



Yıldız Porcelain Factory: The Heart of Production in the Palace Garden with Its Establishment and Operation*

Yıldız Porselen Fabrikası: Kuruluş ve İşleyişiyle Sarayın Bahçesindeki Üretim Merkezi

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ABSTRACT

The period when the industrialization movement intensified in the Ottoman Empire corresponds to the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II. The best indication that the Sultan attached importance to the modernization of technology and capturing the age should be his having a porcelain factory opened within the garden of his palace. The purpose of the establishment of Yıldız Porcelain Factory was to produce porcelain for the Sultan. During this period, palaces and pavilions were filled up with unique works of art produced at the Yıldız Porcelain Factory, rather than Chinese or Western porcelain. Many unique products of the factory were presented as gifts to state palaces, especially to the ones in Europe. The factory, which began its operations in 1894, was administratively and financially linked to the supervision of Imperial Treasury (Hazine-i Hassa), which managed the income and expenses of the Sultan and his palace during his era. The establishment had a diverse technical staff as well as administrative crew and served as a modern production centre by taking contemporary technology as an example. This article, which aims to explain the organization and operation of the Yıldız Porcelain Factory since its construction, has been written to narrate the history of the institution through archival documents.

Keywords: Yıldız Porcelain Factory, Abdulhamid II, Ottoman Industrialization, Ottoman Porcelain, Raimondo D'Aronco

ÖZ

Osmanlı Devleti'nde sanayileşme hareketinin yoğunlaştığı dönem, Sultan II. Abdülhamid devridir. Padişahın kendi sarayının bahçesine bir porselen fabrikası açtırması, teknolojiye modernleşme ve çağı yakalamaya verdiği önemin en iyi göstergesi olmalıdır. Yıldız Porselen Fabrikası'nın kuruluş amacı, padişah için porselen üretmektir. Bu dönemde saray ve kasırlar Çin veya batı porselenlerinden ziyade Yıldız Porselen Fabrikası'nda üretilen eşsiz sanat eserleriyle dolmuştur. Fabrikanın pek çok benzersiz mamulü, başta Avrupa olmak üzere pek çok devlet sarayına da hediye olarak sunulmuştur. 1894 yılında faaliyete başlamış olan fabrika, idari ve mali açıdan dönemin padişah ve sarayının gelir-giderlerini idare eden Hazine-i Hassa Nezareti'ne bağlanmıştır. Çağdaş teknoloji örnek alınarak modern bir üretim merkezi halinde faaliyette bulunan müessesenin, idari görevlilerin yanı sıra geniş bir



teknik kadroya da sahip olduğu görülmektedir. Yıldız Porselen Fabrikası'nın inşasından itibaren teşkilatlanmasını ve işleyişini açıklığa kavuşturmayı amaçlayan bu makale, arşiv vesikaları üzerinden kurumun tarihini şekillendirmek üzere kaleme alınmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Yıldız Porselen Fabrikası, II. Abdülhamid, XIX. yy. Osmanlı Sanayileşmesi, Osmanlı Porselenciliği, Raimondo D'Arconco

Introduction

Due to its bright white and semi-transparent structure, porcelain, which resembles a seashell, is named after “Porcellana” which means oyster in Latin, is a type of ceramic that was first manufactured in China¹. As far as it is known, Marco Polo was the first person to use this term for such wares brought from China. The Ottomans called porcelain items from China as “çini”² (Ceramic tiles) that was to state that they came from China. Items such as pots and pans manufactured in Iznik were also called “çini” due to the admiration of Chinese porcelain³. After the capital was moved to Istanbul, ceramics production would develop there along with Iznik and continued to exist in a fluctuating process that was sometimes popular and sometimes forgotten⁴.

It is known that the first porcelain production started in Istanbul, albeit rarely, in the 19th century and the first trials were conducted in small tile and pottery shops in Beykoz, Eyup and Balat⁵. It is observed that the industrialization movement in Europe also influenced Ottoman porcelain during the middle of the 19th century. Eser-i Istanbul Porcelain Factory, founded by

1 Arthur Herbert Church, *English Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century*, London 1911, p. 1; Demet Coşansel, “19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Saraylarında Fransız ve Yıldız Porselenleri”, *MS Milli Saraylar*, Issue 3, Istanbul 2006, p. 133. In general, ceramic is a term used for all kinds of ware made of clay and fired at high temperature. Today, ceramic products used as wall tiles are referred to as “ceramic tile”, and those used as pots and pans are referred to as “ceramic” (Sitare Turan Bakır, *Iznik Çinileri ve Gülbenkyan Koleksiyonu*, Ankara 1999, p. 10). Porcelain, which is a kind of ceramic, differs both in its cooking properties and in the used raw materials. While porcelain dough is a waterproof, tight structure and the glaze and dough are in an inseparable whole; the glaze in ceramics can crack with a hard blow and break. They can also be distinguished from each other by their cooking temperature. The most important difference is that porcelain is light-transmitting, while ceramic has a matte structure. Buket Baykal, *Osmanlı Porselen Sanatı*, ITU Institute of Social Sciences, Master's thesis, Istanbul 2000, p. 15.

2 Faruk Şahin, *Seramik Sözlüğü*, Istanbul 1983, p. 13.

3 For details on this topic, see Julian Raby - Nurhan Atasoy, *Iznik Seramikleri*, London 1989.

4 For details see Sinem Serin, *Yıldız Çini/Porselen Fabrikası*, Istanbul University Institute of Social Sciences, Department of History, Master's Thesis, Istanbul 2009.

5 Baykal, o.c., p. 80.

Rodosîzâde Ahmed Fethi Pasha⁶ in 1845, following the European industrial technology as an example, was the first step taken in this field⁷.

Sultan Abdulhamid II attach importance to the industrialization policy in order to demonstrate competitiveness in the international arena and to improve the image of the state abroad. He considered the factories he established as an element of prestige. Thus, it would be possible to show that technological developments are strictly followed and to prove his power.

Undoubtedly, one of the most crucial modernization movements in technology during this period has been Yıldız Porcelain Factory⁸.

One of the most important factors that led Sultan Abdulhamid II to set up a porcelain factory was that almost all European countries of the time such as Prussia, Austria-Hungary, France and Russia had porcelain factories established with the support of palace in order to meet the needs of the palaces⁹. Besides, the Sultan's interest for fine arts, carpentry as well as

6 Fethi Pasha came from a family of Rhodes Island. He represented his country abroad on various occasions. These duties included the Vienna ambassador in 1834 and 1835 and the Moscow ambassador in 1836. In 1837, he first went to London to attend the coronation ceremony of the Queen of England, Victoria, and then went there as Paris ambassador. In 1839, he returned to Istanbul and was appointed as a member of the Supreme Council (Meclis-i Vala) and married to Atiye Sultan, Mahmud II's daughter. After that, Fethi Pasha, who took various duties in the state service, was promoted to the war office in 1844, and in 1845 he was assigned to the Tophane Marshall (Tahsin Öz, "Ahmet Fethi Paşa ve Müzeler", *Türk Tarih, Arkeografya ve Etnografya Dergisi*, issue 5 (1949), p. 2-5). While Pasha was carrying out these duties, in 1846, he established the first Turkish museum, which was a very important step in the history of Ottoman museums, named Mecmua-i Ešliha-i Atika (Ancient Weapons Collection) and Mecmua-i Âsâr-ı Atika (antiques collection), was exhibited in the rooms around of the inner court of Hagia Eirene Church (Wendy M. K. Shaw, *Osmanlı Müzeciliği Müzeler, Arkeoloji ve Tarihin Görşelleştirilmesi*, trans. Esin Sogancılar, Istanbul 2004, p. 43-45). Ahmed Fethi Pasha had the opportunity to follow the artistic and cultural movements of those places, as he had the opportunity to be abroad for a long time. Therefore, when he returned to his country, he started to work on museology as well as establishing modern factories. One of them was the iron factory around Baruthane and the other was the above-mentioned Eser-i İstanbul Porcelain Factory.

7 In this factory, imitations of Sevres and Limoges porcelains were produced in a way that was just like their originals. It is also seen that the factory produced specific products. Examples include decorated and illustrated plates with or without lids, bowls, vases, and Noah's pudding jugs (Hüseyin Kocabaş, *Porselencilik Tarihi*, Bursa 1940, p. 64-65). Tile wall and floor tiles required for palaces were also produced in this factory. The name of the factory stamped in gilding on the bottoms of objects helped to easily identify wares. The public could not use the products of this factory. Because the cost of products made of topflight materials was high. Therewithal, the factory was neglected, and due to the rising debts, it became unable to manage things around after the death of Fethi Pasha. For such reasons, the factory did not endure long and closed after 25 or 30 years. (Nedret Bayraktar, *İstanbul Cam ve Porselenleri*, Istanbul 1982, p. 4-5).

8 In documents, the name of this factory is sometimes mentioned as "Yıldız Çini Fabrika-i Hümâyûnu" and sometimes as "Yıldız Porselen Fabrika-i Hümâyûnu". Since mainly porcelain products are manufactured in the factory, it is more appropriate to name the factory as Yıldız Porcelain Factory. In addition to these names, it is named in one source as "Hamidiye Çini Fabrikası" (Aydın Talay, *Eserleri ve Hizmetleriyle II. Abdülhamid*, Istanbul 2007, p. 339); however, this name has not been found anywhere else.

9 Sadi Bayram, "Yıldız Çini Fabrikasına Ait Birkaç Vesika", *Suut Kemal Yetkin'e Armağan*, Ankara 1984, p. 101.

ceramic tile and porcelain ware and his attention to painting appears to be a significant factor that cannot be overlooked¹⁰.

1. Establishment of the Factory

The first task of installing a factory to meet the porcelain needs of the palaces and pavilions belonging to the sultanate was to decide its site. The garden of Yıldız Palace was the most fitting location for a palace-funded factory. The construction works of the factory, designed by the chief architect of the palace Raimondo D'Aronco¹¹, thus started in the east of Yıldız Outer Court¹² near the Malta Mansion.

- 10 Tahsin Pasha noted in his memoirs that Abdulhamid the Second had a great interest in carpentry and ceramic tile products and that he built a carpentry workshop and a ceramic tile factory within the palace and sent gifts from these factory products to European rulers. (*Sultan Abdülhamid, Tahsin Paşa'nın Yıldız Hatıraları*, Boğaziçi Pub., İstanbul 1999⁵, p. 20). Osman Nuri, *Bilinmeyen Abdülhamid Abdülhamid-i Sâni ve Devr-i Saltanatı*, I-II, prepared by Osman Selim Kocahanoğlu, İstanbul 2017, p. 416. There have been some rumours regarding the establishment of the Yıldız Porcelain Factory. The first of these was that during his visit to Abdulhamid the Second, the French ambassador, Monsieur Paul Cambon, saw a glass on his table and liked it very much. Thereupon Sultan Abdulhamid said that the glass was a product of the Sevres Factory and the ambassador proposed to the Sultan saying, "Then let's set up one of that factory here". Another rumour was that the same ambassador made such this offer to the Sultan to provide a job area to a man whom he protected. (Mustafa Cezar, *Sanatta Batı'ya Açılış ve Osman Hamdi*, İstanbul 1971, p. 212.) However, the Sultan's action in this area cannot be directly based on these rumours. The Sultan already had this idea. In fact, he had asked Miklos Zsolnay, the son of Vilmos Zsolnay, who owns the Zsolnay China and Porcelain Factory in Pecs, Hungary, to conduct feasibility studies to establish a porcelain factory in İstanbul in 1887 (Serin, op.cit, p. 12).
- 11 Sevim İlgürel, "Yıldız Köşkü", *IA*, XIII (1986), 426.
- 12 Raimondo D'Aronco was born in Gemona near the city of Udine in north-eastern Italy (31 August 1857), he started working at a young age, following his family tradition which had been involved in construction for many generations. He later moved to Austria and continued to Baukunde (Construction Vocational School) in Graz; where he worked with well-known professionals. He then went back to Italy and graduated in 1880 from the Venice Academy of Architecture. R. D'Aronco, who began his career as a lecturer at the Carrara Academy in 1881, was recognized as an architect with well-known skills and participated in several national and international project competitions. His success in designing the Venice Exhibitions in 1887 and the Torino Exhibitions in 1890 led him to be invited to İstanbul in 1893 to plan the exhibition of Ottoman Agricultural Products and Industrial Merchandise (Afife Batur, "Yıldız Sarayı'na İlişkin Bazı Belgeler ve Türkiye'de Belgeleme Çalışmalarının Sorunları", *TBMM Milli Saraylar Sempozyumu 15-17 Kasım 1984 Yıldız Sarayı/Şale- Bildiriler*, İstanbul 1985, p. 91). Most likely, the close relationship of Selim Melhame Pasha's with İstanbul's financial circles, especially with the Italians, played a crucial role in assigning himself to this mission. The task first was given to the architect Vallauray earlier; however, he got fired and later D'Aronco appointed (Afife Batur, "19. Yüzyıl İstanbul Mimarlığında Bir Stilistik Karşılaştırma Denemesi: A. Vallauray / R. D'Aronco", *Osman Hamdi Bey ve Dönemi- Sempozyum 17-18 Aralık 1992*, prepared by Zeynep Rona, İstanbul 1993, p. 147). The exhibition was cancelled due to the earthquake in 1894, which caused massive damage in İstanbul; but D'Aronco was hired as an architect in the Ottoman Palace. R. D'Aronco, who was assigned to reconstruction works after the earthquake, repaired some of the damages in palaces, including Dolmabahçe and other seaside ones. He engaged in the restoration of many mosques particularly that of Mihrimah Sultan, schools, hospitals, fountains and the Grand Bazaar. He later joined Yıldız Palace staff (Batur, "Yıldız Sarayı'na İlişkin Bazı Belgeler", p. 91). He also put his signature under many architectural works within Yıldız Palace. The greenhouses across the Little Mabeyn Mansion, the orangery and greenhouse in the garden of the harem, Ceremonial Kiosk added to the Sale Mansion, the theatre building, the stables and manege of Imperial Stables (İstabl-ı Amire), Yaveran Chambers were his work of art (François Georgeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid*, trans. Ali Berktaş, İstanbul 2006, p. 152).

Imperial buildings warehouse (Ebniye-i Seniyye)¹³ and Imperial Repair-shop (Tamirhane-i Humayun)¹⁴ supplied the necessary materials for the construction of the factory. As far as we can ascertain from the archive documents, the cost for the construction of the factory in the four and a half month period, between 22 May 1893 and 1 October 1893, was 356.989 kurush 50 centimetres¹⁵. The construction work of the factory continued later on. An additional 5.760 kurush was invested in October¹⁶. The work continued during 1894. For example, a construction charge of 25,000 kurush was paid in February 1894¹⁷.

While the construction activities were underway, work was carried out to create a new waterway in order to supply water that might be needed by the factory, especially during the production process. An 850-meter-long iron pipe was laid from the mainline of the palace to the factory during two months of work between September and November 1893. A total of 32.109 kurush was spent on this¹⁸.

Another waterway building was the overhaul of the road that would provide access to the plant. It started with expanding the existing way. Except for the 30-centimetre gutters on both sides of the 470-meter long road, it was deemed adequate to be 2.90 meters wide. In this arrangement, the expense was estimated as 5,400 kurush by the head gardener. The amount was accepted and this arrangement was made under the responsibility of the head of the gardener¹⁹. The construction work, which began on 13 September 1893 and lasted for 29 days under the supervision of the head gardener, was completed on 11 October. The first two of the three instalments were paid in the form of 2,000 kurush to him while the road work was still underway. The third instalment, remaining 1,400 kurush, was delivered on October 16 when the work was completed²⁰. By the time the road was finished, some landscape studies were carried out in the front area of the factory, which cost an amount of 790 kurush²¹.

While the construction of the factory was going on rapidly, necessary arrangements were made to begin production as soon as possible. The equipment and materials to be used for the factory, which aimed to manufacture up-to-date products using contemporary technology,

13 The Ebniye Warehouse Administration had tasks such as the design of buildings upon the will of the Sultan, rehabilitation of the buildings which were in need and the periodic control of the buildings under their responsibility (Arzu T. Terzi, "XIX. Yüzyıl Sonlarında Ebniye-i Seniyye İdaresi (Görevleri ve Teşkilâtı)", *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, issue 16 (1998), p. 109-119).

14 "Imperial Repair-shop provided the repair and manufacture of various items from cabinets to tableware in Yıldız Palace, primarily in the Sultan's apartments, in the harem section, in various places of the palace and the apartments affiliated with other palaces." (Arzu T. Terzi, *Hazine-i Hassa Nezareti*, Ankara 2000, p. 76).

15 HH.İ, 88/63.

16 ML.EEM, 178/42, leff 5; ML.EEM, 178/63.

17 ML.EEM, 202/73, leff 1.

18 HH.İ, 88/45, leff 5.

19 HH.İ, 86/7; HH.EMK, 486/99.

20 ML.EEM, 178/33.

21 ML.EEM, 179/65.

were brought from Paris. Begin with, one of the most basic needs of the factory, two kilns to fire porcelain, were ordered. The total price of these orders amounted to 5,679.45 francs, as can be seen in a document dated 10 August 1893²². The raw materials to be used in the production were also obtained from Paris. For example, 2.110 kurush was paid on 5 December 1893 for feldspar, one of the most basic raw materials for porcelain production²³.

Craftsmen in Istanbul supplied necessary materials for the factory. For example, on 26 October 1893, the chief blacksmith bought fifty grating rods needed for the kilns of the factory from a shop in Galata for 588 kurush²⁴. Besides, some equipment was purchased for the factory for 600 kurush on 14 November 1893²⁵. In the meantime, three stoves to be used for heating the factory rooms, 22 meters of pipe, seven pipe bends as well as six wicker chairs for the workers were supplied by Imperial Repair-shop on 23 October 1893²⁶. After, the raw material deficiencies for production were eliminated. First, on 24 January 1894, materials such as clay, sand and containers to mix them were bought for 827 kurush²⁷. In June 1894, kaolin, which is called sand and oily clay, was purchased and a total of 3.549 kurush was paid for it²⁸.

Finally, the construction of the factory completed and the required infrastructure was established for production. However, the scheduled inauguration had to be postponed for a while due to the Istanbul earthquake on 10 July 1894. D'Arconco, the chief architect of the palace, who was responsible for the building of the factory, restored several parts of the factory damaged by the quake, and the recovery was completed in November 1894. Total of 30,000 gold was paid for this renovation on 22 November 1894²⁹.

What eventually came out was Yıldız Porcelain Factory; one of the buildings that best represented the originality of the architect's style. It consisted of three parts: a thin, long rectangular block designated for painting and preparatory workshops, a triangular section covered with moulding red brick interspersed with white stones and ceramic tile decorations allocated to administration; lastly, a large area where firing and manufacturing operations, as well as turnery works, took place³⁰.

22 HH.EMK, 482/115.

23 ML.EEM, 180/46, leff 11.

24 ML.EEM, 179/6.

25 ML.EEM, 179/85.

26 ML.EEM, 179/125.

27 ML.EEM, 183/10.

28 ML.EEM, 191/91.

29 ML.EEM, 198/47, leff 2.

30 Afife Batur-Selçuk Batur, "İstanbul'da 19. Yüzyıl Sanayi Yapılarından Fabrika-i Hümayûnlar", *I. Uluslararası Türk-İslam Bilim ve Teknoloji Tarihi Kongresi ITU 14-18 Eylül 1981*, İstanbul 1981, p. 336; Afife Batur, "Yıldız Sarayı", *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*, VII (1994), 524-525.



Image 1

Front View of Yıldız Porcelain Factory

(İ.Ü. Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi, II. Abdülhamid Han Fotoğraf Albümleri, no. 90552/83)

The same year, the factory started production³¹. Crescent and star were chosen as emblems in order to differentiate the manufactured porcelain pieces. Besides, under each product, along with the badge, there was the stamp “1312 (1894)³²” which was the founding year. There was also an expression such as “Year 7” to indicate which year the piece was produced in the factory.

31 Fuad Ezgü, *Yıldız Sarayı Tarihçesi*, İstanbul 1962, p. 10; Nedret Bayraktar, “Topkapı Sarayı Müzesindeki İstanbul Manzaralı Yıldız Porselenleri”, *Sanat Dünyamız*, V/15 (January 1979), 29; *Milli Saraylar Yıldız Çini ve Porselen İşletmesi*, İstanbul 2007, p. 4; Mustafa Cezar, op.cit., p. 212; Önder Küçükerman, *Dünya Saraylarının Prestij Teknolojisi: Porselen Sanatı ve Yıldız Çini Fabrikası*, İstanbul 1987, p. 63. Ahmed Ağın noted in *Yıldız Sarayı Çırağan Sarayı Tarihi ve Yapılışları*, İstanbul 1965, p. 157 that his architect was D’Aronco by giving the date of 1890; same information is also mentioned in İlğürel, “Yıldız Köşkü”, p. 426; but it is known that D’Aronco was not in İstanbul at that time.

32 The aforementioned date of 1312 was taken as a financial date by Tahsin Öz and concluded that the first pieces were produced in 1896. Tahsin Öz, “Yıldız Çini Fabrikası”, *Arkitekt*, XV/161-162 (İstanbul 1945), p. 109; However, according to arguments above, it would be appropriate to consider the date in the Islamic calendar.



Image 2
Examples of Yıldız Porcelain Factory Symbols³³

2. Administrative Structure of the Factory

Yıldız Porcelain Factory, which started production in 1894, was administratively and financially affiliated with the Ministry of the Imperial Treasury. It can be said that the factory also had a certain subvention from Imperial Realty³⁴ revenues. All transactions of the factory were carried out by Imperial Realty Administration³⁵.

33 Hülya Kalyoncu, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Yıldız Porselenleri Koleksiyonu'nun Değerlendirilmesi*, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Art History, PhD Thesis, Istanbul 2011.

34 The concept of Imperial Realty, which was used for properties acquired by the Sultan Abdulhamid the Second himself during his reign had a broad content. Because within this concept, lands such as vineyards, gardens and farms; rentable properties such as shops, houses, coffeehouses; revenues of factories and privileges of extracting and operating mines throughout the country, operating ferries in seas, lakes and rivers, opening and operating ports, warehouses, stores were included. (Arzu Terzi, *Bağdat-Musul'da Abdülhamid'in Mirası Petrol ve Arazi*, Istanbul 2009, p. 30).

35 The Imperial Realty Administration was the office where the correspondence of the properties and registration procedures were carried out. This administration was in regular contact with the Imperial Treasury Communication Administration. There was a manager who was responsible for its proper functioning. There were an examiner and around 9 to 11 caliphs under the command of the manager (Terzi, *Hazine-i Hassa*, p. 105).

Yildiz Porcelain Factory was set up to be used for the furnishing of palaces and pavilions and for the production of gifts to be presented abroad and domestically by the Sultan, instead of generating revenue and was managed by an external manager³⁶ along with an internal one.

The proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy has been a turning point for the activities of the factory. As it is known, the Assembly convened on 27 April, following the 31 March Incident, and decided on dethronement of Abdulhamid II and Sultan Mehmed Resad's ascension to the throne. Consequently, with the departure of Sultan from Yıldız Palace, the palace got purged. Yıldız Porcelain Factory, which was established by Sultan Abdulhamid II and born his identity, also got its share from the liquidation.

Thus, the production in factory was halted for more than two years and resumed its activities on 10 July 1911. It was managed by the Imperial Museum Administration, affiliated with the Ministry of Education. Imperial Museum Administration was in charge of making all sorts of factory-related transactions and payments. Also, additional payment was made to the budget of the Ministry of Education to cover the factory expenses³⁷.

The factory had to suspend its operation with the beginning of the First World War. It affiliated to the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture with a decree dated 4 September 1918³⁸. In 1920, the factory management returned to the Imperial Treasury Directorate³⁹.

3. Officers Working in the Administration and Production of the Factory

Yıldız Porcelain Factory needed both competent managers and technical staff who were experts in their profession to operate efficiently. In general, an external and an internal manager were responsible for overseeing the factory. Also, an assistant manager and an accounting officer were among the administrative team of the factory. The technical staffs that constitute the production part of the factory consisted of artists and craftsmen such as painter, mud maker, mould maker, turner and kiln operator.

36 Even though giving the title of a minister to the top manager of the factory forms the opinion that the factory was managed like a ministry, it is absolute that it was not ministry. It would be more appropriate to treat it as an external manager who was authorized to manage the communication of the factory with the headquarters and had the right to sign on behalf of the factory.

37 The document dated 27 June 1327 (10 July 1911) written from Imperial Museum Administration to the Ministry of Education: Imperial Museum Records, cardboard 22, transferred from file 3905, Nedret Bayraktar, "Yıldız Porselenleri", *Milli Saraylar Koleksiyonu'nda Yıldız Porseleni*, İstanbul 1998, p. 35, n. 35.

38 MV, 212/171. This decision was submitted to the Grand Vizier on 5 September (*BEO.NGG.d*, 398).

39 About two years after Sultan Vahdeddin took the throne; a decree was issued on the return of Imperial Realty, consisting of property, land, institutions and concessions which were transferred to the state treasury during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid and Sultan Mehmed Resad, to Imperial Treasury. According to the decree dated 8 January 1920; properties, lands, farms, institutions and concessions, except for those sold by finance and distributed to migrants, transferred from Imperial Treasury to the state treasury would be taken back by Imperial Treasury (Terzi, *Hazine-i Hassa*, p. 160-161). Since the factory was one of the afore-mentioned institutions, its administration has been transferred back to Imperial Treasury Directorate again.

Managers of the Factory from Its Establishment to Turkish Republic

The management of the Yildiz Porcelain Factory, which was established as a palace-supported institution, was assigned⁴⁰ by a verbal command to Forestry, Mining and Agriculture Minister Selim Melhame Pasha⁴¹, as an additional duty with the title of Honorary Minister⁴². There is no doubt that in this appointment, Pasha's place among the people Sultan Abdulhamid II trusted played a part. Any problems related to the factory were reported to the Ministry of Imperial Treasury by Selim Melhame Pasha. Especially the personnel to be recruited to the factory had to be approved upon the recommendation of Selim Pasha as it was the only way to start working at the factory. Besides, Selim Melhame Pasha represented the Ottoman Empire in agreements signed with the artisans who came to the factory to work from abroad.

During the second operational phase of the factory, which resumed in 1911 as stated above, Halil Bey, Director of the Imperial Museum, had a signature in all kinds of correspondence related to the factory as well as contracts with the artisans coming from abroad⁴³.

The internal director was responsible for the administrative and technical issues of the institution. The founding director of the factory was Monsieur Lui Dat of France. Monsieur Dat, an experienced and trained person in porcelain production, was invited from France when the factory was still under construction. On 29 July 1893, Monsieur Dat signed a contract to settle his working conditions, shifts and salary. According to this contract, he would both oversee the construction of the factory and be responsible for all kinds of activities of the factory related to porcelain production. The contract was valid for a year. Monsieur Dat ensured that a heater and a pool would be built for the factory during this time. Ottoman Empire would pay for all materials and labour costs of the construction. Monsieur Dat would be paid a monthly salary of 20 Ottoman Liras (2.000 kurush) for these duties as of 13 June 1893. He would not be entitled to claim any compensation if the contract was not renewed at the end of the term⁴⁴.

40 On 13 February 1893, Selim Melhame, who was the former director of the Public Debt Administration (Duyûn-ı Umumiye), became administrator of the Ministry of Forestry, Mining and Agriculture. He was paid a salary of 15,000 kurush for this duty. As a minister, Melhame, one of the favourite Pashas in the palace, had considerable power and authority since he was appointed by Abdulhamid the Second. "*Immediately after the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, Melhame, who asked for permission to go to the so-called European thermal baths, fled abroad by boarding an Italian ship on 29 July 1908 with more than 30 million francs, which he had unjustly obtained.*" Özkan Keskin, *Orman ve Ma'âdin Nezâreti'nin Kuruluşu ve Faaliyetleri*, I.U. Ins. Soc. Sci., PhD Thesis, Istanbul 2005, p. 57-61.

41 See Footnote 36.

42 *DH.SAİD*, 80, Record of Selim Melhame Pasha on p. 117. A part of the Pasha's record is in the same classification no. 72, on p. 67-68.

43 Cezar, op.cid., p. 214.

44 The two-article agreement between the Imperial Treasury Ministry and Monsieur Lui Dat in French and its translation: HH.THR, 118/42, leff 2. This agreement also transmitted from MSHHA, 4715, p. 39, published in Coşansel, *ibid.*, p. 143.

The founding manager Monsieur Dat took care of both the construction process and the supply of tools to be used in production at Yildiz Porcelain Factory. While the factory was getting equipped with technological devices, studies were also carried out on the use of local clay in the factory, as clearly specified in the contract of Monsieur Dat. In this regard, he first asked for permission to carry out clay research. The director's proposal was received positively. On 26 August 1893, it was ordered to provide the necessary assistance and convenience for the search for porcelain clay in Arnavutkoy, affiliated to the Imperial Realty Administration's Tokat Branch⁴⁵. Shortly after that date (19 October 1893), 1,300 kurush⁴⁶ were spent to cover the expenses of the excavation operation of the quality white porcelain clay detected in Arnavutkoy. Monsieur Dat made all the arrangements for the factory to settle and operate. He had fulfilled his goal. As a result, when the one-year contract expired, it was not extended and, his time came to an end.

The successor of Monsieur Dat, Yusuf Bey, was appointed in September 1894 with a salary of 1,200 kurush⁴⁷. It can be said that he remained in this post relatively for a short time. Because Nazim Pasha, an engineer at the Ebniye Warehouse since 20 April 1895 and a colonel in the Ministry of Defence (Erkan-ı Harbiye) was appointed as a manager⁴⁸. Thanks to his successful administration, Nazim Pasha was able to keep the post until Sultan Abdulhamid was dethroned. However, as mentioned above, he was dismissed when activities of the factory halted.

Operations in the factory were carried out under the responsibility of the manager. With the increase in both the number of employees and the production, a need for an assistant in order to support the manager emerged. Thus, starting in August 1897, Captain Ahmed Bey was appointed deputy manager with a salary of 400 kurush.⁴⁹ Ahmed Bey successfully carried out his duties until the activities of the factory were halted⁵⁰. However, he got fired during this process. Another administrative employee of the factory, the accountant was responsible for keeping the accounts as well as purchasing required materials for the factory. Yusuf Bey, one of the former managers of the factory for a short time, was appointed to this position on 5 August 1895 with a salary of 1,200 kurush⁵¹.

45 HH.EMK, 484/79; HH.EMK, 484/85.

46 ML.EEM, 178/54.

47 *HH.d.*, 7447, p. 27b.

48 *HH.d.*, 30667, p. 40/2; *HH.d.*, 7524, p. 23b.

49 *HH.d.*, 10131, p. 34b.

50 Ahmed Bey was awarded for his success in his duties. On 1 September 1898, he was given the fourth degree Ottoman medal (İ.TAL, 1316/R-191) and was honoured with a silver royalty medal on 1 May 1899 (İ.TAL, 1316/Z-181). On 14 July 1905, he was raised one degree, became a major (İ.TAL, 1323 / Ca-16) and was given Order of the Medjidie of the third rank (İ.TAL, 1323/B-4). Finally, on 1 June 1908, his rank raised one more degree (İ.TAL, 1326/Ca-2).

51 *HH.d.*, 7524, p. 27b; *HH.d.*, 30667, p. 28.

In the second operational period of the factory, which started in 1911, the same person carried out the accounting duties and the directorate. Painter Adil Bey⁵², one of the instructors of the School of Fine Arts (Sanayi-i Nefise), was appointed to this post. In this period, Şakir Efendi, transportation officer of the museum, was appointed as the procurement officer to the factory and Sitki Efendi became the warehouse clerk⁵³. Following Adil Bey's resignation, İsa Behzat Bey assigned to the post in 1914⁵⁴. After him, on 27 January 1916, Mesrur İzzet Bey⁵⁵ became manager. He was employed⁵⁶ in the factory in November 1894 as an officer in the Antiquities Directorate⁵⁷ and, he was one of the sculptors of the Imperial Museum⁵⁸.

Expert Team Working in Production

Yıldız Porcelain Factory had a production structure that was technologically inspired by the Sevres Factory. To be able to make the existing technology operational, it was necessary to get support from the technical team there. Therefore, masters from the Sevres Factory were invited to the factory to work, with an aim to lay the base for an effective production process by training local employees. Accommodation expenses of the foreign masters were paid by the state⁵⁹, and they were taken good care to feel comfortable during their stay.

The foreman, also listed as a production manager in some documents, used to serve as a master at the Sevres Factory. A foreman was an officer who ensured that the production was carried out in the best way and supervised the goods produced. Only those with experience and expertise of teaching at the Sevres Porcelain Factory were appointed to this post. The first of these was Monsieur Blanchet⁶⁰, who had, since September 1894, been the manager of

52 Ömer Adil Bey was born in 1868. He worked as a director and a teacher in the School of Fine Arts (S. Pertev Boyar, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devirlerinde Türk Ressamları Hayatları ve Eserleri*, Ankara 1948, p. 194; *Osman Hamdi ve Sanayi-i Nefise Mektebi*, prepared by Adnan Çoker, İstanbul 1983, p. 32).

53 The document dated 27 June 1327 (10th July 1911) written from Imperial Museum and the Administration to the Ministry of Education: Imperial Museum Files, cardboard 22, transferred from file 3905, Bayraktar, "Yıldız Porselenleri", p. 35, n. 35.

54 *Osman Hamdi ve Sanayi-i Nefise Mektebi*, p. 48.

55 He was a designer at the factory and later became the factory manager. In addition, Musa Kazım chronicled Mesrur İzzet Bey as the painter of the Royal mint (Darbhâne) patternmaker "Darbhanenin Ahval-i Dahiliyesi", *TOEM*, year 2, fascicle 9, t.m., p. 557. This person is also mentioned in Fatma Ürekli's thesis as Mesrur İzzet Efendi, the sculptor who graduated from the School of Fine Arts in 1902 without obtaining a diploma (*Sanayi-i Nefise Mektebi'nin Kuruluşu ve Türk Eğitim Tarihindeki Yeri*, İstanbul University Institute of Social Sciences Doctoral Thesis, 1997, p. 218).

56 Imperial Museum files, cardboard 22, file 7184, transmitted from 7186/7 Bayraktar, "Yıldız Porselenleri", p. 35, n. 36.

57 *HH.d.*, 7447, p. 30.

58 *Osman Hamdi ve Sanayi-i Nefise Mektebi*, p. 50.

59 For example, it was ordered by a will on 21 July 1894 that five masters, who were requested from France and came to İstanbul when the factory was established, resided in the number 20 in Besiktas Akaretler. *HH.THR*, 807/62.

60 The will dated 2 Rebi'ülevvel 1312/22 August 1310 (3 September 1894): İ.TAL, 1312/Ra-129; *HH.d.*, 7447, p. 32b.

the factory with a salary of 500 francs. However, he did not stay long in this post and resigned on 14 March 1895. With the decision of 15 May 1895, his resignation was accepted and he was dismissed⁶¹.

After the resignation of Monsieur Blanchet, there is no record of a foreman for a while. However, with the contract made between Monsieur Tharet and Selim Melhame Pasha, the former who had been working in the factory as master since January 1895 with a salary of 300 francs⁶² was assigned to the post of foreman as of 13 September 1896⁶³. According to the articles of the contract, Monsieur Tharet would assume the position of production manager of Yildiz Porcelain Factory for two years as of 13 September 1896. In return, he got paid 7.200 francs monthly, 525 francs per month. Monsieur Tharet agreed to shape the porcelain in a guaranteed way and to manufacture porcelain using local clay. His work was appreciated that even after working for a long time his contract was extended with an increase of 100 Francs in salary with a six article contract in French signed on 13 April 1905⁶⁴. According to the contract clauses signed between Minister Selim Melhame and Monsieur Tharet, Monsieur Tharet would continue to serve with a monthly salary of 625 francs for three years beginning 13 April 1905. He agreed to use local clay in the porcelains during his stay as stated in previous contracts.



Image 3
A Vase signed by Monsieur Tharet⁶⁵

61 Copy of 20 Zilka'de 1312/3 May 1311 (15 May 1895) dated will: *HH.d*, 30667, p. 16b.

62 *HH.d*, 7447, p. 32b.

63 *HH.THR*, 807/75.

64 *HH.THR*, 1252/80.

65 Kalyoncu, *ibid.*, p. 177.

It is known that Monsieur Tharet, while successfully fulfilling his duty in the factory, wrote a letter of complaint a year before the end of his contract. In the letter, he stated that he had been prevented from performing his duties by the factory manager Selim Melhame, manager Nazim Pasha and one of the painters Vasfi Pasha. Tharet added that the above people caused trouble in the production of the goods ordered for the palace and that the employees had been prevented from helping him⁶⁶. He emphasized that he worked as a foreman since the establishment of the factory⁶⁷ and that carried out successful works and that he has produced products from local clay that was equivalent to foreign factories. Tharet targeted Nazim Pasha and said that there were only eight workers when he first came to the factory but, this number had increased to fifty during his time. He wrote in the letter that he joined to the factory earlier than Nazim Pasha and Nazim Pasha had no knowledge and experience back then. He requested the recruitment of competent people in order not to be prevented from work. Undoubtedly, Sultan Abdulhamid the Second did not dismiss his trusted Pashas upon this letter. As a result, while we do not know about the fate of Monsieur Tharet, it is possible to think that his contract, which was due 13 April 1908, was not renewed. In an application dated 7 January 1911, he demanded reassignment to the post following the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy⁶⁸. Monsieur Tharet claimed that he has worked faithfully for 15 years since the establishment of the factory and succeeded in making porcelain from local clay; asked for the post during the second term of the factory. However, his request has not been fulfilled. Halil Bey, in charge of the factory, invited Monsieur Naret, who had been working as a manufacturing engineer at the French Sevres Factory, to Istanbul in 1912. Monsieur Naret started to work as of 1 September 1912 for a period of one year with a nine article agreement and a monthly salary of 2,707.5 kurush⁶⁹.

To produce stylish and flamboyant goods by decorating and adorning with various pictures, painters were employed in Yildiz Porcelain Factory. While there were 7 of them in the factory in

66 Y.PRK.HH, 38/50.

67 Although Monsieur Tharet stated in his letter that he was the foreman in the factory since its establishment, he started his job as a master in January 1895 and worked as a foreman as of 13 September 1896.

68 Bayram, m.s., p. 102.

69 24 Şa'ban 1330/26 July 1328 (8 August 1912) dated licence and the original and translation of the nine-point French contract following the will of the Minister of Education dated 28 Şa'ban 1330/29 July 1328 (12 August): İ.MF, 12/1330 p. 28. This contract was notified to the Grand Vizier's office on July 26 and the will was written on July 29 (*BEO.NGG.d*, 393).

1894⁷⁰, the number was increased to 17 by 1901⁷¹. The chief painter of the factory was Monsieur Nicot of France⁷², who had been working since 19 February 1895 with a salary of 2,383 kurush. Monsieur Nicot continued his work during the first operating period of the factory.



Image 4
A plate signed by Nicot⁷³

Halid Naci Bey was another chief painter of the factory. He was a Navy student who attended the Painting Department of the School of Fine Arts upon the special request of the Sultan and obtained his diploma in November 1893. Halid Naci Bey was sent to Sevres Porcelain Factory and trained for Yildiz Porcelain Factory. He returned to Istanbul after learning how to paint ceramic tiles there and appointed to the position of the chief painter at Yildiz Porcelain Factory with a salary of 500 kurush beginning from November 1894⁷⁴. Halid Naci Bey administered the painting and decoration works of the factory for many years⁷⁵.

70 *HH.d.*, 7447.

71 *HH.d.*, 10131. Fausto Zonaro, a palace painter, visited the Porcelain Factory from time to time and painted some pieces there. Zonaro also mentions the factory personnel in his memoirs. According to him; “*There were a few Greeks, a few Armenians and French masters from Lille who worked on a salary basis in the factory*”. Also “*Among the factory personnel, there was an Arab artilleryman (probably Mustafa Vasfi Pasha) who painted huge vases in his unique style, a Naval cadet (probably Halid Naci), an infantryman, and Colonel Nazim, the fat deputy chief of the factory*”. Fausto Zonaro, *Abdülhamid’in Hükümdarlığında Yirmi Yıl Fausto Zonaro’nun Hatıraları ve Eserleri*, prepared by Cesare Mario Trevisone-Erol Makzume, trans. Turan Alptekin-Lotte Romano, Istanbul 2008, p. 156-157.

72 *HH.d.*, 7447, p. 36b.

73 Kalyoncu, *o.c.*, p. 291.

74 *HH.d.*, 7447, p. 30.

75 Cezar, *o.c.*, p. 212-213.



Image 5
A plate signed by Halid Naci ⁷⁶

Both French and Ottoman painters worked in harmony at the factory and contributed to the creation of beautiful artworks. The names of the French painters, who worked in the factory along with chief painter Monsieur Nicot, are listed as follows: Monsieur Schalar⁷⁷, Monsieur Narcice⁷⁸, Jan de Latole⁷⁹, Monsieur Lavergne⁸⁰, Monsieur Toblier⁸¹, Monsieur Alfred de Sain⁸² and Monsieur Jan Cloud⁸³.

76 Kalyoncu, o.c., p. 295.

77 *HH.d*, 10131, p. 14b.

78 İ.TAL., 1317/N-10.

79 *HH.d*, 7524, p. 23b.

80 *HH.d*, 7447, p. 32b.

81 HH.THR, 1252/73; HH.THR, 807/93; *HH.d*, 10131, p. 45.

82 *HH.d*, 7524, p. 19b.

83 *HH.d*, 10131, p. 18b.



Image 6
A vase signed by Et. Narcice⁸⁴

In the factory, there were also painters selected and employed from among local artisans in Istanbul. Attention was paid to ensure that the recruited people were experienced and expert in their field. For example, Hacı Beyzade Ali, who previously worked as a painter at Eser-i İstanbul Factory, was hired by Yıldız Porcelain Factory⁸⁵. Another local painter was Sarı Atam Efendi, who received training in watercolour painting technique in Venice and returned to Istanbul. The painter was assigned to the Porcelain Factory with the will of 28 April 1895 and a salary of 2,000 kurush⁸⁶. Bizantos Efendi, the son of chief engraver Yanko Rayoni, an engraver in Repair-shop and Royal mint, also worked as a painter and an engraver in the Porcelain Factory⁸⁷. Another local painter was Mardiros Efendi⁸⁸. In addition, Omer Adil Bey, a student at the School of Fine Arts, was an intern at the factory⁸⁹.

84 Kalyoncu, *o.c.*, p. 136.

85 Kocabas, *o.c.*, p. 68; Bayraktar, *o.c.*, p. 5.

86 *HH.d.*, 7524, p. 11b; *HH.d.*, 30667, p. 11b/1.

87 İ.TAL, 1317/B-195.

88 *HH.d.*, 7447, p. 30.

89 İ.HUS, 1313-R/64.



Image 7

A flower tub signed by Mardiros⁹⁰

Enderun was an educational institution in Topkapi Palace which made an impact as a valuable resource that educated both statesmen and artists until the end of the 19th century. Some painters got training there who later worked at the Yildiz Porcelain Factory. Tufan Pasazade Faik Bey⁹¹, Abdurrahman Sa'ban Efendi⁹², Nuri Bey⁹³ and Ferid Bey⁹⁴ were among the Enderun graduate painters who worked in the factory.



Image 8

A tray signed by Nuri Bey⁹⁵

Some of the factory staff also had a rank in military, as can be seen in other factories. Therefore, some of the painters were also in this group. The most important of the members

90 Kalyoncu, *o.c.*, p. 303.

91 HH.THR, 1252/76, leff 1, 2.

92 *HH.SAİD.d*, 10, p. 279.

93 *HH.d*, 10131, p. 32b.

94 *HH.d*, 10131, p. 32b.

95 Kalyoncu, *o.c.*, p. 324.

of the military was chief artillery officer Mustafa Vasfi Pasha⁹⁶. It is known that Vasfi Pasha worked at the factory beginning of July 1895 with a salary of 500 kurush⁹⁷. Besides him, adjutant major Yahya Bey⁹⁸, Major Adjutant Ziya Bey⁹⁹ and Police Sergeant Riza Bey¹⁰⁰ worked as painters in the factory.



Image 9
A Vase signed by Mustafa Vasfi Pasha¹⁰¹

Other employees of the factory were artisans who were fully involved in the preparation and manufacturing phases of the work. These were employees such as the maker of mud, moulder, turner and kiln operator.

The maker of mud would combine the raw material that came in the form of clay with water and make it formable by adding the appropriate compounds. The number of mud makers in the factory varied between 2 and 5¹⁰². The salaries they have received varied with their number. For example, the first mud maker of the factory was Mehmed Riza Aga, who

96 Mustafa Vasfi Pasha was born in Erzurum in 1857. He graduated from engineer school in 1877 and worked as a painter at the Harbiye Printing House. Later, he was assigned as a painter in the Porcelain Factory and two vases he painted there were sent by Abdulhamid II as a gift to the King of England. Mustafa Vasfi Pasha, who personally went to present these gifts, had the opportunity to introduce himself in London. He died in his house in Besiktas in the earthquake that occurred in 1905 (Boyar, *ibid*, p. 59-60; Nüzhet İslimyeli, *Türk Plâstik Sanatçıları Ansiklopedisi*, II, Ankara 1969, 495).

97 *HH.d.*, 7524, p. 15b.

98 *İ.TAL.*, 1324/N-21.

99 *İ.TAL.*, 1312/S-35.

100 *İ.TAL.*, 1319/S-47; *İ.TAL.*, 1319/N-26.

101 Kalyoncu, o.c., p. 109.

102 *HH.d.*, 7447, 7524, 10131.

had been working with a salary of 400 kurush since September 1894¹⁰³. Another one was Arif Aga, started to work with a salary of 200 kurush on 23 July 1895¹⁰⁴. The same day, Musa Aga began to work with a salary of 150 kurush¹⁰⁵. Ismail Hakki Efendi also worked as a mud maker in the factory on 18 November 1894 with a 200 kurush salary¹⁰⁶.

The legs and handles used in ornaments, vases, trinkets and porcelain products were first moulded and then fired by creating moulds from plaster. Therefore, a mould maker was required in order to do this job. There were between 2 to 6 moulders in the factory¹⁰⁷. The first mould maker of the factory was Haci Mehmed Aga, who had been working with a salary of 600 kurush since September 1894¹⁰⁸. Mehmed Aga, who fell ill, was dismissed in August 1896¹⁰⁹. It is seen that one of the French masters, Monsieur Cluzelout, another moulder of the factory, was working in the factory since January 1895 with a salary of 250 francs (1,100 kurush)¹¹⁰. Another mould maker French master Monsieur Traford started working at the factory on 6 February 1895 with a salary of 250 francs¹¹¹. Since his contract ended in June 1897, his salary was cut and he was broken off with the factory¹¹².

There were also changes between roles in the factory. For example, we see Musa Aga, once a mud maker, as a mould maker since September 1898. His salary was increased to 270 kurush¹¹³. Ismail Hakki Efendi was another employee who switched from mud making to mould making. He continued to serve as an assistant mould maker with a salary of 400 kurush beginning 8 September 1898¹¹⁴.

103 *HH.d*, 7447, p. 27b.

104 *HH.d*, 7524, p. 16.

105 *HH.d*, 7524, p. 16.

106 *HH.d*, 7447, p. 30. As İsmail Hakki Efendi stated in his libel, from 18 November 1894 to September 1898, he received a salary of 200 kurush as master mud maker. From 8 September 1898 to 28 June 1902, he earned a salary of 400 kurush as an assistant mould maker, and from 29 June to 22 September 1903 a wage of 500 kurush was paid as an assistant mould master. He left the factory on that date (*HH.HRK*, 57/51, leff 1).

107 *HH.d*, 7447, 7524, 10131.

108 *HH.d*, 7447, p. 27b.

109 *HH.d*, 10131, 10b.

110 *HH.d*, 7447, p. 32b.

111 *HH.d*, 7447, p. 35b.

112 *HH.d*, 10131, p. 31.

113 *HH.d*, 10131, p. 58.

114 *HH.d*, 10131, p. 58.



Image 10

Workshop of Yildiz Porcelain Factory

(İ.Ü. Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi, II. Abdülhamid Han Fotoğraf Albümleri, no. 90552/85)

Round objects such as bowls, cups and plates made of porcelain were shaped by hand on a lathe. While there was only one turner in the factory in 1895, this turner later learned the job and became a teacher of turnery and started training others. Generally, there were 2 to 3 turners in the factory¹¹⁵. The first turner of the factory, Mehmed Ali Aga, worked as an assistant engineer at the factory with a salary of 100 kurush from September 1894 to 22 July 1895, became a turner on 23 July with an increase of salary. Mehmed Ali Aga later worked as a turner master at the factory and passed away in 1900¹¹⁶. Another turner was Ahmed Onbasi, who worked for an honorary office in the institution. As of December 1896, he was paid 100 kurush salary¹¹⁷. Another turner was Mehmed Aga. As of August 1898, he took office in the factory with a salary of 520 kurush¹¹⁸. In March 1900, two new turners Hasan Aga and Ali Aga started to work with a salary of 350 kurush each¹¹⁹.

115 *HH.d*, 7447, 7524, 10131.

116 *HH.THR*, 808/4.

117 *Y.PRK.OMZ*, 2/1.

118 *HH.d*, 10131, p. 57b.

119 *HH.d*, 10131, p. 94.



Image 11
Yildiz Porcelain Factory's Manufactured Goods Warehouse
(İ.Ü. Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi, II. Abdülhamid Han Fotoğraf Albümleri, no. 90552/86)

A kiln operator and his assistant worked with kilns to fire the porcelain produced. One of these operators was the French master Monsieur Karye. He was the first kiln operator of the factory. Although his salary was 300 francs (1,320 kurush)¹²⁰ in November 1894, his salary increased by 50 francs in June 1896. His contract was extended for one year. His salary after 13 June 1896 was 350 francs¹²¹. Another operator was Osman Aga, who had been on duty with a salary of 600 kurush since August 1898¹²². Osman Aga was promoted to the chief kiln operator on 2 July 1905¹²³. Since March 1900, Abbas Aga was with the title of an assistant kiln operator. His salary was about 120 kurush¹²⁴.

Apart from the administrative and technical staff mentioned above, there were also janitor and labourer in the factory. As of September 1894, there were a janitor and three labourers in the factory. As of July 1895, the number of janitors rose to two and the number of labourers increased to six. Until the end of the first working phase, not exceeding the number in July 1895, janitors and labourers, occasionally decreasing and increasing, served in the factory.

120 *HH.d*, 7447, p. 32b.

121 *HH.THR*, 807/71, leff 4; *HH.THR*, 807/71, leff 1.

122 *HH.d*, 10131, p. 58.

123 *HH.THR*, 1252/79.

124 *HH.d*, 10131, p. 94.



Image 12

The control point of Yıldız Porcelain Factory

(İ.Ü. Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi, II. Abdülhamid Han Fotoğraf Albümleri, no. 90552/84)

Mr Bes, a teacher at the School of Fine Arts in Limoges, was in charge of the factory's external advisory service on the issues of contacting masters employed in France and the procurement of ordered materials. The communication between the factory and abroad was through Monsieur Bes. Besides, Monsieur Bes, the inventor of many porcelain paints, also formed various dyes for Yıldız Porcelain Factory. He was not paid any salary from the factor in exchange for these services. However, Selim Melhame Pasha, in order to preserve the relations that he had built successfully and his support for the factory, thought that it would be a fair honour for him to obtain a reward and requested a monetary award of 100 liras or 2,000 francs¹²⁵.

Conclusion

During the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II, significant steps were taken in terms of Ottoman industrialization. In this process, technological developments in Europe were closely monitored. The facilities in the country were made operational after accordingly equipping them with modern technology. One of the most important one of these facilities was undoubtedly Yıldız Porcelain Factory. The purpose of establishing Yıldız Porcelain Factory was to supply the

125 Y.MTV, 147/28.

porcelain needs of the palaces and pavilions where the Sultan lived. However, we can say that one of the most important factors that pushed Abdulhamid II to build such a factory was the existence of porcelain factories established with the support of palaces in almost all European countries at that time. Undoubtedly, Sultan's interest in fine arts, carpentry, ceramic tiles, porcelain and his appreciation of painting also played a remarkable role in this. The aim of the Ottoman Empire and therefore of Abdulhamid II was to present a positive picture to the world and to display its presence by using the products of Yildiz Porcelain Factory as a platform to prove its power to Europe and to show that it is not behind them in technique. For example, while Monsieur Dat, the founding manager of the factory, received a salary of 2,000 kurush for his service, his successor manager Yusuf Bey worked with a salary of 1,200 kurush. This partition was also observed among the masters who came from abroad. For instance, while Monsieur Nicot, one of the chief painters of the factory, worked with 2,383 kurush salary, Halid Naci Bey, who was in the same position, earned 500 kurush. Also, the mould maker who earned the highest pay among the local moulders received 600 kurush, while the mould maker from France was paid 1,100 kurush, twice that amount. There was a double gap in pay for the masters running the kilns too. All sorts of machinery and equipment used in the factory were at the same standard as those used in European factories and the other contemporaries. The experience of these masters was therefore required to make the system work. These masters trained the local personnel working in the factory both in the use of machines and tools and in production of quality ware. Specific attention was paid to the use of indigenous clay in the production of porcelain and this matter was included as a separate article in contracts signed with French foremen. Apart from the masters, some painters were also invited from France while some of them trained in Enderun. There were also experienced local artists in Istanbul who were employed at the factory. Other than painters, the technical staffs working in the factory were all craftsmen who took part in the preparation and manufacturing phases of the work. These are employees such as mud maker, mould maker, turner, and kiln operator. Both local and French masters served during these phases. These masters educated the local staff working in the factory both in the use of machines and tools and in producing quality ware. Particular attention was paid to the use of indigenous clay in the making of porcelain and, this matter was included as a separate article in contracts signed with French foremen. Besides the masters, some painters were invited from France while some of them were trained in Enderun. There were also accomplished and experienced local artists in Istanbul who worked at the factory. Other than painters, the technical staffs working in the factory were all craftsmen who took part in the planning and manufacturing phases of the work. These were employees such as mud maker, mould maker, turner, and kiln operator. Both local and French masters served during these phases.

In terms of the activities of the Yildiz Porcelain Factory, developments following the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy were important. With the abdication of

Sultan Abdulhamid II, the aim was to liquidate the Yıldız Palace and to completely erase his traces. Meanwhile, operation of Yıldız Porcelain Factory, which was built by Abdulhamid II and bore his identity, had also been stopped. Thus, the management of the factory, whose production was suspended, was managed by different institutions when it resumed after more than two years. As a matter of fact, the factory restarted its activities on 10 July 1911 under the Ministry of Education and had to cease its activities during the First World War. Then, with the decision dated 4 September 1918, it was affiliated to the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture. In 1920, the management of the factory was transferred back to the Palace, that is, the Imperial Treasury Directorate. The factory, which started its activities at the end of the 19th century, was tried to be revived after the active and busy days of Sultan Abdulhamid II's reign but that could not be achieved. However, the factory was not allowed to disappear for good. Yıldız Porcelain Factory still has the quality of being an institution that kept operating by developing and continuing its activities as a vital step of industrialization or modernization in porcelain production in the Ottoman period.

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