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A COMPARISON BETWEEN WOMEN LIVING IN TRADITIONAL TURKISH HOUSES AND WOMEN LIVING IN APARTMENTS IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines the relationship between women and housing, focusing on two stages of its development in Turkey: the lives and status of women living in traditional Turkish houses and in apartments. The contribution of the home to women's lives and status is described, and the advantages and disadvantages of each form of housing are noted. This approach highlights changes in the social status of women of similar (upper middle) class, and the reasons for these changes.

Women have never regained the status which they lost with the transition to settled agriculture and animal farming. This study seeks to establish the link between the gender division of labour and women's

status today. It emphasises that although education and participation in the workforce are important factors for improving women's lives and increasing their bargaining power, their status remains secondary to men. In their effort to compensate, educated women are observed to resort to their capacity as the persons chiefly responsible for the physical characteristics and organisation of the home. With their autonomy in the organisation of space, they use their homes to emphasise their personalities and distinctiveness from other women. It is suggested that the opportunities for such behaviour provided by the apartment were influential in its emergence as the preferred form of urban housing in Turkey. The study concludes that unless gender roles change, many women, in their efforts to improve their status, will go on combining their traditional roles as mothers, wives and home-keepers with the material things of modern life, such as living in a well-furnished house in an aspired-to neighbourhood. Hence, they will lead a life-style that fluctuates between the traditional and the modern.

Keywords: Housing, Gender Division Of Labour, Status, Tradition, Modernity

ÖZ

TARİHSEL SÜREÇ İÇİNDE GELENEKSEL TÜRK EVİ VE APARTMAN YAŞANTISINDAKİ KADINLAR ARASINDA BİR KARŞILAŞTIRMA

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Yüksek Lisans, Kadın Çalışmaları Ana Bilim Dalı

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Bu çalışmada kadın ve konut ilişkisi incelenerek iki belirgin dönemde Türkiye'de yer alan iki konut biçiminde - Geleneksel Türk Evi ve Apartman - kadının yaşamı ve konumu araştırıldı. Konutun kadının yaşamına ve statüsüne katkıları, her iki konutun sağladığı avantaj ve dezavantajlarla verilirken, benzer (üst-orta) sınıf yapısından kadınların toplumsal statülerindeki değişimler ve bunun nedenleri üzerinde duruldu.

Kadının, yerleşik tarım ve hayvancılığa geçilmesiyle kaybettiği statüyü bir daha asla geri kazanamadığı açıklanırken, bugün de geçerli olan cinsiyete dayalı işbölümü ile statü arasındaki ilişki kurulmaya

çalışıldı. Günümüzde eğitimin ve çalışma yaşamına katılımın kadının konumunu iyileştirmede ve erkek karşısındaki gücünü arttırmada çok önemli etkileri olmasına karşın, erkeğe göre ikincil konumunun değişmediği ve bu statü eksikliğini eğitimli kadının yaşadığı konutun fiziksel özellikleriyle ve konutun organizasyonundan esas sorumlu kişi olarak gidermeye çalıştığı, bu anlamda sahip olduğu otonomiyle evini, kişiliğini ifade ettiği ve diğer kadınlardan farkını vurguladığı esas alan olarak kullandığı açıklanırken kadına bu imkanı sağlayan apartmanın Türkiye kentlerinde tercih edilen esas konut biçimi olmasında bunun da etkileri olduğu vurgulandı. Cinsiyet rolleri değişmedikçe pek çok kadının statüsünü yükseltmek icin kendisine yüklenen geleneksel rollerle (annelik, eş, evin sorumlusu), modern yaşamın getirdiği güzel döşenmiş, iyi bir semtte yer alan bir konutta yaşamak gibi maddi şeyleri birleştirdiği ve bunun sonucunda da geleneksel ile modern arasında bir yaşam sürdüğü sonucuna varıldı.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Konut, Cinsiyete Dayalı İşbölümü, Statü, Gelenek, Modernlik.

To My Mother, My Mother-in-Law And My Aunts.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> Of course, the Man was wild too. He was dreadfully wild. He didn't even begin to be tame till he met the Woman, and she told him that she did not like living in his wild ways. She picked out a nice, dry Cave, instead of a heap of wet leaves, to lie down in; and she strewed clean sand on the floor; and she lit a nice fire of wood at the back of the Cave; and she hung a dried wild-horse skin, tail-down, across the opening of the Cave and she said, 'Wipe your feet, dear, when you come in, and now we'll keep house.' (Rudyard Kipling, The Cat That Walked By Himself in Just So Stories, 1902)

The relationship between women and housing contains sharp contradictions. The form taken by the home - defined, in a male-dominated society, as the woman's place - has undergone considerable changes over the centuries, and these changes have consolidated women's secondary social position, on the one hand, while reflecting their changing social position on the other. What has not changed is the idea that the home is the woman's place; indeed, women have come to express their identities through their relationship with the home - through its location, furnishing, decoration, cleanliness and tidiness.

This study will focus on the relationship between women and housing in historical perspective, examining the changing typology of housing in Turkey and the changes in the status of women. A comparison

will then be made between two types of housing - the traditional Turkish house and the apartment building - and between the lives and status of women living in these two housing types. The traditional urban residential architecture of Ottoman times had some relative advantages from the point of view of women. Its unspecialised spaces (i.e., the fact that each room could be used for living, eating and sleeping) allowed for women to recreate space every day. Meanwhile, the women were also in charge of the only specialised space, the kitchen. Thus women's labour was visible and valued. The modernisation movements of the late nineteenth century and the declaration of the Republic put a new form of housing onto the agenda. The apartment was at first an indicator of social status - a place where only the elite could live, but as of the 1950s it became the prime form of urban residential accommodation.

One reason for this - alongside many other economic and social factors - was the preference of women themselves. For them, apartment life was the most visible proof of modernisation. It provided the opportunity to live within their own nuclear families, and the accompanying independence and autonomy in the organisation of space was a source of status. In addition, apartment life was easy - it was all on one floor, the cleaning was easy and heating was much less of a problem. This choice was made irreversible by subsequent technological developments - central heating and the spread of the refrigerator, washing machine and dishwasher - combined with the existence of janitors who did daily shopping (In Ottoman times, too, the elites did not do their own shopping).

However, all these advantages for women did not come without a cost. The woman's labour and housework became invisible. This

situation reduced the scope of women, particularly those living as housewives, to define and express an identity for themselves, and led them to seek new reference points for self-identification. Today, although women in a sense play a greater role in the public domain through work outside the home, the general rule that a woman's place is in the home remains alive, and equality between men and women has not been achieved. In these circumstances, the change in women's status within the home - that is, the devaluation of their domestic labour - has led, together with the change in the nature of the value attached to children, from an economic value to a sentimental one (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1982), to an even greater emphasis on motherhood as one of the most important vehicles for a woman to gain in status. The status of women has come to depend not only on the status of their husbands but also on the education of their children, the quality of their marriages and the attractiveness of their homes. Even though children are not regarded as security for the future as much as in the past, having well brought-up children with careers of their own is a measure of success.

Since the view that it is the mother who is primarily responsible for the care and education of children has not changed, these remain her responsibility, and in this sense she expresses herself through her children. In other words, motherhood comes to be one of the most important means for women to achieve spiritual satisfaction. Women tend to become dependent on their children, the housewife because she spends all her time with her child or children, and the working woman out of a sense of guilt about because she thinks she is not spending enough time with them; hence the number of child-centred families is rising all the time (Ayata & Ayata, 1996b).

Moreover, as a result of living in an apartment, women today are no longer content with the spiritually satisfying feeling of being in charge of the home; its location and physical features are also important for achieving this satisfaction. At a time of persistent gross social inequalities, not being able to have a good home has led to a further downgrading of women, especially lower class women and those in poor economic circumstances. Last but not least, while women were isolated from society in the Ottoman house too, they at least had relations with other women - neighbours and relations - which provided them with solidarity. Today's life-style, revolving around the nuclear family and cordoned off behind the apartment door, while it may have saved women from subordination to their mothers-in-law and allowed them to take charge of their own homes, has left women even more powerless and defenceless vis-à-vis men. Even where women have raised their bargaining power by going out to work, the isolation of their lifestyle obliges them to recreate the traditional ties with other women, albeit without sharing a home. This brings with it fresh contradictions.

The contradictory life of the woman of today, caught between the traditional and the modern, is influenced among other things by the space in which she lives, and this requires that her life be examined within the context of that space. The literature contains various pieces of research on the lives of women in apartment buildings. However, these studies mainly set out the attitudes towards specific aspects of life of members of different social classes. In particular, they contrast the woman of the apartment building with the woman of the *gecekondu*.

Women living in *gecekondu* are generally migrants from the villages to the cities, have a low level of education and employment, and live

within networks of relationships that still reflect the traditional structure. It is true that the spaces in which they live differ from the apartments of middle class women in terms of relations with both neighbours and relatives, and of spatial organisation. But at the same time, comparisons between these two kinds of women are inevitably comparisons not just between women living in different spatial surroundings but also between women from different social classes. In order to reveal the changes in the lives of middle class women, this study takes as its point of comparison the women who lived in the traditional house that characterised towns and cities in the past - women whose situations were quite different from those of the very poor and the very rich, and whom we might therefore term 'middle class'.

Faroqhi (1997) describes these women as the women of craftsmen and merchants. The literature contains various studies - and above all the observations of foreign travellers - on the lives of women living in the harem of the Ottoman palace, or in rich mansions. It is only recently, however, that research has started to be carried out on the daily lives of ordinary people in this period (Faroqhi, 1997). For this reason, care has to be taken not to generalise the life-style described in the bulk of the literature to the rest of society. For example, it should not be assumed that all Turkish homes contained a division between *selamlık* and *haremlik* (i.e., physical separation of men and women).

By taking as its theme the middle class women of the apartment building and the traditional house, and studying the changes that have occurred over time in the social status of these women alongside the changes in their spatial surroundings, the present study will seek to address the topic of "woman and housing" from the perspective of a

single social class. It is hoped that this will contribute to a clearer understanding of the point which women have reached in Turkish society, at least from the point of view of the middle class.

The choice of a group that lived in the past as a basis for comparison makes it inevitable that the present study should take the form of a survey of literature, and that it should be limited by the results of previous research. In the case of women living in apartment buildings, for consistency of methodology a similar approach has been taken. The researcher was concerned to combine her education as an architect with the perspectives given by the women's studies programme, and in the case of both types of housing, she first examines the socio-economic factors which brought them into being, then describes the architectural features of and daily life in the housing types in question. Finally, an attempt is made from a comparative perspective to describe the status of women in the two types of housing, with their various advantages and disadvantages.

A point that must not be lost sight of while making this comparison is that regardless of the society they live in, the forms of housing they occupy or the work they do, women are always faced with the assumption that their place is essentially in the private/domestic sphere. This assumption remains true today. Consequently, the idea that women in the past enjoyed certain advantages within the home which they have lost as a result of living in apartments should not be taken as implying praise for the past or suggesting that women were more highly valued or more equally treated in former times. All that is being compared here is the place of women within the limits drawn for them by a male-dominated society.

Some explanation is also called for regarding the use of the term middle class. The middle class in Turkey is far from homogeneous. With their lifestyles, level of education and concern about status, the present-day women referred to in this study have been called the "upper middle class" (Ayata & Ayata, 1996), "educated middle class" (Kandiyoti, 1982) and "new middle class"(Kuyaş, 1982). In the traditional house, the counterparts of women of this class are women from the families of traders and craftsmen. Being economically well off, these women generally lived in extended families.

The study is made up of seven chapters. Chapter 2 considers the relationship between women and housing in general. It looks at housing forms, the social status of women and the importance of the home in the lives of women from prehistoric times to the present. It also examines the ideological and cultural importance of housing, stressing that the home is the centre of privacy, and privacy the precondition for the reproduction of social ideology within the family.

Following on from this, the third chapter has been devoted to the topic of privacy and the family in Turkish society. A comparison is made here between the concept of privacy in Western and in Turkish society, where it has developed not on the basis of the individual but on the principle of isolating the family, and in particular women, from the rest of society - i.e., men other than their relations (Olson, 1982:41).

Chapter 4 considers the way in which the specific understanding of privacy in Turkish society has influenced housing. The traditional house is described and the concepts of specialised and unspecialised spaces are examined in this context. An attempt is made to define the advantages and disadvantages of such accommodation for women.

Chapter 5 looks at modernisation and the transformation of residential architecture in Republican times from a cultural and social point of view. It investigates the influence of women in bringing about this transformation. Although no great changes are observed in this period in the lives of the middle class women under study, it is considered an intermediary period which requires attention because of the transforming impact on society of changes in the lives of the upper classes.

Chapter 6 deals with the spread of apartment buildings and the current situation, which is contrasted with the life of the traditional house.

The concluding chapter explains how, whatever other gains women may have achieved over the course of time, their relationship with housing and their attitudes towards the domestic roles they are obliged to act out have changed little, thanks to the lack of change in gender roles in a patriarchal society.

CHAPTER 2

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WOMAN AND HOUSING: AN OVERVIEW

The house is not just a specific part of the physical environment but also a product of a certain society. For this reason, housing has a special importance in all cultures.

In 1887, Ferdinand Tonnies defined the house as follows:

> A house constitutes the realm and as it were the body of kinship. Here people live together under one protecting roof. Here they share their possessions and their pleasures. They feed from the same supply, they sit at the same table. The dead are venerated here as invisible spirits, as if they were still powerful and held a protecting hand over their family. This common fear and common honour ensure living and cooperation with greater certainty. (Ferdinand Tonnies, *Community and Society*, 1887, translated by Charles P. Loomis, 1957, in Mitchell & Oakley, 1976:139)

Writing nearly a century later about American migrants and migration, John Berger ([1984] 1987), says the house originally signified the centre of the earth - not in the geographical sense but in the existential one. The house was once a kernel around which to construct the world, and the place where a house was situated was the soul of reality. In traditional societies, Berger goes on, everything on the earth

that has meaning is real. The opposite of reality is chaos, which is dangerous. If there is no house in the soul of reality, not only are people left without shelter but at the same time they are lost in nothingness, in unreality. Without a house, everything is scattered.

The house was the centre of the earth, Berger suggests, because it was the point at which two lines crossed, the vertical one climbing up to the sky and descending under the ground, and the horizontal one representing the surface traffic, showing all possible routes to other places. In this way, a person at home was closest to the gods in the sky and the dead under the ground. This proximity held out the promise of being able to reach both states. And the person was at both the starting point and the final point of all possible earthly journeys.[1]

These passages give us very specific clues about the definition of the concept of "home". Although they were written in different centuries, they emphasize similar things. From historic times to the present, human beings have needed to protect themselves, their possessions and their supplies within certain "spaces". Moreover these spaces identified them with the emotional ties of their past and their future. The links between home and soil, and between home and the dead/the past described here indicate that the home is a sacred space. This is also suggested by the unity of home and temple in the past, as in Çatalhöyük, where the dead were buried inside the home. The special protection which contemporary legal systems grant to the inviolability of the domicile demonstrates the persistence of the same understanding.

All these meanings that have come to be associated with the concept of home shape the cultural and traditional dimensions of housing. Rapoport (1969:44) says:

> The house is an institution, not just a structure, created for a complex set of purposes. Because building a house is a cultural phenomenon its form and organization are greatly influenced by the cultural milieu to which it belongs. Very early in recorded time the house became more shelter for primitive man, and almost from the beginning "function" was much more than a physical or utilitarian concept. Religious ceremonial has almost preceded and accompanied its foundation, erection and occupation. If provision of shelter is the passive function of the house, then its positive purpose is the creation of the environment best suited to the way of life of a people - in other words, a social unit of space.

As a social unit, the house does not only reflect the cultural and ideological aspects of the society it belongs to but also reproduces the values and needs of that system - a process central to the continuation of the various forms of social domination and legitimate authority. Davidoff, L'ésperance and Newby (in Mitchell & Oakley ed., 1976:143) argue that "The ideology of the home increased the traditional authority of the household, emphasizing a solidarity of place while identifying the husband's personal authority over wife, children and servants." They assert that traditional authority is most easily stabilized in relatively, small, face-to-face social structures within which the desired social system can be maintained.

In this sense, the home has an ideological function. In other words, as well as being a product of the society to which it belongs, the home, to which such weighty meanings are attached, plays a part in re-shaping that society. This adds the the importance of the housing problem. According to the famous architect Le Corbusier[2]:

> The primordial instinct of every human being is to assure himself of a shelter. The various classes of workers in society today no longer have dwellings adapted to their needs; neither the artisan nor the intellectual. It is a question of building which is at the root of the social unrest of today: architecture or revolution. (Jencks, 1985:36)

Neither the revolution nor the architectural transformation which Le Corbusier looked forward to ever occurred. The question of housing remains one of the world's most important problems. In developed countries, the numbers of homeless are on the increase, and in developing countries the majority of people seek to survive in unhealthy conditions. The argument that housing is one of the most basic human rights has still not been established, and housing and the people who occupy that housing are viewed as separate entities. "The house in the modern world is a consumer's item, a neutral product, like a box, like a car, a television set." (Kuban, 1996: 5)

It is women that are most affected by this situation, for it is they who spend most time at home and are responsible for its physical and psychological organisation. Though this is a state of affairs imposed upon women by the dominant ideology, women have come to accept it. Accordingly, an explanation of the relationship between women and housing in all its dimensions may both help us to understand women's - and society's - way of life and also play an important role in re-shaping social relations. To put it another way, when the power of housing to re-shape society is combined with changes in the role of women, significant progress may be made towards the formation of the longed-for egalitarian society.

Turkish culture and the Turkish language possess a wealth of expressions that express the link between women and housing. The home is a determinant of women's social status, her marital status and her moral condition. All this reflects the importance attached to the home in Turkish culture - and the dominance of the view that a woman's place is in the home.

2.1 The Home, A Woman's Place

The female bird makes the nest" (*Yuvayı dişi kuş yapar*). This well-known Turkish proverb has several meanings. In terms of the physical environment, woman is responsible for the organisation, maintenance and reproduction of space. In terms of the social environment, woman is responsible for the peace and happiness of the family that lives in that space, and she is the only guarantee of these. In the spiritual sense, woman is the only owner of the house because it is she who, as the one in charge of the kitchen, keeps the fire burning and so ensures the symbolic continuity of the home.

Not only does the "female bird make the nest", but women are classified in accordance with the relationship which they have with the home: the *ev kadını* ("house woman", meaning housewife)[3], the *ev kızı* ("house daughter", referring to an unmarried young woman who does not go to work or school) and the *çalışan kadın* ("working woman", a term for those who work outside the home). The perceived moral aspect of the link between woman and home is evident in the use of the term *sokak kadını*, literally meaning "woman of the street", to denote prostitutes. Interestingly, too, the literal implication of the Turkish term for a brothel - *genelev* - is "public house": because everybody can use the women who

live there, the place itself comes to be regarded as belonging to everybody.

Women who do not get married or who reach a certain age without getting married, on the other hand, are described using a standard phrase that again defines their status in terms of their place of residence: they have "stayed at home" (*evde kalmak*). However, a man in the same situation is described only as a bachelor (*bekar*).

The Turkish word for getting married - *evlenmek* - describes the situation very well. The first syllable *ev* is the Turkish word for house, and the word as a whole can be translated as "to come to have a house". When a couple get married the bride and groom are also referred to in Turkish as "entering the house of the world" (*dünya evine girmek*). This figurative expression also points to marriage as essentially a move into a new physical abode. Although no gender differentiation is explicit in this concept, in practice it is women who start to live in a different place as a result of getting married.

In Turkish society, it is also very difficult for a woman to live by herself. She is always thought of as a part of a family. Women who live by themselves are seen by married women as a potential danger to their men, and by men as potential prostitutes. From both points of view, the morals of women living alone must be protected at any cost. Everybody becomes entitled to interfere. If a married woman is at home on her own, it is even considered improper for a man - other than a relative - to enter the house or flat. It has to be added that it is not considered proper for a man to live by himself either. People tend not to let their property to bachelors because these would be a threat to the women among the neighbours (whose morals have to be protected!). In wealthy areas of

large cities, this may no longer be the case, but the high income required to find a home in these areas keeps the problem on the agenda. And widowers are encouraged by those around them to remarry even if they do not themselves find a woman essential in order to go on living.

Although the status and morals of women are defined by reference to house and home, the latter are not usually their property. A woman lives in her father's house until she gets married, and then she lives in her husband's house. In the case of a divorce, women in Turkey return to their father's home - even if he has died. Just as lineage is passed on through males, so is possession of the house. According to the Turkish Civil Code, the head of the family (male) decides where it will live. Conventionally, it is the name of the man that is written next to the doorbell.

It is very difficult for a woman to become the owner of her home, except perhaps by inheritance. Lacking funds and unable to reach the sources of credit, she is not in a position to access the housing market, even in developed countries (Nişancıoğlu, 1996; Chant, 1996). Most men are able to own homes in Turkey thanks to their incomes and to the self-sacrificing of their wives. Even if a house is bought with the woman's money, the man usually becomes the formal owner. When a woman is named as the owner of a family house, this is usually only in order to avoid certain risks related to the man's work.

"A woman's place is in the home", but even in the home the woman has no place - no special place of her own, that is. In the terminology of architecture, in English, the parents' bedroom was until recently called the "master's bedroom". Although there is no parallel term in Turkish - the room in question is simply called the bedroom (*yatak odası*) - this

does not mean the woman is seen as sharing the ownership of the room; the Turkish term simply emphasises the activity which is associated with the room and not its ownership. Children have separate rooms but women do not. Where houses or flats contain a study, there is only one, and it is designed with the man in mind (Özbay, 1996; Bauer, 1996).

Yet a suitable home is of great importance if a woman is to be able to set up a sphere of her own, to have a career, to find employment. If she does not own the home, it is very difficult for her to live independently. This is why it is always the woman who is thrown onto the street in family disputes - this cuts her off from the sphere to which she belongs and leaves her entirely defenceless and obliged to make concessions.

Women generally accept these assumptions and their own identification with the house as the most natural thing in the world, defining their status in terms of the tidiness, cleanliness, furnishing and location of the home for which they have. When women are successful enough in these respects, their men never go and seek happiness "outside" the home/family.

According to Davidoff, L'ésperance and Newby (1976:155):

> In literature, from highbrow to popular, the wife-mother-house-mistress images often merged with the physical symbol of the house so that it became difficult to visualise the woman as having a separate identity from the house; in a sense she became the house (.....) If the husband (grown-up sons or brothers) looked for action, adventure, amusement away from home, then it was a fault of the domestic atmosphere, and wives (daughters, sisters) must strive to win them back by making home more attractive, warmer, better organised, more comfortable, more sprightly to counteract the weakness of male human nature (...) For the domestic

> organic community was the upholder of moral order in a chaotic external world. Women created this order by 'being good' themselves. There was, in fact, very little they could do actively to change their men; it was rather their general example and positive influence which ultimately alone could save men from their baser selves, through their redeeming power 'to love, to serve, to save'

Clearly, the dominant ideology and the process of socialisation of girls and women have much to do with this. In little girls' games of house, they set up their own homes and serve the boys to whom they allocate the role of husband/father. In this way, they reproduce the lifestyle which they see in their own homes, adopting it as their own and ensuring its continuity.

2.2 The Socialisation Process Of Women

> Because of their traditional access to the public realm, men occupy positions of power women do not. In turn, men in the public realm become role models for boys who are then socialised to adopt those roles that traditionally bestow patriarchal power on men. Girls, on the other hand, learn to play their future domestic roles that screen them from public authority and recognition. To the extent that men have power at different levels of society and that women are unaware of its patriarchal nature, women can not or do not challenge the traditional division of labour between the sexes in the private and public realms (Arat, 1989: 19)

Besides Arat, F. Acar (1983), Kandiyoti (1982) and Kağıtçıbaşı (1990) also state that patriarchal relations evolve within the family, and that both women and men accept that the husband, because he has

economic power, is the sole authority. This situation is reinforced by religion, education and the media, and by economic and political institutions. In these circumstances, women accept the domestic roles that are imposed on them and use these as a way of expressing their identities.

Spain (1992: 3), on the other hand, comments that "women and men are spatially segregated in ways that reduce women's access to knowledge and thereby reinforce women's lower status relative to men's". She uses the term "gendered spaces" to describe these architectural and spatial arrangements, which have reinforced status differences between women and men. In other words, the view that the woman's place is the home cuts her off from the public sphere, and by making it difficult for her to reach the world outside the home, helps keeps her status lower than that of men. "Gendered spaces" - to use Spain's terminology - separate women from knowledge used by men to produce and reproduce power and privilege (ibid: 3).

For Spain, "masculine spaces" (schools, political and economic institutions etc.) are the sources of socially valuable information, while "feminine spaces" (like the home) contain unvalued information such as how to take care of children, cook and clean. Women living in these spaces are unable to reach other information and make do with the information available to them, which makes it easier for them to accept their domestic roles.

Although things have begun to change, the socialisation of girls takes place mainly in the home, and that of boys on the street. For toys, girls are given dolls, dolls' houses and toy household items, while boys are

given balls, guns and toy cars. All these apparently minor details contribute to the adoption of gender-related roles.

The view may also be taken that both women's assumption of domestic roles in a patriarchal society and the view that the home is a woman's main place date back much further, to the gender division of labour in prehistoric times, which resulted in women being better adapted to a settled way of life - a situation which over time developed along with patriarchy to the disadvantage of women.

According to Margaret Ehrenberg (1989: 42):

> A key aspect of the debate about the evolution of sex-role behaviour centres on food collection, and the way in which females and males have foraged for different foods. Many discussions, including those written by some feminist anthropologists, assume that from a very early stage in evolution females primarily gathered plant foods, while males mainly hunted animals, the pattern usual in modern hunter-gatherer societies.

Ehrenberg gives two reasons for this: first that it was not in the interests of the community for women of child-bearing age to be exposed to the risks of hunting, and secondly that "pregnant women and those carrying very small infants would have found hunting difficult, though gathering is quite easily combined with looking after young children" (ibid: 43). As game is more mobile than plant food, the male members of such a society would tend to travel further afield than women, and the meeting point, which developed into the home base, would tend to be more closely related to the women's activity. Women may then have played the key role in the transition to a more fully settled life-style - a mode of existence that provided them and their children with greater

protection and a guarantee of being able to find food the next day. In this sense, women themselves may have drawn men into living in permanent homes.

Erhan Acar (1983: 9) suggests that the home did not emerge from the physical differences between men and women but from the separation of the places of production, and that hunting and gathering are separate production processes which each require expertise and which each have their own natural environments. For Acar, the first camps must have come into being among the young, fit men on the hunting grounds and among women, children and the elderly on the food gathering grounds.

Acar also proposes that homes were not built for the protection of women and children, to compensate for women's lack of strength, but rather for the storage of the surplus production created by the labour of women, specialised in agriculture and the most efficient production force in neolithic times. He argues that women also made the first storage vessels, in the form of clay pots, and concludes that the home symbolised women's activity, not their passivity. Mumford (1961: 16) states that the most primitive home found in Mesopotamia was a dish-like recess dug in the soil, sun-dried to the hardness of brick and used for storage purposes. This finding supports the view that the first homes were made by women to store surplus production.

The conclusion may be drawn that when the first homes were built, surplus production was essentially created by women gathering foodstuffs, that women were the chief founders and owners of homes and that women's status was higher than men's. For according to Spain (1992:99), studies of various tribes (the North American Eskimos, the Fulani Wodaabe of Nigeria, the Western Bontoc of the Philippines, the

Bari of South Africa and the Botswana !Kung of southern Africa) have revealed that surplus production leads to social stratification, and that those in control of it exert a certain power over others.

So it seems that at some point in history something changed in social relations, and the woman came to be shut up in the home which she herself had created (Acar, 1983). In order better to understand this process, it will be useful to examine the development of the home and its social transformation in conjunction with one other.

2.3 The Development Of Housing In Anatolia And The Spatial Segregation Of Women

The roots of the sexual division of space - i.e., the assumption that the home is the woman's place and the outside world the man's - in many societies may thus go back a long way. Archaeological research into the form taken by early homes provides further evidence of this assumption. The work of James Mellaart in Çatalhöyük, one of the earliest settlements in the world (seventh century B.C.) reveals houses with a main room entered from the roof by means of a ladder. The southern third of the main room is taken up by a "kitchen" area featuring a hearth, one or more ovens and storage space for fuel. Raised platforms were arranged around the rest of the room. Every house had one large sleeping platform against the east wall, near the "kitchen", while several smaller platforms were scattered about the room in varying positions. Mellaart (1967: 60) explains:

> These platforms, as carefully placed as the rest of the house and frequently provided with rounded kerbs, are the prototypes of the Turkish sofa (and divan) and served for sitting, working and sleeping. They are often covered with rush

> matting as a base for cushions, textiles and bedding. Below these platforms the dead lay buried, and from studying the burial customs it is possible to affirm that the small corner platform belonged to the male, the master, whereas the much larger and main platform belonged to the mistress of the house. The woman's bed never changed its place, nor did the arrangement of the kitchen, but the man's bed did. The sociological implications to be drawn from this are fairly obvious. Children were buried either with the women or under the remaining platforms, but they never accompany the master of the house.

This proves that the house was mainly the woman's place. She might have used this house also for preparing and drying food - making use of the roof for drying - and for making pottery, and we can describe it as her workplace as well as her home. At the same time, the fact that the dead were buried inside the home made it a sacred place - something we shall refer to again below.

Hodler (1996: 45) reports that Mellaart said he had come across a part of the settlement that appeared to be specifically religious or exclusive. However, he (Hodler) goes on to explain that the more carefully-built structures characterising the said neighbourhood were later discovered in other parts of the settlement too, and were understood to have been used for domestic purposes, so that there was no clear distinction between the elite and the common people. Hodler also stresses the idea of continuity with the ancestors, as each new house was built upon the walls of an older one, and the dead were buried beneath the floor. According to Hodler, Çatalhöyük was "largely based on individual households, each increasingly independent, with its own wall boundaries, rituals and history". (ibid: 47-8).

In a sense, then, the homes of Çatalhöyük can be said to reflect an egalitarian social structure (Acar, 1996).

The homes of Çatalhöyük represented a more developed form of the examples of earlier periods (pre-10,000 BC) at Aşıklı and Çayönü. Esin (1996) confirms that at Aşıklı the houses contained hearths and were entered from above, and that the dead were buried inside the home. This is significant from the point of view of this study, for it indicates that the roots of the idea of the home as a sacred place date far back into prehistory. The position of the woman in charge of the home in a spiritual sense is symbolised by the continuous presence of the hearth as housing types changed, and its later development into a specific space, the kitchen.

Towards the end of the seventh century B.C., housing forms begin to change with the emergence of courtyards, broader passages between the homes and, through the development of a lower storey or basement, as at Hacılar I, multi-storey structures. Homes of this type can still be seen in villages today. According to Acar, the changes may point to the accumulation of larger quantities of surplus production and to the development of livestock farming. The transformation may be explained in terms of the passage to settled agriculture. However, with the passage to settled agriculture and stockbreeding, the egalitarian structure of society also started to break down. The innovations of ploughing and the extensive use of secondary products of animals, including milking, spinning and weaving bring in their train many other important new tasks, and males played the major roles because of their physical strength. As Spain (1992) puts it, surplus production was now generated by men, and this brough male domination onto the agenda. For

Ehrenberg (1989), this was the "secondary products revolution or the great male takeover bid". Engels too ([1884],1992: 62) describes the process as the "world historic defeat of the female sex".

> Changes in economic production that allowed men to acquire private property. The concept of "paternity" was established to include the possession of women and children so that private goods could be passed from one generation to the next. According to Engels, with the advent of private property and the patriarchal family, women were transformed from independent household managers to subordinate workers in privately "male-owned" families (Spain, 1992: 25)

When we look at the house types of the Aegean region in later times, we observe that courtyards and some covered spaces were used as workplaces, and that women as well as slaves lived in separate places of their own. The master of the house is a man, as husband, father and head, and hierarchy is apparent (Acar, 1983).

> A Greek town, at almost any date, must have been just a collection of white-walled houses with flat roofs or tiled roofs of low pitch, like the temple. Each house looked inward upon a small court, and presented an almost windowless wall to the street - the timeless house of all hot countries where there is seclusion of women. (Furneaux Jordan, 1969:26)

Known as megarons, these homes were located in walled cities, and according to Erkanal (1996: 79) reflected a political authority. The courtyards that characterised them were created by extending the long side walls forward or back. They had a function as a place of work, and continued to exist for hundreds of years. In the period of the Assyrian

trading colonies, for example, most of the houses had courtyards and it was here that trading took place (Neve, 1996: 105). It is worth noting that the hearth remained a fixed item, located either in the courtyard or within the house itself.

In the homes of ancient Izmir (Ionia) in the Hellenistic period (seventh century B.C.), the segregation of women within the home is documented, particularly in the life styles of aristocrats and the wealthy. In his article Houses and Society in Classical Antiquity, Hoepfner (1996: 155-163) recounts that the part of the home containing the hearth, which was its centre and the meeting point of the family, and where a flame had to be kept burning constantly, was known as the *oikos*. All this was in the megaron style. However, there were also rooms known as androns where the owner of the house would entertain guests and which women were not supposed to enter.

The androns were essentially made to contain the long couches known as *klinai*, probably a borrowing from Lydia in the east, which it was considered a mark of high class to lie on while eating. Men felt the need for this extra space because guests (i.e., strange men) could not go into the *oikos*. Thus, adjacent to the large structure, containing a hearth and situated close to the entrance to the property, in which the family lived (i.e., the *oikos*), an andron was constructed, linked to the *oikos* by a hall but with an entrance of its own. Where the andron adjoined the courtyard at the front, there was no opening onto the courtyard, so that women would not see in.

> What happened in the androns? Usually, the evening began with a meal. Up to 14 persons could dine in one of the characteristic androns with seven *klinai*. Later the symposion started. Usually no invitation was needed, almost all

> were welcome to drink wine mixed with water. The symposion could last until morning. There were firm rules about the sequence of activities. The gods were praised, music was very important, recitations very common. The description of symposions by Plato and Xenophon make clear that conversation was the main activity, and it seems, that special themes were prepared. In a certain way, the androns were a place of education, and there is no doubt that the attractions of Greek culture to a large extent is due to the existence of the androns.
>
> Why were the women of the household not allowed to participate? The main reason is that the androns were not exactly part of the household, but they belonged to a second world, half private, half official. The women were responsible for the house proper, for what was going on there. It seems to have been not very attractive for the men to interfere with this world of the women. Men were supposed to go to the agora, to take an active part in politics, to go to the gymnasium and to discuss official matters with other citizens. With the installation of the androns the men recaptured a certain territory of the private houses for their own purposes, and it is very clear, there was a severe limit between the two parts of the house (Hoepfner, 1996, pp 160-161).

Hoepfner states that this way of life did not go on only in the big cities, but that even in villages houses were constructed with androns in the fourth century B.C.. He describes how this changed social behaviour as follows:

> The existence of androns in Greek society also led to change in sexual behaviour. Naked handsome boys served meals and wine in the androns, and the admiration of young male

> bodies became a hallmark of the period. Prostitutes were not admitted in the androns, perhaps because of the semi-official character of these fine rooms. So the special form of hetaires, i.e. "girlfriends", were born. These well-educated and free-living persons were accepted in society, and some of them became famous. Many vases show men in androns together with hetaires. Their main duty seems to have been entertaining the participants during the symposia. It is clear that this development did not strengthen the family as a unit, but we must bear in mind that only married women and their children were protected by law (ibid: 61-62).

Hoepfner goes on to relate how houses continued to be built with androns in the city of Priene, while first floor rooms called gynaikonitis started to be built exclusively for women.

From the perspective of women and housing, the significance of this kind of housing lies in the fact that while spaces were created which women were not allowed to enter the main room of the home belonged to the woman and the family; the home continued to belong essentially to women but men too started to create separate spaces of their own. The role of furniture in determining space, and as a sign of high class, is a theme, as will be noted in subsequent chapters, that persists even in the days of the apartment building.

It is not only in the classical context that the spacial segregation of women in the home appears mainly as a tendency of the upper classes and a sign of status. Spain (1992) remarks that in the nineteenth century the houses of members of the British and American elites contaiend sections (departments) that were specifically for women. The following chapter will show how the distinction between *haremlik* and *selamlık* in

Ottoman society was also generally present in the homes of the upper class.

The homes of early Roman times reflect the characteristics of the Hellenistic period. In the later Roman period, public affairs came to the managed in large private home. According to Mitchell (1996), the rise to political power of an elite minority resulted in public affairs taking on the form of private bargaining behind closed doors, and so individual houses began to take on features of public architecture, such as columned (peristyle) courtyards. This was a sign of wealth, and spatial arrangements were also made to allow the wealthy to entertain their guests in an impressive manner. "The most obvious sign of this was the introduction of high-ceilinged reception rooms, laid out in the style of a small basilica with an apse at the end, where the host might receive visitors" (ibid: 201).

Mitchell also points out that in Ephesus, for example, the statues and monuments that used to be on display at place of worship in Hellenistic times were not to be found in the home - the latter had become the primary place where wealth was put on display.

In examining the development of housing in Anatolia in historical perspective, having looked at the Roman era, it is necessary to say something about the Byzantine age. However, as both Tanyeli (1996b) and Rheid (1996) point out, information on daily life in Byzantine times is limited. Rheid nevertheless suggests that Byzantine homes were similar to the modern village houses to be seen today in many parts of Anatolia, with a courtyard and a multi-functional main room.

To sum up, the courtyard, which came into existence with the development of settled agriculture and livestock farming, persists in

Anatolia in various forms right up to the end of the nineteenth century. As already indicated, houses with courtyards and fortified cities reflected a certain form of political authority, and this authority further strengthened the patriarchal family, which had come into being in conjunction with male private property rights. According to Engels (1884), the ownership of private property also allowed one man to become wealthier than his kin and this inequality of wealth led to the formation of classes. The state came into being to coordinate the new economic activities (such as trade) and to protect the interests of the different groups (classes) in production. The development of states did not prevent women from being regarded as male property. On the contrary, the patriarchal structures of family and household, which regulated women's sexuality and economic activities, came to be legitimised to some extent by a form of patriarchy in which the state increasingly defines the lives of women through legal forms of property ownership. The patriarchal state is one which promotes and maintains institutions and practices which systematically oppress women, i.e. family and household structures, and rules of inheritance and property ownership which make women dependent on others. In these circumstances, women were restricted mainly to the function of reproduction, for the continuity of life and the emergence of future generations. This function was reinforced through laws and other forms of coercion. Thus the courtyard, coming into existence in parallel with changes in the social and political system, also became a symbol of male dominance. The home, which was created by women and previously served also as her place of work, gradually turned into the man's place of work. The woman was shut up in the home and left only with the

spiritual role of keeping the hearth and the sacred flame constantly burning.

In Europe, the form of the home changed after the middle ages as a result of mass production and the consequent physical separation of the home and workplace. In Anatolia, in the traditional Turkish house, as the man's workplace moved outside of the house (Faroqhi, 1997), the courtyard passed into the hands of women, at least as an interior space where they pursued their domestic economic activities.

2.4 The Situation Today

Today, women live in homes quite different from those of the past. They go out to work, and take on responsibilities in many areas of social life. There is one thing, however, which has not changed in their relationship with the home. The home is still regarded as essentially the women's place, and women themselves accept this. Pamir (1982) says women have a romantic approach to the home: when asked what kind of a house/home (*ev*) they would like, they replay with concepts such as "cheerful", "comfortable", "happy" or "peaceful", which describe phsychological aspects of the home mainly related to the balances within the family.

Once turning a house into a happy home becomes the duty of women, the home starts to exert an independent influence on the lives of women. The woman becomes a slave of her house. She has a life that is subservient to the needs of the house - its need to be tidier, cleaner and warmer for the sake of the man and children. Her oppression is reproduced between its walls and under its roof, and the house itself becomes a dominant figure of her oppression. Because she lives in homes

where major decisions about the family, income and investments are usually taken by men, and reflect men's daily routines, houses are built without consulting her or taking her gender needs into account (Nişancıoğlu, 1996; Chant, 1996).

All those who are not white, middle-class, middle-aged and male are ironically defined as "others" in housing questions. Moreover, housing is now only officially considered in quantitative terms - its quality has ceased to be taken into account. In these circumstances it is only in recent years and thanks to the efforts of feminists that attention has started to be paid to women.

> Not until 1985 was the connection between women and shelter strongly detailed in a UN document when the World Conference for the UN Decade for Women, meeting in Nairobi, adopted the Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. Included this document were two paragraphs calling on governments to "integrate women in policies, programmes, and projects for the provision of basic shelter and infrastructure", and declaring that "women and women's groups should be participants in and equal beneficiaries of housing and infrastructure construction projects". (Forward-Looking Strategies: para: 209.210) (Tinker in Dandekar ed., 1993:24)

To "integrate women in policies, programmes, and projects for the provision of basic shelter and infrastructure" is very important because it is only in this way that consideration will be given to women's different gender needs. However, it is also worth remembering that women are not a homogeneous group. In Dandekar's words,

> They must be stratified along criteria that include whether they are in urban or rural contexts, whether they are from destitute, poor,

> low, middle or upper income levels, whether they work in the formal or informal sectors of the economy or are involved solely in domestic household tasks and whether they possess through customary or statutory laws the right to own shelter. (Dandekar in Komut, ed. 1996:36)

Another point frequently emphasized by feminists is that policy-makers always take the nuclear family as the norm. The number of non-nuclear and non-traditional households, including those headed by single parents, is increasing. Significant demographic changes, migration and urbanisation are increasing the number of woman-headed households in cities the world over. "But in the face of these shifts," Dandekar remarks, "the physical contours of housing and the legal, social and architectural approaches to housing creation have changed very little." (Dandekar in Dandekar ed., 1993:3)

Unfortunately there is no evidence that governments and building producers are trying to focus either on women's demand for integration in shelter policies or on the various needs of women in differing circumstances. Women's rights to ownership of land and housing are still problematic in many parts of the world and women's access to housing benefits are still limited in all countries (Chant, 1996).

Women in Turkey have developed a passionate desire to stop paying rent, to own their own homes and to live in certain districts together with their families (E. Acar, 1983). To this end, they are prepared to make great sacrifices, and it is often the goal of going out to work. However, the state lends no support, salaries are low, housing credits carry high rates of interest and are difficult to obtain, and home prices - even in the case of cooperative and mass housing projects - are high. Owning a home becomes an unattainable dream. In the meantime, the fact that the home

is the prime centre of women's oppression in a patriarchal system is ignored. Yet as long as social relations do not change, even the realisation of this unattainable-looking dream will not suffice to turn life into the desired garden of roses.

The home, in conclusion, is the smallest unit in which the social system is reproduced, and the essential centre of the oppression of women:

> Architectural space also plays a role in maintaining status distinctions by gender. The spatial structure of buildings embodies knowledge of social relations, or the taken-for-granted roles that governs relations of individuals to each other and to society. Thus dwellings reflect ideals and realities about relationships between women and men within the family and in society. The space outside the home becomes the arena in which social relations (i.e., status) are produced, while the space inside the home becomes that in which social relations are reproduced. Gender status distinctions therefore are played out within the home as well as outside of it (Spain, 1992: 7).

As we have seen, housing is always considered in connection with a concept of the family, and looked upon as the place where the privacy of the family is upheld. While looking at housing from the point of view of tradition, culture and ideology, an assessment must also therefore be made of the ways in which the family and privacy are understood. The prevailing attitudes in this respect are different in Turkey from those of the West. In the West, privacy is considered necessary for each of the individuals in the family as well as for the family as a whole. In Turkey, on the other hand, privacy is more a matter of keeping women in

particular at a distance from society in general ("Family rooms" in restaurants are for groups that include females for example.)

For this reason the next chapter will discuss privacy and the family in Turkey and compare it with the western understanding.

Notes

1. John Berger, *And Our Faces, My Heart; Brief As Photos*, 1984 (*Ve Yüzlerimiz, Kalbim, Fotoğraflar Kadar Kısa Ömürlü, İstanbul, Anadolu Yayınları*, 1987)

2. Le Corbusier "was the dominant figure internationally in modern architecture from 1920 to 1960. His long period as a leading figure in modern architecture - for nearly half a century - was unique among architects of his time and is, finally, a reflection of his capacity to endow architecture with an expression which evokes the spirit of his epoch. In this sense, he was at once the 'terrible simplificateur' in the tradition of the rational enlightenment and a creator of forms which will endure well beyond his time." (V. M. Lampugnani, Ed., 1986, *Encyclopaedia of Twentieth Century Architecture*, Thames & Hudson, London pp193-199)

3. Other languages use similar terms for the housewife. The researcher's English mother-in-law expressed her discomfort with the English term "housewife" as follows: 'I am married to my husband, not my house'.

CHAPTER 3

PRIVACY AND THE FAMILY

In all societies, there is a close interconnection between the concept of the home and that of the family. This is because only the physical border of a house provides the isolation necessary for the privacy which is the main criterion of the intimate relationships built up in the family. However, privacy itself is not a fixed, universal concept; its meaning varies depending on time, place and culture. Even in different parts of the same country, understandings of privacy may differ considerably.

In Western societies, personal privacy is very important. The public-private distinction was a product of late 17th and 18th century liberal thinking. The age of enlightenment generated the idea of the individual, and a view of the state as a protector of the individual and of individual rights. Hence privacy was reduced to the level of the individual. A person's body, belongings, earnings and relationships and all kinds of information concerning that person were a matter for that person alone - they were, to use another word, confidential. Privacy existed on the basis of the individual, and even within the family, every individual was entitled to a personal privacy.[1]

In Turkey, such personal privacy is absent. Parents need no permission to enter their children's rooms, and a child who demanded

that they ask permission would be considered cheeky and unrespectful. People do not hesitate to touch people whom they hardly know or do not know at all (for example, to remove a hair from the shoulder of someone they happen to be sitting behind on the bus). They address complete strangers using terms that express family relationships, such as *teyze* (aunt), *amca* (uncle), *anne* (mother) or *yenge* (sister-in-law) - it shows greater respect to treat someone as a family member than as an individual in their own right. Likewise, they frequently ask people with whom they are virtually unacquainted the most personal questions.

Singers, film stars and even government ministers (Işılay Saygın, October 4, 1998 - Hürriyet) take pleasure in announcing that they are virgins. In these circumstances, the idea of forcing young people to undergo virginity tests can appear quite normal. At the same time, certain activities that might be regarded as private are sometimes carried out in groups. For example, in Turkish society, taking a bath - one of the most personal and private of all activities - was for centuries carried out communally: for both men and women, going to the *hamam* and bathing without embarrassment in the company of their own sex became a form of social entertainment.

Waxing shops (*ağda salonları*) are another case in point: in the past, women used to remove their unwanted hairs in groups at the *hamam*; today, this task has come to be provided as a commercial service and is accomplished in places specially opened for the purpose or at the hairdresser's. Going to the waxing shop is as normal as going to the hairdresser's.[2]

3.1 Privacy In Ottoman Society

Some observations on Ottoman society may help explain the Turkish notion of privacy and the way in which it differs from the Western one. In Ottoman society, privacy was not based on individuality but on the social unit of the family. It existed independently of the space in which that unit lived and revolved around the people living in that space (particularly the man). The complete separation of the private from the public was essentially a status symbol and did not involve gender differences. Leslie Pierce (1993:8) points out that:

> We begin to see that, in the Ottoman case, conventional Western notions of public and private are not congruent with gender. In fact, when we examine the structure of male society and the interaction of male and female networks, we see that, at the highest reaches of society at least, notions of public and private tend to lose meaning altogether. In many ways, male society in the Ottoman world observed the same criteria of status and propriety as did female society. The degree of seclusion from the common gaze served as an index of the status of the man as well as the woman of means.

Nevertheless, within this seclusion, women had a distinct position. The family's social status could only be maintained if the women were prevented from making marriages that would reduce it, and from bearing children from these marriages. In Islamic law, the principle of *kafa'a*, which according to Bernard Lewis might be translated as equality of birth and social status in marriage, is invoked to justify restrictions on a woman's marriage. Lewis (1995:180) explains:

> The purpose of the rule is to protect the honour of respectable families by enabling them, if they

> wish, to stop unsuitable marriages. The principle of kafa'a may be invoked by the father or other legal guardian of a woman to prevent her from contracting a marriage without permission, or to annul it if it is contracted without permission or with permission fraudulently obtained, provided there is no child or pregnancy. It may be invoked to restrain a woman from marrying a man who is below her in social status and thus dishonouring her family. There was no objection to a man marrying a woman of lower status, since the woman, in the view of the jurists, is in any case inferior, and no social damage could therefore result from such a marriage.

In this way, the inequality of women - one of the basic inequalities of Islam, along with the inequalities between believers and unbelievers and free persons and slaves (B. Lewis, 1995) - combined with a specific concept of privacy to create a practice whereby women of well-to-do families were removed from society. The privacy required for the protection of the honour and status of the social unit (i.e., of the man) inevitably led to the guarding of women and their separation from society (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1982a).

Mahrem, the Turkish word for "private", and *mahremiyet*, the Turkish word for "privacy", both entered the language from Arabic. It is no coincidence that the words "harem" and *haram* (meaning unlawful, forbidden) come from the same Arabic root.[3]

The word harem usually brings to mind - and especially to the Western mind - the women of the Ottoman sultans and the place where they lived. In fact, in Ottoman culture, it was common to speak of men's wives and the female members of their families as harems. The word harem is thus clearly directly related to women. Nevertheless, according

to Leslie Pierce (1993:3-4), it does not refer to sexual exclusiveness alone:

> To an Ottoman subject, the term "harem" did not connotate a space defined exclusively by sexuality. The word *harem* is one of an important family of words in the vocabulary of Islam derived from the Arabic root *h-r-m*. These words partake of one or both of two general - and obviously related - meanings associated with the root: to be forbidden or unlawful, and to declare sacred, inviolable or taboo. A harem is by definition a sanctuary or a sacred precinct. By implication it is a space to which general access is forbidden or controlled and in which the presence of certain individuals or certain modes of behaviour are forbidden. That the private quarters in a domestic residence and by extension its female residents are also referred to as a "harem" comes from the Islamic practice of restricting access to these quarters, specifically access by males beyond a particular degree of consanguinity with the resident females. The term *harem* is a term of respect, redolent of religious parhy and honor, and evocative of the requisite obesiance; it is gender-specific only in its reference to the women of a family.

In its meaning of a sacred place general access to which is forbidden or controlled, the word harem could be used to refer to real, physical places like the holy cities of Mecca and Medinah or the inner courtyards of mosques. Improper behaviour in such places would be *haram*, and the places themselves could be described as *mahrem*. In the same way, when the word harem is used in speaking of the women of the sultan or the females of any family, it can be assumed that relations with them must follow certain rules, that relations with them which do not follow these rules are *haram* and that the places where they live are *mahrem*.[4]

It was pointed out in Chapter Two that the idea of the home as a sacred space is widespread. This is true of Ottoman society too. An interesting example is the tradition of not entering a home without removing one's shoes. This is unlikely to be merely the product of hygienic sensitivity; the fact that Muslims take off their shoes in order to enter mosques suggests the motive is a sacred one. The tradition continues today, and it is interesting to note that women play the key role in conserving it by providing slippers and so on. Yet the sacredness of the home is a product not of the presence of women but of that of men - of the sultan (the representative of God on Earth) and of the man of the house . Pierce (1993:4) puts it like this:

> While not himself divine, the sultan, "God's shadow on Earth", created a sacred space with his presence. Because the sultan lived there, the inner precinct of the royal palace, inhabited only by males, was known as the "imperial harem" (*harem-i hûmayun*). When, towards the end of the sixteenth century, the sultan established a second set of private quarters in the palace precinct to house women and children of the royal household, the latter area also began to be referred to as "imperial harem" because of the presence there not of women but of the sultan.

The presence of the sultan makes the place where he lives sacred and imbues it with a special privacy. But to use a simple metaphor it can also be said that every man is sultan in his own home, and that in this sense every home is a harem. For as well as denoting the women of a household and the places where they live, the harem also implies the privacy, the sanctuary, of the head of the household. It is this privacy which protects people from what is *haram* - "specifically the belief that

unmarried women and men who might lawfully enter into a sexual relationship must be kept apart" (Pierce, ibid: 4). In this sense, privacy in Ottoman society came to be based on the family and on the separation from society of women, thought to be the main cause for what is *haram*. We noted earlier that words denoting family relationships are commonly used as forms of address. In particular, when addressing women, men tend to use the terms *yenge* and *anne*, depending on the woman's age. In this way, they place themselves in a relationship to the woman being addressed which excludes any possibility of sexual interest.

To sum up, "family" came to have the same meaning as "harem", and was used to refer to the women of a household. Ultimately, the position of woman in society was defined "primarily by her function in the family - as daughter, sister, wife or mother, rather than as a person in her own right." (B. Lewis, 1995: 210).

3.2 Family In Ottoman Society

Considerable research has been carried out into the structure of the Ottoman family. The issue is raised here not for the sake of repeating the outcome of this research but for the purpose of demonstrating that the Turkish family differs from the Western family, being private as a unit, with the consequence that the place of women is defined, unlike in the West, with reference to the family to which they belong.

Research on the family in Ottoman society tells us little about the period before the nineteenth century. According to Alan Duben (in ed. Erder, 1984: 106), however, sources may exist for research into the family in earlier times. There might, he says, be some Ottoman tax registers in Anatolia at least for the sixteenth century, and censuses, court

records and other accounts in urban areas for the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries.

Research carried out on such sources might well suggest that the structure of the family had changed little in the course of history.

One may add that what has been written about the lifestyles of the Turks in pre-Ottoman or pre-Islamic times - and particularly the tales of Dede Korkut, mention is made of the bond of love between mother, father and child, and between wives and husbands, and the heroes are monogamous.

From the point of view of this study, all this needs to be understood as different concepts of privacy and the family have an impact on the physical form of the home and the use of space and spatial changes within the home have an impact on women's lives.

P. Aries explains the emergence of the modern family in Western societies in terms of the emergence of the concept of childhood. In his article Centuries of Childhood (1962), he observes that there was a clear division between rich and poor in West European society in the seventeenth century. The poor lived in small houses, a handful of people in one place, whereas the rich lived in large houses with unspecialised spaces - the only specialised space being the kitchen - and formed large groups together with all their servants. In Aries' own words (in Anderson, 1971: 65):

> Those little houses fulfilled no social function. They could not even serve as homes for families. The housing crisis after the Second World War has taught us something about the effect of housing on the family. Admittedly, people were not as sensitive about promiscuity under the ancient regime. But there has to be a certain amount of space or family life is impossible, and

> the concept of the family cannot take shape or develop. We may conclude that these poor, badly housed people felt a commonplace love for little children - that elementary form of the concept of childhood - but were ignorant of the more complex and more modern forms of the concept of the family.

When the little children got a bit older, they would either get married or in the case of boys move out together with one of their brothers and go and live another small house. Alternatively, they would go to work as servants in a large house. Aries continues:

> The big house fulfilled a public function. In that society, without a café or 'public house', it was the only place where friends, clients and relatives could meet and talk (...) The density of social life made isolation virtually impossible... This sociability had for a long time hindered the formation of the concept of the family, because of the lack of privacy (ibid: 66).

It is apparent that privacy was lacking among both poor and rich people because of the inadequacy of the spaces in which they lived, and that in consequence there was no concept of family. In the eighteenth century, the family begins to separate its private life from that of society as a whole:

> The organization of the house altered in conformity with this new desire to keep the world at bay. It became the modern type of house, with rooms which were independent because they opened on to a *corridor*. While they still communicated with each other, people were no longer obliged to go through them all to pass from one to another. It has been said that comfort dates from this period. It was born at the same time as domesticity, privacy and isolation,

> and it was one of the manifestations of those phenomena (ibid: 72).

In this way, rooms began to become specialised, and the way was paved for great changes in day-to-day living.

> It satisfied a new desire of isolation (...) The rearrangement of the house and the reform of manners left more room for private life, and this was taken up by a family reduced to parents and children, a family from which servants, clients and friends were excluded (ibid: 73-74).

To sum up, the nuclear family appears in the West at the end of the eighteenth century. The family ceases to be an economic organization and becomes one the main aim of which is biological reproduction. This process involves the provision of privacy (through the transformation of the house in physical terms and the limitation of relations)[5].

In Ottoman society, by contrast, the family always existed as a unit of biological reproduction. The concept of the household (*hane*) as a unit of production and consumption persists alongside this. Duben (1984: 108) writes:

> Though like the English words family and household, the Turkish words aile and hane are sometimes used interchangeably, in fact they are quite distinct in meaning. The first meaning for aile listed in Develioglu's authoritative Ottoman-Turkish Encyclopedia Dictionary is, "a person's wife"; the second, "a relative"; and the third, "the members of the household." The emphasis is clear from the dictionary; it is on a kinship relationship, and primarily the conjugal relationship.

Duben goes on to summarise the results of ethnographers' research in rural Turkey. These variously point out that peasants "use aile to refer to their wives or, more precisely and significantly, to 'the mother of their children'", that "the aile is composed of husband, wife, and their offspring and is not an economic unit", and that "aile refers to a social group composed of father, mother, and children (or grandchildren) without entailing common residence." One ethnographer reports that "there are three folk definitions of aile: 1) wife, 2) married couple with or without offspring, or widow or widower with or without offspring, and 3) an ego-centered set of people, and in particular, a married couple with or without children as indicated above, which happens to be located in an *ev* (in the sense of house or room) and which can be seen as a subdivision of a hane." Duben concludes that "aile is, to put it somewhat differently, a way of thinking conjugally about one's closest kinsmen. It is a referent for certain delimited relationships linking individuals. "On the ground," it functions basically as the unit of biological reproduction of society" (ibid: 108).

The nuclear family might always have existed in Ottoman society Kağıtçıbaşı, 1982a; Timur, 1982) - or has been "more prevalent at least for the last 140 years" (Duben, 1982: 78). Further, our view that privacy developed on the basis of the family and in particular of the seclusion of women is strengthened by the representation of the family as woman-mother-wife in the definitions recorded by the ethnographers. The difference between the family and the household, as already noted, stems from the household being necessarily a unit of production and consumption. Duben (ibid: 111) says:

> The division of labor in work and the patterns of consumption in Turkey of past times did not

> break down aile by aile, but rather followed lines of sex and age, interconnecting diverse members of the ailes of the small hanes as individuals in a dependency that made them into a corporate unit in a way that the aile was not... In the hane, the rights of individuals, particularly with respect to property, were under no ordinary circumstances sanctioned if they opposed the interests of the household as a corporate group.

But Duben also notes that "For the majority of Turks in the past (and especially at present) each hane contained only one aile, hence the ease with which individuals use the two terms interchangeably..." In other words, in Turkish society the terms household and family both refer to a joint production and consumption unit living under the same roof and made up of persons related to one another by bonds of marriage. The hane came to mean the space in which this unit was accommodated.

Some mention must be made of the concept of the extended family. Even today, there are households whose members do not all belong to a single nuclear family. According to Kağıtçıbaşı, there is a variety of research than shows that:

> For example, a typical pattern of change through the life cycle of the rural family involves first the newly married couple living with the husband's parents as a valued pattern and due to economic necessities (patriarchally extended family) then moving out as the young man gains more income and autonomy (nuclear family) and then later on, the aged parent(s) moving in again for protection in old age (1982a: 5)

In line with his distinction between family and household, Duben (1982: 94) defines the extended family "which is actually living together" as "an extended family household". Such a household, Duben

goes on, may be either what he calls the multiple family household or may be formed by a three-generation patrilineal extended family. Even where such households exist, however, the nuclear family is present within in (Timur, 1982: 99). After all, as Duben points out, "Though certain activities such as economic cooperation or the preparation and consumption of food often take place among conjugal units living together, it is quite common both in rural and urban areas in many societies for such functions to be maintained despite the separate residence of such related conjugal units."

Kağıtçıbaşı too (1982a: 5) notes that even for conjugal families living in separate households "the functions of an extended family are served by them for material support forming what might be called 'functionally extended family'." Thus the extended family exists as a support to the nuclear family, and even if this support sometimes extends to sharing accommodation, the nuclear family is not superseded. "The functionally extended family is very much a psychological presence for most people," writes Fişek (1982:296). Özbay (1985: 61) puts it like this:

> The patriarchal extended family is, in fact, important, not as a permanent life style but as a pattern of relationships even in the pre-capitalist period. During their life cycle, families can pass through extended-nuclear-extended family patterns. The family, at its formation, generally exists in an extended pattern, becoming nuclearised later with the death of older members. The main factor here is the tradition of cooperation and assistance among members during the family's reproductive period and the responsibility to meet the elderly members' need for care.

Moreover, both Duben (1982) and Timur (1982) state that the extended family generally existed among the upper classes to prevent the division of wealth, while other sectors of society lived in nuclear families. Timur also states that the widespread view of the extended family as the unit of communities based on agriculture and the nuclear family as that of industrialised and urbanised societies is based on superficial observations: research done in recent years makes clear that the great majority of the population lived and still live in nuclear families, and in the way it is defined in family sociology and cultural anthropology, the extended family appears to be more of a sociological tradition than a statistical reality (1982: 100).

At the same time, Timur says, most couples are found in more than one form of family during the course of their married life. However, while they form part of a patriarchal extended family when first married, they very quickly transform to a nuclear family (ibid: 105).

Timur argues that couples who at first form part of a patriarchal extended family accept this because of traditions such as expensive wedding ceremonies and bride prices, and because the groom's side is obliged to meet the costs of these. The most important reasons for splitting off, Timur adds, are financial difficulties and frictions within the family.

In summary, in Turkish society, the family continues to exist as both a unit of biological reproduction and a unit of common consumption (though, in modern urban life, not necessarily a unit of production). It will be useful to bear this in mind in this study, particularly when examining life in the traditional home and seeking to understand relations between women. Life in the traditional house appears to revolve around

extended families, but in reality, as Faroqhi (1997: 168) too points out, there was usually only a single family living in one house in Anatolia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the reason for this being that the houses were very small. However, close relatives generally lived in the same streets, and relations between women who were immediate neighbours or lived in the same neighbourhood could be as close as if they were living in the same house. This issue will be treated at greater length in the following chapter. The point here is that even within the extended family living in a large house, the nuclear family had its own room, which was not the case in the West at the same period.

In this respect, the Turkish family has not undergone the changes which have transformed the Western family from a production and consumption unit into a merely biological reproduction unit. The transformation in the West was related to the development of the concept of the individual and a corresponding concern for privacy. In Turkey, privacy has developed on the basis of the family or household, and individual privacy has not developed in the western sense. Fişek (1982: 310) argues:

> The social content of the Turkish family in so far as it is based on close group ties, accountability, loyalty and interdependence rather than autonomy and individualism, would translate into a somewhat fused, undifferentiated system of relationships within the systems theory framework.

From the point of view of housing, the emergence in the West (especially France) in the eighteenth century of houses with corridors and specialised rooms provided greater opportunities for privacy. In Turkish homes, on the other hand, lack of privacy had never been a problem.

Privacy in Ottoman Turkish culture revolved around the family, and within this context on a basis of the seclusion of women. Houses were built in such a way as to provide for this privacy most effectively. In addition, the provision of semi-private rooms forming a link between the public and the private, and the fact that the home itself enjoyed a certain privacy as the place of residence of the family, should not be overlooked.

3.3 The Changing Concept Of Privacy In Housing

While the concept of privacy developing on the basis of the family has not changed in Turkish society, important changes have come about regarding attitudes to the privacy of the home, which provides for the privacy of the family. In the traditional house, as previously noted, the privacy of the family and the privacy of the home complemented one another exactly. Today, however, people of different social strata take different views of the privacy of the homes in which they live. Since the home is a status symbol, and the objects within it play a part in this, in the upper and lower classes privacy has become synonymous with its protection. The rich fear that their homes and their life styles, if too visible, may be endangered at a time of growing economic inequalities, and are therefore inclined to live on protected, private estates away from the city centre (Şenyapılı, 1998)[6]. Among the lower classes, on the other hand, the tendency is to close off the home out of a fear of jealousy and the *nazar* (evil eye) (Pamir, 1982) in the case of those possessing desirable objects, and out of embarrassment (Ayata & Ayata, 1996) in the case of those not possessing them.

The middle classes, on the other hand, have opened up their homes completely with a view to displaying their status. This trend has been

created by women in particular. This may be why lack of privacy does not appear to register highly among the complaints of those living in apartment buildings (İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu, 1996) even though apartment life has strengthened privacy on the basis of the family by reducing outside interference, for example in the case of domestic violence, which is referred to in Chapter 6.

The fact that, despite the existence of family privacy, the home can be opened up to the outside world, and that this does not seem to create a major contradiction, provides important evidence of the extent of the concern for status which modern life has brought to the middle classes. This topic will be looked at more extensively in Chapter 6.

Chapter 4 should make the extent of the change just described clearer. This chapter will look at the architectural features of the traditional house, describe the place of women in the life of the house and draw attention to the way in which women used the space available to them. This will serve as a basis for making comparisons later on.

Notes

1. It has to be noted, however, that this understanding of the privacy of individuals does not mean that the place of women was differently understood. Individual privacy does not necessarily give the woman a place in society outside the domestic sphere. As Gardiner (1993: 62) points out: "The public/private dichotomy refers ideologically and historically to the development of a male political community and citizenship with all its attendant rights within the public sphere of society. The development of the public sphere, with its exclusion of women, demanded the parallel development of the private sphere of family and home. The private sphere, without rights of citizenship, became women's place and space. These public and private spheres became mutually reinforcing ideological constructs in spite of their irrelevance to the reality of poor women's lives throughout the industrial age. However, this political and ideological construct was translated into the built form so that public buildings and spaces associated with citizenship and power were male-centered, and the home was considered the woman's realm. The development of the suburbs, with the associated cult of domesticity which idealized women as the center of home and hearth is an excellent example of the way in which housing reinforced women's subordination in society."

2. It is worth noting that large beauty salons in the West have added epilation to the range of services which they provide. However, this should not be seen as a social custom but rather as an innovation of the consumer society forcibly sold to women on the grounds it will make them more beautiful (!)

3. See: *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, Hans Wehr. Ed. J Milton Cowan, Third Edition - Spoken Language Service, New York, 1976.

4. It is in accordance with this way of thinking that couples getting married may be described in Turkish as *mahrem* to one another, that relations out of marriage are *haram* and that men may refer to the women in their households as "my harem". Of these expressions, all but the last live on in poems and songs. For example, Sezen Aksu, Düğün ve Cenaze, 1998: Helal ettim hakkımı/Ben başka yastıktayım/Sen ele kuşak çözdün/Ne ben mahremim ne sen/kavlimizi sen bozdun.

5. In the West, the woman only comes to be thought of in special conjunction with the family in the second half of the twentieth century, particularly after the second world war. Gardiner (1993: 63) points out: "The cult of domesticity idealized women as the center of home and hearth, or to put it more realistically, her primary role in social reproduction. The cult also

idealized women's isolation from the public world of the formal economy and political power; it promoted the single-family home as an island of tranquillity; and it defined child-rearing as exclusively women's responsibility."

6. Professor Dr. Şenyapılı, head of the Department of City Planning of the Faculty of Architecture of the Middle East Technical University, made this point in conversation with the researcher on December 1, 1998.

CHAPTER 4

THE TRADITIONAL TURKISH HOUSE AND WOMEN

As seen in Chapter 2, the experience of housing in Anatolia dates back some ten thousand years. Over this period, a great variety of materials, styles and technologies have been employed. To this wealth of experience, the Ottoman period contributed its own particular house style: the "Hayat House"[1]. This style (Kuban, 1996; Günay, 1998) is first seen in Western Anatolia, the birthplace of the empire, reaches its classical form in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and maintains its presence right up to the early twentieth century. According to Doğan Kuban (in ed. Sey, 1996: 4), this form of housing emerged for the following reasons:

> Since building techniques used in the construction of common houses were developed in the early history of Anatolia, the rise of distinctive residential styles were the outcome of sociocultural and economic structures of their societies and political conjunctures, and not the outcome of technical necessities. The house form in the 15th and 16th century Anatolia had developed under the political security provided by the Ottoman system. It was the architecture of recently settled nomadic groups, on the outskirts of old cities, and in a quasirural, agricultural setting. It was a garden-house style. Its form took shape under different influences:

> Firstly, it was free of fear and outside of the dense urban environment. It had expressed, to a certain extent, nomadic preferences; Secondly it was organized according to the injunctions of a Muslim society, namely responding to the status of woman in society; Thirdly it used some prevalent architectural patterns representing the images of a remembered and cherished past; Fourthly, it kept its semi-rural character and simplicity.

The key characteristics of the "Hayat House" were - again in Kuban's words (1996: 4-5) - the following:

> ...a two-storied house where the functional separation in levels is categorical: services on the ground floor; living quarters on the second floor. The plan of *piano nobile* was a historical clichee: a *bayt* form, common in Islamic architecture, consisting of two rooms separated by a central iwan and with a large semi-open gallery before them. The ground floor was irregular, shaped according to the street. There was a pronounced duality between the lower and upper floors. The house at the ground floor level, turns its back to the street, and barely has windows. Upper floors were articulated, projecting over the ground floor walls, open with windows - although screened by lattices - to the street. The anterior facade of the house opens by a two-storied gallery to the courtyard or garden. This gallery is called a *hayat*... The characteristic feature of this house is that the *hayat*, which is the core of design, the communication centre of the house, was an open-air element, like a courtyard, a portico, a balcony. It has the function of the central court. The user, opening his room's door faces the elements. Because of this peculiarity, the behavioral relationship between a tent and a Turkish house was often recalled. The use of a

> room in a Turkish house has also been related to a tent interior. Because like a tent, the room centre is empty. The *divan*s surround the centre. The room is multi-functional. All these idiosyncratic aspects of the primary concept of these houses have been preserved, especially in Anatolia and some regions of the Balkans, for centuries. This was one of the greatest dwelling traditions in timber.

According to Reha Günay, houses with the following characteristics may be described as "Turkish houses":

> A special arrangement of rooms: the most important feature of the Turkish house is the room, the nature of which has changed little throughout the period for which information is available.
> The plan: Plans types include, notably, those with open, external *sofa*. There are examples with *köşk* and *iwan*. The most original feature of these plans is that the rooms are not connected to one another but are extensions of the *sofa*, making them more independent of one another. Later periods see the development of the house with central *sofa*.
> More than one storey: Turkish homes are built on at least two floors, with the upper floor forming the living area and exhibiting the intended plan. The ground floor is blank, high and of stone, like a city wall. The upper floor has oriels jutting out over the street
> The form of the roof: The roof slopes in four directions, avoiding projections and recesses. The eaves are broad and horizontal.
> Construction: The most typical construction system involves a wooden framed wall or *bağdadi* (lathing, battening).
> (1998: 16-18, translated from Turkish by the researcher)

Günay (ibid) and Asatekin (1994) point out that the Turkish house may show variations from region to region in terms of construction technique and materials, and of whether the *sofa* is external or internal. Günay also states that variations are possible in the ground floor walling, the filling and finishing materials, the roof and eaves, the oriels and oriel supports, the window shutters and ballustrades, the fireplaces and chimneys, the ceilings and other details, but that the tradition of the Turkish house is nevertheless clearly apparent in the above characteristics (ibid: 21).

In describing the Hayat House, it would be wrong to detach it from its surroundings. The relationship between the house and the street, and the concept of the *mahalle* (neighbourhood), must also be taken into account. In Ottoman culture, life went on primarily in the context of the *mahalle*. It was at the centre of the social and economic structure. As Alan Duben and Cem Bahar (1991) point out, neighbourhoods were separated from one another not by class divisions but by ethnic and religious ones. The neighbourhood had at its centre facilities such as a mosque, shops, coffee-houses, one or two water fountains, a *hamam*, a *medrese* (religious school) and a soup-kitchen. These would be surrounded by a dozen or so streets, most of which would be cul-de-sacs, providing for an inward-looking way of life. (Aru, cited in ed. Sey, 1996; Faroqhi, 1997).

Turning to the relationship between house and street, as Kuban states, on the ground floor the houses turned their backs to the street. The ground floor was windowless, and entrance to the house from the street was via the garden or yard. The ground floor plan of the house was determined by the shape of the street. The street, in one sense, was an

extension of the house - its semi-public part. But from the point of view of the neighbourhood, it was also a kind of semi-private extension of the central hub. The salient windows of the upper floor, leaning out over the street, effectively turned these roads, semi-public with respect to the house, semi-private with respect to the *mahalle*, into semi-enclosed spaces (Vanlı, 1994; Günay, 1998).

The ground floors of some of the houses close to the centre of the neighbourhood were used as shops. There is thus some overlap between homes and workplaces, but not in the sense that the home, as in the Middle Ages, was also the place of work. Rather, as is the case with some of today's housing, the ground floors took the form of shops. The important thing to note is that the privacy of the home was in any case assured by the closed facade it presented to the street, and the presence of shops on the ground floor never threatened this privacy.

The arrangement of space inside the house also followed a hierarchical order. The basic hierarchy consisted of the separation of the living spaces from the service spaces, and the provision between the two of open or semi-open spaces such as the *avlu* (yard), *hayat* or garden . In addition, the internal rooms were constructed one or two steps higher than the sofa, and as Küçükerman (1973) points out, this created a social division as well as a physical one. Asatekin (1994: 79) lists the types of room that existed in these homes as follows: (a) neutral spaces - *avlu*, *hayat* or garden; (b) specialised spaces - the service spaces, i.e.: kitchen, toilet, *hamam* (bathroom); (c) unspecialised, multi-purpose spaces - *sofa* and *oda (rooms)*.

Using Asatekin's terminology, these spaces may be described as follows:

The neutral space, the *avlu*, might, depending on the economic situation and social standing of the family, include a vegetable garden, a barn for animal feed, a stable, a chicken-run, a store for firewood, a stove, oven or cooker for cooking food, washing clothes and cleaning and a guest room, bachelors room or servants room. In other words the *avlu*, besides its function as a central space permitting circulation and distribution, is essentially defined in terms of an agriculture-based economy and the roles of women within the family (Kuban, 1982). The woman's contribution to the domestic economy was concentrated either in a separate space within this *avlu* or garden or in the kitchen on the ground floor, the only specialised space in the whole house excluding the toilet and *hamam* - and not every house had a *hamam*, with the public *hamam* and washbasins and stands located in *yüklük* (large cupboards) in the rooms serving instead. Daily, monthly, seasonal and annual foodstuffs were prepared and stored in the kitchen, which contained stoves, cupboards, niches and an oven (Asatekin, ibid: 80). V. İmamoglu (1992) records that in Kayseri houses there was a kitchen known as a *tokana* or *togana*, the most important feature of which was a fireplace where food was cooked, as well as a winter room and a space used for storage. A comparison with the houses of Çatalhöyük described in chapter 2 shows that the special position of the kitchen and the view that the home was essentially a space belonging to women had not changed very much.[2]

The main living areas were the *sofa* and the *oda*. The former, also known as the *hayat*, *sergan* or *salon*, is perceived as a circulation area but at the same time is essentially the main space in which the common functions of the family's daily life take place. Fully or partially enclosed,

this space would have *seki* (sitting platforms) along one, two or three walls, aligned according to the view or to the location of the stove. Later examples display various architectural features such as washbasins, salient windows or oriels, iwans and steps (Asatekin, ibid: 82).

The *sofa* is in all respects flexible and the type of the house is therefore determined by the *sofa*. (Günay, 1998: 59). Accordingly, S.H.Eldem classifies three types of plan. The external *sofa* type has a *sofa* open, without walls, on one or three sides. According to Günay, this set-up is an excellent reflection of tent life in a settled context. The internal *sofa* and central *sofa* types crystallised in the eighteenth century and spread in the nineteenth. They owed their existence to a more comfortable way of life, the need for protection from the cold and the need to use to *sofa* all the time. Thanks to these neat plans it was possible to incorporate more rooms, and as the rooms were side by side and shared walls, this could be done more economically (Günay, ibid: 62).

The *oda* (*göz*) is the most private part of the house. According to Turgut Cansever (1994: 121), the house came into being as a result of the consolidation of *oda* - a word known to derive from *otağ* (a large tent). The *oda* is an unspecialised space arranged so that all the activities of daily life, including sleeping, can take place there:

> Every Turkish living-room is a multi-purpose room which can be changed into a bedroom, a living-room or a prayer-room. Changed into a living-room, it fulfills the functions of a living room to the same degree as a planned European living room. Changed into a prayer room it serves this purpose as well as a chapel. The open hall or vestibule plays a central role in the Turkish house. No European house can display such high and differentiated room quality. This vestibule on a terrace is at all times an in-

> between zone, open and closed, public and private, inside or outside at the same time, and one can either pass through it or stay in it... But just as the term multi-purpose room is not quite fitting for the living-room, since it is changed all the time to serve a certain characteristic function, neither can the hall serve all purposes at the same time. Its atmosphere and meaning depends upon the standpoint of the onlooker or the user, be it a woman or man, the inhabitant or an alien, young or old and so on (Bammer, 1996 in ed. Sey: 243).

Raphaela Lewis (1971) explains that both in the houses of the rich and in those of the poor, the main objects to be found in the *oda* were carpets and mattresses. These could be unrolled to make a bed at night and bundled and stacked against the wall or a cupboard in the day time. In addition, in the homes of the wealthy, "All around were *divans* spread with hangings and covered with cushions of velvet and wool fabrics in winter, and silks and satins in summer. Here and there on the floor were little square mattresses or heaps of cushions, as occasional seats" (ibid: 109). Ornate braziers of copper or brass, known as *mangal*, were used for heating. Tanyeli (1996b) says that the hearths which existed in the rooms were more of a status symbol than a functional item. The *mangal* burned charcoal, and could be carried in and out of the room, a fact which reinforced the non-specialisation of the space. Faroqhi (1997) suggests that the great fires which repeatedly struck Istanbul in particular may have been the result of this widespread use of *mangal*.

According to Cansever, the *oda* was the successor to the *otağ* - meaning a large tent. Kuban and Günay also speak of the resemblance between the Turkish home and a tent. And Bammer states that the Anatolian house was greatly influenced by the *yurt*, the tent of the

nomadic Turks. Not everybody agrees. Tanyeli (1996b: 426) argues that even if the etymological link between the words *oda* and *otağ* reveals traces of nomadic habits, the Ottoman *oda* is quite different: in contrast to the nomadic culture, almost all the furniture is fixed - that is, united with the building - and the hearth, which is in a central position in the tent, is set in a wall. Nevertheless, Tanyeli does not seek to deny that the traces of nomadic culture are visible if not in the architecture then at least in living, sleeping and eating habits. In two striking examples, he notes that even in the most elevated social groups it remained a habit to carry around one's own spoon for eating right up to the nineteenth century, while heating was regarded not as an architectural problem but as a matter of clothing.

As it is clearly of some significance for the subject matter of this study, it is therefore worth taking a brief look at the structure of the *yurt*:

> Yurts do not have windows; however, the hole in the roof serves as a window and a chimney... The cooking area is in the centre of the yurt, directly under the dome opening. Doors are always on the south side and there can be a standing altar across from them towards the wall. Seen from this axies, men would sit to the left (on the west side) and women to the right (on the east side). The seat of honor is on the men's side somewhat behind the fireplace." (Bammer, ibid: 236)

Bammer goes on to discuss the cosmic meaning of the *yurt*:

> The yurt is put up by the women with the help of the men. It was and still is the only place in the huge treeless flatland of inner Asia in which people could orient their life. This is where the eternal space beyond man's grasp becomes a microcosmic experience. The inhabitant of a valley, the woods, or the coast can orient himself

> in terms of these unchanging assets; he has the shade of the trees, the reflection of the water, the protection of the cliffs. All of this does not exist for the inhabitants of the plains. Any kind of reference point has to be created by himself in his home. The available references are the astronomical axis, the sunrise and sunset, the firmament as a whole, and the yurt as the centre. Thus the tent stands for a "reciprocal" reflection of the cosmos: the hole in the roof represents the eye of the sky, the sun, and the roof represents the domed, closed sky. It is a matter of dialectic reversal - the round, full sun corresponds to the hole of light, and the open sky corresponds to the limited dome (Bammer, ibid: 236-7)

We have here a very concrete illustration of Berger's view, given in Chapter 2, that in traditional society the home is the soul of reality, and that the opposite of reality is chaos, which is dangerous, and that without the home everything is scattered. At the same time, as Jean-Paul Roux has stated (cited in Erdem, 1990: 705), just as everybody has a place in the universe, so everybody has a place in the *yurt* (home). "It is important to note," writes Bammer (ibid: 237), "that Central Asian *yurt*s display no architectural separation between men and women. The separation is suggested only by behaviour. This observation has also been made in the black tents of Anatolia and the Turkish house." In other words, among the nomadic Turks, there was no spatial segregation of the kind seen in Anatolia in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. When they adopted a settled way of life, the forms of their homes were influenced by those that already existed in the territories where they settled, but the distinction between *haremlik* and *selamlık*, particularly visible in the homes of the well-to-do, might have some onto the agenda for other

reasons - either as part of an Islamic way of life or, as Badran suggests, it may have other, earlier roots:

> Among the practices and institutions held to be Islamic but which are not required, nor perhaps even condoned, by Islam are segregation and seclusion of women, which have existed historically, and still do in some places, in urban areas of the Middle East mainly among women of the upper and middle classes, although veiling, a distancing device, is practised by lower-class women as well. Muslim societies took up the practice of segregation and seclusion in the cities of the Byzantine and Sassanian worlds they conquered in the seventh century. Early in Islamic history, these practices came to be associated with Islam (1985: 53-54).

According to Asatekin and Tanyeli (1996b), in the majority of traditional houses, no such distinction existed. Madran (1994: 425-427) says that many properties registered in foundation (*Vakfiye*) records had internal and external *avlu*, respectively referred to as *hariciye* and *dahiliye*. The kitchen and pantry, Madran goes on, were always within the *dahiliye*, from which it may be concluded that this area was given over to private life - and could be described as the *haremlik* - and that the *hariciye* might be a kind of *selamlık* area encompassing commonly-used service spaces. Faroqui takes a similar view, asserting that where space was sufficient, the *selamlık* would be constructed as a separate building overlooking the *avlu*. This building might also contain a stable and servants' quarters. The family might also have a second *avlu* where female guests were entertained; for those who were not so wealthy, when the man of the house had guests, one of the rooms would be vacated for the purpose (1997: 170).

Further, both Akın (1996) and V. İmamoğlu (1992) state that each house had a main room with better furnishings than the other rooms. This room may be said to have served as the *selamlık*. Faroqhi (ibid) refers to a large room in the separate *selamlık* called the *divanhane*, where guests were received. Günay (1998: 65) says that in the houses of Safranbolu the distinction between *haremlik* and *selamlık* was mainly visible in the homes of the wealthy, while in other homes a room easily accessible from the staircase would be used as *selamlık*, so as not to disturb the course of family life. The important thing here is that, just as with the homes of the Hellenistic period described earlier, the space where the family lived, including the kitchen and hearth, still belonged to the woman, and the man felt the need for a separate space to entertain guests as a display of his wealth.

Given that the honour of the rich that was to be protected by the segregation of women was no greater than that of other people, it is very clear from the above that the aim was to prevent the women from making marriages which would cause the wealth to be divided and the status of the family to be reduced, in line with the way of thinking referred to by Lewis and mentioned in Chapter 3.

In the great majority of cases, when men were at home and there were guests, women, as a matter of behaviour, would never enter the rooms they used while they were there, and so these rooms might reasonably be termed *selamlık*. This does not prevent the rooms from being multifunctional (dining, living, sleeping), nor does it change the fact that the woman was responsible for the organisation of the whole space. This spatial segregation was, however, quite different from that of the palace and the homes of the rich already described. Polygamy was

not uncommon in these latter homes, and they contained specific boundaries never to be crossed. For the poorer segments of society, the great need for labour meant women could not possibly afford the luxury of gathering in a particular space and doing nothing (Olson 1982: 42) (Tanyeli, 1996b: 438).

Describing the houses of Safranbolu (see below), Kıray (1981) notes that the only difference between the rooms was a seasonal preference. As the rooms were all the same, those that heated up best tended to be used most in winter, and those that remained cooler tended to be used most in summer. Bammer too refers to this tendency, emphasising its roots in the tent, or more precisely the migratory way of life. The upper floors were used more in winter, says Bammer, and the lower floors in summer (ibid: 243).

The similarities between the tent and the room are striking indeed: both were set up by women; both could be converted by the woman from living room to bedroom, etc, depending on the immediate need, and they were even decorated in similar fashion, with storage space around the walls, carpets on the floor and a central stove (or, in the case of the house, kitchen). The fact that the spatial arrangements were made by the woman, and that it was the woman who lit the stove, demonstrate the spiritual importance attached to the woman, but at the same time make clear where her responsibilities lie - i.e., at home.

4.1 Daily Life In The Traditional House

Safranbolu is a town where the traditional houses have survived to this day, and for this reason it has been made into a preservation area. In examining this town from the point of view of changes brought about by

tourism, Mübeccel Kıray (1981) takes a look at living facilities in the houses, and in this context describes the changes in the traditional habits of women. Here, she gives important information about the past way of life. According to Kıray, all food and clothing and almost all other consumables were prepared by women in various parts of the home at various times, and generally without any differentiation of time and place. In the empty space surrounded by *sedir* and *yüklük*, places would be laid and meals served on a *sini* or large tray, then the tray would be removed and sheets and mattresses laid down, then they in turn would be taken up and a clean cloth spread out and pastry made or vegetables stuffed, or *gergef* brought out and material sewn and embroidered. And so life went on. In the hall, the stone entrance or the garden, activities requiring more space, such as doing the washing or making seasonal foods such as jam, syrup, *yufka*, cracked wheat and pasta would be carried out one after the other. Entering the home did not therefore mean simply entering the privacy of the women; it also constituted interference in a wide variety of production and preparation tasks carried out by women according to a pattern set out by themselves. Accordingly, men, who were usually busy earning a living or engaged in production activities outside the home, were not usually to be found at home during the day-time, and in the evening they would spend their time at the mosque and coffee-shop:

> A man who stays at home too often during the day makes himself ridiculous or suspicious. But for a woman it is almost totally forbidden to be outside because of the threat of certain hard sanctions. The man has to stand before the eyes of the others, has to stand his ground. Therefore, for the man, the house is not so much something he steps into but more often leaves behind.

> Whereas for the woman it is the other way around, since the house becomes the place she steps into but never really leaves (Bammer, ibid: 247).

Women did not leave the house to go shopping - although there were differences between rich and poor. In the words of R. Lewis,

> The difference between the conduct of wealthy households and more modest homes was mainly one of degree, not kind: in rich establishments, for example, the slaves would to the marketing, while among working-class families the husband would bring the shopping home, but in neither case did the women of the house go out to the bazaar to get the food, and they would make only small purchases from the street traders who came to the door (ibid: 91).

Ironically, some of the street traders were themselves women, known as *bohçacı kadınlar*. However, as we have seen, not going out onto the street was a status symbol, and as these women were of the lowest class, their presence on the street was not significant. Moreover, women working at home as servants could also go out for shopping, or as attendants of the women of the house.[3] It is a known fact that these women provided other women of the house with contact with the outside world, and arranged their romantic affairs (Faroqhi, 1997).

Reasons why women might leave the house included trips to the *hamam*, visits to neighbours and picnics. On such occasions, news and gossip would be exchanged, and children compared - Lewis speaks of the "inspection of potential daughters-in-law and of rivals for their own daughters" (ibid: 12). Women took with them their embroidery or knitting or any other such work they had begun wherever they went. According to Kıray, when visiting neighbours, they also helped one

another in the processing of consumables. She explains this in terms of the lack of any clear dividing line between spare time activities and work, which is typical of closed, traditional societies, and of the disorganised nature of such activities.

Until the nineteenth century, there were no particular meal times. The elders of the family decided when food would be taken, and this could even vary from day to day. When serving food, priority was given to the oldest male. In elite households, men and women might eat separately. Food was eaten sitting around a *sini* placed in the middle of the room, from a container placed in the centre (Duben-Behar, 1991). These arrangements meant women were obliged to prepare and serve food and do the washing up at any time of the day. The room also had to be repeatedly arranged for eating and subsequently returned to its previous condition.

Women having to carry out all these tasks as part of their daily life clearly could have no real spare time. Work continued at all hours of the day, even during visits to the neighbours or on trips to the *hamam*.

4.2 The Situation Of Women

Besides these production activities within the family, women's responsibilities in terms of reproduction included giving birth, looking after the children, taking care of the ill and the aged, the education of girls and forming the mutual ties which made the execution of these tasks possible (Özbay, 1990).

Özbay emphasises that the volume and variety of the work done by women resulted in the division of labour among them being governed by

more detailed rules, resulting in a second tier of exploitation, this time of women by women.

When a woman entered a family as bride, she would be reminded of her newness and made to feel like a newcomer on every possible occasion. Her status was low. However good a bride she might be by all existing standards, she was only accorded some significance and status when she gave birth to a son (Kıray, 1979). The older a woman became and the more children (boys) she gave birth to, the greater her status became, and she in turn would establish authority over other women and so recreate the hierarchical order. The woman at the very top of the ladder had chief responsibility for the home and was responsible for the division of labour among the other women, and for resolving the conflicts or jealousies which might arise among them. It must be added that this woman would also use her influence over the men, and especially her relationship with her sons, to increase or moderate the level of male domination over the other women (especially the brides). The arrangement of space too - for example the location of the kitchen in the *avlu*, where most of the housework was carried out, and the fact that the upper floors of the house opened onto this area - considerably facilitated the supervision process (Goodwin, 1997).

In the traditional house, the lack of specialisation of the rooms and their use for a variety of purposes made it possible for the various nuclear family units that made up each household to live in the same house while maintaining their separate existences both as a unit of biological reproduction and as a joint consumption and production unit as noted by Duben (see Chapter 3). Günay (1998: 107) also records that in the houses of Safranbolu the large families were divided into smaller units formed

by husband-wife couples, each of which was given a room and so provided with its independence.

Cansever (1992: 122) points to another advantage of the traditional house. Although its design made it a single, complete house, it also had gardens at the side and rear which allowed for additions and repairs to be made to the house as the make-up of the family changed, and for the house to be divided many times if required (Note that the *gecekondu* or shanty-town housing of today has similar characteristics).

These spatial arrangements set the scene for a chain of exploitative and hierarchical relationships between the women but at the same time, in spite of all the disputes and arguments, it can also be said to have produced a climate of solidarity. For example, in the case of domestic violence (Goodwin, 1997, stresses that a woman could only be beaten by her own husband), a mother-in law's intervention could conceivably save a young woman who has won the affection of her mother-in-law from being beaten. Failing that, at least the other women are likely to have assisted in healing the wounds (physical and psychological) resulting from a husband's beating. This assistance is not available to the women of today, who cannot for reasons of family privacy tell anyone of what goes on between their four walls, and who are ashamed of saying they have been beaten - all the more so as their educational level rises. This is a cause of great loneliness and will be referred to again in Chapter 6.

Another form of solidarity is possible when the wives of brothers join forces to counter the authority of their mother-in-law. Women in such a relationship (known as *elti*s in Turkish - there is no English equivalent) would naturally help one another in looking after children, coping with health problems and giving birth.

When the traditional house was described above, it was stressed that it should not be regarded as separate from its surroundings. Indeed, as Goodwin (ibid) notes, it was fun to watch the neighbours from the protruding windows of the upper floor of the house, even if they really knew they were being watched. This created a certain sense of security too: if something inappropriate went on, a neighbour was bound to see it. In this context, Duben and Behar (1991) draw attention to the way the neighbourhood was organised: there was a communal solidarity which kept a more or less independent check on daily events, and there were many official and unofficial means by which public morality was set and directed. Aru (cited in 1996) explains how the rich protected orphans and supplied the dowries of destitute girls, and how guests who visited the neighbourhood from far away were considered to be visitors to the neighbourhood as a whole, so that some of them would be accommodated by the neighbours if there was insufficient room. Çadırcı (1996: 259) states that the *imam* (preacher) would be required to provide a guarantee for a newcomer to the neighbourhood, thus ensuring a form of control. In addition to all this, Faroqhi (1997: 66) says that it was rare for strange people to come and settle in a neighbourhood and alter its composition. Most of the families neighbouring one another were related, and the fact that the streets were narrow cul-de-sacs meant that comers and goers were easily observed. Based on Magnarella's (1974) study of Susurluk, Olson (1982: 46) remarks that "Despite the fact that these neighbourhoods are characterized by enclosed courtyards, the 'defended neighbourhood' has many of the characteristics of an extended family."

Thus the house and its immediate environment the neighbourhood provided women with solidarity and a network of relationships both with close relatives and with their neighbours (Fallers & Fallers, 1976).

To sum up, first, the traditional house and its living conditions provided women in the fullest sense with the segregation and social privacy that followed from their position in society. To this house women came as young brides and, according to Günay were given the best room on the upper floor, and this room was their own home and the only place they were free (ibid: 102). In this house, women grew up, worked, produced and had their children, and when they died it was in the same house that they were prepared for their final journey (Goodwin, 1997). Segregation persisted even in the grave, the woman's final home: Karaçağ (1994) recounts how in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries women's graves were dug deeper than men's on the grounds they were *mahrem*. For example, the gravestones of men and women were different, shaped like a turban for men and engraved with flowers and poems for women (Goodwin, ibid: 98)[4]

Secondly, within the unspecialised spaces of the home, women arranged the space according to the needs of their daily lives, in a sense recreating it. Whether working in the kitchen or *avlu* or rearranging space in the rooms, a woman's work was always there to be seen, and in this sense valuable.

Writing about the development of housing in England, Barley (1963: 13) has this to say:

> The vast majority of houses were until the growth of the factory system in the last century or more bases for the work of a livelihood as well as homes for the workers... The removal of the production process from the house and its

> yard to a factory revolutionised the function of houses because it left them only part of their former scope. They became merely machines for living in.

In Turkish society, the union of home and workplace continued in the traditional house, as far as women and the work they carried out was concerned, so maintaining the visibility of a woman's work. According to Özbay (1996: 51):

> Housework was an unending activity throughout the day (...) Women's place was the heart of the house. Therefore, despite the gender segregation in the dwelling, women's labour was visible and important. The intensity of housework indirectly limited the time men spent at home. Men spent their time outside, with their friends in coffee-houses or somewhere else even after their work was over.

In her study on Safranbolu houses, Kıray (1982) also pointed out the importance of women and their work at home. Goodwin (1997: 50) finds something poetic in the fact that carrying water to the house was the work of women, arguing that water and women were the arteries of life. Nevertheless, to use the words of Ortaylı (1985: 95), "The woman is in fact the most important member of the traditional family, but her status both there and in society in general does not measure up to her role in production." On the other hand, control of space and of the home was an important source of spiritual strength for women. When two young people got married it was in the first place the two mothers who came to the agreement and reached the bargain (Goodwin, 1997; R. Lewis, 1971). It may have been on account of this spiritual strength that in the establishment of a new home the girl's mother took on the great

responsibility of choosing a new home for her daughter and the boy's mother that of choosing a new daughter for her home.

Finally, the conditions of common living provided by the house and its links with its immediate surroundings created the climate for a special network of solidarity among women. It could even be said that spatial segregation, the assumption that the home was the woman's place and the absence of men all day long and even in the evenings enabled women to enjoy a particular climate of independence. "Contrary to the usual stereotype," writes Olson (1982: 39), "the family in this segregated society allows women more autonomy, because it is easier for them to escape the dominance of men within it than within the joint nuclear family." Fallers and Fallers (1976: 255) also speak of women being "at least psychologically" more independent. According to Spain:

> The positive association between segregated dwellings and women's control of labour is not reversed by additional explanatory factors. Its persistence suggests that segregated dwellings do not remove women from knowledge of economic issues to the same extent as other types of segregation. In fact, separate spheres within dwellings in non-industrial societies allow women slightly greater control of their labour (1992: 103).

The traditional house continued to exist into the early twentieth century. However, the movements towards westernisation and modernisation that swept Ottoman society in the nineteenth century and later the declaration of the Republic brought about great changes in housing as in other fields. The next chapter will examine the connections between the changes that took place in housing in this period and the changes that occurred in the lives of women.

Notes

1. For the most comprehensive studies of this issue, see two works by Sedat Hakkı Eldem: *Türk Evi Plan Tipleri* (Typology of Turkish House Plans) (1955) - Istanbul Technical University Faculty of Architecture Publications, Istanbul, 1972 and Sedat Hakkı Eldem's *Türk Evi* (The Turkish House), Istanbul, 1984 (three volumes).

2. The kitchen was also the only specialised space in English houses in the Middle Ages (Barley, 1963), where it was located in a separate building. The twelfth and thirteenth century brought changes to the house, with living and sleeping areas being separated and the byre or cowhouse being detached from the house itself. However, the space gained as a result of this detachment was used as a service room. It was only in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that the kitchen was integrated into the house as the third room after the bedroom and living room, and even then it was only used for the preparation of beer and bread, while the rich in particular continued to use an outside kitchen. Interestingly, from the point of view of the kitchen-stove-woman complex, the distinction continues to be made in the houses of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, particularly terraced houses: the kitchen is either located in the basement or separated by a step from the rest of the house (The researcher lived in such a house in London in 1996-1998).

3. In this connection, see İrfan Orga, *Portrait of a Turkish Family*, New York, 1957 (*Bir Türk Ailesinin Öyküsü*, İstanbul, Ana Yayıncılık, 1995); Orhan Pamuk, *Benim Adım Kırmızı*, Istanbul, 1998.

4. See *Yapı Dergisi*, No 170, January 1996.

CHAPTER 5

MODERNISATION, HOUSING AND WOMEN

The Nineteenth Century was one of great changes and interactions in Ottoman society. There was a quantitative and qualitative explosion in social activity and movements. Novelties and innovations were introduced and almost everything started to become a topic for debate. Influential in this process were the attempts made to restructure society from the point of view of education, law, social and economic structure and political institutions.

The restructuring effort began with the *Tanzimat Fermanı* of 1839. It gained pace with the constitutional arrangements of 1908, which brought with them a new political structure and a measure of individual freedom.

Tanyeli (1996a) and Bilgin (1996) state that modernisation, as distinct from westernisation, began in this period. Since the *Lale Devri* (Tulip Age, 1718-1730), if not before, facts of western origin had been imported into Ottoman culture, but they see this transfer of knowledge as a preparation for modernisation, not modernisation itself:

> But true modernization which encompasses the above-mentioned imports, started when the process of change was declared in effect, after having been run through ideological sieves. In other words, modernization began when transfers from the West turned into ideological constructs. Ottoman upper class crossed the

> threshold of modernization once it formulated its own cultural change as a goal and opened it to discussion. Modernity is the state in which the individual and/or the society consciously endeavours to exchange its conditions of existence. There is no such consciousness in the pre-modern state of affairs. Pre-modern epistemology does not have a problem of cultural transformation. Despite variations in magnitude, cultural changes always existed; it was the individuals and societies who could not always develop a consciousness of transformation (Tanyeli, 1996a: 284-5).

From the point of view of women and housing, the modernisation movement is not a single, homogenous process but has to be divided into distinct sub-periods. Bilgin (1996) underlines that the parameters of these sub-periods, in each of which modernisation took a different form, are determined by the coincidence of turning points in the world and inside the country from the point of view of economic/political and social influences. In this chapter, we will distinguish between two phases of modernisation: 1839-1923, and 1923-1950. The period after 1950 will be left to Chapter 6, where we deal in detail with the advent of the apartment block.

5.1 The Period 1839-1923

Internationally, this period was marked by the spread of industrial capitalism throughout the world and by the First World War. Turkey experienced the *Tanzimat* era, the 1908 Constitution, the War of Independence and the declaration of the Republic. For Bilgin (1996: 475):

> The single most important development that characterizes this period is the fact that throughout the period modernization, as opposed to early industrializing countries, did not rest upon the *industrial* sector which mobilizes human potential (the labour force) but rather on *commercial* and *financial* sectors which mobilize goods and money. What this means in terms of urban spatial structure is the absence of a stable absorption of ever-increasing population into specific centres. Both at the level of individual cities and at the level of Anatolia as a whole, a polarized dualistic structure reflecting modernization as well as traditionalism has been dominant.

Looking at housing from this point of view, the forms of housing encountered in this period, particularly in Istanbul, were (1) "traditional" wooden neighbourhood houses having undergone certain changes, (2) terraced houses, (3) apartment blocks and (4) suburban or summer houses (*sayfiye evi*), Bosphorus-side mansions (*yalı*) and villas (Yücel, 1996; Bilgin, 1996).

Traditional houses naturally continued to exist up to the end of the century but at the same time they underwent certain changes. These changes, related to the way the house was used, will be described later. However, it is not these traditional houses but the other types of home mentioned that best represent this period (Bilgin, 1996).

The reasons why these new types of housing emerged are listed by Tekeli (1985) and Yücel (1996) as follows:

(1) the increasingly crowded nature of the city, caused by migration, primarily the migration of Muslims as a result of the loss or growing insecurity of the Ottoman provinces (in the Balkans, Crimea and Caucasia, and of Anatolian non-Muslims hoping to

gain a share of the economic well-being enjoyed by the urban European and Levantine communities;

(2) the changes brought about by modernisation in the institutional/administrative structure, and their impact on municipal government, ownership rights and the organisation of the professions. The *Tanzimat Fermanı*, which guaranteed the citizenship and ownership rights of the people, the *Arazi Kanunnamesi* (Land Decree) of 1858, the innovations of earlier in the century such as the institution of the *muhtarlık* (the office of local headman) within the traditional structure of the neighbourhood in 1826, and the creation of the directorate of *Ebniye-i Hassa* (an organisation that widened and introduced new norms for streets and that brought in new standards for the facades and heights of buildings, the parcelling of land, construction techniques and construction equipment) in 1838 and of the *Şehremaneti* (Municipality) in 1855 eroded the semi-independent, religion and ethnicity-based organisational patterns of the neighbourhood. "In other words, instead of a traditional ethnic/religious community system, the social topography of the city started to take shape according to characteristics pertaining to social class" (Bilgin, ibid: 302). At the level of society, this situation paved the way for the transition to an organised urban society; it also affected family life.

(3) the impact of modernisation on social life, consumption patterns, tastes and value systems. Everywhere that the administration/elite and "the *intelligentsia* that was virtually synonymous with it" (Tanyeli, 1996a: 285) acted, they vigorously imposed a new

dwelling culture, and their tastes gradually began to influence the urban lifestyles and family environments of the rest of the populace. Yücel (ibid: 303) puts this in the context of the removal of the palace to the Bosphorus, the visibility of the new styles on display in the *kasır* and *köşk* (mansions and villas) stretched out along this shoreline, the improvements in urban transport and communications and the increasing scope for trade in goods - that is the traditional neighbourhood dwellers of the city "coming out" into the Beyoğlu district and starting to take part in its shopping, consumption and entertainment habits (Güzel, 1985).

(4) The new construction materials and technology available for the construction of housing and the changes in items for use in the home such as furniture and heating equipment that resulted from the opening up of the economy.

(5) the banning of wooden buildings due to the fires and other disasters that constantly broke out and destroyed neighbourhoods, and the obligatory use of masonry (Faroqhi, 1997).

An examination of the new types of housing that emerged for the above reasons reveals that the apartment blocks were the choice of the new upper middle classes and non-Muslims, while suburban and summer houses with gardens were preferred by the upper classes and terraced houses were built as lodgings and through the efforts of ethnic and religious communities.

In their altered form, the traditional houses of the neighbourhoods, as middle-class homes, retained their wooden building technique and shape (oriels, the proportions of the facade) but tended to differ from their predecessors in being built attached to one another, separated by fire

walls, on small plots of land, presenting a continuous front to the widened streets, with their doors opening straight onto the street and their ground floors in use as living space (Bilgin, 1996; Faroqhi, 1997).

5.2 The Period 1923-1950

In the newly-established Republic, the ideals of the nation state and modernisation were pursued with the backing of the state. Innovations in housing took place increasingly in Ankara, the capital of the young Republic, rather than in Istanbul. The form of housing which stamped its mark on this period was the cubic house.

> Cubic house is a term which entered common parlance in the 1930s, designating the aesthetic canons of the Modern Movement in architecture - namely flat roofs, wide terraces and cantilevers, simple cubic volumes with round corners and/or projections, continuous window sills and balconies and an overall absence of decoration, which by then had already become the official discourse of progressive architects everywhere (Bozdoğan, 1996: 318).

These villas, designed - unlike the houses of the past - by architects, satisfied the tendencies of the same administrators/elite who led housing fashion in the previous period. As Batur puts it (1984: 77):

> The so-called 'Republican Bourgeoisie' consisting of military and civilian officials, played an important role in the acceptance of modern architecture. These highly-paid officials had found in modern architecture an appropriate response to their search for a new life-style: thoroughly contemporary, without a hint of the past. These qualities were decisive in the diffusion of modern architecture, particularly in residential architecture.

Meanwhile, the drive to build a new Republic saw the state taking a close interest in the housing sector. Lodgings were built for state employees, and the first cooperative houses were constructed. The latter were also intended mainly for homeless civil servants as well as other citizens in similar circumstances, but in this case the beneficiaries came to own their own homes (The *Bahçelievler Yapı Kooperatifi* became the first cooperative to be set up in Ankara in 1934. Most of its members were state officials. With considerable assistance from the state and from Ankara municipality, it had soon built more than 150 houses - Keleş, 1983: 15). Bilgin (1996: 482) describes the form taken by these houses as follows:

> With their few storeys and located in low population density areas, both lodgements and cooperative settlements are squarely with the garden-city tradition; they could allow all kinds of different emphases from the picturesque/rural versions to the more fordist/rational versions.

5.3 From 1950 To The Present

Until the 1950s, modernisation was the expression of an elite way of life which set international traders, high-level bureaucrats and civil servants aside from the rest of society. After 1945, this duality was eroded, and a more homogeneous pattern came into existence. The apartment, built either by private developers or by cooperatives, came to be seen as the sole appropriate form of housing for all sections of society. For those migrating from the countryside and living in *gecekondu* (shanty-towns) built by themselves on the periphery of the city, it became an ideal.

5.4 New Ways Of Living

While looking at the transformation of the physical forms of housing, the changes in the ways of life that went on within these various kinds of home should not be forgotten. According to Tanyeli (1996: 288):

> For the Ottoman Turk, modernity is defined in terms of domestic objects. But the definition, as well as the objects and their relationship to the definition, are changing. What is more significant is that a "dual code" has been established within the *wohnkultur*. There are two different but related codes for western and traditional artefacts and they have survived to this day.

The most distinctive domestic objects are the bed and the dining table. These are followed by armchairs, western-style heating and cooking equipment, lighting and communications systems.

The entry of the bed and the dining table into the Ottoman house did not just mean that the surface on which food was eaten or sleep taken was raised further from the ground. On the contrary, their arrival was to bring much more important changes in its wake (Tanyeli, 1996a). The arrangement of space in the unspecialised rooms of the Ottoman house was completely transformed as specialised spaces like the bedroom and the dining room appeared. It was not the first time that the arrival of furniture had brought with it changes in the use of space in this part of the world. The way in which an item of furniture which made it possible to eat while reclining created a special space in the Hellenistic period was explained in Chapter 2. However, traditional living habits were not completely done away with. As Kıray (1982) notes in the case of Safranbolu houses, beds and tables were present in the Ottoman house

for a long time without being used for their original purposes. These objects were put there not so much for their usefulness but as a status symbol.

> During the modernisation movement of the reign of Mahmut II, western artefacts were of value as signs for public presentation or exhibition. They began to play an important role in the domestic scene but as one moved into the more private domain, the inner sanctum of the Ottoman life, they ceased to exist. The member of the upper crust would "exhibit" an artefact as a sign of his changed cultural preferences, and as a status symbol in accordance with the dictates of the system of traditional social relationships (Tanyeli, ibid: 288).

It is worth adding that these western items of furniture, placed in the man's space, which had always been the best-decorated, were for a long time used primarily by men, (Tanyeli, 1996a; Özbay, 1996; Ayata, 1988; Faroqhi, 1997). Besides the simultaneous existence of modern and traditional codes, the way of life thus also came to be marked by separate codes for men and for women. In time, this led to a distinction based on age as well. To exemplify this, Tanyeli contrasts two pictures (pictures 51 and 64) in Mustafa Şefik's Illustrated Alphabet (Istanbul, 1925). In one of these, the grandmother is seated on the ground while the mother occupies an armchair (Tanyeli, ibid: 286).

Meanwhile, the piano took its place as a status symbol in the homes of the rich. It served as proof of the educational standing of the women, and became a fetish (Tanyeli, 1996a; Bozdoğan, 1996) that could be said to symbolise modernisation.

In the new forms of accommodation of the early years of the Republic, the past was completely disregarded, and light, functional, easily-cared for items of furniture that were modern, moveable and had simple geometric forms were preferred, in sharp contrast to the bulky furniture of the old houses (Bozdoğan, 1996).

As noted above, this change in furniture was not just a superficial change. As specialised items of furniture entered the home, unspecialised spaces became specialised ones: the room in which the bed was placed became a bedroom, the room in which the dining table was placed a dining room. This specialisation in turn changed the pattern of life in the traditional home and so influenced the domestic role of women.

5.5 The Situation Of Women

Small families, the changing relationship between husband and wife and improved levels of education did not of themselves change the "true place" and duties of women. However, they did alter the way in which space was used. As already mentioned, the houses became smaller and the rooms came to be specialised. The work done by women was somewhat lessened. This was a very clear trend in the early years of the Republic:

> The Republican discourse on the modern house is, before everything else, an extension of the nationalist emphasis on the nuclear family, especially on motherhood as a national duty and on the family home as the sacred space or hearth of national regeneration, all of which were ideas introduced in Turkey back in the Young Turk era. In what is essentially a profound contradiction in the "liberation" of Kemalist woman, the idea of a woman's life being centred

> in the workplace outside the home was scorned by many prominent Republican intellectuals. The idealized model remained that of an enlightened wife, mother and companion whose life-world was the home or the "family nest" (aile yuvası) as it was often called. The image of this idealized nest was that of a "beautiful, comfortable, simple and practical" modern house, tastefully and economically arranged by the wife's skills as a home-maker (Bozdoğan, 1996: 317)

While carrying out this task, women also spent more time in the company of men. From the spatial point of view, the gender segregation that related to the way space was used inside the home had started to disappear (Duben & Behar, 1991; Özbay 1996, Bozdoğan, 1996). The clearest indicator of this was the transformation of the *haremlik-selamlık* distinction in the traditional house into a distinction between living room and reception room. The *haremlik* continued to be used in a multi-functional way as the space were the whole family lived and ate, and where children and guests might sleep at night. The reception room , meanwhile, turned into a room where man and woman jointly entertained visitors in the evening, and where women formally received guests in the day-time, excluding informal calls by neighbours (Özbay, 1996; Ayata, 1988). As Özbay (1996) states, these rooms, equipped with western furniture, were showpieces in themselves and a source of status.

> These rooms were not open to daily use. On the contrary, their doors were closed and they were kept clean for the guests. In the houses where there were no central heating, it was also practical to keep the doors of the reception room closed. Receptions rooms led to a closer relationship between husband and wife, but in the meantime they excluded the other members, i.e. children (Özbay, 1996: 52).[1]

In this way, the reception room served to bring women closer to the outside world within the home, softening the borders by which they were separated from society and bringing greater flexibility to the concept of privacy without altering it in essence. The use of curtains can be given as another example of this. As noted already, traditional houses achieved visual privacy by being closed to the street on the ground floor. The upper floor windows had *kafes* (mushrabbiyah - wooden lattice panels) fixed to the outside. In addition, the high walls of the *avlu*, separating the house from the street, kept women away from the public eye even when they were in the *avlu* or garden. As houses changed, the *kafes* disappeared, and the sun streamed into the rooms through broad windows. Like the release from the veil, the removal of the *kafes* from windows looking out onto the street was an important breach in the wall that had been drawn between the public and the domestic sphere.[2]

On the other hand, the visual privacy of the home, particularly at night, was now protected by curtains. The duty of opening the curtains by day and drawing them by night was generally performed by women, and this control of the visual privacy of the house shows that women remained in charge of the home in a spiritual sense. Women continued to carry out the task of recreating space which they had performed in the unspecialised rooms of the homes of the past, but in a different way - by adjusting the curtains during the course of the day, thereby recreating the visual privacy of the home. Like the other western objects and customs, curtains too were both a status symbol and the outward sign of a deeper transformation of behaviour.

5.6 Women And Their Role In Modernisation

Uğur Tanyeli (1995) states that what was modern was not the space or the artefacts in it but the people who used them as an argument or as a way of proving themselves. The term modernity, he says, should not be used to describe the state of objects but on the contrary to describe the human being in a specific historical region. Just as there were changes which had an impact on women, so women had an impact on the changes taking place. It is therefore appropriate to take a brief look at the position of women and the women's movement in the period stretching from the *Tanzimat* to the Republic.

In looking at the development of feminism in Turkey, the general trend in the literature is to assume that unlike in the West, rights were given to women in Turkey "from above" especially within the context of Kemalist reforms (Arat, 1989; Sirman, 1989; Göle, 1991; Kadıoğlu, 1994). Such an approach can only label women in advance as "passive receivers" - or to put it another way, to deny them a place within a social movement.[3] However, research done in recent years and the examination of Ottoman documents in particular[4] indicates that this was by no means a period in which women did nothing for themselves. It is apparent that in the process of the formation of the new order, women made use of the opportunities available to them in the conditions of the day to determine their demands and struggle to achieve them.

Criss (1993: 241) argues that:

> The Reform Era in the Ottoman Empire began to provide basic public education for children of both sexes - secular elementary education in İnas İptidai Mektepleri (Girls' Elementary Schools) were followed by admission of females into Rüştiye (higher primary schools) by 1862. At

> first, elderly male teachers were assigned to these institutions but the need for female teachers became imminent (probably, because these old gentlemen began to die off on the system). Hence in 1873 the first Dar'ül Muallimat (Teachers' Training School for Women) was established.

The women trained in the schools of this period and the daughters of reformist bureaucrats educated at home now questioned their position in the family and in society and began to raise demands for a different social status.

These women first entered public life through their writings and publications. "Between 1869 and 1927 there were at least 38 women's periodicals, eleven of which were owned by women, and twenty-seven of which either had a woman editor and/or major writers," notes Criss (1993: 241). Among the most important of these periodicals were *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* (1895), *Mehasin*, *Kadın*, *Demet* (1908), *Kadınlar Dünyası* (1913-1921), *İnci* (1919), *Genç Kadın* (1918-1919). These publications primarily called upon women to be good wives, good mothers and good Muslims. At the same time, they dealt with topics such as the family, social and labour life, education, health, fashion and clothing and cooking.

Faroqhi (1997: 289) suggests that the change in social life can be traced through food recipes, noting that the spread of women's magazines in the 1900s made cooking a part of the written culture, and giving the striking example of the tomato, a plant of American origin, which is today one of the most important ingredients in Turkish cuisine, but which was at that time only one of the innumerable vegetables and dishes making their first appearance in Turkey. If women could change

men's eating habits, it is surely not unreasonable to assume that they could play a leading role in bringing about change in other respects too. Meanwhile, the thought that eating tomatoes might once have been a status symbol appears quite modest when compared with the status symbols of today.

Both the writers of the women's magazines referred to above and the authors of readers' letters are seen to question the role of women, veiling, marriage and women's place in social life. They also display an awareness of the feminist movements in the West.

Some women in major cities began to leave the home and enter social life in various ways, from moonlight walks by the Bosphorus to shopping in Beyoğlu (Güzel, 1985). A significant number of women were obliged to enter working life in an active manner during the First World War. Women also became organised in various associations and made their influence felt in the public domain. This continued through the period of the War of Independence, when women both struggled for the salvation of their country and took up an active role as bread-winners.

In summary, women began to fight for the rights which they gained as a result of the Republican reforms back in the *Tanzimat* era. They came to defend every innovation which fitted in with their demands. In other words, they became modern. Faroqhi, indeed, underlines this, saying that all these developments cannot be considered separately from the role of women in urban society (ibid: 302). Faroqhi also stresses that high culture in Ottoman society was not just handed down, but that there was a constant exchange between the culture of the intellectual and political elite and the verbal culture of the people (ibid: 293). It can thus

be assumed that the changes inevitably influenced the lower classes as well.

From the angle of housing, living in small, modern homes responded to the basic demand for monogamy and need for closer relations between husband and wife and a smaller family structure. It would have been unthinkable for women who were constantly questioning their own clothing, the veil and veiling, not to champion changes that would bring about modernisation in the houses in which they lived. Moreover, given the growth of communications in the city, it was entirely natural for women who were able to go out to various places to want to introduce the things they saw into their own lives. In this case, we may say that as women changed, so did the home, and as the home changed, so did women in a continuous process.

In the cult novel *Kiralık Konak* by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, which uses the life of a *konak* (a large, old house) as a symbol for the changes of the era, the young girl Seniha, one of the novel's chief protagonists, says to her grandfather:

> Siz zannediyormusunuz ki, ben ömrümün sonuna kadar böyle bir evde kalacağım? Böyle bir memlekette, etrafımda böyle bir halkla? Bin güçlükle senede ancak beş on kat esvap yaptırarak, ara sıra Ada'ya misafirliğe giderek ve pazartesi günleri aşağıda salonda birkaç manasız ve yavan davetli bekleyerek yaşayıp gideceğim? Hayır! Büyükbaba, ben o kadar basit ruhlu bir kız değilim! Çok okudum; çok öğrendim; çok düşündüm, çok tahlil ettim. Biliyorum ki, hayat denilen şey, içinde doğup büyüdüğüm bu hapishanenin dışında, gürültülü, geniş, aydınlık, acayip, hazin, neşeli, düz, yılankavi, inişli yokuşlu, bitmez tükenmez bir sahadır. Oradan bin türlü sesler işitiyorum; bu sesler her biri

> başka tarzda, bir başka lisanda bana, 'gel' diyor. Kendimi güç zaptediyorum. Fakat, bugün değilse yarın mutlaka bu seslerden birine doğru koşacağım, mutlaka. (page 122)

Here, Seniha complains of the meaninglessness of her role and describes the house in which she was born and lives as a "prison". One day she plans to escape to the outside world about which she has read, which is calling her with a thousand voices.

It is only to be expected that a woman expecting a lot from life, who says that she will certainly one day answer the voices of life calling to her, will embrace modern life in all its dimensions. Unfortunately, Seniha was created and has been perceived as a negative character, decadent, pitiless and devoted to material things, symbolising the collapse of a past way of life. Neither the historians of literature who have evaluated Karaosmanoğlu's work, nor the architectural historians who have used it to illustrate the ideological importance of the home, have commented on the unbreakable link between women and housing, or on how the collapse of both (i.e., modernisation) becomes one of the most important indicators of social change. *Kiralık Konak* is worthy of fresh study if only for the character of Seniha.

Given the concept of morality of the time, one would not have expected such a character to be drawn in a positive light. The point to which attention is being drawn here is that the modernisation of women - her desire to take her own decisions in connection with herself and her life, is a rebellion against the traditional, just as the new forms of housing were a rebellion that changed the way of life and family structure of the past. It is no coincidence that the change in housing and the change in women are treated together. Nor is it any coincidence that the same

approach can be seen in the novels and plays of subsequent periods. In Refik Halit Karay's *Bugünün Saraylısı*, Ayşen persuades the family which she comes to live with to move into an apartment, thus bringing about its demise. Memduh Şevket Esendal's novel *Ayaşlı ve Kiracıları*, written in the early years of the Republic, relate the home lives of ordinary people and again decadence is reflected through the immorality of women (Akatlı, 1985).

Turning to the period after 1950, plays such as Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *Balıkesir Muhasebecisi*, Turgut Özakman's *Pembe Evin Kaderi*, Ahmet Kutsi Tecer's *Satılık Ev* and Çetin Altan's *Tahteravalli* all portray people who sell their old homes in order to keep up with the times, and who move to apartment buildings and fill the rooms with uncomfortable furniture and nasty objects in line with the fashion of the day. In all these plays, women are portrayed as irresponsible people, shrewish and given over to gambling, who are inclined to cheat their husbands and who put pressure on the latter to provide them with a more flamboyant way of life (Şener, 1985).

In short, the negative aspects of modernisation have always been seen as related to women and housing and hence to the family. Attempts to describe the disintegration which modernisation has brought about have repeatedly focused on the "negative" changes in women.[5] As such changes posed a threat to patriarchal society, it was inevitable that they should be regarded in a negative light. The important thing is that the reality of change in women was perceived and recorded.

In conclusion, the modernisation of Ottoman/Turkish society from the mid-nineteenth century onwards brought with it, alongside many other changes, a major transformation of the culture of housing. First

western items of furniture found their way into homes as objects of display, then the unspecialised rooms of the past became specialised and underwent changes that brought the home, and hence women, closer to the public domain. Women who were already questioning their positions and way of life favoured modernisation and hence supported these developments, in time becoming the main implementers thereof.

It has been noted that as of the 1950s the apartment building became the leading form of housing for all sections of society. Within the limits of an essentially patriarchal system, women forged new kinds of relations in society and the family. The topic of the apartment and women is dealt with in the following chapter.

Notes:

1. The researcher can recall this pattern from her own childhood in the 1960s. In later years, although the distinction was not so sharp, the armchairs in the salon would be covered with sheets or other such coverings, which would only be removed when guests were present. In other words, the salon belonged to the guests, and formality continued in terms of whether or not to display the real upholstery of the armchairs.

2. İrfan Orga recalls his mother's reaction, after moving to a new address, to the removal of the *kafes* and to going out into the street with her face uncovered. See İrfan Orga, *Portrait of a Turkish Family*, New York, 1957 (*Bir Türk Ailesinin Öyküsü*, İstanbul, Ana Yayıncılık, 1995).

3. It is naturally in the interest of official history and ideology for people to believe that women's rights were provided from above, and for the reality to remain hidden. But it is strange that feminists should have accepted this point of view and thereby ignored a movement that really existed. However, this is not the subject matter of the present study.

4. One of the most comprehensive pieces of research to have been done on this topic is Serpil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*, *Metris Yayınları*, 1993.

5. According to a common popular belief, the approach of the day of judgement will be marked by an increase in *bina* and *zina* - buildings and adultery. It is, of course, women who are viewed as the main perpetrators of adultery, and who are most punished for it. From the point of view of our subject matter, the link which the belief makes between a moral collapse symbolised by women and the disappearance of the peaceful, quiet ways of the past symbolised by a growing number of buildings is striking.

CHAPTER 6

APARTMENTS AND WOMEN

As stated in the preceding chapter, apartment buildings first appeared in Istanbul, in areas such as Şişli, Galata and Beyoğlu (Pera), inhabited mainly by the well-to-do and by Levantines. Işın (1985: 555) relates how Jews settled in the Fener-Balat district created a primitive form of apartment building known as the *yahudihane* (Jewish house), the size of the home being in inverted proportion to the density of the population. Işın relates how the renting out of these buildings room-by-room became a source of revenue for members of the minorities. He nevertheless argues that the spread of apartment buildings began, notably in the heavily-populated Beyoğlu area, not with the goal of securing income for a family, but with that of developing a modern symbol of its social status.

Population growth and scarcity of land inevitably lead to an increase in the price of housing. Yücel (1996) notes that around the turn of the century, room and housing rents and real estate prices in Galata and Pera could be two or three times higher than for comparable property in Paris or London. He therefore underlines the economic incentive to a dense, multi-storey development in and around these parts of the city.

Kıray (1979) for her part views apartments as the homes of workers and public servants, the newly-created middle classes of modern

industrial societies. In her view, the rise of the apartment runs parallel to the manner and pace with which the middle class is created. In Turkey, the first trend towards the emergence of a middle class took place among those working in lines of business dependent on the West and among medium-scale traders - both groups formed largely by non-Muslims. According to Kıray, the spread of apartment buildings in Beyoğlu and non-Muslim neighbourhoods was not motivated by imitation or social values based on religious and ethnic roots; rather, it derived from the emergence of a middle class in line with the growing numbers of people employed in organised places of work such as new banks and companies. Apartment life also spread in the Muslim community when the same conditions came into existence.

Balamir (1994) believes that the apartment building came to be the dominant form of housing culture not due to any preference within society for a certain kind of housing but for objective reasons like lack of capital and lack of land where infrastructure was available.

Tanyeli (1995), on the other hand, argues that it was not so much the arrival in the country of a new architectural repertoire (that is, the first examples of apartment buildings) which made the apartment modern but the new people who used it as the means for a demonstration of taste. What is modern is not the apartment itself but the people who use it to vindicate themselves, to make a statement. Because the apartment formed a sharp contrast with the traditional Turkish home, it was readily adopted as a vehicle for this cause.

As may be seen from the above, there are two basic views on the reasons for the spread of the apartment building. One view sees the cause as economic, including the idea that the apartment was the housing form

of a newly emerging social class. The second view emphasises the role of the apartment as a symbol of status and modernity, and of the people who saw it as such.

However, these two groups of causes cannot be regarded as independent of one another. It is only natural that a reality which comes into existence on account of socio-economic change should become an indicator of a new way of life, and constitute a model for all sections of society. The fact that apartments first came onto the agenda in Turkey at a time of conscious political and social change can be assumed to have intensified the interaction between socio-economic conditions and popular taste. The all-pervasive spread of apartment buildings in subsequent periods was due to objective forces, but the belief that apartment buildings offer a better way of life continued to exist (Tanyeli, 1995; Şenyapılı, 1998; İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu, 1996).

It will be useful to examine the development of the apartment phenomenon from its beginnings to the present day in separate periods.

6.1 The History Of The Apartment Phenomenon

6.1.1. Period 1: 1850-1950

The apartment buildings of the early part of this period were generally of few storeys. They were family buildings which brought together two or more mutually-related nuclear families, in a sense resembling the life of the traditional house - a curiously Ottoman formula (Bilgin, 1996). However, in the Galata-Pera area in particular some very different examples can be found. Yücel (1996: 309) remarks that these buildings, with tennis courts in their private gardens, collective laundries on their terraced top floors, servants' rooms, multiple staircases, elevators and *avlu* (courtyards), and special merchants' apartments containing offices on the lower floors and workshops and homes on the upper,

rivalled anything to be found in Vienna and Paris in their size and impressiveness.

One of the best known examples of such buildings is the *Doğan Kardeş* apartment building, which can still be seen standing in one of the side streets around the Galata Tower. Formerly named Helbig and then Botton Han, this block is believed to have been built in the late nineteenth century. A white-gloved janitor kept guard at the door, and when a guest was received a second uniformed janitor would escort the visitor to the door of the flat in question. There was a tennis court, since converted into a car park, and the gallery was surrounded at basement level by four separate laundry rooms and a *hamam*, all of which later became coal-cellars. On the top floor, there was a servants' room for each flat. In former times, most of the occupants are said to have been Jews.[1]

The status and exclusivity of this lifestyle and the form of housing which provided it naturally constituted an ideal for other sections of society too.

The apartment buildings constructed as of 1923, the year of the declaration of the Republic were, as noted in the preceding chapter, rather different. Balamir, in his article on the spread of apartment buildings *'Kira Evi'nden 'Kat Evler'ine Apartmanlaşma: Bir Zihniyet Dönüşümü Tarihçesinden Kesitler* (1994: 29-33) reports a negative response particularly in the capital Ankara to the apartment buildings of the early Republican period. People who had managed to acquire the land, materials and technology to become the owners of apartments in times of privation were looked upon with suspicion, he says. The law laid down that for a building to be considered an apartment block it had

to bring in rent, and apartment buildings were termed *kira evi* (rent houses) even in professional publications. This state of affairs alone - different from the present-day situation - carried negative connotations, he concludes.

In spite of all this, Balamir continues, the number of "rent houses" in Ankara, where rents were high, continued to grow. These were not multi-storey edifices but relatively modest buildings by the standards of today which sought to have some architectural, aesthetic value. At the time, nevertheless, they were the largest investments on the market and the most exciting structures for architectural circles from the point of view of design, technology and production. They found their way into architectural magazines.

Balamir adds that in the eyes of society, the single-owner apartment building was equated with its owner. Its size, appearance, plan, materials and common spaces represented the owner. Apartment buildings were given the names of their owners. It was a matter of pride to be the owner of a fine, quality apartment building. This social conditioning required that apartment buildings be designed by capable architects and constructed with care.

The first Turkish operetta, *Lüküs Hayat* (A Life Of Luxury) (1933), merits a brief mention in this context. Composed by Cemil Reşit Rey, it is set in a Şişli apartment and satirises the luxurious lifestyle of the woman of the house with her cubic furniture. In the process, it paints a portrait of a way of life which, as the very title of the musical suggests, is quite different from what people were used to.

Meanwhile, within both society and the official and professional discourse of the day, the preferred form of housing was the house-and-garden. From an architectural perspective, Bozdoğan has this to say:

> "...as far as the design of the house is concerned, the irony of modern architecture in Turkey is that the authoritarian and étatist early Republican period has produced the detached villa or row-house types while the relatively more liberal period after 1950 has witnessed the introduction of high-rise slab block construction, the notorious symbol of the sterility, banality and repetitiveness of high modernism or "international style" as it literally proliferated in every country in the post-WWII period" (1994: 5-6).

6.1.2 Period 2: 1950-1980

This period is marked by the multi-party system, the liberal economy and mass migration from urban to rural areas.

Between 1940 and 1950, the urban population rose by 20.1%. As of the 1950s, the political transformation proposed by economic policies that radically altered the political authority-market balance mechanism caused a rapid transformation in the social field. Between 1950 and 1960, mass migration from rural areas to the cities resulted in an 80.2% increase in the urban population (Özcan, 1998).

In the previous period, housing construction was generally an individual investment. With the 1950s, this changed.

After World War II, rising land prices made it too expensive for citizens to live in one or two-storey buildings on single plots. However, as Ali Türel recounts in his study of housing in Ankara *Ankara'da Ruhsatli Konut Sunumu* (1996: 60-62), the construction of multi-storey,

high-density buildings required greater organisation and finance, and it would be difficult to sell each apartment building to a single purchaser. In 1954, the first legal arrangements were made allowing for housing to be sold flat-by-flat. (The Flat Ownership Act - *Kat Mülkiyet Kanunu* - followed in 1965). This resulted in the rapid spread in Ankara of a form of housing production carried out by small entrepreneurs known as *yap-satçı* (build-and-sellers).

In 1968, Türel goes on, a plan regulating the height of buildings (*Bölge Kat Nizamı Planı*) was approved for Ankara, leading to an increase in the height of buildings in central areas. The increase in the permissible height of buildings under the *Bölge Kat Nizamı Planı* benefited, above all, the landowners. Many plots which had previously been unattractive to the *yap-satçı* could now be built on, thanks to agreements under which the owner of land made it available in return for future ownership of some of the flats in the apartment building to be constructed on it. Besides one and two-storey buildings, taller buildings too were demolished in order to build new ones with a greater number of flats, a process justified, says Türel, on the grounds that although the existing buildings had not completed their physical lives, their economic lives were at an end.

However, in the construction of these new apartment buildings, the concern of the past for architectural and aesthetic factors disappeared, and matters of form came to depend on the decisions of the contractor.

> In both detached and block types of build-and-sell housing, the apartments are built according to certain basic planimetric designs which can be classified by the size of the lot. These designs are determined not by the priorities of a particular discipline but rather by intuitions the

> undertakers of the building projects had developed concerning the middle class life-style. These buildings were built upon a reinforced concrete frame with traditional brickets; as for the finer details, whatever menu the market provided was made use of (Bilgin, 1996: 486).

Besides the apartment buildings produced by the *yap-satçı*, there was also mass housing provided by a small number of cooperatives. However, these were little different from the other apartment buildings. Although they were built as a collective enterprise on large plots of land, they usually took the form of large horizontal or vertical apartment blocks repeated at steady intervals throughout the available space (Bilgin, 1996: 485). Unlike today's mass housing projects, there were no common facilities.

The other form of housing to make its mark on this era was the *gecekondu*[2]. Initially, attempts were made to suppress these makeshift shelters built illegally on publicly-owned land surrounding the city by force. Eventually, however, under various laws such as the *Gecekondu* Act No. 775 of 1966 (Şenyapılı, 1996) and construction amnesties, they were legalised and the necessary infrastructure was put in place. As a result, says Şenyapılı (1996: 14), the economic and political position of the inhabitants of the *gecekondu* became more solid, their incomes increased and as the children and women joined the working population the families came to earn two or more incomes. Accordingly, Şenyapılı goes on, the rooms of the *gecekondu* increased in size and number, the quality of the buildings was improved with whatever means were available, the immediate surroundings were tidied and cleaned and these single-storey, whitewashed houses with gardens came to possess all the most widely-used durable and semi-durable consumer goods. Şenyapılı

adds that the general appearance of the *gecekondu* areas changed too, the once poverty-stricken neighbourhoods taking on the feel of ordinary, tidy urban neighbourhoods.

The *gecekondu* are mentioned here because certain relationships between the women of the *gecekondu* and the women of the apartment building are referred to later on.

6.1.3. 1980 And After

This is the period of mass housing. A new era began with the Mass Housing Act of 1982. The Act defines mass housing as 200 units in places where settlement plans have been approved and the sites are ready for construction, 750-1,000 homes in areas of at least 15 hectares which are not yet planned, and the associated workplaces and facilities and areas for common use (Keleş, 1983: 24). Such housing may be built by either the public or the private sector.

Mass housing built by the private sector has tended to take the form of relatively high-quality, large-scale settlements unrelated to the surrounding areas. These settlements tend to offer a lifestyle outside the actual home (Bilgin, ibid). Türel (1989: 150) speaks of homes constructed to high standards, situated on large estates and priced to suit high-income groups being marketed through newspaper and television advertising not only to the inhabitants of, say, Istanbul but also at the national and international level. The quality living environment and quality of these estates, Türel says, makes flats there more expensive than low-rise, detached homes in the same vicinity.

Besides these developments, the post-1980 era is marked by the construction on the outskirts of cities by the state and by cooperatives of

apartment buildings for the middle classes. In the gecekondu areas, meanwhile, apartment buildings have been constructed by *yap-satçı* , who obtain the land from the owner of a *gecekondu* in return for the ownership of some of the flats in the building to be constructed. Owners of *gecekondu* that are not attractive enough for the contractors have often been transformed into small-scale apartment buildings by the owners themselves, together with other family members. This is a much sought-after solution, as it makes the family the sole owner of such a building (Şenyapılı, 1996: 20-21).

In conclusion, it may be said that while apartment buildings have undergone various changes since the period when they first made their appearance, they have always been wanted for the sake of a better life, and this preference continues to this day. Although economic realities have made this type of housing obligatory, people have always believed that one could live better in them. Thus Bilgin (1996: 485) sees the reason for the spread of apartment buildings to medium or small cities and towns with low or even decreasing population densities in the spread of information opportunities and consumer norms and the increasing attractiveness of modern living patterns.

6. 2 Apartment Life And Women

6.2.1 The Apartment And The Traditional House

There are significant differences between living in an apartment and living in a traditional house. First of all, the link between the house on the one hand and the street and garden on the other ceases to exist in the case of the apartment. With a view to making the most efficient use of the available plot, the area of land covered by the building has been

increased, and the amount of open land left around the building has been reduced to a minimum. Planning laws insist on a minimum gap of only six metres between two apartment buildings[3]. There is hardly any distance between neighbouring buildings, and visual privacy is infringed. The hierarchy of public and private spaces that exists in the traditional house and its surroundings is no longer president. The interiors of these homes, meanwhile, have diminished in size so as to ensure the maximum possible number of flats on each floor. There are only two or three rooms, and the kitchen in particular has become smaller - indeed, the kitchen is not infrequently treated as a troublesome necessity and located where it looks out on the ventilation shaft, like the toilet and bathroom (Özbay, 1996: 53). Although more recently-built apartment buildings do not exhibit this last defect, kitchens usually remain smaller than the other rooms. Şevki Vanlı (1995) explains that central heating brought with it the arrangement in which an L-shaped living room at the front of the flat is separated from the bedrooms at the back by the bathroom, kitchen and staircase. The *sofa* disappears to be replaced by the corridor. Long narrow balconies resembling corridors are far from meeting the need of the home for open space, lack of storage space often results in these balconies being used for storage purposes, and typically the balcony becomes a space where the rubbish bin stands, and where washing can be hung out between two buildings. Research shows that balconies are a common cause of complaint (Pamir, 1982; Dülgeroğlu-Yüksel *et al*, 1996; İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu, 1996).

The most definitive characteristic of the traditional house is the unspecialised nature of the rooms. In the apartment, every room has a specific function. This specialisation continues vertically through the

different floors of the building, as rooms with the same given function are located above one another. This causes problems from the point of view of audial privacy, particularly in connection with design "solutions" particularly common where there are three flats on each floor which result in the bedroom of one flat sharing a wall with the *salon* of another.

Cansever (1994: 189) argues that specialised rooms result in a loss of space and increase the square-metres-per-person requirement. Bektaş (1998: 17) gives a different example of space loss. He points out that bathtubs, which he says are extraneous to Turkish bathing culture, take up roughly 1.5 square metres of each flat and increase construction costs.

The average apartment is designed with an idealised form of the nuclear family, as it is in the West (Bauer, 1996) consisting of a father, mother and two children, in mind. In practice, where there are a larger number of children, or when visitors come to stay for the night, or a relative comes to live with the family, attempts are made to resolve the problem with bunk beds or by using the settee in the *salon* as an extra bed.

In his book *Cehenneme Övgü*, in which he recounts the totalitarianism of daily life, Gündüz Vassaf explains how the apartment building results in millions of people doing exactly the same things, how their lives will be subject to exactly the same environment, how any creative effort they may make to reorganise the use of space will be prevented and how the fact that everything has its right place creates a sense of order - a false reality - in the environment. To him, the apartment is to the citizen what the barracks is to a soldier. The barracks is an extension of the uniform, serving to instill an unconditional discipline, and human beings have become civilian soldiers, living in the

barracks of the apartment building. The rooms do not only determine what activity may be carried out in them, but at the same time affect both our feelings and the form of our relations with one another. Linked to each room are certain feelings and types of social behaviour. Rooms separated by function make sure that people's thoughts, conversation, feelings and relationships are kept as closely in line as possible with the designated function (1992: 62-67).

Vassaf's views may appear an exaggeration, but they do reflect a reality: the mechanical nature of apartment life. The lives of apartment-dwellers, who have lost the flexibility to make additions to the home, are dependent on the space around them. Both Kuban (1996) and Bektaş (1998) argue that people no longer dream about homes but that they simply buy a roof to shelter under.

The relationships with immediate neighbours and the neighbourhood in general that formed part of life in the traditional house also change with the advent of the apartment building. The link with street and neighbourhood that was formerly on a horizontal plane moves onto a vertical plane. Moreover, while ties with the neighbours persisted in the 1960s and 1970s, they are now close to complete eradication, particularly in the case of city centre apartment buildings and luxury homes. People completely unacquainted with one another have come to live under the same roof. The close relationships formed in the 1960s and 1970s with the local grocer, greengrocer and butcher have also disappeared, as consumer and shopping habits change in favour of the supermarket and hypermarket. Thus a link between the home and its immediate environment is undone.

In short, the apartment building has entirely done away with the life style that went on within and outside the traditional house, and replaced it with its own rules. However, traditions and habits change less rapidly than the physical environment has, and society remains nostalgic for the old form of house or for houses with gardens (Pamir, 1983, Dülgeroğlu-Yüksel *et al*, 1996; İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu, 1996). In both the *Tanzimat* era and the early Republican period, apartment buildings were opposed as being inappropriate to the concept of privacy of the Turkish family, and houses-with-gardens were seen as the best solution (Balamir, 1994; Tanyeli 1996; Bozdoğan, 1996). It is curious that today, as the former type of housing has become the norm, and the latter has remained a nostalgic ideal, even architects recommend the gardened home as the ideal form of accommodation (Dülgeroğlu-Yüksel *et al,* 1996; İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu, 1996). Another contradiction is to be found in the fact that *gecekondu*, although they are houses with gardens, are belittled, and those who live in the *gecekondu* wish to live in apartments too.

In order to understand better why, despite being so different from the kind of house people aspire to or are accustomed to, the apartment has become the living space of the majority of society, account must also be taken of the benefits which it provides.

6.2.2 The Benefits Of Apartment Life

To begin with, it has to be made clear that for a period of thirty years society was presented with no alternative other than the apartment or the *gecekondu*. It could therefore be argued that people have had little choice in the matter of housing form. In the period after 1980, however, as noted above, apartments on luxury estates were able to fetch higher prices than

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detached houses with their own gardens. Moreover, neither the study carried out by Haluk Pamir in Ankara in 1982 nor the research done by Yurdanur Dülgeroğlu-Yüksel *et al* in Istanbul (*Toplu Konutlarda Nitelik Sorunu* - Quality Issues In Mass Housing) and İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu in Ankara (*İnsan, Evi ve Çevresi - Ankara'da bir Toplu Konut Araştırması* - People, Homes And Their Environment - A Study of Mass Housing in Ankara) in 1996 with the support of the Mass Housing Administration (*Toplu Konut İdaresi)* revealed any evidence that living in apartment buildings was in itself an unwanted state of affairs - even though it was emphasised that the ideal home would be a house with a garden. The complaints of those surveyed centred on matters of design - they wanted the areas around their homes to be quiet and peaceful, the flats themselves to be of adequate size, the storage spaces and balconies to be adequate and practical - and on technical issues such as the quality of the construction, plumbing and wiring and the ease with which doors and windows opened and closed. In these matters, there was little difference between the responses of male and female interviewees, even though in general women tended to have more complaints about their houses (İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu, 1996). The fact that "the users seem to be affected more by the physical factors of the houses than the visual or psychological and social factors" (Dülgeroğlu-Yüksel *et al*: xiv) supports the view that there is no significant opposition to the apartment as such.

All this leads to the conclusion that there must be certain benefits of the apartment building which make this way of life in some way attractive, and that providing physical deficiencies can be done away with, there are no major objections to apartment life.

To begin with, apartment buildings are cheaper to live in than detached houses (İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu, 1996), as they bring a large number of homes under the same roof, and in accordance with the article 20 of the *Kat Mülkiyeti Kanunu* expenses for maintenance, heating and other needs are shared among these homes[5].

Secondly, apartment buildings in urban areas are close to the city centre and hence to educational and entertainment facilities, shops, transport routes, hospitals and other amenities. Those located on specially-designed estates have their own social facilities, making life easier and improving its quality. Research shows that these factors are of considerable importance (Ayata & Ayata, 1996b; Dülgeroglu-Yuksel, 1996; İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu, 1996).

Thirdly, apartment buildings typically have a *kapıcı* "on duty" to carry out tasks such as operating the central heating, cleaning the building and its environment, watering the garden, putting out the rubbish, distributing bread twice a day, running shopping errands, ensuring the security of the building and collecting dues from each flat. "He provides order," notes Gül Özyeğin (1996: 149). It is a benefit of the apartment life that so many services can be bought for a small amount of money.

The fact that apartments, built on a single level, are easy to clean may be another reason for choosing them (Özbay, 1996; İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu, 1996). During the course of a survey[5] carried out in 1996, in which the researcher took part, she took the opportunity of asking the interviewees and their close relatives and friends what they considered the chief benefit of living in an apartment to be. Of 68 women to whom this question was put, 53 gave ease of cleaning as their reply.

As another factor can be cited the continuing role of the apartment as an indicator of social status. According to Ülker Berke Çopur[6] , the inhabitants of the *gecekondu* on the edges of the city and the *kapıcı* in the basement of the apartment building form the lower strata of the social structure, creating a continuity at ground-level, while the middle class, situated above them in the social hierarchy, occupy the upper storeys, preserving the hierarchy in the spatial sense too. Özyeğin (1996: 150) suggests that the middle class is the class that feels the most vulnerable and that its members are therefore much more sensitive than members of other classes in setting up class distinctions and preserving their status.

Finally, the fact that the apartment is designed for the nuclear family may be considered one of the reasons for its relatively unquestioning acceptance by Turkish society, which, as seen in Chapter 3, has long been built principally around the nuclear family.

An examination of all these reasons for the benefits of the apartment building shows that all of them address the expectations of the middle class woman of today. It is emphasised in the work of Ayata and Ayata (1996b: 62) that middle class women are more open to the outside world and therefore take a greater interest in economic problems and shopping, that the relatively low costs of apartment living are therefore of importance to them, and moreover that they wish to preserve their social status as it is a determinant factor in the education of their children - a point also made by Özyeğin (ibid). Apartment life provides for this need. Women also wish to live in a closer relationship with their husbands and children (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1982b; Olson, 1982); apartment life makes this possible too.

Women, because they are at home, are the real bosses of the *kapıcı* (Özyeğin, ibid: 151). Having somebody to do their jobs for them gives them a sense of supremacy similar to that enjoyed in former times by the elites who did not have to go out into the street. The apartment also has benefits for women in that it simplifies the domestic tasks of cleaning and maintenance which are usually imposed on them (İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu, 1996; Özbay, 1996).

Hence the conclusion can be drawn that women want the life of the apartment (Özbay, 1996: 53). A male-dominated society may have sought to ignore women's ability to accept innovations that are in their interests (Kıray, 1964), but in the case of the apartment too it emerges that they are not passive receivers but play important roles in spatial changes - just as they play the determining role in migration from village to town (Tahire Erman, 1996).

6.2.3 The Changing Life Of Women In The Apartment

From the point of view of women, the two most important changes that occurred in the period, starting in the 1950s, when apartment life became more widespread were improvements in education opportunities (Özbay 1979, 1990) and work outside the home (Kazgan, 1982; Kıray, 1985). Even so, the proportion of women receiving education remained lower than for men (Özbay, 1990), and work was not satisfying for working women because of the double workload they incurred (Çitçi, 1982). Urban women have been observed to enjoy higher standards of living than village women, and educated women than uneducated ones (Özbay, 1990). Against this, the obligatory participation of women in production activities, as exists to this day in village life and as was

described earlier in the context of the traditional house, disappeared, and among women non-participation in production came to be a status indicator (Özbay, 1990). Women achieved status of this kind through their marriages and the social status of their husbands. Education was important because it made possible a better marriage (Özbay, 1990) and helped a woman to be, in line with the social ideology still widespread at the time, a well-equipped mother and a good wife (Criss, 1993).

The apartment was a place which could provide women with the life they wanted. The spacious *salon* was arranged as a sitting and dining room, filled with handsome objects to reflect the status of the family and hence of the woman, and kept closed except when there were visitors (Ayata, 1988). Meanwhile, one of the bedrooms would be turned into a living room where the woman did her daily chores and sat and talked to her neighbours. However small the kitchen might be, a table would be squashed into it, so that it became the room where the family at their meals and generally gathered together (Bozdoğan, 1996; Özbay, 1996; Pamir 1983), for the kitchen and the hearth had been the family's gathering point since very long ago.

Jobs such as the preparation of food and clothing that took up a large part of the woman's time in the traditional home became less significant, as most of the said items became commercialised and customs started to change. In this sense, the women's burden was lightened (Kıray, 1985). At the same time, there was less cleaning to do, thanks to the reduced size of the home and its relative ease of cleaning, to the use of gadgets such as washing machines and vacuum cleaners, to smaller families and to the establishment of a daily routine as the rhythm of life changed. All in all, while housework remained the responsibility, it became less

onerous, and women found themselves with free time, a concept that was strange to the woman in the traditional house.

After finishing their daily tasks in the morning, women went to "reception days" (*kabul günleri*) in the afternoons. These were meetings of women, at which they opened up the *salon* to their guests and showed off their homes and their skills as housewives. Each woman would choose a particular day to host such a gathering each month. The point is that these were formal occasions and the participants came from circles appropriate to the social status which the woman had achieved thanks to her marriage and her husband - often, they were the wives of men from the husband's circle of acquaintances (Del Vecchio Good, 1978; Kandiyoti, 1982; Kuyaş, 1982). Özbay (1996) suggests that these meetings served as a kind of school of modernisation.

Besides these meetings, women might have informal contacts with their neighbours - meeting, for example, for morning coffee - and take part collectively in forms of entertainment arranged specially for women. Some nightclubs staged "women's matinées", with singers and belly-dancers, and women would prepare their own food and go to these, taking their small children with them, reminiscent of the trips to the *hamam* of an earlier era. There was still sexual segregation here[7] (Kıray, 1985), but there was a difference as the waiters who served beverages and some of the singers were men. These occasions were probably a continuation of the practice according to which some theatres in the modernisation period organised performances exclusively for women (Faroqui, 1997: 276).

The evenings would be spent listening to the radio or visiting neighbours. Men took part in such visits, and instead of the invitation

coming from the host, the guests would send round news that they were coming (Özbay, 1996). This was another advantage of keeping the *salon* closed except when there were guests: even sudden visitors could see how clean and tidy the housewife was.

Meanwhile, it had become quite normal for women to go out to restaurants and cinemas with their husbands. Kağıtçıbaşı (1982a: 15) describes these as shared activities, and Kıray (1985: 84) underlines that women had started to organise such activities. While men continued to have their own forms of entertainment (the coffee-house, football matches, nightclubs), joint entertainment became more common. This was also the period during which a trend started towards family summer holidays.

Kıray (1985: 86) explains these trends in terms of the commercialisation of the activities in question and of the distinction created by urban life - in contrast to the tradition pattern - between work and entertainment or free time activities.

The advent of television was another important development that altered the woman's way of life in the apartment and the family's form of entertainment. The first television broadcasts in Turkey came towards the end of the 1960s. At first, only certain homes had a TV set, and neighbours would come in to watch (The term *telesafirlik* - formed from the words *televizyon*, meaning 'television', and *mısafirlik*, meaning 'visiting', was coined by a TV presenter of the time and became part of the language). Thus while the television had a function as a status symbol similar to that performed by the piano and other household objects in the era of modernisation, it also provided the woman of the house with a special status. Later, as all families came to own television sets, this

special status disappeared. What remained was that, as the television was placed in the *salon*, the latter was opened up to use by the whole family. Further, the television tied men, who until then had gone out for their entertainment, to the home.

> In contrast, television and video have created a new and important trend, making it possible for the household to participate together in leisure activities which take place at home. Men can go to the cinema or to a nightclub alone, but since they watch television or a video with the family, it is impossible for them not to share their wives' reactions and impressions. Family members who leave for work very early and come home at supper time may not share their experience at work, but the song or film on the television programme naturally brings them together (Kıray, 1985: 86).

The 1980s brought more changes to Turkey. New economic conditions, the increase in the proportion of educated men and women, the increase in communications and the adoption of the western consumer society as a model resulted, in the words of the prime minister of the time, in Turkey "leaping to a new age". This too thoroughly affected the lives of women. Women ceased to regard the role of housewife as conferring status, and complained less about having to work outside the home as well as in it. For many women, it had in any case become essential to participate in production and earn a living (Özbay, 1990; Kıray, 1985). This obligatory participation in working life may have reduced men's authority (Kuyaş, 1982: 184), but it did not provide women with high status and power (Kuyaş, ibid: 186), and it did not change women's domestic roles - they continued to be responsible for the

housework and the care of children. However, it did mean that they spent less time at home, and needed assistance with these domestic tasks.

> Generally, however, the two worlds of the working woman are separated from each other. If she does not use wage labour for household work, the woman cannot relinquish any of her domestic roles. Quite a long time has still to pass for the traditional female roles to change, or for men to participate in such domestic activities. (Kıray, 1985: 83)

The upshot is a proliferation of childminders and cleaning ladies, a rapid increase in the number of private nursery schools and a new wave of gadgets - dishwashers, microwave ovens - to make life easier at home.

A recent piece of research (Onat, 1996: 162) shows that role-sharing is highest in childcare, at 34%. Men tend to assist women more as the level of education rises. But the roles have not changed, and it is a case not of men and women sharing tasks but of women being helped by men (O. İmamoğlu, 1992; Onat, 1996). This is a mirror image of the situation in the public sphere, where women have come to participate in greater numbers, but which nonetheless remains a male domain.

The kitchen has regained its importance in the home as a place where the products of technological innovation are housed. Vanlı (1995) explains this in terms of progress in women's rights or of the whole family entering the kitchen; however, it is no less likely that designers have started to take into account the fact that the kitchen is used for dining in, or that the best way to market a home is thought to be to appeal to the importance people place on its physical quality, which is most apparent in the decoration and fittings of the kitchen and bathroom. Indeed, kitchen features and size have become key selling points for

post-1980 apartments (Özbay, 1996), while in older apartments alterations and improvements are most commonly made to the kitchen. Women have opened up every part of the home to their guests (Ayata & Ayata, 1996b; Özbay, 1996). One reason for this is that women believe they have made every part of the house attractive enough to be shown off; another is that they now themselves select and invite the people who are to visit them, and specify the time of the visits. The formal meetings of the past have made way for more informal and friendly gatherings. For women living in apartments, it is not neighbours but friends that are important (Ayata & Ayata, 1996a, 1996b; Acar, Togan, 1996). In this way, relationships with neighbours have changed - they have become people one meets on the stairs, in the lift or in the car park, without always knowing which apartment they live in (Dülgeroğlu-Yüksel et al, 1996). A tragi-comic situation arises here, for while speakerphone doorbells are being introduced to protect the building against outsiders, salespeople and beggars, those living in the apartments are themselves strangers to one another and cannot tell the protected from those they are being protected against. This trend is particularly apparent in the upper middle class. One reason for this may be that women of this class are more likely to go out to work, as a result of which their colleagues and schoolfriends take priority (Ayata & Ayata, 1996a).

By way of entertainment, the fact that the evening is the only time when working partners and their children can be together may have resulted in a preference for not going out. Economic conditions and the variety of television channels may also play a role here. When it comes to the forms of entertainment in which housewives participate, the importance of economic factors is clear.

As of the 1980s, the reception days began to give way to a different form of meeting among women, going by names such as "gold days", "silver days" or "money days". On these occasions, a group of women meets, usually once a month, in the home of one of them not just for refreshments and chat but also to present one member of the group, chosen by lot, with a certain amount of money or gold decided in advance. Over a period of time, every member of the group has her turn, so this becomes an indirect form of savings. Özbay (1990: 150) emphasises the change revealed in the way money has become the top item on the agenda even when women meet up socially in their spare time. Among upper middle-class women, the same change can be detected in the spread of gambling. Recently, indeed, a custom has arisen whereby the woman who hosts the gambling party does not actually play, but is paid a certain amount of money in return for the cost of providing food and drink. Some women have adopted this as a way of earning pocket money.[8]

Özbay (1990: 148-152) states that the rise in inflation has caused some families to move down the social scale and/or forced them to work even harder than before to maintain their positions. This, she goes on, leads men to escape their family responsibilities and put them on the shoulders of women. Accordingly, daily shopping, the payment of bills and dealing with the educational and health problems of the children have become the woman's responsibility, and even if the women do not have regular jobs, they spend a large part of their time outside the home (Ayata & Ayata, 1996a).

For women to go out of the house and enter the public realm, even in this way, is an important change. It is another important change that men

should be helping women in their tasks. However, as already indicated, neither of these changes amount to an undermining of the roles which men and women respectively are traditionally expected to perform, or to the disappearance of the public/private dichotomy separating them. Rather, it is a matter of participating from the outside, and even in this sense the change in the traditional pattern is slow-moving. Accordingly, while examining the way women live in the context of apartment life, it will be useful to focus on factors that affect their status.

6.3 The Position Of Women In Apartment Life

In addressing the position of women in apartment life, it will be useful from time to time to make comparisons with the lives led by women in the traditional house. Such an approach will assist in highlighting the links between spatial changes and gender roles and in revealing the impact of socio-economic change in this respect.

A start can be made by looking at the way society and women themselves regard women. As in the past, women are still not viewed as independent individuals but are defined in terms of the family to which they belong. Under the Civil Code (Changes are being considered, but have still not been made), the man is considered the head of the family (Article 150), and as the person responsible for the home and all who live in it, he has the final say in where the family will live (Article 319). With such a legal framework in place, changes such as the entry of women into the organised workforce as a result of economic realities or the putting into practice by well-educated women of more egalitarian models of the family have little validity for the great majority of women. It is

contradictory that while women with higher education tend to determine the place where the family will live (Ayata & Ayata, 1996), when they move into an apartment they have to name their husbands as head of the family in the *aile beyannamesi* (family declaration) which has to be filled in for the administrator of the building and the local *muhtar* (neighbourhood administrator).

In marriages, the family still has the final say, and even in cases where couples fall in love and decide to get married independently, the ceremonial processes of asking for a daughter's hand, getting engaged and staging a wedding ensure that symbolically at least the marriage goes ahead under the supervision of the family. Here, the concern of families for status comes into play (Kıray, 1985). This shows that the system of young people marrying persons of their own choosing but with the approval of their families observed by Fallers & Fallers in 1976 continues to hold sway, the difference being that the newly-married couple move into a separate home. The latter point ties in with Kıray's observation about the authority of the father being weakened and male offspring gaining independence (Kıray, 1976). Meanwhile, mothers have come to take on a greater role than in the past in decisions and activities related to the marriages of their children (Özbay, 1990). It should not be forgotten, however, that in the past marriages were first arranged by the mothers of the prospective partners (see Chapter 4), so there is nothing new for women in this. The difference lies in the social status which the marriage of her children can gain a woman. As Özbay says (1990: 151), women are not encouraged in Turkey to seek a social status of their own in society; they can only advance their status if the social status of their family rises. Hence, Özbay goes on, women are obliged to concentrate

their efforts on the increase or decrease in the status of other members of their families. In these circumstances, the level of education of the children, the quality of their marriages and even the homes in which they live must, like the professional status of their partners, be considered factors that increase or decrease this status.

While women who go out to work have greater bargaining power in relations within the family (Bolak, 1996; Kuyaş, 1982), the woman's right to spend her own earnings depends on how well she is educated and how egalitarian relations within the family are. For the great majority, important decisions on spending are still taken by men. Moreover, by handing over their incomes to men, women actually seek to compensate for the damage done to the men's masculine self-esteem when they cease to be sole bread-winners (Bolak, ibid).

For all these reasons, living in an apartment does not change the fact that a women is perceived in terms of the family to which she belongs - women themselves take the same stand point when displaying their own status, and make the situation of their children a part of the status equation too.

6.3.1 The Role Of Women In Spatial Organisation

In defining a woman's status, another significant factor apart from her family is the space in which she lives. In the traditional house, the woman every day rearranged the unspecialised spaces of the home, and as the person principally responsible for its spatial organisation she was its owner in a spiritual sense. For the woman of the apartment, this spiritual satisfaction has started to depend on the home being located in a good area (Ayata & Ayata, 1996; Dülgeroğlu-Yüksel *et al*, 1996), on its

physical attributes (Dülgeroğlu-Yüksel *et al*, ibid) and on the objects it contains. The concept of privacy has been changed so that all corners of the home - kitchen, bathroom and bedrooms included - have been opened up to guests (Ayata & Ayata, 1996; Özbay, 1996; Kıray, 1985). It has become almost a tradition to give visitors a tour of a new home. In this sense, the entire home - and not just the western objects which were a status symbol in the modernisation era - has become an artefact reflecting the woman's taste and modernity. Educated upper middle class women who go out to work reinforce this situation by spending significant amounts of their earnings on their homes (Ayata & Ayata, 1996b). Further evidence of this is provided by today's women's magazines, which consistently contain several pages on home decoration.

Determining the times when guests may come is another way in which the woman affirms her spiritual ownership of the home. Further evidence of continuing acceptance of the woman's role as the main arranger of space can be observed in the persistence of the tradition whereby household items needed by newly-married couples, and particularly kitchen equipment, are bought by the bride's side and presented as dowry, and also in the primary importance given to kitchens and bathrooms in the show-homes of today's housing market.

> An educated, home-oriented female population wishing to spend mainly on the appearance of the home will acquire a unique and considerable importance on housing and housing politics in the near future (Ayata & Ayata, 1996b: 64).

6.3.2 Gender Division Of Labour

With the increased importance of the entirety and overall appearance of the home, the relationship between the woman who lives there and her

daily activities has changed too. In the traditional house, the contribution of the woman to the production and reproduction of the family - that is, her labour - was visible and in this sense valued. In the early history of apartment life, the woman's labour became invisible. The specialised rooms and the state of the kitchen in the apartments constructed by the build-and-sell developers were in sharp contrast to the exaltation of the housewife in the ideology of the period.

> The contrast in middle-class women's life between the "modernity" they lived in their large 'saloons' and the unhealthy condition they worked in small kitchens and bathrooms for long hours like slaves was significant. This contrast, in fact, reflects the double standards of the industrial society towards women (Özbay, 1996: 54).

The situation described here has changed now that the kitchen has once again become the most important space in the modern apartment, and that some new luxury homes are even being built with American-style open-plan kitchens. Özbay (1996) states that these developments have made women's labour visible again. She adds that larger or open-plan kitchens make it possible for the various members of the family to share the housework, and for the woman to share her life in the kitchen with her husband and children. Kıray (1985: 87) suggests that the use of various new household gadgets and technologies and the commercialisation of domestic consumer needs might lead to a sharing of domestic tasks and a closer relationship between the partners. It has to be added, however, that the sharing of household tasks with other members of the family may result in the value attached to housework being raised merely on account of the person (i.e., the man) performing the task (O.

İmamoğlu, 1992). Meanwhile, as there is no change in the view that the woman has prime responsibility, the idea that the work which she does can be done by anybody could lead to a further downgrading of its perceived importance. Moreover, the performing of household tasks by the man does not reflect a fundamental redistribution of roles but is rather a matter of taking part from the outside, and as Onat (1996: 162) says, the basic division of labour is between the gadgets in the homes. Men who take part in the housework by using these gadgets may, again, raise the status of certain household tasks only on account of their own status. In the family encyclopaedia *Hayat*, published in 1964, it is suggested that men should help women with the household by using mechanical equipment, and that as this equipment has a technical side to it, men may be better suited to using it (p.23). It seems that this way of thinking is still with us, albeit latently. One television advertisement targeting a female audience offers a product called "Mr Muscle" to carry out tough domestic tasks such as opening blocked drains and cleaning the oven and bathtub, suggesting that male strength is best suited to such jobs. In other words, if a task is done by a man it is valuable; if it is done by a woman it is not (O. İmamoğlu, 1992).

It is worth emphasising at this point that social values continue to consider it strange for a man to do housework, that men who do perform such jobs are looked down on, at least in jest, and that they generally try to do it when there are not too many people around.

Housework has also become a professional occupation. Research carried out by Kongar and Berksoy (1990) in Istanbul showed that at least half of the middle and upper middle class families regularly made use of cleaning ladies. Not only women going out to work but many

housewives had other women to do their housework for them once a week or once a fortnight. It is ironic that housework, having lost so much value in the eyes of women themselves that they have it done by others in return for payment, should once again gain in value when viewed as a professional occupation. The cleaning ladies are generally either the wives of *kapıcı* (Özyeğin, 1996) or women living in *gecekondu* (Gümbetoğlu, 1996; Onat, 1996). From their point of view, the paradox is that while the work they do in their own homes is without value, when they perform the same tasks in other people's homes they earn money for it. What goes unchanged is the understanding that the women of both social groups have the main responsibility for the housework and are unpaid workers in their own homes.

Another contradiction is that the middle class woman should bring into the privacy of her own home, and even at times, place her children in the care of, a woman of lower class whom she looks down on and whose children she would certainly not like her own children to form friendships with (Ayata & Ayata, 1996b; Özyeğin, 1996). The status gained seems to explain this behaviour. The *gecekondu* woman and her family, on the other hand, do not consider that when she goes in and out of the strangers' house there is any harm to her morals or the honour of her family. Even if they have more conservative family structures, people of this class, as pointed out earlier, have not been able to afford to shut their women up in the home. While taking part in production activities, women of both classes are expected to fulfil their reproductive functions completely, and are left alone to carry this double burden amid a wealth of contradictions.

6.3.3. Women's Solidarity Networks

Another aspect of the contradictions which women face is to be found in their family relationships and especially in the reorganisation of the patterns of solidarity needed particularly in connection with their reproductive activity.

As previously noted, apartment life provides women with the nuclear family life she wants, with an environment in which she can form close and emotional ties with her husband and children. At the same time, however, it brings with it a certain isolation (Kıray, 1985; Bolak, 1990).

> Living in separate houses undermines direct responsibility, while close relations strengthen mutual assistance as an alternative. In this system, the relationship of parents and children seems to be closer and that of siblings to be weaker. But whenever necessary, all relatives are involved in the process of mutual assistance (Kıray, 1985 :82).

The urgent circumstances that Kıray emphasises are when the family faces social and economic problems and especially the needs of women in connection with their own domestic roles (Özbay, 1990 - 154). As, unlike in the West, the state does not take measures to resolve the problems faced by society in such cases, links with relatives take on considerable significance in keeping the family on its feet. It is women, principally, who organise these relationships. Cooperation and a division of labour persist, particularly in matters of childcare, even when the women involved live in separate homes.

According to Özbay (1990: 155), this collaboration serves to perpetuate the power relations among women: women living in apartments are obliged to organise once again, and of their own accord,

the hierarchical structures that existed in the past in the traditional house. There is a difference, however, in that women prefer to establish these relationships with their own relatives. Relations with the family of the husband are generally less close, and the woman seeks the assistance she needs from them only when her own relatives are not available (Acar, Togan, 1996; Bolak, 1990). Although living in separate homes has reduced the tension substantially, the clash of daughter-in-law and mother-in-law continues. Meanwhile, because it has necessarily become a power relationship, the clash between mother and grown-up daughter can be much more intense (Özbay, 1990). A role may also be played in these conflicts by the different expectations of and demands of better-educated daughters compared to their less well-educated mothers (Kandiyoti, 1982b). Kıray (1976) nevertheless demonstrates that where mothers are obliged to live with one or other of their children, they prefer to live in the homes of their daughters and sons-in-law, rather than in the homes of their sons and daughters-in-law. In spite of the conflict between mother and daughter, having a mother supporting her increases a woman's bargaining power *vis-à-vis* her husband in the home (Bolak, 1990: 243). It may be said that women who lack the support of their own families are in the weakest position with respect to men in apartment life. The disappearance of relations with the neighbours, and of the life of the street and neighbourhood that were a natural extension of traditional structures, greatly increase this weakness. The most obvious example of this is violence against women.

It is a fact that domestic violence is widespread, and continues to exist in secret, not only in the lower socio-economic structure but in all sections of society to an extent which can neither be explained in terms

of factors such as illness, unemployment, poverty or alcoholism, nor be prevented while women remain silent and employ containment tactics (Yüksel, 1996: 346). While women are becoming less silent as they gain economic independence and as their level of education rises, shame and self-blame may still prevent the situation from coming out into the open. Another reason for silence is the lack of anywhere to go to, with the exception of a couple of centres (Criss, 1993):

> The police simply refuse to get involved with domestic violence. Further, they, along with many women, are conditioned to believe that husbands have the right to physically punish their wives as much as they have the right to engage in sex, in this case called "love" (Criss, 1993: 255).

The isolated life of the apartment is the greatest accomplice to this violence. Due to a concept of staying out of family quarrels, to the stance of the police described above, which only reinforces the said concept, and to the approach of women themselves, other people tend not to take any action[9]. And so the spatial "heaven" in which the woman lives with her nuclear family can easily become a hell. The woman knows nobody who can help heal her wounds, and this leads to psychological disorders (boredom, worry, fear, loss of sleep) and a variety of psychosomatic illnesses, sometimes even to suicide (Yüksel, 1990: 343).

6.3.4. Motherhood

Another reason for the crises which women go through relates to her duties as a mother. One of the greatest contradictions which a woman experiences emerges when she becomes a mother (Oakley, 1993: 199). As pointed out above, in order to fulfil this duty, women recreate

structures of solidarity and power among themselves, even if they live in different homes. Working women in particular often have to find women of a lower class to look after their children. These are women who they think will have a negative effect on their children and whom they would like to set up barriers against. But the contradictions do not end here.

> The ideology of motherhood in the 1980s emphasised women's continuing major responsibility for children and their development and, as a corollary, the male breadwinning role and the unacceptability of full-time maternal employment(...) Motherhood continued to be mainly constructed according to the dominant ideology. The mother was regarded as the person responsible for the child's development and for giving the child time and attention. Moreover, in order to be a good mother, it was also necessary to enjoy it. (Brannen & Moss, 1993: 208-210)

In enjoying their motherhood, women made this the most important vehicle of their self-image. It was stated earlier (see Chapter 3) that Aries (1973) regarded the emergence of the modern family in Western society as a consequence of the development of the concept of childhood. In this context, the importance given and value attached to the child is of primary importance. In Turkish society too, the value attached to children has changed. In her valuable work on the subject (Sex Roles, Value of Children and Fertility, 1982b), Kağıtçıbaşı posits that the value attached to children in societies organised along traditional lines in which modern economic structures are absent is a matter of benefit - the child will be able to assist the family economically while still a child, and at a later stage will be able to provide the mother and father with security in old age. In this environment, hope of having a male child is high, and large numbers of children are the norm. As levels of income, education and

urbanisation increase, and the number of children per family declines, the function of the child as a source of affection and a completion of the family gains in importance (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1985).

From this perspective, it may be said that women living in traditional houses attach value to their children in accordance with the economic benefits the child represents and the increase in their own status within the family that the existence of the child brings about. On the other hand, women living in apartments value the psychological aspects of their children - their friendship, their role as a source of joy. In this sense, the contribution of the parents to the child also becomes important (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1985). When this is combined with the dominant ideology which sees women as the main providers of their children's needs, it is easy for working women to feel guilty that they are neglecting their duty or failing to fulfil it properly (Brannen & Moss, 1993).

This sense of guilt is constantly reinforced by the dominant ideology. A striking example of this came in a speech by Haluk Yavuzer to parents completing a course at a school for mothers and fathers in Mersin. According to Professor Yavuzer, "The woman who gives birth to her ninth child in the fields is to be esteemed more highly than the woman who has a degree in pedagogy but who puts her child in the care of a minder at the age of two" (see newspaper *Cumhuriyet*, December 8, 1998).

The same feeling of guilt may also stem from the failure of the living space in providing the things the child needs. The urban environment and the home are full of designs that respond to the needs of adults in particular. Choice of school has become more and more important in providing children with a good education, and instead of going to the

nearest schools, children are today sent by service buses to schools in far-away districts, with the result that they are away from the home from early morning until evening. The majority of home designs are implemented in a way which ignore children and their requirements[10] (Gökmen, 1996: 447). Interiors do not provide sufficient room for play, and many children have to share their rooms with other people - or at least with a sibling. The homes are too high up for a woman to be able to keep an eye on her children playing outside, and play areas are also too small, or unsafe, for example because of traffic (Gökmen, ibid: 449).

Children have therefore been forced first out of yards and gardens, then off the streets, into the narrow confines of the home. Research done by O. İmamoğlu (1979) among children of various income groups living both in apartments and in *gecekondu* revealed that for all children the concept of the ideal home was a building with few storeys and a garden. The *gecekondu* children cited these same characteristics of their homes as the ones they liked the most. Gökmen carried out similar research in İzmir and "the mothers and children interviewed said that they would ideally like to live in a single or two-storeyed house with a garden and many rooms" (Gökmen, 1996: 451).

In this respect, women feel sorry for their children. They consider their own childhoods to have been happy ones, and think they have been unable to provide the same for the own offspring (Acar, Togan, 1996). At the same time, they impose limitations on what their children can do inside the home. Some of these are essential - for example so as not to disturb people in the other apartments - while others, as User notes, are a matter of choice:

> The importance of real estate as a security and a status symbol results in the tendency to acquire

> it even at the expense of depriving young children of certain necessities and in the behaviour of decorating the interior in such a conspicuous manner that no living space is left for the children. The interiors of the houses are dangerous for the children and they cause serious accidents as well as limitations of movement which constitute a high risk for the psychological development. The space left for the children inside these houses is so limited that it may damage motor and cognitive development and cause behaviour disturbances and school problems (User, 1996: 461).

Thus yet another contradiction is added to the contradictions of women's lives in apartments. They are responsible for the entire development of their children, they take an increasing interest in their children's education (Kıray, 1985; Özbay, 1990) and as their own education increases they approach the task of child care in a more knowledgeable manner and "attempt to carry out tasks of mothering with high degrees of professionalism and expertise by seeking out information about their children's development from a variety of sources including childcare manuals" (Woolet & Phoenix, 1993: 216). Yet at the same time the fact of having to go out to work and the physical structure of the home mean they have to make an extra effort if they are to bring up their children in the way they have read about and seen, and this in turn further increases their emotional ties with and expectations of the child. Ayata & Ayata (1996a) expect there to be more and more child-centred families in future.

Since the child's development and achievements will to some extent be seen as the woman's own success, they figure prominently in her self-image centring on children and motherhood. Kandiyoti (1982a:114-115)

reports that in a study carried out among working women only 12.2%, when asked what a woman should be like, chose the option of "being self-sufficient and self-fulfilled persons as the ultimate goal". Kandiyoti goes on:

> Apart from this last exception, all mothers insisted on not compromising their qualities of being a good spouse and mother, whatever their other achievements might be. Thus it is possible to conclude that mothers have developed new role strivings without making any fundamental changes in their traditional domestic expectations.

For women who are housewives, this situation is of even greater importance, given the falling value attached to housework, the increase in spare time and the inevitable central role of children in the lives of mothers who do not go out to work. In a nutshell, the function of the child for the woman living in the traditional house was to increase her own status within the family; for the woman living in the apartment, it is to increase her own status in society, and to provide emotional fulfilment.

To sum up, the apartment, which entered Turkish housing culture towards the end of the nineteenth century as the chosen style of residence of the elite, became as a result of economic and social changes from the 1950s onwards, the only choice available to the middle class. Despite all the criticisms, the fact is that this form of housing offered various facilities for easier living and was still perceived as a status symbol. Women gained most from the benefits of apartment life, but were also the group most affected by the negative effects if had on ways of life.

Needless to say, the changes in question were not merely a result of spatial changes. The change in the country's economic system from a

pre-capitalist one to a capitalist one, the effects this had on urban life, changing social ties and consumer habits and working life, the spread of education and the consequent shifts in taste and preferences - all these had a combined impact on changes in living patterns. While all these factors had positive consequences for the lives of women, the roles which women were given within a male-dominated social system remained the same. In attempting to fulfil these roles, women were obliged to seek status in terms of their families, their children and the physical environment, specifications and contents of the homes in which they lived. Apartment life provided opportunities for this. However, women still needed the psychological autonomy and solidarity, the visibility and value of their labour and the spiritual satisfaction of being able to organise and reorganise space all of which they had experienced in the traditional house. They therefore tried to recreate these in different ways and to attach them to their new environment. The contradictions of a life half-way between the modern and the traditional were the price women had to pay.

> (...) upper middle class women seem to be at the crossroads since they keep a delicate, but so far an advantageous balance between traditional prerogatives and more modern participation patterns (Kandiyoti, 1982a: 116)

Notes

1. For more information, see *Şehir Dergisi*, no. 15, May 1998, pp76-80.

2. See Tansı Şenyapılı, *Gecekondu - Çevre İşçilerin Mekanı* (The *Gecekondu* - The Place Of Marginal Workers), Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Faculty of Architecture, 1981.

3. Planning Act (*İmar Kanunu*) No. 3194, Regulation applying to the Settlement of Unplanned Areas within and outside the Borders and Adjoining Territories of Municipalities, Article 14.

4. In recent years, with increased use of natural gas, the number of apartment buildings which have opted for individual heating arrangements for each flat has risen. This is usually proposed by dwellers who complain that although they pay for heating their homes are not warm enough. It is also expensive. However, considering that flats are likely to be smaller than detached houses and that heat loss is less due to the existence of adjoining, heated flats above and below, it is probably still cheaper to heat an apartment individually than to heat a detached house.

5. See Prof. Dr. Feride Acar, Prof. Dr. İsenbike Togan and project workers Nilgün Kennedy and Elif Bilgin, *Babasoylu Toplumlarda Kadın Dayanısma Örüntüleri* (Women's Solidarity Networks In Patriarchal Societies) (Ankara, 1996) - unpublished research carried out with the support of the Directorate General for the Status of Women and Women's Issues.

6. Interview with Ülker Berke Çopur, January 15, 1996. Çopur is a professor of architecture and a former member of staff of the Middle East Technical University, now teaching in the United States.

7. This form of entertainment usually took place on Wednesdays. At weekends, there were "people's matinées" to which the whole family could go. As a child, the researcher frequently attended such occasions with her mother and female relatives.

8. The researcher is unaware of any research into this topic, but has observed these developments among her own relatives and acquaintances.

9. The researcher very recently witnessed a striking case. A man was killed by a prostitute in the apartment building where she lives (see newspaper *Zaman*

Ek 2, December 9, 1998). Neighbours (including the researcher) were questioned by the police as witnesses. Most said they had heard a noise but "assumed it was a family quarrel". Even more disturbing were the *kapıcı* 's words. Two years ago, he said, he had called the police out to such a quarrel, but the woman who opened the door had said, 'What are you here for? It's nobody else's business'. After that, the *kapıcı* said, he had never got involved.

10. One of the latest examples of the way in which the needs of children and women are ignored in apartment life is the tendency not to turn on the building's central heating in the day time on the grounds that fuel is expensive. This practice is entirely in accordance with the daily routine of men, and totally ignores those who stay at home.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The home is assumed to have been created by women. In hunter-gatherer societies, women were the equals of men. They had equal access to knowledge of the environment, and controlled it as much as men. As producers of surplus production, they were even superior to men (Spain, 1992). The home, which was created in order to store the surplus production, was the woman's place. In the course of history, power relations changed. Women lost their status and ended up shut inside the home which they had created. In all forms of housing to be built on Anatolian soil from ancient times up to the founding of the Republic, the confinement of women to the home was seen as an indicator of wealth and power. This achievement of status by reducing the status of women was, to borrow a phrase from Engels, women's greatest defeat in history.

Social change brought with it changes in women's daily lives. Today, women take part alongside men in many areas of social life. Nevertheless, women have still not regained the status they lost with the advent of settled agriculture and animal farming. Without much questioning, they have accepted the home, the space which once best represented their supremacy, as their main place and as the place of their

low status, and they have likewise taken on the domestic roles required by it.

Further, women have started to regard this gender division of labour and space which has been imposed upon them as the sole vehicle for raising their own status. For it is men who are the owners of the surplus production of women (both within and outside the home) (Walby, 1993: 188), and the status of those who do not own the surplus production is always low.

The reason why the surplus production is owned by men is entirely a product of the patriarchal system. Despite all the rights which they have achieved and all the changes that have come about in their living conditions, women today live in a patriarchal society. "By patriarchy, we mean a social system in which the status of women is defined primarily as wards of their husbands, fathers and brothers" (Muller, 1977: 7). In the patriarchal society, woman are viewed as second class citizens and kept under constant oppression. "The oppression of women means, first of all, a patriarchal set of power relationships which robs women of autonomy and equality" (Muller, ibid). The absence of these basic rights results in the continual exploitation of women. "By exploitation, we mean the alienation of labor power (e.g.: slavery, corvée labour, serfdom, conscription) or the product of labour (e.g.: taxes, rent, wages, fines)" (Muller, ibid). The woman works as an unpaid, forced labourer in the home, whether she works outside it or not, and when she is employed outside the home, the professions in which women are employed in the greatest numbers, such as nursing and teaching, are relatively low paid. Women have only a limited say over their productive and reproductive activities, and this is subject to certain conditions.

In this study, an attempt has been made to examine the links between the status of women and housing, and more specifically to detail the impact of housing on the oppression and exploitation of women of a certain social class in Turkish society in the case of two particular kinds of housing which are the products of two different economic, political and social eras.

As the home is the physical theatre both of the public-private dichotomy that is the products of capitalist society and of the domestic sphere that patriarchal ideology sees as a woman's primary place, the development of housing in historical perspective was examined first, together with the ideological and cultural meanings attached to the home, and the relationship between all these and the lives of women.

The home is the place where the family, the smallest unit of society that reproduces the dominant ideology lives, and which provides the privacy required for the existent of this unit. For this reason, the development of the family in Turkey and the concept of privacy formed the subject of a separate chapter. It was explained that Turkish society has generally been characterised by the nuclear family in the past, but that the patriarchal extended family and transitional extended family forms can also be discerned, mainly in the form of webs of relationships. The position of women within these structures was described, and the effects of the type of housing they occupy on the persistence (traditional house) and reproduction (apartment) of these patterns of relationships were explored.

It has been explained how status of a woman in Turkish society depends on the family to which she belongs, and how privacy took the form of keeping women apart from society in order to protect the

family's honour. At the same time, it has been pointed out, women too came to view themselves in terms of their families - as good mothers, good wives and good housewives - and in due course added the physical environment of the homes in which they lived, together with their other characteristics and the objects they contained, to the criteria of their self-esteem, so that in their own eyes women could raise their social status and define themselves by living in a modern form of housing.

While raising their status in this sense, it has been suggested, women living in modern homes found that their domestic labour, which was clearly visible in the traditional home, had lost its visibility and value due to the specialised organisation of space, the commercialisation of many domestic production activities and the use of new gadgets and appliances. This argument has been supported by an examination of changes in the kitchen, in particular.

Meanwhile, an effort has been made to show how woman have tried to create a life-style between the traditional and the old, to explain the reasons for this and the contradictions which such a life-style entails and to describe, with reference to the home, how woman have sought to cope with these contradictions.

From all this, the conclusion has been reached that the home makes up the physical parameters of the oppression and exploitation of women in the patriarchal society, and that the changes in the form taken by the home have not done away with this state of affairs but have merely altered the forms which it takes. In other words, even though women have derived certain advantages from living in a kind of housing that is the product of a certain socioeconomic system, and even though this has brought about benefical changes in the way they live, the primary

importance of the domestic roles and reproduction activities with which women are burdened have not changed. What has changed is that the social segregation of the past has been done away with, and the woman's bargaining power within the family has been increased. This may be seen as a significant step with the context of a male-dominated society.

These gains made by women primarily depend on a higher level of education and greater economic independence. While examining the changes in spatial arrangements, it has been noted that the changing social structure has given middle class women these opportunities.

The woman of the traditional house lived in a closed, agriculture-based social structure, and so particularly for the woman there was no distinction between home and workplace. The woman was the keystone of both the family's production activities and its reproduction activities. It was also an entity that separated her from society, the sole place in which she spent all her life, without any social status of her own, but assessed in terms of the family to which she belonged. In a society in which the concept of privacy is reduced to the segregation of women, and in which threats to privacy are directly attributed to women, the woman had no other vehicle for self-esteem than the spiritual satisfaction which came from being the person in charge of spatial arrangements in the home, the woman's place. It was a system in which even the children to whom a woman gave birth were of value on account of the contributions they made to the family economy, and accordingly their gender was of great importance; a woman could only carve out a place for herself with age and with the increase in the number of male children she bore. Women's relations with their husbands were limited and their lives were lived in accordance with their relations with the other women

who lived in the house, who were relatives of their husbands. In spite of all these negative factors, the space in which these women lived also had some advantages: solidarity with other women, ties with the neighbours and a certain psychological freedom and autonomy at least in so far as the man spent all day and often the evening outside the home (Olson, 1982; Fallers & Fallers, 1976; Spain, 1992).

The woman who lives in an apartment lives in a society which has taken on the shape of an industrial society, with a clear distinction between home and workplace. The general level of education is higher thanks to the reforms of the Republic, and living standards have improved. The woman herself may work outside the home. However, within the public/private dichotomy reproduced by capitalist production norms, the view that the woman's true place is the home has not altered. Women themselves have adopted this viewpoint and have started to assess themselves in terms of the homes in which they live and the tasks which fall to them there (a good wife, a good mother). In this sense, the main difference between the apartment woman and the woman of the traditional house is that the former is not content with the spiritual satisfaction of being the person chiefly responsible for the home but has made it an additional condition of achieving this satisfaction that the home she is responsible for should be more attractive, better furnished and better equipped. This, in fact, is also a way of achieving social status: unlike the woman of the traditional house, the woman of the apartment does have a social status, even if she owes it to her marriage and to the physical attributes of the home in which she lives. In addition to the satisfaction she acquires as the chief organiser of space, the apartment woman herself decides who is to visit that space and when;

she takes pleasure in showing off the home as a whole, and she does these things in a way that give her a sense of superiority. Yet she has not been able to turn this social status into a true change of status. The relative independence associated with the nuclear family, the close and emotional relationship she shares with her husband, the nice home she lives in with a certain autonomy, the children and the fact of working outside the home and having a profession and a career do not stop her from taking on a secondary role *vis-à-vis* her husband, for the domestic roles imposed on her have not changed. A very recent piece of research carried out by the teachers' syndicate *Eğitim Sen* illustrates this in striking fashion (see newspaper Cumhuriyet, Dec. 20, 1998). A survey of 350 woman teachers in Istanbul showed that 70% carried out the housework on their own, 73% were unable to read daily newspapers and professional publications regularly due to lack of time and 78% could not find time for cultural activities like going to the cinema or the theatre. The upshot is that men's assistance with the housework remains largely symbolic, and that there is no change in the view which sees her as primarily responsible for these tasks. Another striking result of the survey was that all the women found the length of maternity leave inadequate, and 93% were unable to take additional unpaid leave for economic reasons. As many as 50% of the women wanted to be considered on discretionary leave when having their periods, and 75% wanted to be able to use their own surnames rather than those of their husbands. These responses indicate clearly how domestic roles remain the determining factors in the lives even of a group of women with a relatively high level of awareness of women's issues.

The domestic roles which a woman is obliged to take on lead to a series of contradictions in her apartment life-style. One of these contradictions comes when a woman who lives and wants to live within a nuclear family structure finds herself having to reconstruct ties with her relatives, especially for the purpose of child-minding, thereby entering into power relationships with other women. The fact is that because of the social and economic problems which a family may experience and the combination of domestic roles with the burden of working life, relations with an extended family - albeit living in separate homes - are needed, and it is generally the woman who arranges these (Kıray, 1985; Özbay, 1990). This may even be a way of escaping the solitude that has resulted from the disintegration of the patterns of solidarity among women that surrounded the woman of the traditional house and from the downgrading in women's own assessment of the importance of relations with neighbours. The woman of the apartment may be able to organise ties with her own relatives rather than her husband's, but this in turn raises the problem of tensions between mothers and daughters, with the mother seeing the marriages and homes of her children as a vehicle for increasing her own status, and the daughter resisting the mother's interventions because she wants sole responsibility for her life. Kandiyoti explains this by saying that the gender expectations of the mothers have not changed much but that those of their daughters, although in social terms they are the continuation of the mothers' generation, are more numerous and varied from the psychological point of view (Kandiyoti, 1982b: 337)

The view that the woman is the only person with responsibility for the care of her children is constantly reinforced by the dominant ideology

through the media and on all sorts of public occasions. Women are constantly trying to put into practice all the information on this subject that is imposed on them as their level of education rises. However, because of the double burden in their lives and the special nature of apartment life, they are unable to do so fully. As a result, they come to feel guilty, and this makes them more emotionally dependent on their children, leading to fresh efforts on their part to be able to see themselves as good mothers. The woman of the traditional house could raise her status within the household by giving birth to male children; the woman of the apartment defines and increases her status within society in terms of the expectation that her children will be well brought-up, members of professions and good human beings (A common phrase is *hayırlı evlat* - the child that turns out well) (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1985). The value placed on the child is in this case not one a matter of benefit but of emotional reward, but the child in any case remain a vehicle for status-seeking.

Another contradiction of the woman's life in the apartment is concerns her one-to-one relationship with the man, her husband. The isolation of apartment life leaves the woman particularly defenceless against domestic violence, which can easily turn the heaven of the nuclear family which she is trying to create into a hell. On the other hand, with rising educational levels and social status, and as the woman becomes more independent economically, there is a trend towards egalitarian relationships within the family (O. İmamoğlu, 1994).

Meanwhile, the relationships between women and the homes in which they live are also improved by improving material conditions and levels of education: as women become able to live in better homes, the general level of dissatisfaction with existing homes is reduced (Ayata &

Ayata, 1996a; İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu, 1996). Women invest more in the interior of the home, which expresses their personalities, and are able to reflect their own tastes and preferences, and this too paves the way for more harmonious, more egalitarian relationships within the family and increases women's sense of satisfaction.

What goes unchanged is that the home in which a woman lives is still a vehicle for her self-satisfaction. The same spiritual satisfaction which women achieved in the past by re-creating every day the unspecialised spaces of the traditional house and by holding sway in the sole specialised space, the kitchen, is achieved by the woman of the apartment in the little changes she makes in line with her own tastes, and in the way she has the kitchen decorated and in her choice of furniture, fittings and other objects. For the great majority of women, regardless of their level of education, their socio-economic status or the level of equality they have achieved in their family roles, the home continues to be a vehicle of their self-esteem.

Until and unless the roles imposed on women within the patriarchal system change, and women come to be regarded as independent individuals, they will be obliged to find other vehicles for raising their social status. That said, it is still a positive change that they have begun to seek status in ways that are not entirely dependent on men, in more material things, like homes and furnishings. For men too, in today's society, status is sought in similar things, for example, in the make of their cars, so in a sense the woman has approached equality here.

The women living in apartments whom this study deals with are women of the middle and upper middle classes living in apartment buildings near the centres of cities or in mass housing schemes of a high

socio-economic level. As already noted, woman are not a homogeneous group. The women who live in apartments are not a homogeneous group either. Studies by Ayata & Ayata (1996a), İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu (1996) and Dülgeroğlu-Yüksel *et al* (1996) reveal that where mass housing schemes for people of different socioeconomic levels are concerned, the apartment life-styles, relations with neighbours and spatial arrangements of people from the lower strata differ substantially from those of the others. Şenyapılı (1996), for her part, recounts how first generation *gecekondu* owners faced with increasingly difficult economic conditions in the cities and a reduction in work and educational opportunities have themselves turned their *gecekondu* into apartment buildings in order to provide homes for their children. The women living in these apartments, she notes, are obliged to live by the values of the first generation.

For these reasons, more comparative studies of the position and lives of women of different socio-economic levels living in apartments would provide very useful information. Another possible subject for study, as demographic conditions change, is that group of women who, after their husbands have died and their children have grown up and left, remain alone in apartments that are too large for them, behind doors on which their husbands' names are still inscribed. Research also needs to be done on professional women who live on their own. In addition, it would be worth investigating the extent to which the expectation that men should become home-owners gives added emphasis to their breadwinner role and so affects the situation of women and makes changes of role more difficult. Research of this kind would shed clearer light on the contradictions of the lives of urban woman of today, caught between the modern and the traditional. It would make a great contribution to the

literature, which in its treatment of women and housing to date has been limited mainly to comparisons between *gecekondu* women and those dwelling in apartments.

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