

Rethinking Construction and Planning Processes in the Ottoman Provinces

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Abstract

Ottoman construction system is one of the significant issues in the Ottoman History. Specifically, after the Tanzimat reforms in 1839, the system encountered with a significant change not only in the capital, Istanbul, but also in the provinces. The aim of this paper is to highlight these changes on the planning and design processes in the provinces in order to understand the multifaceted relationships among the central authority, provincial authority, the architects both in the capital and in the cities, and also contractors.

The archival documents and the newly published data such as the translation of cost estimates books or the drawings of the buildings are going to be used as the primary sources for this article. The sources are going to be discussed within a chronological and conceptual framework. In the first part of the article, the process of the construction and repair activities in the provinces, from the 16th to the 19th centuries, is going to be discussed briefly. In the second part, the changes and developments in the Ottoman architectural organization after the Tanzimat era are going to be discussed within the light of the changing roles and responsibilities of the architects, *kalfas* or contractors.

It is seen that with the proclamation of the Tanzimat edicts, the system significantly changed. The institutionalization, specifically the new institution *Ebniye Müdürlüğü* was the focal point for these changes. The main argument of this paper is reconsidering the changes on the construction and planning activities in the provinces as a signifier for the social change in the Ottoman Empire during the 19th century.

Keywords: Ottoman Construction System, Tenzimat, 19th Century, Ottoman Architecture

The Construction and Repair Activities in the Provinces in the Pre-Tanzimat Era

Ottoman construction system is one of the most puzzling issues in the Ottoman History, even though recent researches¹ reveal a significant amount of archival documents. While each document brings to light another unfamiliar practice in the construction activity, it also shows the irregularities and complexities of the system. The roles and responsibilities of the actors of the construction system also changed within the centuries. The assigned roles for an architect or a *kalfa* in a construction in the 16th century were significantly different from the roles in the late 19th century's Ottoman culture. This kind of a transformation on the roles of the actors of the construction system was also observed in the architectural productions in the provinces. This part of the paper aims to give very brief information on the Ottoman construction and repair activities in the provinces in the pre-Tanzimat era.

The architects who were responsible for the construction, repair and the supervision of the ongoing constructions in the provinces of the Ottoman Empire were categorized under two main categories by Dündar; the provincial personnel of the *Hâssa Mimarlar Ocağı* (The Corps of Royal Architects) and the architects who work independently or for the waqf. (Dündar 2000: 55-73) In his work, Dündar defines the local elements of *Hâssa Mimarlar Ocağı* in two folds; 'provincial architects' and 'city architects'. (Ibid) Based on the documents found in Ottoman Archives, the center of the each province had an architect who was appointed by *Hâssa Mimarlar Ocağı* in Istanbul for undertaking the construction activities in the cities of the connected to that province. (Ibid, 55-6) These documents, of which the oldest one was dating from 1516, also show that there was a hierarchical order within the provincial architects since the title of 'chief architect' was also used in these documents. (Ibid) It can be said that, there was a small version of *Hâssa Mimarlar Ocağı* in the center of the provinces, which coordinated the local efforts with Istanbul. One of the documents verifies that in some cases, the architects in the provinces were summoned by the chief architect in the capital, when their presence was needed for a construction work in the capital. (Ibid, 57) While Dündar believes that there was another group of architects in the cities of the province, called city architects (Ibid), another scholar, Orhonlu, by interpreting the same documents with Dündar, groups city architects together with the provincial architects and called the entire group as city architects without making any distinctions in between. (Orhonlu 1981) Both Orhonlu and Dündar believe that the city architects were appointed by *Hâssa Mimarlar Ocağı* when there was a need for a construction in the cities. (Orhonlu 1981, Dündar 2000) This demand was presented by a letter from the city council or a representative of the government to the center. The archival documents on the city architects also reveals that during the first decades of the 17th century, the number of the city architects increased due to the growing construction activities in the cities caused by the migration movement from towns to cities. (Orhonlu 1981: 2)

¹ In the last fifteen years, the PhD dissertations of Abdulkadir Dündar (1999, Ankara University), Selman Can (2002, Istanbul University) and Oya Şenyurt (2006, Yıldız Teknik University) provide researchers significant information on the construction system of the late Ottoman Empire.

The first puzzling part on the actors and the roles of the construction activities in the provinces starts with the responsibilities of the architects. While Dündar and Orhonlu (Orhonlu 1981, Dündar 2000) believe that there were also waqf architects in the cities who were responsible for the conservation and restoration of the related waqf buildings and prepared the estimates costs (*keşif*), Şenyurt (Şenyurt, Osmanlı Mimarlık Örgütlenmesinde Değişim ve Dönüşüm 2011) does not consider this kind of a division when she describes the architectural organization in the provinces. The archival documents founded by Dündar reveal two significant points on the waqf architects; firstly they were appointed by the board of trustees (*mütevelli heyeti*) to the related waqf instead of the *kadi* or any authority from the center. Secondly the documents show that both waqf architects and city architects worked in the same city within the same time period. (Dündar 2000: 68-71) Thus it is a complicated issue to identify the areas and limits of the responsibilities of waqf architects and province/city architects. Even Dündar himself makes two different interpretations in his works. While he states that restoring the buildings and presenting the estimates costs for the repair works was among the duties of the waqf architects (Dündar 2000, 71), in his another work, Dündar states that the estimates cost was done by the architects who were appointed from the capital by *Hâssa Mimarlar Ocağı*. (Dündar 2002: 119-20)

The discussions on the responsibilities of the architects in the provinces also continue on the relation and link between the design and construction process for the provincial mosques. Even though the recent research reveals new documents on the Ottoman construction system, it is not enough to clarify the whole design and application process. Based on a generally accepted view, between the years 16th and 18th century, the sultan's mosques in the provinces were designed by the chief architect in the central office (*Hâssa Mimarlar Ocağı*), yet the mosques were built under the management of the supervising architect in the provinces. (Kuran 1988, Kafescioglu 1999, Kuban 2007) When the limited architectural drawings belong to the classical period of Ottoman architecture are observed, it is seen that these documents only consists of plans and also some notes written on these drawings by central office. The plans that were sent to the provinces were included the key decisions regarding the diameter of the dome, the transition system and the thickness of the walls. On the other hand, in the absence of elevation or section drawings, the written notes on these plans verbally described what the elevation or the section of critical areas of the building should look like. In Figure 1 the plan of an Ottoman bath which is dated 1584-6 presents this kind of a situation.

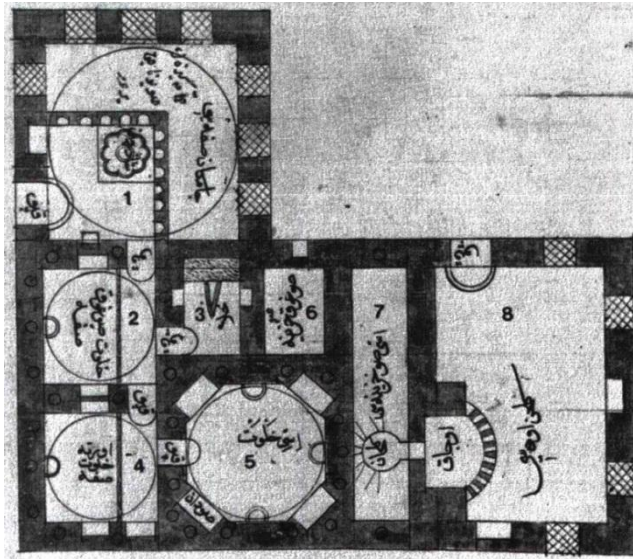


Figure 1. Plan of an Ottoman bath, Vienna National Library, 1584-6. Source: (Necipoğlu-Kafadar 1986: 225)

The small niches for placing shoes on the raised L-shaped platform in the single domed disrobing room (no.1) were represented by an elevation view in the plan. Furthermore, the empty spaces for showing the windows are hatched with a grid, like the meshwork representing the Ottoman windows. For showing the doors, an arch was used giving reference to its arched-top view. The latrine (no.3) was represented by a ‘V’ shape but to make this rooms function clear, the name of the room (*hela*) was written on the plan, similar to the representation of the furnace (*külhân*) in the hot-water reservoir room (no.7). Since this plan was found in Vienna, Necipoğlu believes that the notes were taken for someone in Vienna who was interested in Turkish Baths. (Necipoğlu-Kafadar 1986: 225) In this particular case, the written notes were possibly used for introducing the unfamiliar furnishings and functions of the Turkish bath to a foreigner. However, the use of partial elevation views for the representation of the windows, doors and even the niches was customary for Ottoman architects in the capital when describing the design of their buildings to the provinces during the classical period. Kuran believes that everything except some points that were shown on the plan such as the places and sizes of the domes, the transition systems, windows and the thickness of the walls, were decided and devised on the construction site by the supervising architect who played a significant role in the formation of the architecture in the provinces. (Kuran 1988, 21) Thus it is believed that the features of the elevations and the decorative elements on the facades were chosen by the architect who was in charge for the application of the building on the site. (Kuran 1988: 21, Kafescioglu 1999: 82)

Tanzimat Regulations: Changes and Transformations in the Ottoman Architectural Organization

One of the most significant changes on the Ottoman construction system was the merger of *Şehremaneti* (İstanbul Municipality) and *Hâssa Mimarlar Ocağı* into a single directorate called *Ebniye-i Hâssa Müdürlüğü* (Directorship of Royal Buildings) during the reign of Mahmud II. (Ş. Turan 1964: 178, Dündar 2000: 11, Can 2010: 25) In the beginning of the 19th century *Ocak*'s poor reputation related with the claims of corruption and bribery, and the conflict between *Şehremeni* (İstanbul Mayor) and the chief architect about the sphere of their responsibilities were the main reasons behind the establishment of the new organization, *Ebniye-i Hâssa*, which was founded on November 4, 1831. (Can 2010: 24) The last chief architect of the *Hâssa Mimarlar Ocağı*, Seyit Abdülhalim Efendi, was appointed as the director of the *Ebniye-i Hâssa Müdürlüğü*. The director was responsible for preparing the plans, estimates costs and supervising the construction process of the state's construction activities. (Can 2010: 25) He was also in charge of controlling the plans of private buildings. (Ibid) The establishment of the new organization can be considered as a step towards centralization and reformation movements, which were mainly started by Mahmud II who has also abolished the Janissary Corps in 1826. Because each member of the court architects was also a member of the Janissary corps there was a mutual relationship between the Janissary corps and imperial court architects. (Turan 1964: 173) As a result, the abolishment of the Janissaries has deeply influenced the architectural institution in the Ottoman Empire. In the classical period, the architects of the imperial courts joined the army in order to construct the bridges, roads, small fortresses (*Hâvâle*) around cities under siege, open wells and built camps for the army. (Turan 1964: 173) These works were also a part of the education of the court architects as it can be observed from Sinan's life.

With the proclamation of the Tanzimat edicts in 1839, the construction works all around the empire was institutionalized under the authority of the *Ebniye Müdürlüğü*. (Şenyurt 2009: 491) In the same year, the architects and other workers of the *Ebniye* moved to their new building in the courtyard of the Yeni Mosque (Can 2010: 26-7), since the old atelier in the Topkapı Palace² was demolished. (Öz 1936) As a part of Tanzimat reform's institutionalization program, *Nâfi'a Nezâreti* (Ministry of Public Works) was established in 1848 in order to centralize and control the agriculture, industry and architectural works all around the empire under a single roof. The name of the *Ebniye Müdürlüğü* was changed as *Ebniye Mu'âvinliği* and was subordinated to the *Nâfi'a Nezâreti* in the same year. (Akyıldız 1993: 142) In 1849, a list of codes was prepared by the *Ebniye Meclisi* (Building Council) which aimed to regulate and define the missions and charges of the architects in the construction works. (Akyıldız 1993: 141-3) Based on this list, the missions of this council

² Necipoğlu states that *Hâssa Mimarlar Ocağı* had two foci; *Topkapı Palace* and the office at *Vefa*. (Necipoğlu 2005, 154) She believes that the office in the Palace was used as a royal storehouse, yet the office in the *Vefa* district (near the Old Palace) was used by the chief architects for their initial training. (Ibid) Sinan himself had received his training in this office as a carpenter and Janissaries employed him as a construction worker. (Ibid)

were to organize bidding (*münakasa*³) for the planned buildings, to prepare the contracts with assigned contractors (*müteahhid*⁴), and to act as the technical control authority for the price and the quality of the construction materials. (Ibid) As it can be understood from this list, the construction system and also the responsibilities of the architects significantly changed compared to the classical period. The most substantial issue among this new arrangement can be considered as the *münakasa* system which completely changed the construction process within the empire. Based on *münakasa* system the architects of the *Ebniye Meclisi* prepared the architectural projects for the planned buildings and presented an estimated cost for the construction. (Can 2010: 67) The contracts were awarded to the lowest bidder with respect to the estimated cost.

Within this perspective, since the architects of the *Ebniye Meclisi* prepared the architectural projects of the buildings, it can be claimed that the designers of the buildings should be considered as those architects instead of the contractors whose names are mentioned as the architects of all these buildings such as the Balian family. In his book, Can defends this idea under the light of the evidence found in the archives. (Can 2010) He believes that contrary to the general opinion on the ascendancy of the Balian family; Yıldız Hamidiye Mosque was designed by Nikolaki Kalfa who worked as an architect in the *Ebniye-i Hassa Ambarı* and Büyük Mecidiye (Ortaköy) Mosque was designed by Seyit Abdülhalim Efendi who was the chief architect of the *Ebniye Müdürlüğü* during the construction of the mosque. (Can 2010) There is a similar argument for the Yıldız Hamidiye Mosque in Ersoy's article where he reveals an unsigned letter dated in 1881, from the Dolmabahçe Palace Archives. (Ersoy 2010: 104-17) Based on this letter the construction was started after the plan and models of the mosques, which was prepared by Nikolaki Jelepulo, was approved. (Ersoy 2010: 105) This kind of example, particularly for buildings, attributed to Balian family, can be enhanced under the new evidence, which is presented by Can in his book. (Can 2010)

Furthermore, another evidence to support the idea that the architects of the *Ebniye Meclisi* were the designers, thus the real architects of the buildings, is a cost estimates notebook, which was found by Dündar. (Dündar 2004) Dündar reveals the plan and one of the

³ The term 'münakasa' was the Ottoman equivalent of bidding which basically means the offering of the lowest possible price for a particular item or job. There were two types of governmental or institutional bidding. The first was open bidding where participants offered their lowest possible prices face to face in an open auction. The second was closed bidding where participants offered their price proposals in closed envelopes; the party offering the lowest price is awarded with the contract.

⁴ In Devellioğlu's Ottoman-Turkish dictionary, the word 'müteahhid' derives from Arabic name and adjective 'ahd' which means that the one who gives a commitment for a job with a sign or with a vow. (Devellioğlu 2006, 758) Based on the archival documents the term 'müteahhid' used for the people who provided supplies such as meat, boots and bread for the army in the 18th century. (Şenyurt 2011, 282) In the same century, for the people who committed for constructions were mentioned as they were 'authorized' (memur edilmek) for the work. (Ibid) From the middle of the 19th century, the term 'müteahhid' was starting to use for the contractors. (Ibid)

facade drawings and cost estimate notebook of a tomb in Edirne, which was dated to 1884 and never built. (Ibid) (Figure 2)

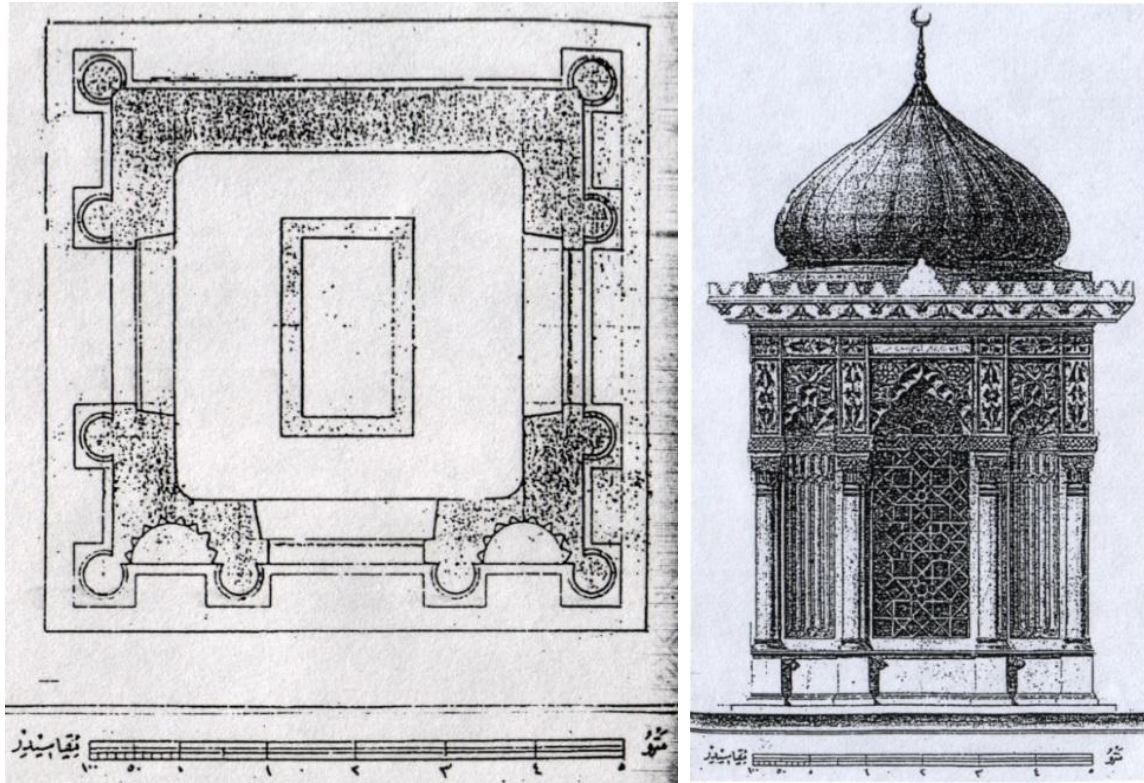


Figure 2. Left: Plan of the Edirne Kadir Pasha Tomb. Source: (Dündar 2004: 154) **Right:** Facade of the Edirne Kadir Pasha Tomb. Source: (Dündar 2004: 155)

The Turkish transcription of the cost estimate notebook of Kadri Pasha Tomb shows that every detail on the building such as the numbers, width and length of the windows, the construction materials, the materials, numbers and form of the decorative elements, the material of the eaves, the amount of the timber used for the construction of the domes, even the numbers of the dove tails were listed for the estimated budget. (Dündar 2004: 146-51) To prepare this kind of a comprehensive list, it is necessary to have a detailed plan and elevation drawings of a building. Since estimates costs and architectural drawings were prepared by the architects of the *Ebniye Müdürlüğü* (or *Mu'avinliği*), it can be claimed that they were the ones who were responsible for the designs of the related buildings.

In her dissertation, Şenyurt scrutinizes the same documents, however; she remains distant to the idea that the architects of the *Ebniye Müdürlüğü* (or *Mu'avinliği*) can be called as the real architects of the related buildings. (Şenyurt 2011) She believes that evaluating the late 19th century's Ottoman architectural culture with today's definitions of architect, designer or contractor causes a significant delusion to our perception. (Şenyurt 2011: 213) In a construction industry where the designer as a professional was not as prominent as the

contractor, professional titles such as architect, *kalfa* or contractor did not necessarily indicate distinct fields of specialization as they do today⁵. In most cases, the names of the building contractors were mentioned as the architects, even though the documents suggest that they had little to do with the actual design process. Instead, the most appreciated professional quality for the contractors of those times was to complete the construction in a quick, efficient and economical manner. (Şenyurt 2011, 214) The French magazine, *Le Monde Illustré* mentions that the Ottoman Sultan had his buildings constructed by Sarkis Balian in a short time with a small budget. (Ibid) This contributed to Balian's professional reputation in a positive manner. It is notable that several members of Balian's family were referred to as architects, even though they had no formal professional training. (Ibid)

Until now, only one part of the construction system is described, however, the *waqf* institution is also a significant part of the system since a high portion of urban space and all state buildings, including mosques, throughout the empire were registered as *waqf* property. Until the 18th century, the sultanic and imperial endowments were under the supervision of high state officials or an appointed board of trustees in the cities. As it is defined previously, the *waqf* architects were responsible for the repair and restoration works of the assigned *waqf* buildings until Tanzimat reforms. The first significant change in this system was observed during Abdülhamid I's era (1774-1789). He placed all his own *waqf* endowments under a single newly created institution which was called as *Evkâf-ı Hamidiye* in 1775. (Akyıldız 1993: 145) In 1826, Mahmud II united the administration of foundations formerly belonging to the Janissary corps and that of his own endowments under a new administrative body, which was called *Evkâf-ı Hümayûn Nezareti* (Ministry of Sultanic Endowments). (Meier 2002: 211) Even though the new *Nezaret* (Ministry) was initially founded for the administration of the imperial endowments in the capital, in 1835 the provincial *waqf* endowments, which were categorized under two main parts as Rumelia and Anatolia, were brought under the central control of the *Evkâf-ı Hümayûn Nezareti*. (Kahraman 2006: 7) With the enactment of the new law (*nizamname*) prepared by the ministry in 1836, the responsibilities and missions of the new institution was arranged. One of the most significant subjects⁶ of this regulation was the introduction of a hierarchical system of approval for the budget of repair and construction works. In this system, the approvals of expenditures up to 500 *kuruş* were within the prerogative of the board of trustees; expenditures between 500 to

⁵ It is also important to point out here that the terms, which define various actors of the construction system, have changed meaning, like the changing building system and codes, from the 15th century to the end of the empire. While in the classical Ottoman architectural culture, the term *kalfa* (or *halife*) referred to a person who assists the architects, in later periods, *kalfa* indicates mostly a non-Muslim practitioner of the building arts. The construction notes of Nur-u Osmaniye Mosque, 'Tarih-i Camii Şerif-i Nur-u Osmani', provide us a first-hand account on the architectural organization of the 18th century Ottoman culture. Based on this document, the professional responsibilities of Simeon Kalfa included both the design of the mosque and its construction. (Kuban 1981, 275) It is seen that the title *kalfa* was used in the place of the architect during the 18th century. In the 19th century, on the other hand, with the adoption of the *münakasa* system, the lines between the professional positions of architects, contractors and *kalfas* have blurred and the terms have been used interchangeably with each other. (Şenyurt 2011, 213)

⁶ The full list of the regulation can be founded in Kahraman's book. (Kahraman 2006, 6-11)

2500 *kuruş* were approved by the provincial councils; expenditures more than 2500 *kuruş* were approved by the *Evkâf-ı Hümayûn Nezareti* in the capital. (Kahraman 2006: 9) It can be said that this kind of a control mechanism on the incomes of the whole waqf endowments indicates a very strong centralization attempt. By this mean, the expenditure for the almost all kind of restoration works of the waqf buildings were received from the state treasury. Lewis believes that Mahmut II's main target was to reduce the power of ulema class by controlling the religious foundations under a central authority. Members of the ulema class were involved in the board of trustees of the most profitable waqf in İstanbul and they were against the westernization reforms. (Lewis 1968: 93-4) It is also known that in the 18th century, the corruption and failures in the administration of the waqf foundations caused degeneration of the old system. (Öztürk 1995) This constitutes another reason for the centralization of the waqf system.

The consequences of the central control over all waqf foundations around the empire and centralization of the incomes are interpreted in different ways. On one hand, it is believed that the centralization of the system helped to protect some of the waqf buildings which did not get enough income from their own sources for repair or renovation works (Madran 2002: 11); on the other hand it is known that some waqf lands and lots were sold after the establishment of the *Evkâf-ı Hümayûn Nezareti* in order to cover the expenses of the all of the buildings' repair and works. (Öztürk 1995) Furthermore, Hatemi states that the reform of the waqf system created a redundant bureaucracy and increased unnecessary payments in the ministry. (Hatemi 1985: 1668) As it can be understood from these interpretations, the overall consequence of the centralization of the waqf foundations is a debatable subject, which had both positive and negative outcomes.

The Construction and Repair Activities in the Provinces during the Post Tanzimat Era

Tanzimat reforms and the new regulations which were applied after the reform movement were caused significant changes on the construction and repair activities in the provinces. As it is briefly argued in previously, before the Tanzimat era, even though the written rules shows that the chief royal architect and the office was responsible for the all kind of construction and repair activities around the empire, in reality, the dissimilarities in the using construction techniques, spatial configurations and facade elements between the capital and provinces prove that each province created its own languages which was not completely different from the language of capital, yet has its own peculiar taste⁷. Cerasi explains these

⁷ Particularly this kind of a differentiation is observed in the architectural productions in the provinces during the 18th century. As Yenişehirlioğlu states in her article that the ayan families' mosques such as Cihanoglu Mosque has a very distinctive highly elaborated architectural language which is not observed in the mosques in capital during the same period. (Yenişehirlioğlu 2005) She interprets this decorative program with ayan families' direct commercial relations with Europe. (Ibid, 328) Cerasi also extends the discussion and adds that the heterogeneous influences of post eighteenth century scene changed the space and typology of the Ottoman

peculiarities with the effect of both the architects (town architects in provinces) and the master builders who tended to use popular modes in 18th century. (Cerasi 1988: 88) He believes that in the provinces, local architects created a local and mostly popular taste in their own provinces which was different than the capital. Lewis takes this claim a step further and states that the decline of the Ottoman culture at the beginning of the 19th century was restricted to court culture. (Lewis 1968: 35) He puts a clear division between the court culture, here the capital, and its surrounding while he is describing the last century of the empire.

However the strong centrality movement which was observed after the Tanzimat era, particularly during Abdülhamid II's reign, caused a significant control mechanism in the all institutional works around the empire, including the construction activities. Here in this part of the paper, the archival documents which are founded by Kahraman, Can, Dündar, Yazıcı, Safi and Şenyurt⁸ are going to be discussed within the frame of the discussed hierarchical relation between the capital and the provinces. Those documents prove that the reforms enhanced the control mechanism of the capital on the construction activities all around its territories. As a consequence, the effects of the local decisions in architectural productions were reduced.

Firstly, the documents, founded by Kahraman reveals that the new *Evkâf-ı Hümayûn Nezâreti* was the main and only responsible organization on the construction works all around the empire. (Kahraman 2006) Besides, he claims that the establishment of *Evkâf-ı Hümayûn* and the new law in 1836 significantly affected the restoration and construction works of the waqf buildings in the provinces. (Ibid) Before the centralization of the waqf system, each foundation used their own incomes for the construction works of their edifices. Yet after 1836, almost all large-scale restoration works were realized by the approval of the center. Furthermore, it is also believed that if *Evkâf-ı Hümayûn Nezâreti* approved the allocation of the budget, the architects of the *Ebniye Müdürlüğü* prepared architectural projects and estimates costs of the buildings. (Kahraman 2006) The documents founded by Can and Dündar also approved this statement. (Can 2010, Dündar 2000) Can states that the *Ebniye Müdürlüğü* was in charge for all kind of construction activities around the empire. (Can 2010) The appointed chief architect and the other architects whose titles were *kalfa* during the 19th century were responsible for preparing the estimates costs and also preparing the architectural projects based on this calculation. This process was not only valid for the capital; the

Balkan architecture. (Cerasi 1988, 88) He believes that the reason behind this transformation can be explained by both the foreign architects and the master builders. (Ibid)

⁸ *The archival documents which are going to be used for this part of the paper are cited in the Seyit Ali Kahraman's book (Kahraman, Evkâf-ı Hümayûn Nezâreti 2006), Selman Can's published PhD Thesis (Can, Bilinmeyen Aktörleri ve Olayları ile Son Dönem Osmanlı Mimarlığı 2010), Abdülkadir Dündar's book (Dündar, Arşivlerdeki Plan ve Çizimler Işığı Altında Osmanlı İmar Sistemi (XVIII. ve XIX. Yüzyıl) 2000) and his article (Dündar, Son Dönem Osmanlı Mimarisinde Uygulanmayan Bir İnşa Projesi: Edirne Kadri Paşa Türbesi 2004), (Yazıcı, Ocak 1989 Balıkesir Depremi 2003), (Safi, Rize-Güneysuyu (Potomya) Büyük Hamidiye Camisi ve Medresesi 2008) and Oya Şenyurt's published PhD Thesis (Şenyurt, Osmanlı Mimarlık Örgütlenmesinde Değişim ve Dönüşüm 2011).*

provincial constructions also followed the same path. The correspondences between *Hazine-i Hassa Nezareti* (the ministry of sultan's private treasury) and the provincial authorities, who demanded a mosque in their cities, show that the all parts of the construction process were carried out under the control of the capital. Here in the examples presented for Balıkesir Zağnos Pasha, Samsun Hamidiye, Ayvalık Hamidiye and Rize Potomya Hamidiye Mosques and also Edirne Kadri Pasha Tomb proves this idea.

Aftermath of the Balıkesir earthquake in 1898, the construction works for the ruined buildings started. Zağnos Pasha Mosque, which was the biggest mosque in the city was also destroyed during this earthquake. The ongoing correspondences among the *Evkaf Nezareti*, *Hazine-i Hassa* and Balıkesir governor Ömer Ali Bey show that a group of architects and *kalfas* were sent to Balıkesir from the capital for preparing the cost estimate book and projects of the buildings. (Yazıcı 2003)

Very similar process can be also observed in the construction orders of the two unconstructed buildings; Rize Potomya Büyük Hamidiye Mosque and Edirne Kadir Pasha Tomb. Based on the archival documents founded by Safi, the cost estimate book and the projects of the Rize Potomya Büyük Hamidiye Mosque (Figure 3 and Figure 4) was prepared by an engineer (?) who was appointed by *Hazine-i Hassa* and sent to Rize for seeing the construction site. (Safi 2008)

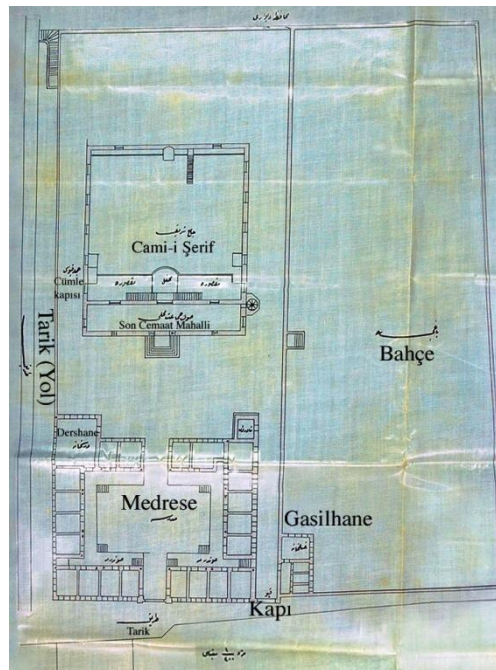


Figure 3. Plan of the unconstructed Rize Potomya Hamidiye Mosque. Source: (Safi 2008)

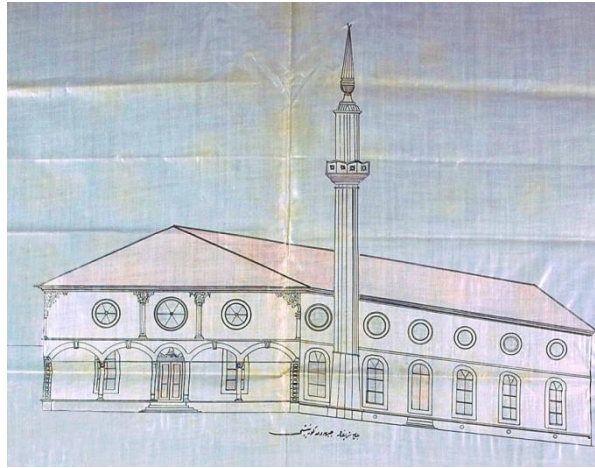


Figure 4. North and west elevations of the unconstructed Rize Potamya Hamidiye Mosque.
Source: (Safi 2008)

The correspondences show that there was a strong hierarchical relation in Ottoman bureaucracy to restrain governors' acts without the control of central authority. Besides the control of the budgets for the construction works from the center (*Hazine-i Hassa*) also prevent the uncontrolled constructions in the provinces. As a consequence, it can be said that both the preparation of the cost estimates notebooks and the projects of the provincial mosques were carried out under the control of the architects working in the *Ebniye Müdürlüğü*. Yet the responsible on the application of these projects in the provinces are still an important question for the 19th century Ottoman architecture.

At that point, Şenyurt's study aimed to answer this question. (Şenyurt 2011) She states that the construction works contracted out to contractors (*mültezim* or *müteahhid*) in the provinces. (Ibid: 11-23) These contractors mostly had professional knowledge on construction works and they took a certificate for their works which was called as *berat*. Even though Şenyurt introduces the provincial system in her work, she also states that there were too many exceptions during the construction works of the structures in reality. (Ibid)

As it can be understood from all these archival documents that there were a strict control on the planning process of the constructions in the provinces which was done by the institutions of the central authority. The detailed cost estimates notebooks and architectural drawings which were included detailed elevations and plans of the buildings prove this claim. However, the same control mechanism cannot be observed in the application of the projects. The local construction workers involved in the process.

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