of her mother and an employee of the patriarchy. The Ministry of Police then send a second order to the local police to force İsmail Bey to submit the girl.[54]

Such documents indicate that although slavery had been abolished, the freedom of domestic servants was strictly limited by economic, social, and moral constraints informed by middle-class ideals, the social and economic backgrounds of the working girls, and patriarchal values. However, this did not mean that they had no capacity to shape their own lives; their escapes can be considered as tactical, subaltern agency. At least in part, they were resisting the limitations drawn for their lives.

As subaltern studies argued, both men and women from all social classes always have the capacity to shift to new roles and resist the constraints on their lives, which is considered an important aspect of their agency. Subaltern studies offer a method that takes various forms of power into account. In the case of the domestic servants, one can regard behaviors such as leaving their jobs

51 BOA, ZB, 437/60, 1320.Teşrinievvel.09 (22 October 1904).

52 BOA, ZB, 437/96, 1320.Şubat.13 (26 February 1905).

53 BOA, ZB, 458/3, 1311.M.21 (4 August 1893).

54 BOA, ZB, 473/65, 1322.Şubat.04 (17 February 1907).

and having illicit affairs with men as forms of subaltern agency—that is, as ways of resisting patriarchal and class hierarchies. The lives of domestic servants were not only restricted by middle-class economic and social values, but also by a patriarchal morality that was also advocated by the middle classes. It is important to note that female protagonists always had agency regardless of their class backgrounds. Their presence in newly emerging urban spaces and at the peripheries of middle-class households that themselves were acquiring new forms and contents was troublesome. On one hand, they provided labor that was indispensable for the construction of middle-class households and norms. Their labor was essential for differentiating the family structures, lifestyles, and gender roles of the emerging middle classes from those of other social groups. On the other hand, it was feared they would bring disorder to streets and public spaces as well as to houses in which they worked, which were expected to be the castle's of morality of the emerging urban middle class.

8

Conclusion

This study has focused on the lives and experiences of single, poor women in the late Ottoman Istanbul, along with new governmental policies controlling their urban mobility, sexuality, and labor. Through historical investigation of the lives of single, poor women, it places their experiences into the context of nineteenth century urban life and urban transformations. Throughout the nineteenth century and beyond, single male immigrants constituted the majority of urban poor in Istanbul. Yet, by mid-nineteenth century, a small though significant group of women had already joined the swelling ranks of poor in the city. Adrift from family ties that would typically support and contain them, they entered into the labor force of the city, unbound by traditional gender expectations, and engaged in sexual behaviors considered illicit by the norms of the time. Because of their "promiscuous" lifestyles, class origins, and spatial mobility in a new urban setting, they defied expectations of domesticity and contemporary models of proper womanhood. This attracted the disapproving gaze of urban reformers and provoked fear and anxiety among the middle classes. However, the labor of these newcomers was considered indispensable to urban life mainly in two respects: Sex and domestic service.

During the period examined here Ottoman Empire experienced enormous changes in political and social matters. Some of these changes involved impersonal forces such as integration into global capitalist networks, and ongoing wars and conflicts in and around the empire. Others affected or involved

particular groups in Ottoman society, namely women, poor, and immigrants. The issue of single, poor women was often at the intersection of these various forces. For administrative and social elite of the Ottoman capital, single, poor women created problems besetting urban life. Policies targeting single, poor women was part of a larger effort to defuse the threat to urban life that the ruling elites imagined in the second half of the nineteenth century. They thought that poor, immigrant communities, and the anonymity of their way of life, posed a serious threat to urban life that they envisioned as ordered modernity. Policies concerning single, poor women were meant to supervise and control urban population, and to force urban poor, and immigrants—women in particular—to assimilate to middle-class norms concerning chastity and proper 'place' of women in society and city.

By focusing on the presence of single, poor women in Istanbul, this dissertation expands upon a number of issues and fields of historical inquiry that remain virtually unaddressed in Ottoman historiography. First, gender and urban space is a relatively understudied area in historical research. In recent years, the transformation of urban space and its social and historical meanings have received increasing attention from Ottoman historians. Despite increasingly sophisticated work, neither the role of women in this transformation nor its gendered dimensions have been adequately addressed. The scholarship in large part has remained inattentive to both the presence of women in urban space and the inscriptions of gendered power relations on urban structures. Second, the history of underclass women is a lacuna in Ottoman historiography. The available scholarship, in large part, remains blind to the presence of lower-class women in urban space and underestimates the importance of their actions and labor for the production of everyday life in the city. This study pays particular attention to the urban experiences of single, poor women marked by day to day conflict and contestation over urban space in order to fill some gaps in Ottoman historiography concerning urban space and gender.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, rapid urbanization of Istanbul was accompanied by overcrowding of urban space, spread of contagious diseases, pollution, and an increase in what was considered social vice. As a response, this period witnessed the rise of conscious effort of urban reformers—

governmental administrators, professional groups such as doctors, and urban elites–to remake Istanbul into a 'modern' and 'ordered' city. Implementing a program for modernization, they sought to impose an idealized urban form on Istanbul that would allow for the efficient, safe, and secure circulation of people, goods, and capital. The goal was to shape the Ottoman capital as a 'modern' nineteenth century city that was compatible with the needs of global commerce. This necessitated reconciling the investments in a modernizing city with the desire for clear class, ethnic, religious, and gendered hierarchies. However, the urban order imagined by the reformers carried within it its own potential for disorder. Who would be permitted to enter the newly expanding urban spaces? How should they behave there? For what purposes should and could they use them?

From mid-nineteenth century on, governmental treatment of the urban poor in Istanbul entered a decisive stage. In the latter half of the century, Ottoman governments adopted a set of institutional and legal changes to establish a modern, cohesive system of social control built upon interconnected apparatuses such as a modern police force as well as institutions such as orphanages, reformatories, workhouses, asylums, prisons and hospitals. In this dissertation, I have demonstrated that the Ottoman ruling elite paid a particular attention to the control of single, poor women and tried to redefine and constrain the urban experiences of poor and single working women through legislative action and policing practices. Ottoman government formulated policies to exclude them from urban space and confine them to certain regulated spaces—to regulated brothels as prostitutes, to middle-class homes as domestic servants, and to relief institutions as needy women. I argue that these institutions and administrative practices were designed in such a way to control mobility, labor, and sexuality female poor.

While urban reformers sought to impose social order predicated on existing hierarchies of class and gender in the face of disorder resulting from rapid urbanization, the people who lived and worked in the city made their own claims about what urban life could and should be. By the second half of the century, Istanbul was a large arena where people from different classes, ethnicities, religious backgrounds and nationalities—and from both sexes—confronted and negotiated the everyday complexity of urban change. Throughout

the study, I explored social and economic hardships single, poor women experienced in Istanbul and paid particular attention to the institutions, discourses and practices that aimed to confine poor women into certain spaces that operated in ways to control and exploit female sexuality and labor. While analyzing the ruling elite's anxieties and concerns I also explored the ways in which single, poor women accommodated and resisted the modernizing city. Like histories of other non-elite groups, a historical investigation of the lives and realities of single, poor women enables us to take them out of the margins of history, and to constitute them as key actors in their everyday historical actuality. Single, poor women is much neglected in Ottoman historiography. I argue that without full consideration of their participation in the work force and social life of the city, it is impossible to gain a complete understanding of urban life and its dynamics of the Ottoman capital throughout the nineteenth and early-twentieth century. This study has singled out the moments in which labor and urban experience of single, poor women had been critical to the nineteenth century urban change, and everyday life in the city.

I believe that a focus on a marginal female group provided one a particular perspective from which to explore how urban reform efforts in the second half of the nineteenth century and new expressions of class, gender and sexuality were mutually constitutive. Until recently, historians have attributed urban transformation of Istanbul in the nineteenth century almost entirely to the determined endeavors of reformist administrators. Exploring how a non-elite female group contributed to and negotiated urban change shifted the emphasis from the concerted and conscious efforts of administrators to the ways in which poor women lived, worked, and pursued pleasure in the city. A perspective of 'urban change' that privileges the lived experiences of the city's poor radically departs from mainstream scholarship that evaluates urban change according to the 'successes' and 'failures' of modernist administrators as urban reforms. By focusing on single, poor women and looking through prisms of class and gender, I have demonstrated that the "modernized Istanbul" was a reflection of an idealized middle-class life that was predicated on certain class and gender ideals. However, this idealized urban form was totally at odds with the needs and actualities of single, poor women who had to navigate city life at the street level to survive.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Ottoman administrative and middle-class approaches to female sexual deviancy gradually changed. In earlier periods female sexual deviancy was personalized and downplayed. It was considered a local problem and solved in localities. However, from the 1850s onward it was constructed as a threat to urban order. During the period under consideration, Ottoman administrators, and middle-classes constructed prostitution as a social problem, and defined it as a key concept in administrative and social treatment of single, poor women in urban settings. The transition from projects to suppress personal immorality to a central preoccupation with prostitution in the late-nineteenth century involved one of the most important paradoxes of the moral regulation of the population. This process was related to a global trend concerning the emergence of a distinctive governmental rationality associated with modern technologies as to the control of urban population and urban space. Simultaneous with this trend Ottoman government adopted regulatory strategies concerning the ever- increasing urban poor in the imperial capital. Unemployed, unskilled male immigrants to the Ottoman capital were considered idle and were therefore susceptible to the charge of vagrancy. For their female counterparts, however, the issue was not idleness, but their very presence in urban space.

I argue that the panic caused by the unaccompanied existence of poor women in the urban space was related to the failure of the patriarchal regime that constituted men as the providers of proper moral households and families for women. The female deviance implied familial disorder among the poor but also a moral crisis on an imperial level. Women in the streets were seen as prostitutes who threatened the social order and public health, yet they were simultaneously considered innocent victims of patriarchal failure. Their unaccompanied presence in the urban space was unequivocally related to contemporary anxieties about the moral breakdown of family, society, and the empire. In late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, reformers, policy-makers, and much of the Ottoman educated public perceived single, poor women in Istanbul as prostitutes. Unaccompanied poor women in urban space symbolized female promiscuity and deviancy. The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of a language of "difference" to mark single, poor women. This was a discourse that cast women's work

outside of the household as deviant. Poor, single women who survived in Istanbul on their own were equated to female promiscuity and deviancy without a consideration of whether they were prostituting themselves or not. I argue that what was at stake in control of single, poor women was the moral control of all women. Women who left to their own choices, might reject civilized, middle-class standards of probity. The fact that some deviant women had done so, had already underscored women's potential to destroy the very foundation of the existing social order as a whole. While the social order, and political order was considered to be in jeopardy, coercive measures to control female mobility in urban space appeared to be warranted. This study has demonstrated that measures formulated as a consequence of such social and political anxieties of the ruling and middle-class elite lead to the lead exploitation of female labor and sexuality in their enclosed spaces. However, although single, poor women could not escape the stigma of promiscuity, physical exclusion and sexual exploitation, they managed to gain visibility, and recognition and created instances of resistance to rigid gendered norms.

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