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Abstract

Ottoman Women in Public Urban Spaces

A thesis presented to the Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, and Women and Gender Studies Departments

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This paper seeks to examine women’s interactions with urban spaces in the Ottoman Empire. It examines how women relate to urban spaces and whether or not the way in which women interact with the city is different from the way men interact with the city. As well, the process of the modernization of the city over time was studied. This study used books, articles, letters, legal documents, pictures, and court records as evidence. The paper concludes that women in the Ottoman Empire did, in fact, relate differently to urban spaces than men, that women’s interactions with public urban space did, often, change as the city went through the process of modernization, and that urban areas shape the experiences of the women who live in them.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Aims and objectives

This paper is intended to be an examination of women in urban spaces in the Middle East from the 17th to the 20th century. It will examine Muslim (predominately Arab) cities throughout the Ottoman Empire. Its intention is to examine how women relate to urban spaces and whether or not the way in which women interact with the city is different from the way men interact with the city. It will be historical in focus. This project aims to examine public urban spaces in the Ottoman Empire, how these spaces change over time, and both what women’s experiences of these spaces were and how these experiences changed over time. Each chapter will focus on a different public space (or, in the case of employment, a way in which women interacted with public spaces). It will begin with an introduction of the space as a physical space, including the architecture of the space and an analysis of the importance of the space. It will then continue with a brief history of the space and an analysis of the changes (if any) that the space underwent over time. The chapter will conclude with a section on women’s interactions with the space. This section will analyze whether or not women’s interactions changed over time as the space changed and will summarize the main points of the chapter.

Research Questions

There are a few essential questions that this paper seeks to answer. Firstly, do women relate to urban spaces differently than men (particularly in the Middle East)? Are the
women of the Ottoman Empire relating to and reacting to urban spaces differently than men? If so, what does this say both about the society and about the gendered nature of these spaces? Also, do women’s interactions with public urban space change as the city goes through the process of modernization? And finally, how do urban areas shape the experiences of the women who live in them?

Importance of the Study

This study appears to be the first of its kind. While many studies have been done on Ottoman architecture and on women, women’s interactions with urban public space in the Ottoman Empire have often been relegated to a mere footnote. Studies focusing on architecture often leave the population’s interactions with the architecture out of the picture, while studies focusing on women often focus solely on their interactions in private spaces, such as the home or the harem. In order to fully understand the women of the Ottoman Empire, however, we must study them outside the home as well as inside the home.

Scope of the Study

This study will focus solely on the experience of women in the Middle Eastern City. For the purposes of this paper, the Middle East will be limited to the countries contained in the Ottoman Empire, though not all of these countries will be mentioned. This study will look at cities in the Middle East from the 17th century to the fall of the Ottoman Empire in the 20th century. The information that was used was found in books, articles, letters, legal documents, laws, pictures, and court records both from the time period and written more recently. The study will cover nine public areas, which have been grouped into three categories: transportation, socialization, and economics. The transportation section will
include chapters on streets and modes of transportation, the socialization section will include chapters on cafés, gardens, bathhouses, squares, and mosques, and the economics section will include chapters on the marketplace and employment. These places were chosen due to their public nature and their presence in nearly all large urban cities in the Ottoman Empire. The chapters dealing with employment and transportation, while technically not public spaces in their own right, deal with women’s interactions in public spaces through their use of transportation and through their employment in public spaces.

Definition of terms

What makes a city? What we call an ancient “city” is now the size of a town, if that. Originally, cities were collections of homes that were permanent and generally walled-off from the surrounding area. The city is a large permanent settlement. As these places grew and expanded past the walls, they became closer to the modern idea of an urban area. Cities were often places of trade and were generally built at a crossroads or at a place in which multiple paths came together. Cities often have systems of sanitation, land usage, and transportation. The concentration of people at the crossroads often facilitates interaction between businesses and people and makes them good centers for trade. Gordon Childe defined a city using ten general metrics. These metrics included size and density of the population being above normal, differentiation of the population (specialist residents), payment of taxes, monumental public buildings, support by the king of citizens not producing their own food, systems of recording and practical science, a system of writing, symbolic art, trade and import of raw materials, and the inclusion of specialist craftsmen from outside the kin-group\(^1\). All cities discussed in the following

chapters contain all of these metrics. As well, all of these cities have some form of organized government, another important aspect of a city.

There is not a typical Ottoman, Arab, or Islamic city that is so fundamental that it excludes other cities. While the majority of urban areas contained a majority of features, such as squares, coffeehouses, mosques, and markets, not every urban center contained all of these features. What makes a city Middle Eastern is both a combination of features and a geographic location. Ottoman cities often contain certain architectural styles that set it apart from other periods in history and other geographic locations.

Delimitations and Limitations of the study

This study is limited to the Ottoman Empire from the 17th century to the 20th century. It is historically based, which limits research to historical documents and drawings. Evidence used throughout the study is, therefore, found through text rather than interviews. The research is book-based, and is limited by the author’s highly limited knowledge of the Turkish language.
Chapter 2: Streets

The space

When studying public urban spaces, it is impossible for one to ignore the construct of the street. Cities are formed around streets, and it is streets that provide many essential services. Roads are important because they are a transitional space by which a person goes from private to public and moves from space to space. In order to go from their homes to other places (particularly public places), women (and people in general) have to traverse the streets of the city. The streets of a city are like the veins of a body—they carry people in and out of the city and to different parts of the city in the same way veins carry blood through a body. Streets are vital to the creation of an urban space; cities tend to form at crossroads and where trading routes meet, for example. Streets allow people to move between buildings smoothly and connect different areas together. They create a place for people to meet. Hanan Al-Shaykh, in the novel *The Story of Zahra*, a work of fiction, said that “the streets…are the lifeblood of the city”². They are essential to any collective of people; they provide connections between buildings and act as ways for people to get from one place to another. The names of streets often have important meanings to a city and represent important people and events in the culture. Examples of this phenomenon include Al-Muizz Street, in Cairo, named after Al-Mu'izz li-Deen Illah, the fourth caliph of the Fatimid dynasty, and King Faysal Street in modern Damascus.

History and changes over time

Streets changed over time. Originally, cities tended to pop up around streets, and

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the paths that were used were often meandering tracks rather than the straight grid-pattern we think of in cities today. Streets were often narrow and winding. This changed, however, with European influence. The Europeans had created grid-structures and widened streets. It was colonization and westernization/modernization that changed streets. In some places, it was the need for military to move, in others, it was the addition of street-cars and automobiles that changed the streets. They also went from dirt paths to cobblestones to pavement.

Roads and streets have been around as long as people have been traveling; in the Middle East, evidence of roads and streets have been found in the form of stone paved streets in Ur in modern-day Iraq. Roads were used to transport people and goods over long distances. They allowed for networks of communication, trade, and governance over wide areas of land. What began as small dirt paths soon widened due to the use of pack animals. Many roads were built throughout the Arab Empire in the medieval Islamic world. In Baghdad, Iraq, roads began being paved with tar in the 8th century. The roads throughout the Middle East began with small dirt roads and thus often kept their winding character rather than forming the more modern orthogonal grids of modern cities. Roads were constructed around buildings rather than buildings being built around roads. This meant that streets throughout the Middle East were often “narrow and tortuous”. There were winding, narrow streets. Over time, streets adapted and transformed from dirt paths to wooden paving and cobblestones. At the end of the 19th century, tar-bound macadam (later known as tarmac) became a popular way to pave roads. In the early 20th century,

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tarmac and concrete paving appeared in the Middle East and expanded to include some areas in the countryside. Modern roads now often use asphalt concrete rather than tarmac.

Streets and roads in the Middle East changed over time naturally and superficially; paths were widened both through natural means (e.g. an increase of foot traffic made the sides of the path widen) and through superficial means (e.g. adding to the path through digging or through the addition of further stones or tarmac). Most of the major changes in roads began in the late 1800s and had to do with European influences rather than the decline of the Ottoman Empire. Colonizing forces, particularly the French and the British, changed streets and roads in urban spaces for many reasons. The colonization of the Ottoman Empire and the influence of the Western world changed the way that cities were built and thus also changed the way that roads were built.

French colonization in the Middle East and North Africa began in the early 1800s. In order to “modernize” the cities that they took over, the French often destroyed buildings and widened roads. The French transformed the roads in order to transform the city. Urban transformation began with the transformation of roads from narrow and winding to wide and grid-like.

“Although initial radical proposals to raze the capital were never implemented, a partial demolition and Haussmannization was undertaken throughout the Middle East and North

5 Haussmannization is a concept of city planning that was created by Georges-Eugène Haussmann; Haussmann was hired by Napoleon III to “modernize” the city of Paris. The goals of this project were to create safer streets, better housing, more sanitary, hospitable, shopper-friendly communities, better traffic flow, and, last but not least, streets too broad for rebels to build barricades across them and where coherent battalions and artillery could circulate easily if need be (Barnes, 49-52). He accomplished much of this by tearing up many of the old, twisting streets and rundown apartment houses and replacing them with the wide, tree-lined boulevards and expansive gardens. Haussmannization was used throughout the Middle East and North Africa in many of the urban remodeling projects that took place in the 19th and 20th centuries. This was particularly relevant to the renovations that took place in the city of Cairo under Khedive Ismail Pasha who ruled
Africa, particularly in cities like Cairo. This involved a number of projects, largely
determined by military considerations. The best parcels of land were monopolized by the
military. Streets were widened whenever patterns and widths did not accommodate
military needs.” Streets in the colonized countries were widened to create large
boulevards and an orthogonal street pattern. This change was often alarming to those
Orientalists who had romanticized the Middle East. The city’s “metamorphosis caused
profound disillusion among the French Romantics. Imbued with images of a charming,
exotic Orient, picturesque streets, and labyrinthine quarters, they objected to the alarming
results of the assimilation policy.” What had once been cities full of winding passages
and alleys became cities full of wide boulevards and grids. In order to accommodate
military carriages (a purely European method of transportation), main roads had to be
eight meters in width. This meant that buildings on the sides of roads had to be
demolished in order to rebuild the roads. This, in turn, meant that new streets “stood out
amid the urban fabric not only for their difference in scale but also for the character of the
buildings that lined them: with their European façades, fenestrated and decorated in
sparse neoclassical style, and arcades on the ground level, they introduced a new type of
thoroughfare.” The changing of streets changed the entire character of an individual city;
because streets are essential to a city, they often dictate how well the city is run. Small,
winding streets make the line between private and public space much blurrier, where

from 1830-1895. See Barnes, David S. The Great Stink of Paris and the Nineteenth-
Press, 2006, p. 49-52)
6 Hamadeh, Shirine. “Creating the Traditional City: A French Project”. Forms of
7 ibid, p. 246.
8 Çelik, Zeynep. Empire, Architecture, and the City: French-Ottoman Encounters, 1830-
wider boulevards make it easier for traffic to come through. This increase in traffic space meant that leaving the house became both more public and easier; rather than having to navigate winding roads, a grid system allowed public buildings to be easier to find.

**Women’s presence and interactions**

Women’s interactions with and engagements in the streets and roads in cities was complex and changed over time. Streets and roads are public spaces, which means that in order to go out and use the roads, Muslim women of the Ottoman Empire in urban areas were required to cover themselves and to wear certain clothing if they were allowed out at all. Many women used roads and streets in order to go visit their friends or to go to the baths, this is not well-documented. The small alleys and winding roads in residential areas in many cities made it easier for women to go from one home to another without being seen or interacting with men.

While women were often separated from men, they did sometimes join them in the streets of a city for large or important occasions. Women did take to the streets in protest, as can be seen in the city of Aleppo in 1775. When ‘Ali Pasha was expelled from the city of Aleppo, many people stood in the streets to watch him leave. These crowds included both men and women. “As the expelled pasha rode to the outskirts thousands of triumphant residents, including many women, stood in the streets, jeering and spitting in contempt.”9 Thus, we can see that women did go in the streets during large gatherings, though it is likely that they were covered and heavily veiled.

There were many rules and regulations about how, where, and when women could go out in to the streets. Bathhouses would only be open to women on certain days, and

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women were often forced to stay inside their homes even to work. The rules and
regulations, however, were not fully effective at all times. The rules and regulations were
often not strictly enforced, and there were even times when women did enjoy some sort
of freedom. During the “Tulip Period”\textsuperscript{10}, a period of time that went from 1718 to 1730
and in which the Ottoman Empire began to turn to Europe for guidance and trade,
“women wearing light coloured feradjes attended the festivities and entertainments which
took place in the open, as revealed by both the paintings and writings of that period.”\textsuperscript{11}

Many laws and decrees were issued throughout the Ottoman Empire about how
women should dress and where they could go. Mustafa the Fourth, an Ottoman sultan
whose reign lasted from 1807 to 1808, issued a decree that “proclaimed that women
should not walk together with men, not even their fathers or sons, in the streets…”\textsuperscript{12} This
meant that women were segregated, even in the streets. While they were still, at this
point, permitted to use the streets, they were not allowed to mingle with men. While this
was not a new idea, certainly, this was one of the few decrees that was documented and
explicitly stated the separation between men and women in public spaces, particularly in
streets.

This dislike of women in the streets would continue and get even more strict with
the passage of time. In 1881, a British newspaper, the Levant Herald, reported that “by
Order of H.M. the Sultan and at the request of the Sheikh-ul-Islam, the Ministry of

\textsuperscript{10} The Tulip Period was a relatively peaceful period during which the Ottoman Empire
began to orient itself towards Europe and during which trade with Europe flourished. The
name of the period is derived from the tulip craze among the Ottoman court society.
Tulips became very popular and trade in tulips increased dramatically. The Tulip Period
is an illustration of the conflicts of consumer culture and material symbolism.

\textsuperscript{11} Afetinan, Professor Dr. A. and UNESCO. \textit{The Emancipation of the Turkish Woman},
p. 33

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{ibid.}

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Police, acting in concert with the Council of the State, has drawn up a code of rules prescribing the nature of the coverings which women of the Moslem faith are to wear, and the conduct that they are to observe. According to this rule, women are prohibited from appearing in public places and frequented streets and from paying visits”.\textsuperscript{13} This law also mentioned that women could not go out in the streets uncovered or wearing thin veils, and also were forbidden from certain public places altogether.

When streets began to change and European culture began to influence the Ottoman Empire, particularly in the early 1900s, the way that women interacted with roads and streets began to change. With streets getting wider, women could not as easily get to their neighbors homes without being seen. However, because these countries were also westernizing, it became much more acceptable for women to go out in to the city and to use the streets as a way of travel with or without her family. Wider streets also meant that there would be more room for women to remain separate from the men who were also on the street. As women began to take jobs outside of the home, their use of streets to get to and from work became more frequent. As well, many women would send out slaves to go in to the streets rather than going themselves. Slavery was not abolished in the Ottoman Empire until as late as 1908\textsuperscript{14}. With the abolition of slavery, many women then had to go and get things for themselves, such as food in markets.

\textbf{Conclusions}

Streets, as well as women’s interactions with the streets changed over time.

Streets in the Ottoman Empire and throughout the Middle East and North Africa changed

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{ibid}, 34. (Quotation taken from the \textit{Levant Herald} of 15 August 1881 in an article entitled \textit{Moslem ladies in the streets}).

from narrow and winding passages to wide boulevards. This change reflected a change in the colonizing power— from Ottoman to European— and also reflected a change in attitudes towards women. This change in attitude towards women encouraged women to go out in to the streets and allowed women to legally gather in the streets. As well, the change in streets made it easier for women to have access to the streets. What were originally paths that were chaotic and disorganized changed to an orthogonal grid pattern. This change in pattern made it easier for people to navigate the city and also allowed people to use different forms of transportation in the city, such as carriages, bicycles, and eventually automobiles. These changes in mode of transportation also made it easier for women to get around; with the introduction of cars, women were able to remain in a relatively private space even while being in the public street.

Chapter 3: Transportation

The space

Related to the issue of streets is the issue of transportation; while having streets
gives people a path to follow and provide structure to a city, how they transport themselves along these paths is also important. The different methods of transportation in a city are important both in describing the character of a city and in describing the people who inhabit that city. A city like Venice, for example, relies on boats for transportation; this tells a scholar about the nature of the city and how the city functions using waterways as roads. Other cities, such as Damascus, are completely landlocked and thus cannot use boats as transportation. Means of transportation is an indicator of wealth and class. Many poor people were unable to afford any method of travel other than walking, whereas richer people were able to afford donkeys, mules, horses, and camels. Transportation is also important because it shows the limits of certain classes of people. Poorer people, who were forced to travel on foot, were unable to go long distances or to leave the boundaries of the city for very long. On the other hand, people with access to different methods of transportation, such as camels and caravans, were able to travel over long distances and to move from one city to another. Traveling from one place to another in a city often used a variety of different roads, from small alleys to large thoroughfares. Some cities have access to the ocean, and these cities often make use of boats and ferries as an alternate source of transportation of people. Transportation in and around a city is essential because it provides a way for merchants to trade goods and provides a way for people to access different goods and thus promotes economic exchange. As well, it allows for the flow and interaction of people as well as the spreading of news and the exchange of ideas, something which is essential for the growth and expansion of any city or country.

Transportation in many cities was limited by the geographical features of the area
in which the city was located. Damascus for example, was difficult to navigate due to the
topography of the area. “The folds and contours of regional topography alternately
facilitated and obstructed movement, complicating attempts to overcome distance and
link people and places.”\textsuperscript{15} Thus, the city of Damascus was limited by the area in which it
was located. Because Damascus is not located on the coast, it did not have much travel by
the sea until the mid-nineteenth century. While Damascus did not use ocean travel, this
does not mean that other cities did not adopt different methods of travel based on their
costal geography. There were many coastal cities that preferred to use boats as a method
of travel. One example of such a city is the city of Istanbul, which often used ferries to
transport people from the main city to nearby islands.

One of the most important issues concerning transportation in urban spaces is that
of the expensive nature of transportation. In his discussion of the city of Damascus,
Grehan focuses on the expenses of mobility. He argues that it was only the rich who were
able to travel in ways that were not by foot; any private methods of transportation were
incredibly expensive. “The first characteristic of eighteenth-century transport, and
perhaps the one which best highlights the obstacles faced by the economy, was its high
cost. Mobility was a luxury, and it was by no means accessible to everyone. Very few
Damascenes possessed their own private means of transport, which required sizable
outlays of capital, not to mention constant expenditures on maintenance, such as fodder
and care for animals. Most residents therefore moved on foot, particularly the poor, who
had little choice. Though walking was not a significant hardship within the city, it was
usually impractical for longer journeys…”\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{15} Grehan, James. \textit{Everyday Life & Consumer Culture in 18\textsuperscript{th}-Century Damascus}. Seattle
\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid}, p. 40.
Damascus, was incredibly expensive. Due to the expensive nature of transportation, a large majority of the population walked around the city rather than hiring alternate modes of transportation.

*History and changes over time*

While different methods of transportation stayed the same for a long time, mainly focusing on beasts of burden and on-foot transportation, this does not mean that all forms of transportation in urban Ottoman cities were completely stagnant. Instead, it is clear that modes and methods of transportation in urban areas in the Ottoman Empire changed over time. Streets widened and became paved, automobiles and bicycles became more popular. Automobiles were often limited to the very wealthy, but bicycles were an inexpensive way of moving around the rapidly expanding cities much more quickly than on foot. Horses, donkeys, camels, and mules were unsanitary and incredibly expensive; the introduction of bicycles and automobiles reduced the animal waste in the streets and made cities relatively more sanitary. As well, while automobiles did require gasoline in order to run, they did not require the space or the daily feeding that animals required. Bicycles did not even require gasoline to run and thus were much more efficient.

Transportation did modernize with the rest of the city. This was mostly done through a desire to interact with the West and the colonizing forces. When colonizing forces, particularly the French, widened and straightened streets, it made larger forms of transportation much easier. Carts and automobiles were much more easily able to move down main roads once the roads were wider; the smaller winding roads of many cities were unable to support the larger space needed to keep cars. As well, the paving of roads meant that wheeled vehicles could travel more easily and smoothly. Even without the
influence of colonization in some countries, European influence can easily be seen on matters of transportation. In Damascus, for example, the economic influence of Europe forced the city to interact more with coastal cities rather than relying on land-based communication, as it had previously done. “Communications with the coast did not begin to improve until the mid-nineteenth century, as Syria was progressively pulled into the European world economy. In the meantime, Damascus seldom looked towards the sea.”\(^\text{17}\)

It was European influences that emphasized travel by sea rather than travel by land. As well, the expansion of roads meant that more people could travel on the streets. As well, the introduction of tarmac made it easier for bicycles to be introduced (and sometimes automobiles, though some roads in cities like Marrakech are still too narrow to allow the effective introduction of automobiles). Even though there were not width issues with bicycles, as they are very compact, it was very difficult to ride bicycles down the old streets. Older streets were not smooth and were therefore difficult for bicycles to travel down.

The main method of transportation, until the invention of bicycles and automobiles, that was not by foot was through the use of animals. There were four main animals that were used for transportation: donkeys, mules, camels, and horses. Horses were the most expensive animals and were often used to carry people between cities rather than used for transportation within cities. Camels were often used for long travel through the desert from one city to another. Within cities, mules and donkeys were most commonly used. “Most animals were essentially creatures of commerce, which depended heavily on their exertions. A large part of the economy moved on the backs of donkeys, mules, and camels, all of which functioned as the trucks and locomotives of their day.”\(^\text{17}\) 

\(^{17}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 45.
Their strength, speed, and stamina effectively determined the volume of trade and information that towns like Damascus exchanged with the outside world. Cities such as Damascus used donkeys, camels, and mules in order to transport people and to transport goods. Donkeys were used primarily to carry local traffic rather than for distances. They were easily able to travel along the narrow and winding streets of the city. Unlike horses, donkeys are able to see all four of their feet and thus are much more balanced and are more easily able to travel along unsmooth roads. Many roads had piles of rubble that was rarely cleared away; donkeys were much more easily able to climb over this rubble and were less likely to injure themselves along the winding roads.

The use of donkeys in cities was essential. Donkeys acted as transportation for goods and for people. Some people would even rent out their donkeys to other people, having youths walk alongside the donkey to make sure it was returned to its owner. An example of this can be found in the city of Damascus, near the Suq al-Khayl. “In several markets, particularly Suq al-Khayl (west of the citadel), donkey drivers rented their animals much like modern taxis, charging rates according to distance…Mules offered more range and endurance and seem to have performed a more strictly commercial role. They were perfectly useful as mounts, but were more valuable in transporting goods and supplies…” Donkeys were used as forms of transportation of goods and people, though most people preferred to walk and to use donkeys to carry their goods rather than using donkeys solely as a mount.

**Women’s presence and interactions**

Women’s transportation through the city was similar to that of men, though it was

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often separate. Women would walk and would take drives in carriages. Evidence of this can be found in a law from 1881 which, in part, states that “Moslem ladies are also forbidden to drive or walk round the places of Beyazit, Shahzade-Bashi and Aksarai and to walk in the Great Bazaar and to sit down in shops…” This law was likely applicable in the city of Istanbul but was probably followed in many cities throughout the Ottoman Empire. Eventually, with the introduction of bicycles and automobiles, people became much more private about their travel. Cars and carriages allowed women to travel in relative privacy, or at least much more privacy than walking along the streets. However, women’s travel in the Ottoman Empire was mostly segregated from men’s travel through the twentieth century. In order to travel around the city, many women were forced to go by foot. Even when bicycles were invented, it was impractical to travel by bicycle and remain in modest clothing.

Once the influence of the West set in and colonialist ideals became popular, there was not as much segregation of men and women. This was clear in Ottoman Turkey, where men and women were finally able to be seen in public together rather than women being alone or in groups of other women. “The passive resistance of women in the beginning of the twentieth century in regard to veiling, the right to go out freely, to ride in the same carriage as their husbands and to sit next to them, triumphed over the fanaticism of public opinion. Until the end of the First World War, men and women were divided from each other on public transport by partitions.” At the end of the First World War, colonial influences were very high, and women and men were no longer forced to separate using partitions. As well, women were able to travel with their husbands and to

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20 Afeintan, p. 32
21 ibid, p. 41-42
sit next to them in public transportation. This means that a man could share a car with his wife rather than having to take separate cars. Another way that women and men had been separated but were no longer separated was on boats and ferries.

Cities in coastal areas, such as Istanbul, often used boats and ferries in order to transport people and goods from one area of the city to another. Boats and ferries were used to carry people from certain areas of the city to surrounding islands. These boats and ferries were often segregated by gender, with the women being forced to remain below decks in order to be properly segregated from the men. This made travel by boat unpleasant for many women. Travel by ferry and by boat was a convenient way to move from one island to another in areas where a city had spread from the coastal area to different surrounding islands. One example of a city in which this happened was Istanbul.

“On boats sailing the Bosphorus and running between Istanbul and the islands, women were obliged to stay in closed cabins below decks. When women were finally permitted to remain on deck, a female author described her feelings at being able to watch the sea in the open air during that one-hour trip with such zest that one would think she was crossing the ocean for the first time.”22

After World War I, women were allowed to travel above decks with the men and were able to watch the ocean go past as they sailed across the rivers. Previously, women were treated as second class passengers. This was significant as it showed a change in the equality of women in terms of public transportation. As well, it showed how public transportation was becoming more influenced by Western notions of travel which did not separate men and women. Up to this point, however, women were considered to be second-class passengers and were separated from men.

22 ibid.
Women were allowed on trains and busses. One of the first railway lines in the Middle East was built between Tehran and Rayy in Iran in 1881. The first railway in Syria opened from Damascus to Beirut in 1895. The Hejaz railway opened in 1908 between Damascus and Medina. The Baghdad Railway had gone as far as Aleppo by 1912 and the branch to Tripoli was complete by the start of World War I. Most trains had separate cars at the back for women to sit rather than mixing men and women. This changed when westernizing influences interfered, and men and women began to mix on busses and trains rather than being segregated by cars. This was much more practical because it allowed men and women who were traveling together to remain together and thus not get separated during the trip.

**Conclusions**

Overall, transportation has a huge influence on the character and nature of a city. Transportation has changed over time- from travel on foot or by donkey to cars, trains, and busses. This modernization of transportation was mostly due to a westernizing influence throughout the Ottoman Empire. These westernizing influences included the widening of streets, the popularization of bicycles and automobiles, and the implementation of public transportation such as ferries, busses, and trains. The influence of the West can be seen in the widening streets, which allowed for more efficient transportation by bicycle or by car. The way in which women traveled throughout a city also changed over time. Women originally had to travel separately. Eventually, however, travel integrated and segregation by sex on boats, trains, and busses ceased to exist. As well, travel by private car became a popular method for women to leave their homes while remaining in a semi-private space. An enclosed automobile allowed women more
freedom to leave their homes.

Chapter 4: Coffeehouses

The space

Coffeehouses were a key part of every major city and were a center of society. As key parts of a city, they have been found in almost every single urban space throughout the Middle East and the Ottoman Empire, including Damascus, Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul\(^{23}\). They were located in nearly every part of the city and there were often many different coffeehouses in an area. “Coffeehouses could be found in nearly every part of the city, in both residential quarters and markets. There was even one at the gate of the citadel. The majority were modest operations which might accommodate one or perhaps

two dozen customers. In contrast, the biggest coffeehouses could hold literally hundreds of people at a time.  

Unlike modern coffee shops, such as Starbucks, the Ottoman coffeehouse was built as a place to entertain and for customers to sit and socialize. They ranged in size, but were consistent in their aim to entertain their patrons; often, they would have small stages for performances. The focus was not so much on the coffee, but on the experience and entertainment of the venue. There is evidence that coffeehouses were not limited to specific parts of the city but rather flourished everywhere that they surfaced. Coffeehouses were found scattered throughout cities and there would often be one located near a gate to welcome travelers and visitors while others would be in residential areas for the locals. In Damascus, for example, the first coffeehouses were located on the riverbanks outside Bab al-Salaam. Others were located throughout the city; this includes “the Café Nawfara, [which] still operates after hundreds of years, its patrons relaxing over their coffee and narghile under the towering remains of the eastern gateway to the Temple of Jupiter.”

Coffeehouses were popular and remained popular throughout the region. Coffeehouses were located at important areas throughout the city; they were used as public meeting places and were thus often located in central places.

Coffeehouses needed patrons to thrive and thus were located in places where people congregated (and became places of congregation themselves) including neighborhoods and marketplaces. They were also scattered all over the city because they were some of the only establishments in which people could congregate at night. “These brightly painted establishments, which ranged in size from modest rooms to handsome halls with water fountains spouting at their center, were found in every neighborhood.

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24 Grehan, 141.
People could be seen in them at all hours of the day. After dark, when all businesses closed and streets emptied, the coffeehouses held out as the only spots of organized nightlife." Coffeehouses scattered all over the city were used as one of the only places of organized nightlife and thus were located in central areas. They were often found within short walking distance of any neighborhood mosque.

Coffeehouses were used for amusement and artistic expression. This was true from their creation until the modern day. They were places where people from many different social backgrounds came together for news, gossip, conversation, and entertainment. Often, coffeehouses were used for amusement, such as enjoying performances by artists, playing indoor games such as backgammon, and socializing over a cup of coffee. This can be seen in Aleppo, for example, which was “a city without public playgrounds, sports clubs, or athletic teams and competition. The popular entertainments also revolved heavily around company rather than solitary amusement and stimulation.” Coffeehouses were the central, and sometimes the only, place for people to socialize in a secular context. While people did go to the mosques to pray, this was religious rather than social. Coffeehouses were the main public forum for performances of plays, poetry, and story-telling. They were therefore essential in both the creation and dissemination of culture throughout the Arab world. Coffeehouses were also places where troupes of musicians would perform; often story-tellers and musicians would travel from city to city and from coffeehouse to coffeehouse in order to gain a wider audience for their performances. This helped to contribute to the spread of a common

26 Marcus, 231.
27 ibid, 227.
28 Grehan, 144.
29 Marcus, 229.
culture between cities. Coffeehouses were used as performance spaces. Musicians would entertain the crowd with popular songs. At other times, storytellers would take the stage while still at others, a satirical puppet show might be performed. “This worldly milieu of the coffeehouse, occupied by the very same people who filled the mosques at prayer time, presents one aspect of a popular culture with its particular pastimes, entertainments, indulgences, and mental escapes; its forms of cultural and artistic expression; and its lore of songs, plays, stories, jokes, and proverbial wisdom.”³⁰ Along with these many different types of entertainment available, there was also a lot of socializing and self-entertainment. Patrons gathered to talk and gossip, play backgammon, drink coffee, and smoke narghile (water pipes). It is important to note that these various types of entertainment were what made coffeehouses appeal to the masses to such a great extent. The entertainment did not depend on literacy or higher learning in order to entertain people; uneducated people could share them with the educated classes (unlike other forms of entertainment, such as books). The culture was largely oral and was easily adaptable to changing conditions in society. Coffeehouses were essential for the dissemination of culture throughout the Ottoman Empire. “The cultural importance of the coffeehouse rested on its unmatched status as the main public forum for these various activities, all of which figured also in other contexts and formed essential parts of contemporary culture.”³¹ It was the coffeehouses that created and spread culture. While mosques were essential to spreading religion, coffeehouses were essential to spreading cultural norms, lessons, and values. Satirical puppet shows would express certain points of view and would spread political messages. Coffeehouses became the heart of culture

³⁰ ibid, 227.
³¹ ibid, 232.
and central to social life.

**History and changes over time**

It has been said that the first coffeehouse was opened in 1473 in Istanbul, which is when coffee was introduced to the area and the habit began to take root. Coffeehouses expanded and began to truly become popular in the 1600s. The first coffeehouses began to appear in Damascus in the first half of the sixteenth century. They were often banned because authorities thought that they were immoral and coffee was seen as suspect. The early seventeenth century saw huge expansions of coffeehouses in urban areas. “By the early seventeenth century, however, the trend that began in Damascus was unstoppable. The first recorded coffee houses, including those positioned on the riverbanks outside Bab al-Salaam, began operating on a surprisingly large scale with places for hundreds of clients.”

In the 1630s, Sultan Murad launched an empire-wide ban against coffeehouses in an attempt to eradicate the widespread coffee drinking and smoking. This ban only stayed in place for a short time, however, and the popularity of coffeehouses refused to die down. By 1697, visiting foreigners (such as Henry Maundrell) were writing letters home about the coffeehouses that they encountered during their travels throughout the Ottoman Empire. The popularity of coffeehouses grew immensely from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century. In the eighteenth century, coffeehouses were able to operate freely (within the bounds of legality). As well, in the eighteenth century, coffeehouses became routine and the habits of coffee drinking and smoking which had, earlier, been

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32 Burns, 231.
33 Marcus, 232.
34 Burns, 231.
35 In 1764, for example, the governor commanded that the coffeehouses be closed after sundown because of problems with wine drinking and prostitution. The order, apparently ineffective, was reissued three years later by another governor. (Marcus, 232)
considered to be shocking and vile were now considered to be ordinary pastimes\textsuperscript{36}. There has been evidence that coffeehouses were important markers of space. Ibn Jum’a reported, for example, that the al-Munakhiliyya coffeehouse had caught fire and burned to the ground in 1716, and the chronicler al-Budayri, in 1756, considered the construction of four coffeehouses to be one of the newsworthy events of the year\textsuperscript{37}; this shows that coffeehouses were considered to be important and the building of coffeehouses was of note to the citizens. Coffeehouses were often used to mark territories within a city; certain groups of people would take over a coffeehouse in order to show their dominance over that particular area of the city. Different city guards would take over areas of a city as their own home turf. One example of this happened in 1799. “After arriving in the city, the first imperial troops dispatched against Napoleon in 1799 immediately seized a number of coffeehouses for themselves, hanging their insignia as an informal way of marking the territory.”\textsuperscript{38} In this way, coffeehouses were areas of culture dissemination as well as political dissemination; political power could also be spread through coffeehouses. People could take refuge in the coffeehouse of certain groups, and coffeehouses were used as bases for certain groups to convene. The popularity of coffeehouses continued to spread in to the 1800s. The opening of a new coffeehouse always attracted public attention; even though coffeehouses ranged in size from a handful of patrons to hundreds of patrons, the opening of a new coffeehouse was considered to be a newsworthy event. Coffeehouses remained popular and ever growing in numbers. “By his own day, estimated Nu’man Qasalti (1876), Damascus had about one hundred ten

\textsuperscript{36} Grehan, 224.
\textsuperscript{37} ibid, 141.
\textsuperscript{38} ibid, 144.
such establishments scattered throughout the city.\textsuperscript{39} Coffeehouses remained popular throughout the history of the Ottoman Empire, and remained popular even after the collapse of the Empire, as a place to congregate and as a place to be social.

The essential character of coffeehouses did not change drastically over time; though they became more popular and spread widely, they remained mostly the same. Coffeehouses modernized with the city in some ways (e.g. beverages being prepared differently due to modernizing technology), but their identity as a place for social gatherings remained the same. The design and composition of coffeehouses remained fairly standardized; all coffeehouses, no matter the size or city, provided coffee and a place to socialize. While many coffeehouses had gardens and had extra areas or made the smoking of pipes available to patrons, there was still a standard way in which coffeehouses were set up. There was usually a stage or performance area for musicians, poets, and story-tellers as well as an area for the audience to sit and socialize. This formula was so successful that a similar layout remains in many new coffeehouses worldwide. While some outside forces of change attempted to act on coffeehouses, they were not particularly successful. Laws were made to attempt to stop the spread of coffeehouses and coffeehouses were often banned. These bans often did not succeed and faded away as coffeehouses became more popular. The government did attempt to regulate coffeehouses when illegal practices (such as prostitution) happened, but coffeehouses remained popular and as long as they remained within the bounds of legality, the government did not interfere with them. Legislation attempting to ban coffeehouses failed. Colonizing forces did not change the popularity of coffeehouses, but rather accepted them and used them to mark their territory. Colonizing forces often

\textsuperscript{39} \textit{ibid}, 140.
brought European practices of coffee-drinking and sometimes built their own coffeehouses and cafés in the cities that they occupied. All in all, coffeehouses, despite attempts to halt their popularity, remained explosively popular and became a central part of culture.

Women’s presence and interactions

Coffeehouses were spaces that were gendered. Despite the segregation of the sexes and the restrictions placed on women and the general differences in social roles that were performed on men and women, women did take part in popular culture. However, women were not often allowed to socialize in the coffeehouses. “They were public places where men (but rarely women) of nearly every social background came together to pass the time over a few leisurely cups.”40 When women did enter coffeehouses, they were generally Christian or Jewish women rather than Muslim women and were there to perform (either as musicians or storytellers) rather than to socialize. Coffeehouses were, as previously mentioned, the central social spaces for men. “The sociability that ran through the popular culture appeared perhaps at its best in the coffeehouses (qahwas), which served as the main gathering places for men.”41 Coffeehouses were spaces in which men, but not women, gathered together. This is important, as these spaces were places where cultural development happened. Coffeehouses were important cultural spaces, and the exclusion of women from these spaces meant the exclusion of women from a large part of cultural development.

When colonizing forces took over, coffeehouses remained spaces for men. This is because in many of these colonizing places, coffeehouses (and other social places, such

40 Grehan, 144.
41 Marcus, 231.
as pubs) were considered to be men’s space. This did change as women became more accepted in public places, but coffeehouses are still often considered to be a man’s space and women are not fully socially accepted in coffeehouses in many cities today.

Often, women are excluded from more traditional coffeehouses in urban spaces while modern coffeehouses (such as Starbucks) have become acceptable spaces for women and men to mix. This is likely due to a Westernizing influence and the Western nature of these coffeehouses. While women’s interactions with coffeehouses has become more popular with time and with Western influences, they are still generally considered to be men’s spaces in certain places in the Middle East. This is important because coffeehouses were so essential to society; as essential places of congregation, they excluded one half of the population. As well, despite the creation and dissemination of culture that took place within coffeehouses, women were not welcome.

Conclusions
Coffeehouses, then, were highly important and highly gendered urban spaces. They have had a long history of importance throughout the Ottoman Empire, gaining popularity at the beginning of the 1600s and continuing through to the modern day. They were important due to their influence on popular culture and as a place to socialize for men. They provided a social gathering place for the masses and also were used as a platform to express new or popular political ideas. They were places of entertainment and relaxation. Coffeehouses modernized due to Western influences and adapted from an all male space to a space that was much more evenly split between genders and a place where men and women could mix. While the gender divide did change in some more Westernized coffeehouses, the nature of the coffeehouse as a place of entertainment did not change. Many of the more traditional coffeehouses have remained gendered spaces.
Chapter 5: Gardens and Orchards

The space

Just outside of every major city of the Ottoman Empire, travelers noted, one could find a variety of gardens and orchards. These gardens and orchards were both part of and apart from the city itself; they were intimately linked with the city and were an important place in the lives of the urban inhabitants of the city. Large, sprawling orchards and gardens often surrounded large cities, extending for several miles in each direction.

Damascus was a good example of this phenomenon. Passing through the area around Damascus in the spring of 1697, the English traveler Henry Maundrell noted:

“certainly no place in the world can promise the beholder, at a distance, greater voluptuousness…[It] is encompassed with gardens extending no less, according to common estimation, than thirty miles around, which makes it look like a noble
city in a vast wood. The gardens are thick-set with fruit trees of all kinds, kept 
fresh and verdant by the waters of the [Barada]. You discover in them many 
turrets, and steeples, and summer-houses frequently peeping out from among the 
green boughs, which may be conceived to add no small advantage and beauty to 
the prospect.”

As Henry Maundrell took note, gardens and orchards surrounded cities completely. The 
summer houses that he mentioned were highly important as places for families to get 
away from the hustle and bustle of the city. Orchards and gardens were often so 
important and popular that they gained their own names. These names were sometimes 
preserved by geographers; they often counted them among the important local 
landmarks. This notation is evidence that the gardens and orchards that surrounded a 
city were vitally important to the inhabitants of the city and were, in some places, even 
considered to be part of the city. While these plentiful gardens and orchards often 
surrounded cities like Damascus, there was not a clear line between where the orchards 
ended and the city began. Urban expansion often drifted in to orchards and fields. The 
field often pressed against settled areas and made the outer neighborhoods feel more 
semi-rural than urban. In this way, the gardens and orchards that surrounded the city 
acted as a demarcation of an ever-changing border between the urban city and the 
surrounding countryside. The gardens and orchards that often surrounded large cities 
were an interesting dichotomy- neither completely urban nor completely rural.

Another example of a city surrounded by gardens and orchards was the city of

42 Maundrell, Henry. “A Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem,” in Early Travels in 
43 See, for example, Ibn Kannan, Al-Muruj al-sundusiyya al-fasiha bi-talkhis tarikh al-
Aleppo. The city was surrounded by many gardens and orchards, according to travelers to the area. The built-up area of gardens and orchards did not actually exceed 365 hectares (about 1.5 square miles), but may have appeared more extensive because some neighborhoods spread out into the agricultural gardens and there was usually largely undeveloped land on the outskirts of the town, making the gardens and orchards seem much larger\(^4\). This meant that the area around the city of Aleppo was constantly in flux. The boundaries of the city were not clear and changed often. The area surrounding Aleppo consisted of orchards, cultivated fields and large burial grounds\(^5\). The orchards and cemeteries that surrounded the town were also used as areas for picnics, playgrounds, and parks. People of all ages and genders would go to the orchards for an escape from the urban congestion and a change of scenery. The gardens and orchards were a place where all people- regardless of age or gender- could socialize. In the spring, orchards and gardens were particularly popular places to visit due to the blooming of the flowers and the temperate weather. In Aleppo, during three days every April, crowds of people would flock to the gardens and orchards on the outskirts of the city in the belief that their visit would guarantee a year free of headaches\(^6\). The orchards and gardens were believed to be places of health, and the fresh air must have been a relief and in stark contrast to the hustle and bustle of urban life. Orchards were also popular places to celebrate various feasts (both by Muslims and non-Muslims). Many people would celebrate feast-days by spending time in the gardens and bringing picnics to eat outside. Owners of the orchards and gardens would allow visitors to spend the day for a fee, and wealthy families would rent orchards for parties. They would often bring musicians, dancers, and clowns for

\(^4\) Marcus, 28.
\(^5\) ibid, 279.
\(^6\) ibid, 267.
entertainment. These families would spend the entire day relaxing in the garden and celebrating. The gardens and orchards were rented out for special celebratory occasions and often were places where parties were hosted.

Ottoman gardens and orchards were used both as places of rest and relaxation as well as places to grow food. This meant that the gardens and orchards frequently changed their layout. Ottoman gardens and orchards were often haphazard in their organization or in what was planted in them. They rarely had any particular plan and owners would change what they planted from year to year. There were, however, certain main elements that many gardens possessed. One of the main elements that existed in the majority of Ottoman gardens was the garden pavilion. These pavilions exhibited an enormous amount of diversity amongst them; they ranged from the modest to luxurious and from the very small to quite large. Pavilions were placed in places that the owner believed had the best view of the surrounding land. Placement for optimal views, however, was only secondary in importance to the architecture. Pavilions were designed to blend in to their surroundings as closely as possible. Pavilions were required to be open to its surroundings and was intended to blend in to the garden. Pavilions would appear as though they were part of nature rather than man-made structures. Along with pavilions, Ottoman gardens also invariably contained cypress trees and fountains. The fountains would consist of a pool and at least one spout, though many had more. Gardens were usually constructed next to flowing sources of water such as brooks, rivers, or the sea.

Gardens and orchards were highly important to the cities that they surrounded.

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47 ibid, 231.
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
The most important reason that orchards and gardens existed was to provide cities with food. This was particularly important in times of famine. During these times, cities would share food from their orchards with each other and would use these orchards to grow food rather than to grow flowers. There were “...great numbers of vineyards, orchards, and gardens around every important town [that] provided fruit and vegetables.”\(^5\) These fresh fruits and vegetables provided for a varied diet among the townspeople and were important sources of nutrition. As well as being a source of fresh fruit and vegetables, the orchards were important because they provided a space that was used for multiple purposes which, then, allowed the community to satisfy various personal and social needs without specialized institutions which would require additional space.

**History and changes over time**

Until the 19\(^{th}\) century, the Ottoman gardens changed over time in location and in what was planted in them, but rarely in character. Gardens on the edges of urban spaces were constantly in flux and at war with the urban space it surrounded. Often, land would be converted from agricultural land to architectural buildings and buildings would be knocked down to create space for more gardens and orchards. “The conversion of agricultural land to urban space was never a permanent or irreversible process.”\(^5\) The edges of the city were constantly in flux. As well, while planting aesthetics often changed, the purpose of the gardens rarely did. An example of this can be found in Istanbul, where private gardens were popular. The basic characteristics of a garden in Istanbul remained basically unchanged.\(^5\) This would change only when economic and


\(^{52}\) Grehan 25.

\(^{53}\) For examples, please see:
political circumstances caused gardens that had been used as pleasure gardens to be converted to food producing and working gardens. Gardens of the Ottoman Era remained fairly similar to the earlier Byzantine gardens. Gonsul Evyapan's description of the 'typical' Ottoman garden was as a lived in space; sitting areas and small buildings were regular features. They usually contained a wide variety of trees, flowers and other decorative plantings, though it is certain that there were changes over the centuries in planting aesthetics. Working gardens, too, could be attached to the Ottoman garden just as they were to the Byzantine. There was a lack of axially in Ottoman gardens, in stark contrast to what was favored in contemporary western Europe. The Ottoman gardens were much more similar to their Byzantine predecessors.

European visitors to Istanbul in the 16th century were often impressed by the Ottoman gardens, which were generally filled with flowers and trees. This led to the exportation of flowers and trees from Turkey to Europe and caused an influence, to a certain extent, on European gardens in the 17th century. By the 19th century, however, the influence of colonialism kicked in and the direction of influence began to reverse. Where Ottoman gardens had influenced the plant types of European gardens, now European gardens began to influence the layout and style of Ottoman gardens. Foreign gardeners were often recruited from Europe and were employed in the design of gardens for the

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wealthy. Gardens began to change their layout and became much more European in style; Ottoman landscaping practices changed and a new European-influenced style of gardening emerged. This European style of gardening remained, and gardens became more organized and park-like rather than containing a rotation of crops and fruit trees. Gardens also shifted in purpose, and their importance in the lives of citizens changed as the world modernized.

Women's presence and interactions

For women, gardens and orchards were incredibly important. Not only did they provide food for the families living in the city, they also were one of the few places where women were allowed to socialize outside of the home. Because gardens were one of the places where women could socialize, they were often frequented by groups of women. Women were allowed to go out to the gardens either in the company of their family or with other women. Women would gather in the garden to attend parties or to gossip and would sometimes even smoke together. Mikha’il Burayk, a Greek Orthodox priest, expressed his shock at women who, in 1759, “smoked tobacco in homes, bathhouses, and gardens, even along the river while people were passing by.” These women would smoke water pipes, often called hookahs. Men would also smoke these pipes both in the gardens and in other places of congregation, such as coffee houses. Scholars often mentioned how people, both men and women, would go to the gardens.

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55 Atasoy.
Gardens were particularly popular in the spring, when flowers would bloom and both men and women would venture out to the gardens both day and night. Ibn Kannan, in his notebook, mentioned how women would go out to the gardens and would write about how his visits to the gardens were often filled with poetry, conversations about scholarship, and meals\(^{58}\). Another piece of evidence that showed that the gardens were popular places for women was a picture entitled “Syrian ladies”\(^{59}\). In the picture, a group of women sit in a local garden. They have coffee, tobacco pipes, and musical instruments. It appears that the garden has been rented for a private party which has, in this picture, reached full swing. In this picture, it is clear that women enjoyed spending time in gardens. The drawing is clear evidence for women spending time in gardens.

As well as private all-women parties, families would gather to spend time together in the gardens. Women were generally very excited about these gatherings and looked forward to them\(^{60}\); the gatherings provided the women with the opportunity to escape their homes and to relax outside. They provided the women with a little bit of freedom. Often, however, moral opinions interfered with women’s ability to enjoy the gardens and they were restricted to certain days. In periods of unrest, the women were often prohibited from going to the gardens at all. This caused great displeasure amongst the women, who enjoyed the small freedom with which the gardens supplied them. Both


men and women visited gardens both for picnics and strolls with family and friends.

**Conclusions**

Gardens played an important role in the life of the city. Surrounding large urban areas, gardens and orchards provided an unofficial boundary to the city and were considered to be both part of the city and apart from the city. Gardens and orchards were places where the populace could celebrate and escape from the city; they also provided food for the ever-growing population of the city. Women were particularly fond of gardens and orchards because they were one of the few places where women could gather on social outings. They provided a place where families could socialize in public and a place where large celebrations could take place. While the gardens changed over time, both influencing and influenced by European gardens, they remained an important part of Ottoman urban life.
Chapter 6: Bathhouses

The Space

Bathhouses, called *hammams*, were an integral part of life in any Middle Eastern city. People would gather here to enjoy a bath, massages, and a relaxing break. Bathhouses were a center of society and were an integral part of every major city. They could be found in almost every single urban space throughout the Middle East and the Ottoman Empire. Often, there would be many bathhouses throughout a city. The bathhouses were somewhat similar to coffeehouses in function—they provided a place for gossip and entertainment. But while coffeehouses were a place in which only men could go, the bathhouse was a space for both men and women, though segregation between the sexes remained. Segregation of the sexes was through having separate days for men and women to attend or special hours set aside for women. Sometimes, women would have separate buildings.

Bathhouses were places where people from many different social backgrounds came together for news, gossip, conversation, and entertainment. The bathhouses provided a way for people to get away from the hustle and bustle of daily life and also provided a place for people to socialize. Bathhouses would sometimes even serve coffee.

"Some bathhouses kept their own supplies for customers, who might relax with a cup of..."

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61 Marcus, 261.
after a refreshing bath.” This indicates the importance of bathhouses as places of socialization and relaxation.

Bathhouses, particularly those in urban areas, were often fueled by the burning of garbage, trash, and manure. Bathhouses were not merely a place to wash and get clean; bathhouses were also places of socialization, entertainment, and a mixing of the masses. Because only the extremely wealthy could afford to bathe in their homes, bathhouses became a place where people would go to bathe themselves. Cleanliness was a highly important part of culture and religion in the Ottoman Empire.

Cleanliness is essential in Islam. The ideas of purification through water is highly important, and the Qur’an mentions the importance of cleanliness many times. Additionally, cleanliness was an important part of the culture of the Ottoman Empire. Most of the European visitors to the Ottoman Empire mentioned the cleanliness of Ottoman cities and the extraordinary preoccupation with cleanliness. “Of all the habits cultivated by townspeople, none was as popular or as effective in promoting cleanliness as regular bathing, which in practice meant visiting the neighborhood bathhouse (hammam). This was one of the great traditions of both the urban and rural Middle East, dating back to antiquity and thriving throughout the Islamic period.” Bathhouses were very popular and there were often many bathhouses in one city.

Bathhouses were often spread throughout cities, and every section of the city generally had at least one bathhouse. A good example of this can be found in Damascus. “Every part of the city had at least one such establishment. In Ibn Kannan’s lifetime (1663-1740), there were five in his neighborhood of al-Salihiyya alone; for the entire

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62 Grehan, 140.
63 Grehan, 169 and Marcus, 262.
64 Grehan, 170.
city, Nu’man Qasatli later gave an estimate of fifty-eight (1876).\textsuperscript{65} Bathhouses were often located in central parts of the city rather than near the gates. The more populous an area was, the more numerous the bathhouses were. “The bathhouses, not quite as abundant as the mosques, were accessible throughout the city, but were definitely concentrated in the more central locations... Many, especially those in the extramural districts, had to go some distance to get to a bathhouse.”\textsuperscript{66} Bathhouses were used as gathering places, particularly for women, and also provided a place to socialize and for entertainment. Like coffeehouses, bathhouses were a place where people would congregate to play games, gossip, and entertain themselves. While coffeehouses were often populated solely by men, bathhouses were segregated and provided a place for women to congregate.

The Turkish bathhouse evolved from the Roman \textit{thermae} and baths which had spread throughout Anatolia. As well, there were influences from the central Asian Turkish tradition of steam bathing, ritual cleansing, and respect of water. The Arabs were exposed to Greek and Roman baths in Syria and when they conquered Alexandria in 641. They took these bathing practices of the Greeks and Romans and adapted them. Architecturally, the bathhouses of the Arabs became much smaller and more modest than its Roman predecessors. While the Romans built enormous baths at the center of the city, the Arabs preferred to have several small baths scattered throughout the cities. Despite the change in scale, the progression through a series of different rooms remained the same.

The Turkish bathhouses evolved from ancient Greek and Roman bathing

\textsuperscript{65} ibid.
\textsuperscript{66} Marcus, 287.
practices. A person in the baths would first enter a warm room, which is heated by a continuous flow of hot, dry air. This forced the bather to perspire. Then, the bather would proceed to the hot room. After this, there were rooms for massages. The cool room would follow and be the last of the rooms. The cold room was the biggest evolutionary change between the Roman and Turkish baths. The Roman cold room consisted of a cold water pool which was used by patrons preceding use of the warm and the hot rooms. The Turkish baths used running water rather than immersion baths, which meant that the cold water pool was removed. The sequence of the rooms in the Turkish baths was also changed so that the cool room was used after the warm room and massages. The Romans used the room as preparation, but the Ottomans used it as an area for refreshment and recovery. Drinks and snacks would be served in the cool room. The hot room was used for soaking up steam and for getting scrub massages. The warm room was used for washing with soap and water, and the cool room would be a place for the patrons to relax, have a refreshing drink, and get dressed. There were sometimes private cubicles for naps.

**History and changes over time**

From antiquity all the way up to the end of the Ottoman Empire, public bathhouses were a staple part of any city and were central to social life for many citizens. Cities often had many bathhouses and they remained steady in their popularity through the beginning of the 1800s. The nature of coffeehouses did not change drastically over time, however, their popularity waned with the rise of westernization; though they remained popular from the time of antiquity through the end of the Ottoman Empire and spread widely, they did not change shape or format. Bathhouses almost completely disappeared with the modernization of the city and their identity as a place for social
gatherings shifted to a place for tourists. The bathhouses shifted from having an emic construct to an etic construct; originally, they were important to the society for its own reasons, but the importance has shifted. Many bathhouses today have shifted to deliver an experience that is more orientalist in nature. That is to say that they are shifting to better align themselves with the view of their western tourists rather than the traditional culture.

The bathhouse was popular throughout the Middle East until its decline with the influence of modernization. The decline of bathhouses in the 1800s was due to a variety of factors. The widening of streets and the westernizing construction projects often led to the demolition of bathhouses throughout the city. As cities expanded and became more modern, public bathhouses were destroyed to make room for newer buildings. As well, the new apartment buildings were made with bathrooms in the apartment; this made bathhouses unnecessary for the owners of these new apartments. As access to running water in the home as well as electrically heated water became more popular in the home, bathing changed from something that was public to something much more private. The Western (Victorian) notion that bodies should be considered private and bathing should be done in the home rather than in bathhouses spread along with other Western notions. Instead of modernizing along with the rest of the city, bathhouses became bathrooms and thus part of the home. This conversion made the space private rather than public. While bathhouses did, and do, remain scattered throughout the city, their popularity decreased

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67 “Emic” and “etic” are anthropological terms. “Emic” is a description of a behavior or belief that is meaningful (consciously or unconsciously) to an actor, that is a person from within the culture. “Etic”, conversely, is a description of a behavior or belief by an observer, using “culturally neutral” language. In this case, bathhouses were worthy to those inside the Ottoman culture, but were eventually changed to the point that they were culturally appropriated by tourists and no longer valued by those inside of the culture.
drastically and they became a tourist attraction or a rare occurrence rather than a daily or weekly ritual.

*Women’s presence and interactions*

Originally, bathhouses were places where only men would go. Very quickly, however, bathhouses became a place where both men and women had the right to go, though they remained segregated. This made the bathhouse a very gendered space, though in a different way than a coffeehouse. Where coffeehouses were social but for use only by men, bathhouses were social spaces that could be used by either gender as long as they were segregated. Women’s interactions with the bathhouses were very important. The public bathhouses were segregated by sex; women could only attend on certain days or during predesignated hours. During these times, men were not allowed to enter. The bathhouses were also segregated by religion; Muslim women were not allowed to bathe with Christian or Jewish women. “Muslim women were required to have separate use of the baths. According to the judge who reaffirmed this segregation in 1762, for a Muslim woman to expose herself before a Dhimmi female was as sinful as baring herself before a man.” These segregation rules were not always followed, however, because they were detrimental to the business. Men and women were, however, always required to bathe separately. Female bath attendants would attend the women bathers- giving them massages and removing body hair- while male bath attendants would do the same for the men. The bathhouses were not only used to keep clean; as previously mentioned, they were also used for entertainment. “The public bathhouses also doubled as places of amusement and socializing, again especially for women, and a rich lore of popular

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68 Grehan, 170.
69 Marcus, 42.
sayings and stories centered on this social institution.”

Bathhouses became one of the few places where women could go to socialize and gossip. Because men were not allowed inside, women could relax and talk to each other. This was particularly true of holidays like Ramadan, when women would gather to celebrate the holiday together. “During Ramadan, when people customarily went out at night to celebrate the holiday, the baths as well as the coffeehouses were kept open until the early hours of the morning to provide places of entertainment. Parties of women and children brought food and entertainers along with them to the baths, and spent the day socializing in the relaxed atmosphere, their excited voices reaching the streets. On happy domestic occasions the better-off families rented the bathhouses for private parties for female relatives and friends.”

Because women were often restricted in where they could go, bathhouses became much more important to women for social reasons. In a letter written to a friend in 1717 by Lady Montague, a woman visiting the city of Adrianople (today, Edirne) wrote that “the main things women do is go visiting neighbours, go to Turkish baths, spend lavishly and create new costume designs.” The bathhouses were truly central to the lives of all urban women; women from all walks of life frequented the bathhouses, though rich women often only did so on special occasions when they would rent out the entire bathhouse. This is because rich women could afford to have their own baths in their homes. Apart from the extremely wealthy, however, women from all walks of life mixed at the bathhouse. As well, the bathhouse provided important sanitation for many women. In 1897, Bernhard Stein, writing for the Neue Freie Press, commented about the bathhouse’s significance for the Turkish women. ”The hammam recompenses the

70 ibid, 231.
71 ibid.
72 Afetinan, 28.
Turkish women for all the amusements with which European women are indulged: theatres, dances, traveling. It is the only real variety in their dream-like lives. And life is indeed colourful and joyful in these miraculously beautiful halls walled in marble, where the echo repeats every word thrice. There the Turkish women sit, unveiled, in their patterned robes, smoking, gossiping, laughing, suckling their children or painting their faces. Stein's description of the bathhouses is of a beautiful place where women frequented in order to escape from their homes, where they are normally confined. He claims that the bathhouse is a place in which women escape from the dullness of their lives. It is a place that provides them with amusement and variety. Stein notes the importance of the bathhouse specifically to women. While the bathhouse was an important place for men in terms of sanitation, the coffeehouse took the place of the bathhouse in terms of entertainment and gossip.

**Conclusions**

The bathhouse provided sanitation and socialization for inhabitants of a city. Bathhouses were spread throughout cities and were popular and important parts of urban and rural life, though much more popular in urban areas. Bathhouses remained popular until the influence of westernization, at which point their popularity declined drastically due to a change in priorities in terms of how space in a city should be used and the spread of individual bathrooms for apartments and houses. Bathhouses, influenced by Roman bathing practices, were places in which people could be entertained and could spend an entire day. They were not just places of sanitation but were also used for congregation. People would gather there to gossip. Bathhouses were especially important for women due to their use as a place for congregation and provided many of the same important

73 Stein, Bernhard. *Neue Freie Press*, Austria. 1897.
influences as the coffeehouse.
The space

The meydan is an open space in a city, like an urban public square. It is a public area in which public debates and discussions take place and where speeches are made. Meydans were popular throughout the Ottoman Empire. They were places where people were consulted. They were spaces in which people were executed and where people gathered to learn of the rulings of the authorities. These squares were places filled with encounters between people, revolutions, meetings, and announcements. The word meydan in Turkish translates to the English word “square”, but can also mean “time” and “opportunity”. The word comes from the Arabic word Maydan (wide open space) and from Pehlevi (Middle-Persian) Mayan (the center/the visible space). During the Ottoman period, meydans were places where street theater (orta oyunu) was performed and where the Sufi ritual ayin (a Whirling Dance ceremony based on musical composition and poetry) took place.

Meydans were squares and parade fields. They usually had fountains and a few trees in the middle, in order to provide shade and water to those gathered there. The fountains of the meydans were freestanding, and looked like small kiosks or pavilions. They were one of the earliest examples of western influence on Ottoman architecture. Some of these fountains were elaborate, such as the Ahmet III Fountain outside the Topkapi Palace. It was built in 1729 and had multiple taps for water as well as attendants.

Other fountains, such as the Mahmud II Fountain in Boyacıköy, from 1837, were much more simple. Some fountains would only have one face, while others, such as the Hekimoğlu Ali Pasa Meydan Fountain in Kabatas and the Saliha Sultan Fountain in Azapkapı (both built in 1732), had two faces. These fountains were highly important to the *meydan*, as they were one reason why people would gather in the square. People would collect water from the square and this made it a place for people to meet and to gather together as a community. Squares also often had çınars (plane trees), which acted as a form of shade and helped to ward off the heat. One example of a *meydan* with a çınar is in Ohrid, Macedonia. The çınar at this *meydan* is said to be 900 years old; this means that the *meydan* must have existed before the arrival of the Ottomans.

**History and changes over time**

The *meydan* changed drastically over time. The Ottomans inherited the idea of public squares from the Romans, who had hippodromes. One example of this is Sultanahmet Square, which was originally the Hippodrome of Constantinople. When the Ottomans conquered the city of Istanbul in 1453, they left the basic Byzantine structure of the city, but adopted some Romano-Byzantine traditions, such as the *meydan*. These public squares, however, were soon filled up with houses. As urban areas expanded, the empty spaces of squares slowly became filled with houses and the surrounding urban city consumed the open space. The Roman boulevards and squares became cluttered, and by the seventeenth century, the city became completely eastern in character. As the city expanded, open areas became taken over by houses and markets. The cluttering of cities and the filling up of public squares began to reverse with the western influence in the

77 Strootman, Rolf. “From Hippodromos to At Meydan: Continuity and discontinuity in the imperial topography of Constantinople after the Ottoman conquest”, in: International Review of Turkish Studies, Spring 2012, Volume: 2, Issue: 1, pp. 50-70.
nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In the nineteenth century, French colonial cities, such as Algeria and Tunisia, as well as provincial Arab towns in the Ottoman Empire, began to change. Part of this urban construction was the building of public squares. The new construction of public squares and monuments was a visual re-ordering of the city. It changed the way that the city was shaped and influenced how people interacted with the city. Ottoman and French authorities used a combination of technology and communication to create new urban infrastructure, including public parks and squares. These new buildings represented imperial power and were a reinforcement of that representation on the physical layout of the city. There was an emphasis on the physical ordering of space. As well, new attention was paid to the mechanisms of distribution which mimicked the ways in which individuals were coming to terms with “the modern” and the way in which modernity was used. These newly-constructed squares and parks represented imperial presence and monumentality (often containing both a symbolic monumentality and a literal monument of some sort). The spaces also imply different ways of interacting, gathering, and congregating in urban spaces. Public squares were privileged sites of imperial expression; evidence of this can be found in the buildings that surrounded and defined these squares and the iconographically charged monuments that decorated them.

One example of the newly-constructed square representing the imperial presence was the expansion and creation of many different public squares as a commemoration of the 25th anniversary of Sultan Abdul Hamid II’s ascension to the throne in 1900-1901. These squares were built or extended in cities such as Izmir, Tripoli, Jaffa, and Jerusalem.

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78 Çelik.
79 ibid.
They often contained iconic watch towers, and were intended to be a show of imperial power. They were also intended to be an example of the modernization of these cities; the watch towers were considered to be modern and the squares were seen as western in design.

Women’s presence and interactions

Women’s presence in public squares is not well-documented. There is little evidence of women gathering or visiting in public squares, though it is likely that they passed through squares on their way to and from different destinations in the city. Because women did not often interact with people outside of their homes and because politics was considered to be a man’s field, it is highly likely that women did not frequent squares often. Squares acted as places for people to gather together and hear news. Often, it was used as a place for public announcements. These announcements were often given by men and were intended to be announcements for men. These announcements would likely be passed on to the women through their husbands or fathers or by word of mouth.

Conclusions

Meydans were public spaces in a city, like an urban public park. Often, public debates and speeches were made in meydans. They were spaces in which public executions were held and where people gathered to learn of the rulings of the authorities. They often contained fountains and trees. While they were very popular in pre-Ottoman times, they faded out of popularity as urban Ottoman spaces began to become more crowded. They resurfaced in popularity during the Tanzimat period due to western

influence and were often used as monuments and as representations of imperial power. There is very little evidence of women frequenting squares or interacting with squares, though it is distinctly possible that they did pass through the public squares.

Chapter 8: Mosques

The space

Mosques are central to the Muslim world and, thus, are placed centrally in the city. They are one of the main institutions that characterized the establishment of
Ottoman cities. The mosque plays a variety of roles in the life of Muslims. It is not merely a space for prayer; it is a meeting place. Many people socialize and are able to interact and discuss important issues both before and after the prayer services. The mosque is the focal point of all prayer services—there are five daily prayers, a Friday noon service, and various festivals throughout the year. All of these compel people to gather at the mosque. Similarly, mosques are used as a place for social gatherings. Wedding ceremonies, funeral services, and courts of law all took place at the mosque. The mosque, then, became a place where major life events would take place. The mosque also is used as a place for rest. Visiting travelers can stay at the mosque overnight. In places where water was scarce, the mosque acted as a source of water supply. Mosques are required to have some form of running water so that those who pray there can perform their ablutions. This means that mosques were often the only source of water for some small towns. Finally, the mosque acted as a place of learning. Children were often taught to read, write, and to recite the Quran. In larger urban areas, schools were found near the mosque or attached to the mosque rather than being located inside the mosque. As well, madrassas, larger schools for the study of religion, are usually built alongside of the mosque. This way, the imam, or religious leader, could easily teach the students while still leading all of the prayers each day.

Typical Ottoman mosques had a large hemispherical dome that was mounted on a polygon over the prayer hall. This dome was often buttressed by half-domes and sometimes flying buttresses. It usually had a massive, somber, stone exterior that

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concealed a much more ornate and colorful interior. The interior often used tiles as decorations and had high ceilings. The minarets were tall and slender. The larger mosques were often surrounded by a complex of buildings. Often amongst these buildings were an imaret (soup kitchen), a madrassa (religious school), a mekteb (Quran school), a hammam (bathhouse), and a hospital. Smaller mosques generally did not have these extra buildings attached. Large mosques, particularly those built due to patronage, would have these buildings; they were added as a show of wealth and power.

Mosques were centrally located in most urban (and rural) spaces. Mosques were often centrally located because they were the center of religious life and were central to how the large majority of citizens, being Muslim, structured their day. “Thus, in the structuring of urban centers, the market and the Great Mosque played the decisive role, that of the political center being generally limited, if nonexistent.” Most major cities contained one large mosque and many smaller mosques scattered throughout the city. The main mosque was often the focal-point of a city. Ottoman cities were often centralized and plans would be made so that the main mosque would be central, with successive concentric rings of attractions, such as market places and coffeehouses, radiating out from the center. “The second aspect of this intense urban centralization is that the town’s activities developed by radiating outward from the zone of the markets and the Great Mosque. Roughly, the localization of activities, from the center, had a radioconcentric character, the economic activities being arranged in successive rings according to their importance, but also, in a negative way, according to the inconvenience they brought about or their need of space. Nearest to the center were to be found the main

activities, generally the most specialized… tended to be pushed toward the outskirts of town." Mosques were quite literally at the center of urban life. They were placed centrally in urban areas and were focal points for city planning and development. Mosques were the focus of cities and of people; because prayer is so central to the daily life of Muslims, the mosque also becomes central to the daily life of Muslims.

**History and changes over time**

Ottoman mosques changed over time. They developed and were influenced both by historical mosque architecture and Western church architecture. Mosques did not change in character as much as they changed in appearance. While mosques remained a place of prayer and of socialization, they shifted in terms of their physical presence. Mosques remained centrally located but became larger and grander.

Ottoman architecture was influenced by Byzantine architecture and Konya and Mamluk architecture which, in turn, was influenced by traditional Seljuk architecture. Until the Ottoman Empire, Islamic religious architecture almost entirely consisted of simple buildings with extensive decorations. Early Ottoman mosques mimicked this, using a small, square-plan, often topped with a hemispherical dome. The walls were usually very low and the dome would cover the entire space. The first Ottoman mosques did not have windows and generally had plain stone walls. The only openings were small openings in the walls. An example of this is the Alaettin Mosque at Bursa.

As the Ottoman Empire expanded, more complex and monumental forms of mosques began to appear. During the fourteenth century, Ottoman mosques began to change. The hypostyle mosque, such as the Friday Mosque in Bursa, began to disappear.  

83 ibid.
They were replaced by mosques with large central domes which covered even larger interior rooms. Examples of this can be found in the Üç Şerefeli Mosque in Erdine, which was built for Murad II (who ruled from 1421–44 and 1446–51) between 1438 and 1447. The Üç Serefeli Mosque at Edirne also created a more vertical and centralized space. At this mosque, a central dome is flanked by four smaller domes, arranged in pairs at both ends of a long interior. This design begins the transition towards the higher, single domed mosques that were to dominate Ottoman architecture in the time of Sinan.

One of the turning points in the history of mosque architecture in the Ottoman Empire was the conquest of Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire. There, the Ottomans were awed by the Hagia Sophia. Architects began to incorporate its fundamental structural elements in their new constructions. Examples of this incorporation can be seen in the Fatih Camii mosque of Mehmed II in Istanbul, which shows some similarities to the Hagia Sophia. The Ulu Cami (Great Mosque) at Bursa was planned on a four by five bay grid. It was planned with twelve supporting piers and twenty equal domes on pendentives. Inside, the mosque has long horizontal vistas, which were illuminated by small openings in the domes. The Mosque of Bayazit II is even more clear in its resemblance. The Sultan Beyazit II Mosque had a great central dome which was buttressed by two semi-domes and resting on par pendentives with four large arches.

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85 Freely, 20.
89 Freely, 20.
on piers\textsuperscript{90}, echoing the architecture of the Hagia Sophia. Even one of the most famous architects of the era, Sinan, copied this pattern. Evidence of this can be found in his Mosque of Süleyman and the Mosque of Kılıç Ali Paşa\textsuperscript{91}. Both mosques are located in Istanbul and reproduce the plan and structure of the Hagia Sophia faithfully. The Ottomans transformed the previously simple architecture by adding vaults, domes, semi-domes, and columns. The mosque transformed to a place of balance.

The mosque did modernize with the rest of the city. At first, it was not increasing colonialism that caused it to modernize; rather, it was the influence of western architecture and an attempt to imitate the churches of Europe. Because mosques were the center, both literally and figuratively, of urban life in Ottoman cities, they became larger and grander as they developed over time. This was an attempt to imitate the western churches of the time. As well, architects began to be trained mostly in Europe or were, themselves, European. The mid-eighteenth to the late nineteenth century Ottoman architecture was in the Turkish Baroque style. This style was influenced by the gradual Westernization of the Ottoman elite. There were many imported European patterns of buildings. The Nuruosmaniye Mosque in Istanbul is a good example of a Baroque Ottoman mosque. It was completed by Osman III in 1755, and while its prayer hall follows the usual rigid square, domed plan, its courtyard curves to form a horseshoe. This style was then followed by the Neo-Islamic style in the nineteenth century. Architecture was affected by the colonialism in place. European and European-trained architects and designs became central. They interpreted the architectural heritage of the countries in which they built. This meant that hybrid styles, combining eastern and western styles,

\textsuperscript{91} \textit{ibid.}
were prominent. These became known as Oriental styles, and were often known as Neo-Moorish, Neo-Saracen, Neo-Mamluk, and so forth. Examples of this can be found in the Neo-Mamluk style of the Mosque of al-Rifa’i in Cairo. The mosque was built between 1869 and 1906 and the Neo-Corinthian columns found in the Dolmabahçe Mosque in Istanbul.

Women’s presence and interactions

Women’s interaction with mosques was not common. Mosques were often considered to be spaces for men. Islamic law does not technically require men and women to be separated in the prayer hall and there is nothing in the Quran that mentions the issue of gender separation during prayer or the gender segregation of space in mosques. These spaces have, however, been traditionally segregated. Traditional rules have segregated prayer space and women have been relegated to praying in rows behind the men rather than mixing with the men. While the Prophet Muhammad did tell Muslims that they should not forbid women from entering mosques92, and women were allowed to enter the mosques, there is a competing hadith, or saying of the Prophet Muhammad, that claims that the best mosques for women are the inner parts of their houses93.

While the Prophet Muhammad, according to the aforementioned hadith, did command men not to bar women from public worship, this has not necessarily remained the case over time. Women in the time of Muhammad were allowed to perform the

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92 “If the wife of any one of you asks permission (to go to the mosque) do not forbid her.” (Sahih Bukhari Volume 1, Book of Salaah, Chapter 80, Hadith No. 832) And also “Do not prevent the female servants of Allah from going to the mosque of Allah.” [Sahih Muslim Vol.1 Chapter 177 Hadith No.886]

93 Abdullah Bin Mas’ud reported the Prophet (pboh) as saying: It is more excellent for a woman to pray in her house than in her courtyard, and more excellent for her to pray in her private chamber than in her house. [Sunan Abu Dawood Vol.1 Chapter 204 Hadith No.570]
morning prayer in the mosque but were required to line up in rows behind the men and to leave the mosque before the men. This, theoretically, prevented any contact between the men and the women. However, by about 700, Muslim religious authorities had decided to completely ban women from mosques. These religious authorities often claimed that public spaces were unsafe for women and thus they were protecting the women. Keeping women out of mosques was seen as necessary to preserve the holiness of the mosque and to preserve the dignity of the men praying in the mosque. This meant that while they did not begin this way, historically, mosques were primarily male spaces.

Women were excluded from having an active role in orthodox religion. While they were expected to remain pious and moral, they were not expected to take part in religious ceremonies or traditions taking place at the mosque. Instead, many women turned to popular religion to replace their lack of religious activity within the bounds of orthodox Islamic practice. “The prominence of women in popular religion coincided with their subordinate role in orthodox religion, suggesting a basic difference in the cultural expectations of males and females. Women were expected to be God-fearing and moral, but were not sent to religious schools or assigned an active role in communal prayers and worship. With their religious education and active participation in ritual restricted, women perhaps turned more readily to popular religion as a channel for spiritual expression.”

Ottoman women were consciously excluded from orthodox religious life. They were not permitted to enter the mosque and performed their prayers in their homes rather than in the mosque. While women were expected to remain pious and modest, they were not expected to pray openly or in public; rather, they prayed behind closed doors. When women did enter mosques, it was generally as a form of protest. In Aleppo, women

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94 Marcus, 227
took a stand against the governor by occupying the mosque. “Women occupied the minaret of the Great Mosque in 1751, interrupting prayers and abusing the governor for inaction on the famine.” These women used the tradition of not allowing women in the mosque as a form of protest. Their entrance to the mosque was quite disruptive and caused trouble for the men praying there.

Rather than getting involved in mosque life, women became involved in saint veneration and mysticism. Ottoman women were often involved in superstitious beliefs. While these beliefs were not part of orthodox religion, they were still considered to be part of Islam. “Prior to the modern Salafiyya movement of reformed Islam, the most visible manifestation of female religiosity was women’s active involvement in saint veneration or mysticism or both.” Women were able to be religious through their veneration of the saints and through various superstitious beliefs. Because they were banned from the mosques, Ottoman women instead found alternate ways of expressing their piety and spirituality.

Another way that rich women could contribute to mosques was to donate money to build a mosque. Despite the fact that these women were not allowed to enter these mosques, often wealthy women would donate money to build mosques. Rulers and the members of the elite class were the only people with enough capital to build these public buildings. They used waqfs to endow their projects and used these buildings to

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97 The term waqf means “confinement and prohibition”. It denotes an inalienable religious endowment, usually a building or a plot of land. These donated assets were then
demonstrate their political and social status as well as to express religious commitment. Architectural patronage was considered to be an important pious act. Female patronage began after the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul in 1453. Female patrons were often valide sultans, the mother of the reigning sultan, but were also sometimes the wives of the sultan or princesses. The majority of the women who had enough seniority to become patrons were already finished with childbearing and rearing children. One of the first, and arguably the most influential, of the female patrons was Hurrem Sultan. She was one of the first powerful women of the Ottoman dynasty. She was the first female to patronize works in Istanbul; while there were female patrons before her, they all patronized buildings in provincial towns rather than large urban areas. She was the patron of the Haseki Hurrem Kulliye in Istanbul. It was not just a mosque, but also contained a madrasa, mekteb, and a imaret. She later added a hospital for women and a double hammam. This was the first major display of status and power by a woman in the Ottoman dynasty.

Evidence of women building mosques and devoting their lives to prayer and mysticism can be found in the letters of Lady Montague, a British woman who visited the Ottoman Empire in the 1700s. During her visit to the city of Adrianople, now Edirne, on April 18, 1717, she wrote about meeting with the governor’s wife. In her discussion with the governor’s wife, Lady Montague discovered that the woman was devoted to religion rather than to the fashions of the day. "She guessed at my thoughts, and told me, she was no longer of an age to spend either her time or money in superfluities, that her whole expanse was in charity, and her whole employment praying..." From this letter, it

held by a charitable trust.  
98 Afetinan, 31.
becomes clear that religion was a very important part of the life of wealthy women. Often, wealthy women would use charity money to build public buildings, particularly mosques. While these wealthy women, usually the wives of political leaders, did often donate money to build mosques and would pray often, they did not attend the mosques that they built.

Conclusions

Mosques were places where men would gather to pray. They were central to Ottoman life. Ottoman mosques were influenced by both Eastern and Western architecture, particularly the Hagia Sophia. While mosques were clearly places that were central to life in the Ottoman Empire, as evidenced by their central location and their incorporation in to daily routines, they were not places that welcomed women. Instead, women turned to other spiritual paths, such as saint veneration and mysticism. When women did interact with mosques, it was usually a form of protest or as a wealthy patron of the mosque rather than attending prayer services. While the physical appearance of mosques changed drastically over time due to Western influence, the social importance of mosques and the exclusion of women from mosques did not.
Chapter 9: Marketplaces

The space

The marketplace (suq or souq) was usually an open structure. It was often located in the center of the city and followed strict technical specialization. Each trade or good would occupy a specific determined permanent part of the urban space. Because some trades were monopolized by certain communities, these parts of the space would be ethnic or religious in their character. The suq often consisted of a double row of shops that were built along a centrally located street. The markets were developed by transforming residential areas to areas of predominantly commercial activity. The suq was comprised of one basic element: the shop. Shops, called (dukkān or hānut⁹⁹) were

⁹⁹ Raymond, 37.
very simple structures; this made them easy to build as well as inexpensive. This also made them adaptable according to need. Hundreds of these buildings could be built easily. Because of the easy creation of the shops, the suq could develop in areas fairly easily and could be moved around without too much trouble. In this way, Ottoman markets developed; secondary markets would often appear along the more commercial streets and new markets would spring up in the area of the town gates and inside the suburbs that surrounded the city.

Every market was comprised of shops. Because space was limited, space was always at a premium. These shops were small, cramped, wooden booths. Only one or two customers could fit inside each shop at a time. There were no storefronts or any partitions that marked off the interior, though some shops did have shutters. Many shops were small and square. They were 5 to 6 feet high, 3 to 4 feet wide (and sometimes had an extended store room which was situated above the shop). Flooring was raised above ground level and was sometimes extended in to the street by a bench. Often, stores would be closed at night by three shutters. During the day, the top shutter became an awning, the middle shutter as a counter, and the lower one as a display stand or a divan. Shopkeepers in these types of markets did not keep their main storerooms nearby; they also lived elsewhere. Often, the wares of the shop would spill out on to the street. This was both a way for merchants to advertise their wares and also a necessity; there was limited storage capacity, and merchants were often limited to only a few shelves. The overflow into the streets was tolerated both by law and custom as long, that is, as the overflow did not impede the flow of traffic. Traffic was, however, often impeded and the

100 Green, P. *Journey from Aleppo to Damascus*. London, 1736. p. 44.
101 Raymond, 37.
law was rarely enforced until the nineteenth-century, when reformers tried to widen and straighten the streets that ran through the marketplace.

There were, in the Ottoman Empire, other markets that were not suqs. Two types of alternative markets were caravanserais and bedestans. Caravanserais were often specialized in the trade of a single product. Unlike the souqs, which often sold many goods and where the merchants would return to their homes, caravanserais would often sell only one good and contained lodging for the merchants. There were often storerooms and apartments for the visiting merchants located in the caravanserais. Bedestans were zones in which precious goods were sold. The merchants whose activities concerned precious goods, such as cloth merchants, were located in the bedestan. It was usually closed at night due to the value of the goods, unlike many other areas which would be open at night. The bedestan varied in size; in some cases, it was a part of a street in the suq; in other areas, the bedestan would be an entire district.

Marketplaces and suqs were essential places in urban areas. They were located centrally in each city. The suq quarter was consistently located near the city center. “The concentration of the markets is so intense that E. Wirth suggests that the suq is ‘the only…distinctive criterion for the Near Eastern city which can be considered as an Islamic cultural heritage’.” The marketplace and the largest mosque were often located together and played a decisive role in the structuring of urban centers; political centers were often either limited or entirely nonexistent. The market was one of the gathering centers of the population, along with the central mosques. This meant that the mosques and markets connected the economic and religious centers of the city. Marketplaces were

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102 Qasatli, Al-Rawda, 100.
103 Raymond, 13.
often located around the street that served as the main axis of a city. Most cities had one or two central roads that would intersect in the center of the city. At this intersection, the city center (and therefore the marketplace) would be located. Examples of this can be found in Algiers, Cairo, and Aleppo.

Suqs were essential parts of urban places. They were the economic sector of a city; trading was important both in terms of diplomatic relations with other nations and in terms of the flow of money. The suqs, bedestans, and caravanserais were important for wholesale business and the retail of specialized goods. Many caravanserais were specialized, which allowed tax farmers to monitor their transactions and allowed guilds to control the distribution of goods. This meant that taxes were more easily paid. In the suqs, one could find all sorts of items: clothes, shoes, spices, perfumes, drugs, jewelry, copper utensils, Chinese porcelain, European watches, and so on\textsuperscript{104}. There were grocery and barber shops, as well. Central economic areas in cities tended to develop through the expansion of the old centers. This growth was both spontaneous, as in Cairo and Damascus, and organized, as in Tunis or Aleppo. Markets were often not highly monetized; there was a significant presence of non-monetized or semi-monetized forms of trade in most commercial centers. The only exception to this was the city of Istanbul. Most cities, however, “remained strongly linked to their rural hinterlands and to an intermediary role in larger networks of long-distance trade.”\textsuperscript{105} While marketplaces were clearly essential in terms of goods and trade, the trade was often non-monetized trade.

\textit{History and changes over time}

\textsuperscript{104} Marcus, 284.
Louis Massignon, a scholar in the early 1900s, wrote about the close relationship between the central region of markets and the Great Mosque of a city. He noted the fixedness of the markets relative to the great mosque and claimed that this was a consequence of a lack of evolution of techniques and economic life from the end of the medieval period until modern times. While the relationship between the mosque and the marketplace did remain fixed, there were still many changes in market localization that took place over the centuries, and these marked a change in commercial activities—both a decline in old activities and the rise of new ones. Markets did, in fact, change over time.

The Ottoman markets were originally based on Roman markets. Romans often used straight lines, broad thoroughfares, and grand perspectives when building their roads and markets; this was neglected with the Ottoman empire, when the emphasis shifted to sales and profits rather than aesthetic beauty. Ottoman markets changed from the large, clean, open spaces of their Roman predecessors to much more crowded spaces. In the medieval period, big international trade took place in caravanserais (called khan, walāka, or funduq, according to the region). In the Ottoman era, this continued and a center for international trade, called a bedestan, developed in the cores of large trading cities. While the existence of a bedestan was clearly present in many urban centers, including Algiers, Cairo, Damascus, and Aleppo, it is unclear as to whether or not the structure of the bedestan was uniquely Ottoman. Previous mentions of a place called a qayāriyya, in Fez and Baghdad, are strikingly similar to the bedestan and existed well before the

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107 Burns, 87.
108 Raymond, 12.
There is evidence of large market complexes being developed early. In 1583, the governor of Aleppo, Behram Paşa, established an extensive market complex. This market complex grew rapidly and attracted merchant communities from many places, including North Africa, India, Bukhara, Europe, and Iran (mainly Armenians). In 1639, a fatwa by Aleppo’s mufti stated that all the members of the visiting Indian community were Muslim and therefore were exempt from paying a tax on non-Muslims, called a jizya. This international market continued to grow, and Aleppo became a large trading city. By 1660, a Turkish traveler named Evliyâ Çelebi noted that there were 5,700 shops in the central market in Aleppo.

As European travelers and merchants began to influence the international trade markets, Ottoman merchants tried to keep the upper hand. One merchant, Joseph Leroy, wrote about this struggle in 1725. He wrote about how local traders chaotically haggled over goods. Often, Ottoman merchants would go against their guilds and haggle the price down to incredibly low prices. European traders had very little recourse, and Leroy claimed that “…however much one presented to their eyes the convention signed by the deputies of their guild, [the Ottoman merchants] interpreted in their own fashion which has a natural tendency for a lege non pagando.” This experience was not unique to

109 Raymond, 34.
111 Masters in Eldem et al., 34.
114 Italian for “law by failing to pay”
115 ACCM, J 194, Correspondance des députés, Mémoire de Joseph Leroy sur les daps, November 17, 1725.
Leroy; many trading reports of that time wrote about the common theme of haggling over goods. The writings were often patronizing, but behind these patronizing tones is a note of insecurity and resignation to this haggling\textsuperscript{116}. European traders were not, it seems, as dominant as they would have liked to be. They were forced to adapt to the haggling and lower prices of the Ottoman markets. Soon afterwards, however, the Ottoman merchants began to lose their advantage.

As the Ottoman economy began to integrate into the world capitalist system, there was simultaneous political westernization throughout the empire. Initially, the momentum of widening markets increased stability and had benefited economic power holders (generally the wealthy upper and merchant classes), however, these advantages were gradually overshadowed by the Ottoman market’s eventual subjugation to western economic power. While Ottoman economic actors initially benefited from their ability to control local structures of trade, production, and consumption and to manipulate these to their advantage, these actors were eventually pushed into a secondary role and were forced to relinquish their power. “Western money, investments, and services combined with increasing political and diplomatic power made it difficult for local producers and traders to oppose or even retain some autonomy. In addition, the spectacular growth of global trade under western control further decreased the Ottoman market’s proportional share of world trade and intensified its propensity to become a typical price-taker in the new system, depending on all sorts of equilibria it could no longer control or hardly even influence.”\textsuperscript{117} This meant that by the end of the nineteenth century, the social and economic elites were dependant on the west for their survival. This shift to reliance on

\textsuperscript{116} Eldem in Eldem et al., 180.

\textsuperscript{117} Eldem in Eldem et al., 200.
the West was echoed in the architecture of the markets. Markets were not only changing in terms of economic power, but also in architectural influence.

Marketplaces were widened and the streets on which they were situated were broadened. The façades of stores gained a more ‘European’ look and were more permanent\textsuperscript{118}. One example of this widespread phenomenon can be found in the city of Damascus. The markets that were located in the north-west corner of the old city were rebuilt in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, in order to give the area more formal lines. As well, both the Suq al-Bazuriye and the Suq Midhat Pasha (both in Damascus) were both straightened and widened in 1878\textsuperscript{119}. While Ottoman merchants had been successful and in power during the earlier years of the Ottoman Empire, the influence of the West caused them to lose power. This loss of power was reflected in an architectural shift to a more European style of marketplace. This transformation took place very rapidly, and a particular vocabulary surrounded the shift. This vocabulary employed words such as modernity and progress to describe European marketplaces and tradition and backwardness to describe the Ottoman marketplaces. This new vocabulary prompted many Ottoman leaders to change the way that their marketplaces were built.

\text{“Concepts such as the ‘west,’ ‘modernity,’ and ‘progress’ on the one hand, and ‘tradition,’ reaction,’ and ‘backwardness’ on the other were (mis)used in very formalistic and normative ways, mostly in the context of a ‘success/failure’ dichotomy dictated by the very conjuncture of the times and even retrospectively projected into the past.”}\textsuperscript{120}

The old Ottoman markets were viewed as failures due to their traditional nature and haggling.

\textsuperscript{118} Burns, 261.
\textsuperscript{119} Weber, S. ‘Ottoman Damascus of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century: Artistic and urban development as an expression of changing times’, in \textit{Turkish Art (10\textsuperscript{th} International Congress 17-23 Sep 1995)} Geneva: Foundation Max van Berchem. 249.
\textsuperscript{120} Eldem in Eldem et al., 201.
Markets that were based on European markets were considered to be modern and were thus considered to be positive. Due to the influence of colonization and westernization, the markets shifted permanently from the traditional Ottoman market to markets resembling European markets.

**Women’s presence and interactions**

Women would use marketplaces in the same way as men; they would shop for goods. Some women would act as shopkeepers, though this was somewhat rare. Marketplaces were not gender segregated; rather, men and women mixed freely. Women did, however, have to cover themselves completely when leaving their homes and thus were completely covered when they went to the market. Evidence of women’s interactions with the market can be found in the pictures of the day. In a drawing from William Thomson¹²¹, there is a view of a market street in the city of Damascus. A large crowd of people and animals are gathered in the street. There are rows of open-air small shops that line the street. In this picture, there are many men, as well as two figures that are clearly women. The first figure is on the left, talking to a man at a shop. She appears to be buying something. Her hair is covered, but her face is uncovered. Her dress is cut in a v-neck, showing a little bit of skin. The second woman is in the middle of the page, exiting an archway. She is fully covered, including a face veil. Only her eyes are showing. She is not interacting with anyone on the street, and does not appear to be shopping; rather, she appears to merely be walking down the street. It is clear that these two women are very different; their clothing and the way that they are interacting (or not) with the people around them indicate that they are likely of different classes and have different levels of religious observance. People of all ages and genders could be found at

¹²¹ Thomson, found in Grehan, 36.
the marketplace. Another picture\textsuperscript{122}, drawn in Cairo, depicts a woman who is similar to the second woman in the first picture. Like the other woman, this woman is clothed entirely in white and wears a face veil. She is alone, and not interacting with the people around her. The third picture shows a woman walking down a market in Cairo’s Qasba\textsuperscript{123} with a man, likely her husband or a close male relative. She is wearing dark clothing, but a white floor-length face veil. They appear to be shopping and walking together. All three of these pictures depict women’s presence in marketplaces. While some women did not interact with the marketplace, usually sending male relatives or servants in their place, other women did shop in markets and even did business in marketplaces.

\section*{Conclusions}

Marketplaces were essential to the development of the city. They were centrally located in many urban centers and that centrality marked them as being highly important. They were essential to the economic development of the city and were also highly important in terms of the Ottoman Empire’s entrance to the global economy. Markets began to change with the influence of the West, and shops became more Westernized. As well, the economic system changed drastically, with monetized trade replacing non-monetized trade. With this replacement and the westernization of many different parts of the Empire, the Ottomans lost a good deal of their economic power. Finally, while there is pictorial and anecdotal evidence that women did interact with market places, as in most public spaces, men tended to interact more in market places than women did.

\textsuperscript{122} Raymond, 35.
\textsuperscript{123} Raymond, 39.
Chapter 10: Women in the Workforce

The space

Women’s employment took place both in the home and in public spaces. Women in the Ottoman Empire had varying experiences with workplaces. Whether or not and where a woman would work depended on her class and her wealth. As well, acceptance of women holding jobs outside of the home changed over time. Wealthy women were much less likely to hold jobs because a supplemental income was not necessary. Middle and lower class women were more likely to work, both in the home and outside of the home, in order to earn more money for their families. Women’s role in the workforce was highly important in terms of their relation to public space. When women held jobs outside of the home, they were able to interact with public space. As well, women’s jobs were important in terms of the economic growth of the Ottoman Empire. Women of different classes with jobs were viewed differently; women who were not wealthy were considered to be good wives if they held a job. Wealthy women, however, were rarely allowed to hold jobs and were often uneducated.

History and changes over time

Wealthy women in the Ottoman Empire did not hold jobs outside of the home.
Wealthy women, particularly wealthy urban women, spent most of their time in their homes. The majority of these wealthy women remained mostly uneducated and focused on domesticity rather than trying to gain a life outside of their home. “Thus Turkish women of the Ottoman era, especially in the cities, spent their lives in the complete seclusion of the harem. Their occupations consisted mainly of doing or supervising the housework, looking after the children or embroidering. Their social life was restricted to family gatherings.”

Until the 1800s, women were not expected to be educated. The wealthy women who were educated were generally the daughters of well-educated men. These men would hire tutors for their daughters. These educated women would have different jobs, though they were often jobs that allowed them to remain in seclusion, such as calligraphers and poets. “Almost all the women whose names occur in Ottoman literature were daughters of learned men who either taught their daughters themselves or engaged private teachers to do so. Educated women included linguists, musicians and calligraphers as well as writers and poets.”

Women who were educated often did not use their education publicly through publications but rather studied within the privacy of their own homes. These educated women were generally very wealthy. While wealthy women were not required to work and were usually secluded in their homes and not highly educated, poor women were expected to supplement their household income by working.

Middle class and lower class women, those with less money, often worked either inside or outside the home. There is evidence of women who were at least in possession of money, either inherited or earned, as early as the 1500s. Women played relatively

\[124\] Afetinan, 28.
\[125\] ibid, 35.
minor roles as creditors and debtors, though women were 2.57% of creditors and 1.23% of debtors in Hama from 1535-1536. While women were well-known for supplying cheap labor in the privacy of their homes, women are not mentioned in court records as being guild members. Women were often engaged in cotton spinning, mat making, embroidery, and sewing. Sometimes, they would auction off secondhand clothing. Women whose husbands owned farms would often work alongside their husbands, though they did not have guilds of their own. They often played a major role in the agricultural work. There are some records of women involved with guilds, though it is unclear as to whether or not they were necessarily members.

“In one case, a woman was assigned by the judge in Aleppo in 1627 a half share of the fat from which wax was made to be given to her daily by the shaykh of the guild of wax makers (shamma’in) in the slaughterhouse alongside the male members, each one of whom was to receive a whole share. It is not known whether the woman was a full member of this guild and was given half a share because of her gender or whether she was deputizing for her handicapped husband. On a lighter note, the court in Damascus reported a case in 1710 in which a female who stole money from another woman declared in the court that she was a member of the guild of thieves (ta’ifat al-sarraqin).”

These examples show that women in the Ottoman Empire did, in fact, hold jobs, though they were rarely paid for their labor. Women were often a source of domestic labor and unpaid labor. Like men, women worked in the marketplace, invested in property, engaged in money lending. Middle class and lower class women were central to Ottoman social

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126 Rafeq, 124.
127 ibid, 119-120.
128 Marcus, 54.
and economic life, however, little is known about these women. Ottoman women were incredibly important in their role of free labor; without the free labor of women in the home, the Ottoman Empire may not have had an easy time breaking in to the world market. “Women and their households mediated the process of growing Ottoman participation in the world economy, and changes in household processes of production and household division of labor should be understood as adaptations to changing market opportunities, both domestic and international.”\textsuperscript{129} Middle and lower class women were often involved in labor in their homes. One particular type of labor that women were highly involved with was the silk-spinning industry.

Silk-spinning was a common practice. There is very little concrete data concerning the impact of female labor on changes in the gender division of household labor. The silk industry was very popular in cities like Bursa and Damascus. Bursa was a city that was renowned for rich brocades and fabrics for many years. Silk spinning was often done at home. This changed, however, when factories were introduced and spinning became done by machine rather than by hand. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, silk spinning was an exclusively female occupation in Damascus, and may have also been in Bursa as well\textsuperscript{130}. Workers in Damascus were organized into guilds and were mainly men, though there were a few female workers. In the Bursa factories, however, the labor force was entirely female, consisting both of girls and women; the superintendents and mechanics, however, were male. This same gender distribution was also established in


\textsuperscript{130} \textit{ibid}, 163.
the silk-spinning mills that were established in Lebanon. Women were overwhelmingly predominant in the Ottoman silk-spinning industry. Because female labor was seen as supplemental, the part-time labor of silk mills fit the expectations of society as to what a woman’s job should consist of. As well, because the Ottoman economy was labor scarce, employing women allowed factory owners to use cheap labor. Women and girls were highly involved with the production of cloth. “Girls and women played an essential role in three arenas of textile production. They made yarn and cloth at home for immediate use by household members, they produced at home for the market, and they labored in workshops, away from the home setting. Until the second quarter of the nineteenth century, a large proportion of female labor in textile production had been involved with spinning, with either the wheel or the distaff.” The ability to spin cloth at home and to make a profit from this labor changed once factories were introduced. Factories meant women would work outside of the home and did not use the cloth that they made for their own needs. Lower class and middle class women were expected to work solely as a supplement to their husband’s wages. The husband was meant to be the main breadwinner. While married women did provide some of the labor, women would return to the women’s quarters when they returned home from work. The introduction of wage labor meant that women could work and earn a wage to supplement her husband’s.

“According to one European observer in the late 1860s, this wage labor enhanced the women’s status in the eyes of their husbands since it increased family income.” In this way, women began to be permitted to work outside of the home and their work changed

131 ibid.
132 ibid, 165.
133 ibid.
134 ibid, 164.
from being entirely domestic and taking place inside the home to a combination of traditional domestic work and work in factories for a wage. Women began to be paid a wage for labor that had traditionally been performed freely and considered to be part of a woman’s duties.

As colonialism began to influence the Ottoman Empire, the education of women became more popular and more common. The ideals of the west began to influence the Ottoman Empire and the education of women became seen as a criterion for a modern society. In order to be considered “civilized”, the Ottoman Empire was pressured to educate women and to allow them to work outside of the home. Because it was considered inappropriate for men to teach young girls, women were able to get jobs as teachers in all-female secondary schools. An example of this was in 1870, when a school opened in Istanbul. The school’s purpose was to train female teachers for primary and secondary girls’ schools. Girls’ schools opened all over the empire, particularly in Anatolia, due to the increase in the number of women who were teaching. Girls from different walks of life who completed certain educational courses were able to then use their education to establish themselves as career women. Women began to be encouraged to seek out jobs and trades and to educate themselves.

There were statements given in support of the education of women. “The then Minister of Education, Saffet Pasha, pointed out that children are in their mother’s care until they reach school age and that for this reason women should learn how to read and write. He also explained that there was nothing in the Koran to stop Moslem women from learning or acquiring a trade for themselves or even from becoming technicians.”

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135 Afetinan, 44.  
136 ibid, 38.
statement of support was highly important in convincing parents to allow their daughters to complete their education through secondary school and to work outside of the home. While women did begin to enter a variety of professions and trades after they began to study in colleges and universities, it was not always easy for them to enter a trade. An example of this is the entrance of women into medicine. “Women’s wish to join the faculty of law or arts did not meet with any great opposition but when they showed an interest in becoming doctors of medicine, public opinion opposed the idea which was not even readily accepted among the educated class. Articles expressing opposition to the idea appeared in the press claiming that women were not likely to succeed in medicine...”

Women were, eventually, allowed to become doctors and succeeded at a variety of different occupations. As women became more educated, they were able to perform more jobs. In this way, women were allowed to perform more jobs outside of the home.

Women’s role in education and in jobs changed once again when the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War. Many men were required to go fight in the war. This meant that there were more opportunities for women to get jobs. “As men were called up for the army it became necessary to appoint women to fill vacancies in the offices. During the war the first faculty for girls attached to the University of Istanbul was opened (1914).” Because of the hardships and needs caused by the First World War, the number of women going out to work increased drastically. This was partially due to a need to fill empty jobs and partially due to a need to earn money while husbands were away fighting in the war.

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137 ibid, 46.  
138 ibid, 41.
During the war, women were much more free to leave their homes and to organize. Women in Istanbul were able to take an active role in organizing protest meetings. As well, a decision by Istanbul University gave women the opportunity to study with men.\textsuperscript{139} As well, women during the war were able to continue to engage in charitable activities and often worked for the Red Crescent (an organization similar to the Red Cross).\textsuperscript{140} As the Ottoman Empire came to an end, women were just beginning to gain the freedom necessary to take on a variety of jobs.

Conclusions

Women’s involvement with the labor market was varied. Often, it depended on the wealth of the woman’s family. Wealthy women were often involved in charity but did not work. While there were a few wealthy women who were able to be tutored (usually by their scholar fathers), they were not common. These wealthy educated women would often work as poets or as calligraphers. Middle and lower class women were much more likely to work either inside or outside of their homes. Women were not often members of guilds like men, however, this did not prevent them from performing labor inside of the home. Women would perform domestic duties, the extras of which would be sold to generate income. One very popular enterprise that women were involved in was the silk industry. Many women worked from the comfort of their homes and were considered to be free labor. Once factories became popular, however, labor shifted from the home to factories and women shifted from being free labor to being paid a wage. This changed women’s work and their wage was considered to be a supplement to the wage of their husband. This changed with the influence of colonialism and the beginning of World War

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{139} ibid, 44.
\item \textsuperscript{140} ibid.
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I. The First World War meant that jobs that were originally filled by men began to be filled by women. As well, women’s education became important. This education widened the job opportunities that were available to women. Finally, women were able to work in a variety of different jobs. As the Ottoman Empire came to an end, women began to increase their education and their job opportunities.
Chapter 11: Conclusions, discussion, and suggestions for future research

Summary

This paper has examined the way in which women interacted with public urban spaces in the Ottoman Empire and how these interactions changed and shifted over time in response to changes in the city. This paper will hopefully be a spring-board for other studies on Ottoman women’s interactions with urban spaces. It is my intention that this paper be used to inspire other studies on the topic.

Comparison of aims and objectives with achievements and contributions made by this piece of work

This piece of work did meet the aims and objectives set out at the beginning of the paper. It examined cities throughout the Ottoman Empire and the ways in which women interacted with the city. The paper was historical in focus, and used historical examples as evidence to discuss women’s interactions with public areas. The project succeeded in examining public urban spaces in the Ottoman Empire, how those spaces changed over time, and both what women’s experiences of those spaces were and how those experiences changed over time as the space evolved.

Conclusions

Throughout this study, a few essential themes became clear. Firstly, it is clear that
women in the Ottoman Empire did, in fact, relate differently to urban spaces than men did. This is due to the fact that women were often relegated to the private sphere while men were allowed to act more freely in the public sphere. As well, women related differently to urban spaces because of notions of privacy and modesty that were applied differently to men and women. This, then, leads to the important theme of the gendered nature of public spaces. While some public spaces, such as streets, were not explicitly gendered, a large number of public spaces were either explicitly or implicitly gendered. Spaces such as hammams were explicitly gendered, with rules and regulations about which gender could go there at which time, while spaces like coffeehouses were implicitly gendered—while there were no explicit laws stating that women were not allowed, women did not go in as a matter of custom.

Another theme that has become clear is that women’s interactions with public urban space did, often, change as the city went through the process of modernization. The modernization of urban spaces took place due to the influence of western ideas (such as the idea of being “modern” as being superior), western money, and colonization. As public urban spaces became more “modern” and western in their nature, women’s interactions with these spaces became closer to those of western women. As the city modernized, so, too, did women’s interactions with the city.

Finally, it is clear that urban areas shape the experiences of the women who live in them. Urban women had very different lives than their rural counterparts. How women are treated in public spaces influences their lives. Women’s lives are changed when restrictions on their freedom to interact in public spaces is either restricted or granted. Women who are given the freedom to interact in and with public spaces are shaped by
these interactions. Freedom to go in public urban areas meant women could obtain jobs and education and contribute economically to their households. When women could not interact with the urban areas in which they resided, their experience of the city and their entire lives were changed.

Suggestions for Future Research

The next steps that need to be taken in terms of study of the subject should be an examination of the interaction between public and private spaces. A study of women in the home both as a house and as a place of work would be particularly interesting. As well, there was a surprising lack of sources available on squares and meydans. I would like to see further studies on meydans as architecture and as spaces in which women interacted. A continuation of this work would perhaps focus on the distinction between public and private in the lives of women and how this distinction was made.
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