THE SOCIO-LEGAL STATUS AND PICTORIAL REPRESENTATIONS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN EARLY MODERN OTTOMAN SOCIETY

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THE SOCIO-LEGAL STATUS AND PICTORIAL REPRESENTATIONS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN EARLY MODERN OTTOMAN SOCIETY

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

The Socio-Legal Status and Pictorial Representations of Children and Adolescents in Early Modern Ottoman Society

This thesis aims to make an art historical examination of early modern children and adolescents in Ottoman book paintings that were produced from the sixteenth to the beginning of the eighteenth century. This thesis has two main focuses. The first one is to examine what childhood and adolescence were and meant for the early modern Ottomans through various literary sources derived primarily from the elite culture, and to demonstrate that the perception of childhood and adolescents depended on gender, class and age. Secondly, it attempts to illuminate the artistic conventions of representations of children and adolescents by exploring the book paintings in connection to the socio-legal and cultural dynamics of the early modern Ottoman society.

ÖZET

Erken Modern Osmanlı Toplumunda Çocukların ve Ergenlerin Sosyo-Legal Statüleri ve Görsel Temsilleri

Bu çalışmada 16. yüzyıldan 18. yüzyılın başlarına kadar olan zaman aralığında üretilmiş Osmanlı kitap resimlerinde erken modern Osmanlı toplumunun çocuklarının ve ergenlerinin nasıl temsil edildiklerini Osmanlı resim sanatı ve gelişimi içinde konumlandırmayı amaçlıyorum. Bu tezin iki temel odak noktası vardır. Birincisi; çocukluğun ve ergenliğin erken modern Osmanlılar için ne olduğunu ve ne anlama geldiğini temel olarak Osmanlı seçkinlerinin ürettiği birçok eser üzerinden inceleyerek çocukluk ve ergenlik algılarının cinsiyete, statüye ve yaşa bağlı olarak değiştiğini göstermektir. İkincisi; kitap resimlerinde çocukları ve ergenleri görselleştirirken kullanılan sanatsal teamülleri toplumdaki çocukluk ve ergenlik algıları ile bağdaştırarak tespit etmektir.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Hypothesis, methodology and sources 1

1.2. Literature review and chapter outline 9

CHAPTER 2 : THE LEGAL STATUS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN EARLY MODERN OTTOMAN SOCIETY 15

2.1 Children and adolescents in law books 18

2.2 Children and adolescents in fatwa collections 27

2.3 Conclusion 36

CHAPTER 3 : THE SOCIAL STATUS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN EARLY MODERN OTTOMAN SOCIETY 38

3.1 Children and adolescents of the palace 39

3.2 Childhood and adolescence of urban and rural populations 61

3.3 Conclusion 76

CHAPTER 4: PICTORIAL REPRESENTATIONS OF CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE IN OTTOMAN PAINTINGS 78

4.1 Images of babies and children 83

4.2 Images of adolescents 120

4.3 Representation of children and adolescents in literary works 143

4.4 Conclusion 160

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION 163

REFERENCES 170

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Audience hall of grand vizier Sokullu Mehmed Pasha 86

Figure 2. Audience hall of Grand Vizier Sokullu Mehmed Pasha..... 86

Figure 3. A woman and her son present pomegranate to the sultan 88

Figure 4. A woman and his son present a note to the sultan..... 89

Figure 5. Sultan Mehmed I punishes the soldier who stole the beehives. 90

Figure 6. A woman with her baby goes to Atmeydanı for finding justice..... 91

Figure 7. The Kıptîs complain on Kara Yusuf to Kenan Pasha 92

Figure 8. Conquest of Habb Castle 93

Figure 9. The Conquest of the fortress of Kafsa in North Africa by Haydar Pasha .. 94

Figure 10. Funeral of Nurbanu Sultan..... 95

Figure 11. Sultan Süleyman's charity works 96

Figure 12. Sultan Süleyman's charity works 96

Figure 13. The display of the hippo head..... 97

Figure 14. Procession of Süleyman I and şehzades toward İbrahim Pasha Palace.... 99

Figure 15. Ders-i 'amm in the circumcision celebration of Mustafa 99

Figure 16. Parade of *seyyid*s..... 100

Figure 17. Audience crowd 100

Figure 18. Audience crowd and the parade of prisoners..... 100

Figure 19. The poor plead for mercy by Sultan 101

Figure 20. Boys who will be circumcised..... 102

Figure 21. Boys who will be circumcised..... 102

Figure 22. Children performing a play..... 103

Figure 23. Circumcission 103

Figure 24. Charities of Yalvac Bey 106
Figure 25. Musicians and entertainers 107
Figure 26. A woman and her son on the way to bathhouse 108
Figure 27. Children in school 108
Figure 28. *Müezzin* and two children on the minaret 109
Figure 29. Circumcision 109
Figure 30. Bridal procession 110
Figure 31. A child in the garden of kiosk 110
Figure 32. *Şehzade*s and Ahmed III is in a garden 112
Figure 33. *Şehzade*s and Ahmed III watching the demonstrations 113
Figure 34. *Şehzade*s are proceeding toward the palace 113
Figure 35. *Şehzade*s are proceeding toward the palace 114
Figure 36. *Şehzade*s are in the circumcision beds 114
Figure 37. Parade of glassmakers 115
Figure 38. *Surname-i Hümayun* 116
Figure 39. The cottage of the Queen Mother 117
Figure 40. Reception of Quinn Isabella 118
Figure 41. Son of Erdel king 119
Figure 42. Procession of farmers and bakers 122
Figure 43. Procession of butchers and cooks 122
Figure 44. Adolescents from the procession of cobblers 123
Figure 45. Adolescent boy 124
Figure 46. Adolescent girl 124
Figure 47. An adolescent holding a book 125
Figure 48. Adolescent reading a book 126

Figure 49. Apprenticeship of a barber 126
Figure 50. Süleyman's shooting arrow 128
Figure 51. Süleyman kills a wild deer 128
Figure 52. Süleyman hunting with *şehzade*s 129
Figure 53. Süleyman hunting with Selim 130
Figure 54. Selim hunting with Süleyman I 131
Figure 55. Bayezid conversing with his father 131
Figure 56. The death of Mustafa 133
Figure 57. Murad III conversing with Mehmed 134
Figure 58. Ahmed III and his son Mustafa 135
Figure 59. Mustafa III and his son Selim 135
Figure 60. Süleyman and *şehzade*s proceed toward İbrahim Pasha palace 136
Figure 61. Prince Mehmed proceed toward İbrahim Pasha Palace 137
Figure 62. Prince Mehmed proceed toward İbrahim Pasha Palace 137
Figure 63. Portrait of Ahmed I 138
Figure 64. Osman II 138
Figure 65. Mehmed IV on the throne 139
Figure 66. Recruitment of children 140
Figure 67. Horse riding 141
Figure 68. Pages in the bathhouse 142
Figure 69. Sinbad is teaching to the king's son 145
Figure 70. Concubine is trying to convince the king's son to talk 145
Figure 71. Prince at hunt 146
Figure 72. Samek kidnaps Merzeban 147
Figure 73. Infant Muhammed receiving the gifts from angels 150

Figure 74. Infant Muhammed in the arms of his granddad 150
Figure 75. Infant Muhammed was feeding by his wet nurse Halime 151
Figure 76. Infant Muhammed in the arms of his mother 151
Figure 77. Miracle of date 152
Figure 78. Miracle of lion 153
Figure 79. Child Muhammed and his teacher 154
Figure 80. Child Muhammed and his wet nurse are on the way 154
Figure 81. İşretî and his servant 156
Figure 82. Figani and his servant 156
Figure 83. Molla Hüsameddin with his student 157
Figure 84. Bebek Çelebi with his servant boy 158

ABBREVIATIONS

BL	British Library
fol.	folio
IUL	Istanbul University Library
TPML	Topkapı Palace Museum Library

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Hypothesis, methodology and sources

'Childhood is the time for children to be in school and at play, to grow strong and confident with the love and encouragement of their family and an extended community of caring adults'.[1] This description of childhood from the website of UNICEF demonstrates an almost idealized modern perception of childhood and targets the audiences from the twenty-first century. Pondering upon this description together with the Instagram and Facebook photos of the parents, who are hugging and kissing their nicely dressed children for posing in a variety of places and involved in various activities, leads me to integrate this description of childhood with the photographs that were produced in the same modern society and reminds me of the concept of childhood in the modern society we are living.

Admitting that childhood and adolescence are social constructs allows us to understand that the ways children were perceived, treated and expected to behave vary across time and culture, the point of departure for this study is parallel to the instinct of linking today's photographs with the today's understanding of childhood. For the purpose of shedding light on childhood and adolescence in early modern Ottoman society, in this study, I will aim at demonstrating how and in which contexts early modern children and adolescents were depicted and will highlight what the place of the images of children and adolescent were in the Ottoman manuscripts and albums.

[1] 'Childhood Defined.'

However, due to the fact that every artwork is part and parcel of the cultural, intellectual and social environment that it was produced in, it is appropriate to highlight what childhood and adolescence were and meant for the early modern Ottoman society. For the purpose of understanding how childhood and adolescents were perceived, first, I will scrutinize the legal status of children and adolescents. In Ottoman law records, various words were used to categorize people not only according to their gender but also according to their stage of life. Therefore, I thought that the parameters to categorize and label people would have the capacity to reflect the position of children and adolescents in the eyes of Ottoman law.

Nevertheless, focusing solely on the legal point of view is not enough to understand how childhood and adolescence were perceived and treated in the Ottoman society. Since law, by definition, is normative and prescriptive, it is not able to reveal the perception of childhood in a comprehensive way. Therefore, I will attempt to focus on various literary sources that were written by the authors from different strata of society and bring their perception of childhood and adolescence into my study.

In connecting the legal, social and pictorial realms in this study, my aim is to draw a comprehensive and nuanced picture of early modern Ottoman childhood and adolescence. The legal, social and pictorial points of view are not mutually exclusive, but complementary in nature. Looking at the issue of childhood and adolescence from the legal, social and pictorial perspectives, on the one hand, will allow me to see the disagreements between these realms, and on the other hand, enable me to understand the congruent points that they have.

I will concentrate mostly on the mid fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. I will use the pictorial, legal and literary sources that were produced in this time

period. However, I will not approach this long period with the assumption that everything was the same within this time frame. Instead, as far as I can, I will try to demonstrate the change of the social and political practices regarding child rearing and perception of childhood and adolescence and artistic developments in the Ottoman book paintings. In this sense, I will try to reflect the changings that occurred throughout this time period, yet I will aim for a certain sense of continuity. Moreover, I should be indicating that my focus will be mostly on Turkish-speaking Ottoman subjects.

In this study, my aim is to make an art-historical investigation, and at the same time, a social inquiry to reveal the perception of childhood and adolescence in early modern Ottoman society. In this respect, even though my priority is on the visual representations of children and adolescents, and I am planning to use images as my primary evidence, I will also use literary and material sources to understand the childhood and adolescence in Ottoman history. In this sense, my study will include the combination of art historical and historical approaches and be conducted in an interdisciplinary way. In the end, this method will give me a chance to find out the relationship between the literary and pictorial materials and allow me to draw conclusions that will contribute Ottoman art history and Ottoman social history in general and childhood and gender studies in particular.

Throughout my thesis, by using this methodology, in other words, via analyzing socio-legal status and pictorial representations of early modern Ottoman children and adolescents, I will be suggesting that there was not a monolithic understanding of childhood and adolescence in the Ottoman world. Rather, the perception of these age groups changed according to gender, age and social status.

The methodology that I used in this study derived from a relatively new approach to art history writing. Instead of the formalist art history tradition that is based primarily on the description of the art works, I will attempt to both describe and interpret these art works within the social and cultural environment in which they were produced. For such an approach to Ottoman art and visual culture, I have been influenced most by the works of Gülru Necipoğlu, Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, Emine Fetvacı and Oya Pancaroğlu.

To underline the legal status of children and adolescents in early modern Ottoman society, I will elucidate how childhood and adolescence were described and treated in Ottoman legislation. Using the legislation as a source of discourse and praxis, I will focus on *kanunnames* (law books) and fatwa (scholarly opinions on the issues of Islamic law) collections. I will pay attention to the vocabulary that was devoted to categorize and denote people according to their gender and social status.

In the first chapter, I will deal with the law codes that were produced from the time of Mehmed II to Süleyman I as primary sources. In addition, I will scrutinize the four most prominent fatwa collections that belonged to Ebussuud Efendi (b.1490 - d.1574), who was the chief *mufti* of Süleyman I; Çatalcalı Ali Efendi (b.1631 - d.1692), who was the *şeyhü'l islam* of the time of Mehmed IV; Feyzullah Efendi (d. 1703), who was the *şeyhü'l islam* of Süleyman II and Mustafa II; and Yenişehirli Abdullah Efendi (d. 1743), who was the *şeyhü'l islam* of Ahmed III to identify the terminology describing the life stages.

Throughout my thesis, by relying on the findings in the first chapter, I will use the words 'children', 'adolescent', and 'puberty' conscientiously. Due to the fact that human nature is diverse, and that each person experiences these developmental

stages individually, I will be flexible in categorizing age groups as children, adolescents and adults instead of drawing strict boundaries between them.

At this point, I want to clarify that even though at the beginning of my studies my intention was to focus solely on children, my research drew me also to think and write about the life stage of adolescence. Although, in contrast to today's world, there was not a strictly specified life-cycle category as adolescence in early modern Ottoman society, there was a life-cycle period between childhood and adulthood that has been pointed out by many literary sources as well as by paintings. While the temporal boundaries of adolescence are difficult to identify for the early modern period, for the purpose of demonstrating the sub-categories of the life-cycle, I found it meaningful to think and write on adolescence. I believe it would be useful to bring this concept into the literature on the history of childhood in Ottoman society.

Relying on evidence from the fatwas on *hidâne* (the right to care for a child) that oblige caregivers to care for children until they become *müstağnî/müstağniyye* (a child who can eat, dress, sleep by himself/herself without needing adult help), I will call girls and boys up to the age of *müstağnî/müstağniyye* 'children'. Then, I will refer to the girls and boys between childhood and adulthood, which corresponds to one's attainment to puberty, 'adolescents'. I regard this a period between the childhood and adulthood. It was a life stage that boys and girls were considered as people who were capable of doing things that adults are accustomed to do while at the same time they were required to gain knowledge and experience about life. This brings in a further, related concept, that of *müştehâ/müştehâte* (carnally desirable girls and boys), which also corresponds to the ages beyond childhood, and which will be discussed in the following pages.

Furthermore, due to the fact that the Ottoman lawgivers gave paramount importance to the attainment of puberty (*bâliğ/bâliğa olma)*, throughout my thesis, I will use the word 'puberty' to correspond to the stage of '*bâliğ/bâliğa olma*'. As Yahya Araz and Leslie Peirce have analyzed in their articles, the attainment of puberty is accompanied by biological, psychological and mental changes.[2] Briefly, the attainment of puberty requires girls to experience the first menstruation period and for boys the first seminal emission.[3] However, one had to be at least 12 years old and if the physical signs are not visible, girls were regarded to come of age at 17, and boys at 18 according to the fatwas of Ebussuud Efendi.[4]

For the early modern world of Ottoman society, I will suggest that after the attainment of puberty, adolescents became adults. This means that they were considered as legally responsible, could menage their possessions, and were able to get married and father or mother children. To make the period of adolescence more clear, I want to compare today's conceptualization and early modern understanding of adolescence. In the world today, even though there are differences among the cultures and geographies, generally, people between 12 and 18 years old are considered in the age of adolescence, that is, in a privileged, specified developmental period. In this phase of life, adolescents are expected to prepare for the adult world through attending school and acquiring various skills. They are not expected to be ready for marriage and there are not strict boundaries between the male and female adolescent practices.

[2] Araz, '17. ve 18. Yüzyılda İstanbul'da ve Anadolu'da Çocuk Evlilikleri ve Erişkinlik Olgusu Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme,' 99-121. Peirce, 'Seniority, Sexuailty and Social Order: The Vocabulary of Gender in Early Modern Ottoman Society,' 169-196.
[3] Yazbak, 'Child Marriage: The Ottoman Empire,' 57.
[4] Peirce, 'Seniority, Sexuailty and Social Order: The Vocabulary of Gender in Early Modern Ottoman Society,' 169-196. Different notions of these age limits may be gleaned in the fatwas of other *müfti*s.

However, in early modern Ottoman society, adolescents were considered as adults in terms of real life practices and obligations, but at the same time needed to be trained and to acquire experience. In other words, they were expected to integrate into the adult world, attain puberty and get married as soon as possible, join the workforce, and to work, for instance, in family fields or be an apprentice in the shop of an artisan. Even though many adolescents, under the age of 18, today are still to be considered as children, in early modern period adolescents had to leave their childhood experience aside and integrate into the adult world more rapidly and at a younger age. There was not a specified age such as 18 for being considered as a full adult, it was probably at a younger age that one was considered as responsible for his/her deeds.

After identifying the legal status of children and adolescents, this thesis touches upon the social status of these age groups. By categorizing children and adolescents of Ottoman society as children and adolescents of the palace, and the *re'aya*, that is, the tax paying subjects of the Ottoman domains, I make a thematic investigation of each group. One of the issues the thesis considers is gender segregation and the attitude of society toward children and adolescents. I suggest that there was not a monolithic perception of childhood and adolescence in Ottoman society, yet the perception of childhood and adolescence varied, depending on gender, age and social status.

For the purpose of providing a comprehensive account on the perception of childhood and adolescence, I focus on various sources that were written by the Ottomans from diverse social backgrounds. Among these is the *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan*, which was written by a person from the military class. I also deal with *nasihatname*s, advice literature, that were penned by Ottoman religious scholars.

Moreover, I consider *Şehrengiz* poems that were written by Ottoman urban elites. In this way, I hope to be able to present an insight on how a child could be reared ideally from the perspective of religious scholars on the one hand, and how an adolescent was considered as an object of desire by some of the urban elites on the other hand. Furthermore, I deal with *Yaşname*s, which are the poems about the ages of life that reflect how a child or young person was considered by folk poets.[5]

Finally, focusing on the book paintings of the sixteenth, seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, I aim to locate the depiction of children and adolescents in Ottoman book art in order to explore artistic conventions of representing these age groups. Concerning the differences in gender, age and social status, I explore the changing attitudes toward children and adolescents in terms of gender roles, education and expectations. Furthermore, I touch upon the perception of sacred childhood, that is, the childhood of the saints and the prophet by focusing on the paintings in *Siyer-i Nebi,* an illustrated life story of the prophet Muhammed.

The pictorial sources of this thesis are those in illustrated Ottoman manuscripts and albums of the early modern period. I pay attention to the images of babies, children and adolescents in illustrated histories such as the *Süleymanname* (dated 1558)*, Şehname-i Selim Han* (the first copy dated 1571 and the second 1581)*,* the first and second volumes of *Hünername* (dated 1584, 1588) and *Şehinşahname* (dated 1581)*,* the *Surname-i Hümayun* of 1582 and 1720 (dated 1588, 1727), the *Paşaname* (dated 1623-1640). The albums of Ahmed I (dated 1610), Ralamb (dated seventeenth century), Taeschner (dated seventeenth century) and Diez (dated eighteenth century) constitute a further group of visual sources. Moreover, I scrutinize a number of illustrated literary works, such as the *Siyer-i Nebi* (dated

[5] For further information on *Yaşname*s, see Âmil Çelebioğlu, 'Türk Edebiyatında Yaşnameler,' 151-286.

1595), *Sinbadname* (dated sixteenth century), *Kıssa-i Şehr-i Şatran* (dated 1640) and illustrated biographical dictionaries such as the *Meşa'irü'ş-Şuara* (dated 1590) and *Tercüme-i Şakâik'un-nu'maniye* (dated 1618-1622). Concentrating on such different genres allows me to demonstrate various perceptions of children and adolescents that were reflected in the world of illustrated books.

Studying pictorial representations of childhood and adolescence, my attention is again on the issues of gender and social status. The thematic organization of this discussion allows me to interpret the images with an emphasis on the contexts and genres these images belonged to, and to understand the relationship between the images and the texts that were placed around the paintings.

1.2. Literature review and chapter outline

Among the works produced on history, the studies on childhood and adolescence do not occupy a large space in Ottoman history in particular and world history in general probably due to the fact that history writing, established in 19th century, considers the study of children less important, preferring instead to focus on political and military histories in the first instance. With an enlargement in scope, history writing has started to include new topics such as women, working class, blacks or ethnic minorities. The history of childhood is one of the most recent topics that was introduced by Philippe Aries into social sciences in his book *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Regime* that was published in France, in 1960.[6] The translation of this book into English was made two years later by Robert Baldick and titled as *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*.[7]

[6] Aries, *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Regime.*
[7] Aries, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*.

In his seminal work, Philippe Aries argued that childhood is not only a biological period that brings physical development, but also is a social construct that can change selon time and place. Hence, the study of childhood and children emerged as a topic that can aid historians to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the past. Establishing that there was not a special category as childhood in the middle ages, Aries asserted that in the seventeenth century, parallel to the development of schools, well-bred families started to pay attention to the caring and training of children. In this way, through the early modern period, the concept of childhood underwent changes and gave way to the modern understanding of childhood that paralleled the development of private life and the modern family.

After Aries pointed out that the perception and conception of childhood have a history and that our understanding of childhood was not the sole reality for each and every society, many historians, inspired by Aries, demonstrated the changing conceptions of childhood through times and space. [8] Among these I want to touch upon two recent works that I was inspired by and benefited from most.

The first book, *Images of Children In Byzantium,* was written by Cecily Hennessy.[9] Focusing on the various media that ranges from manuscripts to mosaics from the fourth to the fifteenth centuries, Cecily Hennessey identifies children in the paintings and writes on the conventions of representing children. Noticing the frequency of children in paintings, the author draws a conclusion that children played an important role in Byzantine society and they were significant members of community life. Furthermore, she states that because children were depicted often in

[8] Heywood, *A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times*, Katalin, *Beloved Children: History of Aristocratic Childhood in Hungary in the Early Modern Age*, Talbot, *Becoming Byzantine: Children and Childhood in Byzantium*, Giladi, *Children of Islam: Concepts of Childhood in Medieval Muslim Society*, Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500* are some of these studies.
[9] Hennessy, *Images of Children in Byzantium*.

childish poses and attitudes, there was a conception of childhood in Byzantine history.

Another study on the topic, *The Early Modern Child in Art and History* was edited by Matthew Knox Averett, and is composed of ten articles that explore children in early modern European art from different points of view. [10] Covering the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, and geographically Germany, Italy, Spain, England and France, the book deals with graphic art, painting and sculpture. The articles touch upon various issues such as centrality of children in the early modern period, differences in gender roles, childhood innocence, justice and morality. Along with the book of Aries, these two books provided me an inspiration and a methodology to study early modern children and adolescents in Ottoman paintings.

In Ottoman history, the history of childhood is a topic that has only recently started to attract interest, and the few studies that have been completed have relied mainly on the court records, literary texts, and material evidence from the Topkapi Palace. Most of the studies on childhood in Ottoman history focus especially on the nineteenth century and no one before had examined the representation of children in Ottoman paintings from either an art historical or social historical perspective. Moreover, adolescence is a concept that has rarely attracted the attention of Ottoman historians. By focusing on not only childhood but also on adolescence I have aimed to draw a nuanced picture of life cycle categories.

In 2005, Bekir Onur published *Türkiye'de Çocukluğun Tarihi: Çocukluğun Sosyo-Kültürel Tarihine Giriş* (History of Childhood in Turkey: Introduction to the Socio-Cultural History of Childhood). [11] In this book, Bekir Onur highlights the everyday life of children by concentrating on the memoirs of numerous writers,

[10] Averett, *The Early Modern Child in Art and History.*
[11] Onur, *Türkiye'de Çocukluğun Tarihi: Çocukluğun Sosyo-Kültürel Tarihine Giriş.*

scholars and poets. Without recourse to critical inquiry, Bekir Onur presents the memoirs of many late Ottoman intellectuals and tries to figure out everyday child practices of their times.

In the same year, in his master's thesis, Mehmet İnanç Özekmekçi elucidates Ottoman periodicals for children and examines the relationship between these periodicals and the formation of childhood in the late Ottoman history by political authorities .[12] One year later, in 2006, Hülya Tezcan published her book; *Osmanlı Saryının Çocukları: Şehzadeler ve Hanım Sultanların Yaşamları, Giysileri* (Children of the Ottoman Seraglio: Customes and Customes of the Princess and Princesses). [13] The book relies mostly the material culture of children in Topkapı Palace, and as its title suggests, it reveals the lives of palace children.

Among recent works, in 2013, Yahya Araz penned *Osmanlı Toplumunda Çocuk Olmak.* [14] In his book, he points out various issues related to children and childhood such as child mortality, marriages, workforce and education. His scope of analysis ranges from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century. One year later, Nazan Maksudyan pointed out a novel topic that had not yet been studied and tackled the issues of child abandonment, fosterage, orphans and state orphanages. Her book was published in 2014 with the title *Orphans and Destitute Children in the Late Ottoman Empire.*[15]

In regard to Ottoman art history, this thesis attempts to deal with a subject that has not been studied before and has three chapters in addition to the introduction and conclusion.

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[12] Özekmekçi, 'The Formation of Children in the Late Ottoman Empire: an Analysis through the Periodicals for Children.'
[13] Tezcan, *Osmanlı Saryının Çocukları: Şehzadeler ve Hanım Sultanların Yaşamları, Giysileri.*
[14] Araz, *16. Yüzyıl Başlarından 19. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Toplumunda Çocuk Olmak*.
[15] Maksudyan, *Orphans and Destitute Children in the Late Ottoman Empire.*

The first chapter deals specifically with the legal status of children and adolescents and highlights the terminology describing the stages of childhood and adolescence in law books and fatwa collections, and then examines various regulations concerning children and adolescents. Focusing on the vocabulary used by Ottoman legislators to describe the stages of life in early modern period, this chapter aims to elucidate how childhood and adolescence were described, as well as treated in Ottoman legislation.

The second chapter of my study makes clear that childhood was regarded as the age of care and provision; however, adolescence was considered as a period of integration into society. Demonstrating that the childhood and adolescence of dynastic children, the palace slaves and the subjected population were perceived different from each other, this chapter expounds on gender differences and social status as factors that create various understandings of childhood and adolescence in early modern Ottoman society.

The third chapter of my study deals with the illustrated manuscripts from various times and genres and situates the emergence of the images of children and adolescents in the history of Ottoman book art. By focusing on children and adolescents of the dynasty, the palace slaves and the urban and rural populations separately, this chapter sheds light on the artistic conventions of representing each group and reflects the changing attitudes toward the depiction of royal and non-royal children and adolescents as well as the child Muhammed. Moreover, it will show that gender mattered not only in society, but also in book paintings.

In the conclusion, I connect all these three chapters and demonstrate how images, like mirrors, reflect the perception of children and adolescents in Ottoman society, and at the same time I show how the understanding and perception of

childhood and adolescence created the artistic conventions to visualize these age groups. In this way, I will evaluate the depiction of children and adolescents in visual representations in connection to the socio-legal and cultural dynamics of the early modern Ottoman world.

CHAPTER 2

THE LEGAL STATUS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN EARLY MODERN OTTOMAN SOCIETY

By creating boundaries between right and wrong or licit and illicit, the law controls and regulates the societies in which it is created and applied. Capable of shaping the attitudes and behaviors, the law reflects the values and norms of the ruling elite on the one hand and reveals the social behaviors of the ruled on the other. For the purpose of understanding the legal status of children and adolescents in early modern Ottoman society, this chapter aims to elucidate how childhood and adolescence were described as well as treated in Ottoman legislation through focusing on *kanunnames* (law books) and fatwa (scholarly opinions on the issues of Islamic law) collections as the sources of discourse and praxis. Moreover, in this chapter, I will be demonstrating that the attainment of puberty immediately brings legal obligations and transforms adolescents into legally responsible persons.

Kanun has been regarded as a bridge of compromise between the shari'a, which was the body of Islamic law, and which was composed mainly of legislation based on the Qur'an and hadiths, and *örf, which* was customary practice.[16] Generally, in the format of imperial decrees, Ottoman *kanun*s, a set of laws, have offered a legal basis for social, political and economic life. Furthermore, they are capable not only of reflecting the administrative and political structure of the empire, but also

[16] Peirce, 'Domesticating Sexuality: Harem Culture in Ottoman Imperial Law,' 107-108. For a detailed analysis of the balancing Islamic law and customary practices by *kanun*s please see Peirce, 'Domesticating Sexuality: Harem Culture in Ottoman Imperial Law,' 104-135 and Peirce, *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab.*

shedding light on the economic, juridical, religious and social condition of the early modern Ottoman society.[17]

Ottoman *kannunname*s, books of laws, were composed of the regulations that were very sensitive to gender, status and life cycle phases. Since the main function of law books was maintaining social order, numerous norms and punishments were produced to treat various categories of people differently. In this respect, the codes in the *kanunname*s reveal the discursive legal context of the early modern Ottoman society. In this context, people of different genders, ages and class categories were named and treated differently. This gender-, age- and status-sensitive nature of the Ottoman *kanun*s enables readers to understand how the Ottoman legal system perceived and treated its subjects in general and children and adolescents in particular. By analyzing the usage of the terms to categorize people and specifying various norms and punishments solely for these specific groups, it is possible to locate the position of children and adolescents in the Ottoman legal system.

Apart from *kanunname*s, in the juridical literature, fatwa books were my second type of source I used to identify the legal status of children and adolescents. A fatwa is a legal opinion given by a chief jurist. The institution that issued fatwas had a hierarchical structure with theoretical and practical aspects. It was composed of three people: the jurist, who occupied the highest level, gave legal opinions and wrote legal manuals; the mufti, who states the position of Islamic law concerning questions and dilemmas that are directed to him; and lastly, the qadi or judge, who occupied the lowest level and whose legal role was to pronounce what the law had to say concerning an actual human situation.[18] It is also worth noting that muftis not only took the shari‘a into consideration,

[17] For the detailed studies on Ottoman law in Islamic tradition see Inalcık, ‘Kanun and Shari‘ah,’ 1-13, and Imber, *Ebu‘s-su‘ud: The Islamic Legal Tradition.*
[18] Gerber, *State, Society and Law in Islam: Ottoman Law in Comparative Perspective,* 79.

but also consider *örf*, as a result, reconcile both source of law while answering the questions directed to them.[19]

Fatwa collections have great value for social history in general and the history of childhood in particular since they are composed of the questions that were posed by the Ottoman Muslim population and dealt with many different issues concerning real lives of children, adolescents and adults as well. By reading fatwa collections one can acquire information about children's social lives, their rights, and social practices concerning their feeding, rearing, training and marriages, and can also understand the concept of childhood and attitudes toward children in the Ottoman legal system and society.

Moreover, *kanunnames* and fatwas provide a promising yet risky information base that has to be interpreted with caution. Even though they were the foundation of codes that enforced people to behave accordingly, people still had the capacity of making their own decisions, and there are many social practices that were incongruent with Islamic law.[20] Therefore, one needs to remember that law is an instrument to control and regulate society and reflects a discursive base; the choices and preferences of the people could be shaped in totally different ways. For this reason, after locating the legal status of children and adolescents vis-a-vis the law, I will discuss their social position and status in early modern Ottoman society.[21]

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[19] For a detailed work on this issue, see Colin Imber, *Ebu's-su'ud: The Islamic Legal Tradition.*

[20] For the account of inconsistency between shari'a law and Anatolian marriage practices in the sixteenth century, see Ortaylı, 'Anadolu'da 16. Yüzyılda Evlilik İlişkileri Üzerine Bazı Gözlemler,' 33-40, for further analysis on the issue of relationship between social practices and Islamic law, see Tucker, *In the House of the Law: Gender and Islamic Law in Ottoman Syria and Palastine,* Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count: Family and Society in Ottoman Aleppo, 1770-1840*, Tucker and Meriwether, *Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East.*

[21] At the beginning of my studies, Leslie Peirce's article 'Seniority, Sexuality, and Social Order: The Vocabulary of Gender in Early Modern Ottoman Society' was a guiding source for me. For the identification of the terms that mark life-cycle phases of both male and female *teba'a* of Ottoman society, please see Leslie Peirce's article that mostly relies on law books, the shari'a rulings of

2.1 Children and adolescents in law books

Ottoman *kanunname*s recognized and categorized people according to their gender, life-cycle phases and social status. Naming people according to developmental and societal positions, law books prescribed various norms and regulations. In line with their gender, age and social status and given the sensitive nature of the law books, children, adolescents and adults were labeled using numerous words that could change over time dependent to physical and social changings such as physical maturity or marriages. Ottoman law books distinguished the position of children in society. Until they reached puberty, they were not subject to law.

Since the main concern of the law books was the control and regulation of the actions of people who were responsible for their own behavior, in the *kanunname*s of the early modern Ottoman empire, the number of entries concerning children was not high due to the fact that children were not perceived as legally responsible of their deeds. The first entry that I encountered concerning children was in *Kanun-i Padişahi,* which was copied in 1488, but the exact date for its compilation is not exactly known.[22] The entry is at the section of 'Fî Şirbi'l-Hamri Ve's-Serikati Ve'l-Bühtan' (On drinking wine, robbery and slender to chastity). In this section, children were mentioned as '*sağîr oğlancıklar*' [23] and the entry indicates that there was no punishment for the fights of little children. Exempting the children from any punishment as a result of their fight, this entry does not specify any gender difference.

A similar ambiguous statement regarding the absence of gender differentiation appears also in 'Galata Zimmilerine Verilen Ahidname' (Treaty given to non-Muslims of

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Muslim jurisprudence (fetva) and *kadı* court records. Peirce, 'Seniority, Sexuality, and Social Order: The Vocabulary of Gender in Early Modern Ottoman Society,' 169-196.

[22] Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* 347.

[23] 'Sağîr oğlancıklar savaşsalar cürm yokdur.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 1, 350.

Galata) that was promulgated in 1453.[24] In the second entry, it was declared that the property of the non-Muslim Galata dwellers would not be distrained. Having been juxtaposed the material and family possessions of the local people one by one, the code indicated that '*bilcümle meta'ları* (all their commodities), *ve avretleri* (their wives) ve *oğlancıkları ve kulları ve cariyeleri* (*oğlancıkları* and their male and female slaves) *kendülerin ellerinde mukarrer ola* (should stay their hands). In this entry, '*oğlancık*' refers to the offspring of the dwellers of Galata, but there is no specification of their gender.

By using the word '*oğlancık*', the two entries I mentioned above refer to little children. '*Oğlancık*' is the word, as the form and substance, means 'little boy' and derived by adding to '*oğlan*' (boy) the diminutive '*cık*', so the word seems to be more masculine than feminine. In this regard, the usage of *oğlancık* to connote little children can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, *oğlancık* could be the special word solely devoted to refer to little boys. There may not have been a need to mention little girls, but it was understood that the entry refers male children, and at the same time alludes to female children. On the other hand, the term '*oğlancık*' might be a gender-neutral word that was used to denote not only little boys, but also little girls. The usage of '*oğlancık*' reveals that Ottoman codes did not require indication of gender when referring to little children.

Referring to the period of adolescence, '*oğlan'* is the word that basically has three meanings. First of all, it was used to point out the son of an individual. In *Kanunname-i Âli Osman,* that is, the decree whose date is disputed and ascribed to the

[24] 'Buyurdum ki, kendülerin malları ve rızıkları ve mülkleri ve mahzenleri ve bağları ve değirmenleri ve gemilleri ve sandalları ve bilcümle meta'ları ve avretleri ve oğlancıkları ve kulları ve câriyeleri kendülerin ellerinde mukarrer ola, müte'ârız olmayam ve üşendirmeyem.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 1, 477.

reign of Mehmed II or Bayezid I [25], Mehmed II recommended that statesmen address his sons as '*oğlum*' (my son) in imperial correspondence.[26]

Secondly, it refers to a life-cycle phase that suggests a transformation period in which a male child proceeds to puberty. Produced to regulate the recruitment of the *devshirme* lavy, an imperial decree from Bayezid II's time, specifies the age range that corresponds to the term '*oğlan*'. According to this decree, the boys should be fourteen or fifteen, and at most seventeen or eighteen years of old, to be recruited for the Janissary corps.[27] Another entry located in one of the copies of '*Pençik Resmi*' that are belonged to the time of Bayezid II specifies that *oğlan*s should be between the ages of ten and seventeen.[28] In the following entry, it is emphasized to the officials who were responsible for the recruitment that the status of '*oğlan*' should be required, but the boys should not be *mültehi* (a young boy who has started to have facial hair).[29] As it was stressed in the last code that I mentioned, the word *oğlan* indicates the life cycle

[25] In the first and second footnotes of his article, 'The Kanunname of Mehmed II: A Different Perspective', Baki Tezcan summarizes the publications and the discussion on this *kanunname*: The original document is supposed to have been written during the reign of Mehmed II (1451-81), according to Mehmed Arif's 'Kanunname-i Âli Osman,' as supplement of the *Tarih-i Osmani Encümeni Mecmuası*. However, Ali Himmet Berki, in *İstanbul'un Beşyüzüncü Fetih Yıldönümü Münasebetiyle Büyük Türk Hükümdarı, İstanbul Fatihi Sultan Mehmed Han ve Adalet Hayatı,* considers the document a forgery. Tezcan, 'The Kanunname of Mehmed II: A Different Perspective,' 662.

[26] 'Ve oğlum şâh-zade –Edâmellâhu Umrahû- ya hüküm yazılmak lazım gelse böyle yazıla: Ferzend-i ercümend-i es'ad ü emced, vâris-i mülk-i süleymânî, nûr-i hadeka-i Sultânî, tâcü ruûs'is-selâtin, sâhibü'l-izz ve't-temkim, mahdu lutfillah'il-Kerîm oğlum Sultan Cem -Edâmellahu Bekâhu- yazıla.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 1, 332.
'Ve havâtinden olan sultanlardan birine hüküm yazılmak lazım gelse böyle yazıla; İffet-penâh-i sütret ve izzet-câh-i devlet, dürretü dürc'is-selatin , izzetü burc'il-havakin, el-afîfetü, er-rafîatü, el-masûnetü, el-mükerremetü ve'ş şerîfetü, el-azîzetü, el-muhteremetü, al-muazzametü, eyyid'ül-havâtin, a'zamu benâ'is-selâtin oğlum Sultan Mahmud kızı Âişe Sultan –Dâmet Ismetühâ- deyü yazıla.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 1, 332.

[27] '(...) sinnde on dört on beş yaşında nihayet on yedi on sekiz yaşında ola, yeniçerilik için yazub alub zabt ve hıfz eyleye.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 2, 124.

[28] 'Ve ağırlıkdan ziyade gelen oğlan, on yaşından on yedi yaşına varınca alına. Ve eğer on yedi yaşından tecavüz edenlerin dahi ba'zında kabiliyet olursa, ol dahi alunub esir sahibine her oğlan için Hizane-i Amireden üç yüz akçe verile.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 2, 130.

[29] 'Alınacak oğlan ma'lûl ve ma'zûr ve mariz olmaya ve oğlanlık âsârı galib olub mültehi olmaya.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 2, 130.

stage of adolescence between childhood and adulthood, and the age of life that at the end of which the boys acquire their beards and move toward sexual maturity.

Thirdly, quite correlated with the second usage, the term 'oğlan' was used to connote the 'youths of the interior' (*iç oğlanlar*) who were in the service of sultans in the palace.[30] In the light of decrees that I mentioned above, they were carefully selected boys to be trained for military and bureaucratic service.

The decrees on the recruitment and *Pençik* tax (the practice of taking one fifth of the war captives as slaves for the sultan) stipulate beardless faces for the boys so as to recognize that these boys were in the life stage of adolescence. In the *Kanun-i Padişahi,* in the section of 'El-Fasl'ül-Evvel Fi'z-Zinâ ve Devâîhi' (Adultery and the causes of adultery), the codes related to the punishments of adultery stress the stage of reaching puberty. In the codes of this *kanunname*, which is generally ascribed to the reign of Mehmed II, the word '*ergen*' was used to designate boys who had reached puberty.[31] In this regard, it is possible to assume that when an *oğlan* comes of age, he started to be referred to as '*ergen*' in law books. By the same token, the term '*kız*' was used to indicate girls who had reached puberty. The usage of the words '*ergen*' and '*kız*' suggest that they were considered and treated equally, since the punishment for adultery was the same.[32] Furthermore, linked to the usage of '*oğlan*' to indicate a son,

[30] 'Ve bir Has Oda dahi yapılmışdır. Otuz iki aded has oda oğlanı ile içinde biri silahdar ve biri rikabdar ve biri çukadar ve biri tülbend oğlanı ola. Ve oda oğlanlarının zabtı odabaşısına müfevvazdır.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 1, 326.
'İç oğlan ve Has Odam oğlanına yılda dört def'a kaftan verilsün.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 1, 328.
[31] 'Eğer zina kılan ergen olursa, bin akçeye dahi ziyadeye gücü yeterse, cürm yüz akçe alına.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 1, 347.
[32] 'Eğer zina eden kız olursa, onun cürmi ergen gibi ola; azlıkda ve çoklukda ana itibar ederler.' Akgünsüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 1, 348.

apart from designating the status of unmarried girls, the term '*kız*' was used in the meaning of daughter. [33]

Identifying them by using different words and ascribing different fines as punishment, Ottoman law books placed males and females who had reached their pubescence in a different category that diverges from children, adolescence and married adults. Similarly, '*er*' and '*avret*' were used to indicate married men and women, respectively. As in the case of the '*ergen*' and '*kız*', the scale of the fine prescribed for '*er*' and '*avret*' was the same.[34] In addition, being subjected to the same penalties, the male slaves were referred to as '*kul*' and the female slaves as '*karavaş*', but there is no consideration or indication of their age.

The law book *Kanunname-i Âli Osman,* generally ascribed to the reign of Mehmed II, constitutes a basis for subsequent law books and decrees. As a result, it is possible to find the same labels for the same gender and life-cycle phases in the codes that were produced after the reign of Mehmed II. At the same time, there are dissimilarities in the vocabulary of gender and age indicators.

In the law book of Bayezid II, the usage of the vocabulary of gender and age '*er, avret, oğlan, kız, oğlancık, kul, karavaş*' were repeated in the law books of Mehmed II. However, in the section of 'Zinaya Müte'allık olan Cürmi Beyan Eyler' ([The code which] declares the misconducts related to adultery), in the third entry, there is a differentiation between the terms used to denote widows and married Muslim women. Firstly, it refers to married Muslim women as '*evlü müslime avret*' and widows as '*dul*

[33] 'Ve süvarinin ra'iyyetinden hâsıl olan kınlığın yarısın subaşı ve yarısın süvari ala. Ammâ gerdek degürin tamam süvari ala. Süvarinin kızı çıksa, gerdek degürin tamam su başı ala.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 1, 350.
[34] 'Eğer avret zina kılsa, şeriat katında sabit olsa, ganî olsa er kınlığın vere.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 1, 347.

avret'[35] instead of solely '*avret*' and '*dul*'. In addition, an entry about adultery committed by a '*kız*' that was written in a law book associated with the reign of Mehmed II, was not placed in this law book. In this regard, as the equivalent provision of '*ergen*', '*kız*' was not included in the decree. However, the entry that mentions the status of '*avret*' and '*kız*' who acuse a man for committing adultery was repeated and the word '*kız*' was mentioned there, as in the preceding codes.[36]

The absence of an entry devoted to adultery by girls constitutes a situation like the absence of indicating the little girls. Highly correlated with the omission of terms deliberately denoting little girls, the absence of an entry for adultery committed by a '*kız*' can be explained in two ways. First, there may be an expectation in the use of the word '*ergen*' that unmarried girls who had reached their puberty were included. Secondly, the term '*ergen*' was used not only to point out boys, but also girls. These *kanunname*s were created, organized, written and distributed by men, targeted to male administrators. Therefore, it is important to consider this male hegemonic structure of the Ottoman administrative ranks to understand the word choices and indications. In this regard, special indication of males but not females can be derived from the male-dominated world where these codes were created.[37] Probably concomitant to the more detailed codes' entrance to the *kanunname*s in time, in the law books of Selim I and Süleyman I, the entry was placed as it was in the *Kanunname-i Umumi* of Mehmed II. In Selim I's book the term '*kız oğlan kız*', and in Süleyman I's book the term '*kız*' was used as the counterpart of '*ergen*'.

[35] 'Eğer evlü müslime avret zina kılsa, şer' ile sabit olsa, ganiyye olsa ganî er kınlığın vere. Eğer zina eden dul avret olsa, anun cürmi ergenler gibi ola, azlıkda ve çoklukda ana i'tibar ederler. Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 2, 40.

[36] 'Ve eğer avret veya kız bana zina kıldın dese, bunların sözüne i'tibar olmaya (...)' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 2, 41.

[37] I owe thanks to my professor Derin Terzioğlu for reminding me this point.

In addition to these words naming the basic life-cycle categories, other terms were used to demarcate life phases. In a copy of the *Pençik Kanunnamesi* dated 1510, there are many different descriptions of the life-cycle phases used in reference to non-Muslim subjects.[38] According to the information at the beginning of the copy, it was stated that the copy was written because of the need of Pençik Emini, who was a person responsible to collect the *pençik* tax, in İnebolu. It was copied from *Kanun-ı Kadim*, the old decree about the *pençik* tax kept in Istanbul. Showing the vocabulary used to name the non-Muslim war captives, the decree demonstrates the amount of tax that should be paid by their owners, the amount of which varies according to the gender, age and health condition of the slaves.

Coinciding with the development by age, there are words expressing physical growth and the increase in the amount of tax. The term '*şir-hor beççe*' was used to indicate babies up to three years of age. The word '*beççe*' was used to indicate children aged three to eight.[39] The term '*gulâmçe*' was used to show the children between eight and twelve years of age. *Gulâm* indicates boys who were not little children and who were still growing to reach their puberties. This is the group of boys who were available for recruitment and I propose to referring to them as adolescents.[40] '*Sakallı kâfir*' specifies a male adult and '*pîr kâfir*' refers to older males.

In the following entries, female labels were juxtaposed. The words '*mâriye*' and '*duhter*' were used to connote little girls, however it is not possible to understand

[38] *Pençik* means one fifth of the amount, and the name of the *pençik* tax comes from the practice of allocating the fifth of the war captives for the Sultan.
[39] 'Şîr-hor beççeden üç yaşına degin onar akçeden otuz akçeye varınca alınur. Ve üç yaşından sekiz yaşına varınca yüz akçe alunur. Bunun gibilere beççe derler.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 2, 131.
[40] 'Ve sekiz yaşından on iki yaşına varınca yüz yirmi akçeden iki yüz akçeye varınca alınur. Bunun gibilere gulâmçe derler. Ve bâliğ olmuş gulâmdan iki yüz elli akçeden iki yüz sekesen akçeye değin alunur.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 2, 131.

which age groups they refer to.[41] '*Fertûte*' was used as the female equivalent of '*pîr kâfir*'.[42] Moreover, '*acûze*' was used to indicate old women, but probably younger than '*fertûte*', '*bimâre*' indicates ill women, '*ma'yube*' points out the women without proper health or morality.

Moreover, in the law books of Bayezid II, the words ascribed to gender are richer than in the law codes of Mehmed II's time. In the law books of the provinces, especially in the entries on *resm-i arûs,* a tax that was taken by local governors from the people who were getting married*,* there are many words to indicate virginity for girls and widowhood for women. As it is understood from the codes, the most important factor that determined the amount of the tax was virginity; if a girl was virgin, the tax would be higher than that for a widow. For instance, in the entries of the Bursa and Menteşe provinces on *resm-i arûs,* the virgin girls were called '*cihazlu kız*' (the girl with dowry) and widows were called '*avret*'.[43] In the *Kanunname-i Havass-ı Konstantiniyye*, virgin girls were named as '*bâkire*' and widows were called '*bîve*'.[44] Other words used for widows are '*dul*', '*dul avret*', '*seyyibe*' and '*kız*' and '*kız oğlan*' for virgin girls.

The gender, age and social status indicators were used when their presence was needed in the *kanun-i umumi*s and provincial law books. However, it is also worth mentioning that the entries became more detailed in time. The entry about little children appears in the law book of Bayezid II, Selim I and Süleyman I as it was

[41] 'Ve dahi mariye ve acuze ve duhter ve ma'yube ve bîmâre ve fertûte veyahut yek-dest ve yek-çeşm olacak olursa, bu zikrolunanı emsali mucebince alınur.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 2, 132.
[42] 'Ve mezkur kâfir pîr veya fertûte olacak olursa, yüz otuz akçeden yüz elli akçeye değin alunur.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 2, 131.
[43] 'Resm-i arûsane, cihazlu kızdan altmış akçe ve avretden kırk akçe; fakîrelerden nıfs-ı resm-i ganiyye ve mutavassıt'ul hâlden beyne beynedir. Yerlüde avretin resm-i nikahında ve resm-i arûsânesinde toprak mu'teberdir. Ve yörükde lâ-mekan oldığı sebebden atasına tabi' olmakda bâkire ile seyyibe birdir.' Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 2, 183.
[44] 'Ve kullardan resm-i arûs, bakire içun otuzar akçe ve bîve içun on beşer akçe ve kuldan gayrıdan bâkire içun altmışar akçe, bîve içun otuzar akçe alunmak ma'mul kanunmuş.'

written in the law book that ascribed to the reign of Mehmed II, but in the decrees of the times of Selim I and Süleyman I, the code was more detailed and continued with, for instance, a statement about women's fighting with each other. In the *kanun-i umumi* of Selim I, women were indicated by '*avret*' and in the *Kanun-i Umumi* of Süleyman I they were indicated as '*hâtun tâifesi*'. Both codes give privileges to women called '*muhadderât*'.[45]

To conclude, having a complex vocabulary pool, Ottoman lawgivers categorized and labeled people according to their gender, age and social status. In this sense, it is possible to imagine Ottoman lawmakers as very punctilious and sensitive, not only to differentiate between right and wrong, but also to draw the boundaries between sexes, ages and social statuses. Since children were not considered full people and were exempted from legal burdens, they were not frequently mentioned in law books. As a result of their physical development and the attainment of puberty, they started to be considered responsible for their deeds, they appeared in the law books and were subjected to penalties that were specifically prescribed for them. People who were in the stage of growing to adulthood, but not perceived as children, were pointed out with a stress on their beardless faces both in *devshirme* and *pençik kanunname*s. I suggest that it is possible to refer to individuals in these age groups as adolescents.

Even though the borderlines between childhood, adolescence and adulthood are perceivable in law books, they are not clear enough to identify the transition points from one stage to other. At this point, it is useful to focus on fatwa books for the purpose of complementing the information derived from the law books and

[45] '*Muhadderât*' refers to elite women. Being a '*muhaddere*' does not necessitate to be a Muslim. The chief *mufti* of Süleyman I's period, Ebussuud Efendi writes many *fetva*s concerning to the rules of being a 'muhaddere'.

understanding the position of children and adolescents in this literature as another source of Ottoman legislation.

2.2 Children and adolescents in fatwa collections

Closely related to the logic of divisions of people in law books, fatwa collections present a more detailed picture to differentiate people according to their gender, age and social status. Unlike the *kanunname*s, fatwa books reveal complex concepts of childhood and adolescence in terms of the stages of psychological and physical development, and provide a ground for understanding how childhood and adolescence were perceived and treated by Ottoman legislation. By scrutinizing the four most prominent fatwa collections that belonged to Ebussuud Efendi (b.1490 - d.1574), who was the chief *mufti* of Süleyman I; Çatalcalı Ali Efendi (b.1631 - d.1692), who was the *şeyhü'l islam* of the time of Mehmed IV; Feyzullah Efendi (d. 1703), who was the *şeyhü'l islam* of Süleyman II and Mustafa II; and Yenişehirli Abdullah Efendi (d. 1743), who was the *şeyhü'l islam* of Ahmed III, my aim is to highlight how the attitudes of *mufti*s toward children and adolescents were shaped, and how the concept of childhood and adolescence was described in fatwas.[46]

In contrast to *kanunname*s, fatwa books are very decisive to categorize and name little children and adolescents according to their gender, and physical as well as psychological development. Children are evaluated as minor individuals who have not yet reached puberty and are denoted by the words '*sağîr*' (meaning minor for boys) and '*sağîre*' (meaning minor for girls). Generally, '*Hind-i sağîre*' refers to little girls and '*Zeyd-i sağîr*' refers to little boys, in contrast to naming an adult woman solely as Hind and an adult man merely as Zeyd. The word '*müştehate*' (carnally desirable) is used to

[46] Özbey, 'Osmanlı Döneminde Fetva Literatürü'.

denote the girls who have were very close to reaching puberty. The symetrical female category of '*müştehate*' for boys is '*müştehî*'. When little girls became of age, they were referred to as '*bâliğa*', and little boys who had reached puberty were signified by the word '*bâliğ*'.

Considering children as physically and intellectually immature persons who needed care and protection, numerous fatwas put emphasis on the protection of children from violence, exploitation and abuse. The fatwas on *nafaka, hidâne* and *vesâyet* not only demonstrated the protective attitude of fatwas*,* they also obliged adults to create an environment that provided material and moral well being of children.

In the event of divorce or abandonment, the fatwas incorporated under the heading of *nafaka* tried to ensure the daily maintenance of children. *Nafaka* was the maintenance payment assigned by the court to the father[47] or, in the absence of the father, assigned to the relatives.[48] Again, in the case of divorce or the death of the parents, questions about who had the responsibility for caring for a child was determined in the fatwa books. In this way, legal statements prevented disputes over who would become the caregiver of the child in the pool of relatives on the one hand, and guarantee the nurturing of orphans or destitute children on the other. Under the title of *hidâne*, which means taking the responsibility for the care and upbringing of a child,[49] the issues of *müddet-i hidâne* (the time limit for child care) and *hakk-ı hidâne* (the right of child care) were discussed.

Questions directed to the muftis related to *hakk-ı hidâne* were various; they generally asked which relative had the right to nurture the child. The right to raise a child,

[47] 'Hind, zevc-i mutallıkı Zeyd'den olub hidânesinde olan veled-i sağir için zeyd üzerinde hakime kadr-i ma'rufdan ziyade şu kadar akçe nafaka takdir itdirse Zeyd, ziyadeyi hakime hatt itdirmege kadir olur mu? El-cevab: olur. Demirtaş, *Açıklamalı Osmanlı Fetvâları: Fetâvâ-yı Ali Efendi Cild-i Evvel,* 202.
[48] Hind, zevci Zeyd-i müteveffadan olub hidânesinde olan sağîr oğlu Amr'ın vasisi Bekir'in bi-şartı'r rücu' emriyle Amr'ın nafakasına kendi mâlinden kadr-i ma'ruf şu kadar akçe sarf eylese Hind, masrufunu Bekir'den almağa kâdire olur mu? El-cevab: olur. Demirtaş, *Açıklamalı Osmanlı Fetvâları: Fetâvâ-yı Ali Efendi Cild-i Evvel,* 203.
[49] Bardakoğlu, 'Hidâne,' 467.

generally, was given to women members of the family from the close women relatives. For instance, Feyzullah Efendi was asked a question about whether the right to care for a child belonged to a maternal grandmother's mother or paternal grandmother, and Feyzullah Efendi stated that her maternal grandmother's mother should care for the child.[50] Furthermore, it seems that it was preferable to give children to aged relatives instead of siblings. Abdullah Efendi was asked whether the right to care for a child should belong to the married brother or the uncle. He indicated that the right to care for the child should belong to the uncle.[51]

According to the fatwas issued on *müddet-i hidâne* (the time limit of child care), children should be nurtured by their caregivers until they were able to meet their own needs. When Ebussuud Efendi was asked the age limit of *hidâne* for girls, he indicated that she should be cared for until she did not need to be cared for (*müstağniyye*), and he highlighted that it was better for her to stay with her caregiver until she became a *müştehate*, in order to learn (properly) how to be a woman.[52] The word Ebussuud Efendi used in his fatwa*, müstağniyye* points out the children who can eat, dress, sleep by themselves, and it probably refers to the ages of 7-8. The *müştehate*, which probably coincided with 10-12 years of age in general, refers to a girl whose body was developing and had started to become an adolescent. In this sense, Ebussuud Efendi suggested that the girl should learn *âdet-i nisâ* (the behaviors, practices, obligations of women in society) probably for the purpose of providing additional time for the girl child to learn about 'womanhood' from her close relatives. When it comes to the age limit for caring for boys,

[50] Hind-i sağirenin hakk-ı hidânesi anasının anasının anası Zeyneb ile babasının anası Haticeden hangisinindir? El-cevab: Zeynebindir. Kaya, *Fatâvâ-yı Feyziyye,* 85.
[51] 'Zeyd-i sağirin hakk-ı hidânesi li-ebeveyn hali Amr ile li-ebeveyn amm Bekir'den hangisinindir? El-cevab: Bekir'indir.' Kayı, Betül Algın, *Behçetü'l-Fetâvâ: Şeyhülislam Yenişehirli Abdullah Efendi Fetvaları*, 126.
[52] 'Müddet-i hidâne kız çocuklarda şer'an ne zamana değindir beyan buyrula? El-cevab: Hidâneden müstağniyye olucak dahi adet-i nisayı talim için bir miktar almamak evladır, meğer müştehat ola.' Düzdağ, *Şeyhülislam Ebussuud Efendi Fetvaları Işığında 16. Asır Türk Hayatı,* 3.

the main criteria were the same as those for little girls. When little boys did not need to be cared for, they could be taken from caregivers by other relatives.[53]

Vesâyet is another issue that aimed to secure the assets of children who had lost their fathers. Appointed by the father to protect the child's inheritance after his death, a *vasi* prevented using the child's inheritance for himself, but required that it be preserved for the future. Even though many fatwas show that a child was not able to gain his inheritance before puberty,[54] they were allowed to take the control of their property after they reached the age of maturity. One of the fatwas of Feyzullah Efendi did not allow a child's inheritance to be used by his *vasi*.[55] If the child's inheritance was a vineyard or a garden, the *vasi* could cultivate and harvest, but if the child wanted him to pay for his gain from the garden, the *vasi* had to pay this money when the child reached maturity.[56] By the way, if the father died without appointing a *vasi,* the right of appointment passed to the paternal grandfather.

In shari'a law, social and religious responsibility goes hand in hand with the attainment of puberty, so people who asked the muftis questions paid special attention to the legal definition of childhood and the end of childhood. In this respect, it is worth noting that muftis drew a boundary between childhood and adulthood and the main transformation point of this boundary was the attainment of puberty. Closely related to the need to specify where childhood begins and ends, numerous fatwas deal with this

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[53] 'Zeyd-i sağiri anasının anası Zeyneb bi-hakk-ı hidâne imsak üzere iken Zeyd yedi yaşını tekmil idüb istiğna hasıl olsa Zeyd'in babası Amr, Zeyd'i Zeyneb'den almağa kadir olur mu? El-cevab: Olur. Demirtaş, *Açıklamalı Osmanlı Fetvâları: Fetâvâ-yı Ali Efendi Cild-i Evvel*, 183.
The age limit of caretaking is generally accepted as 7, 8 or 9 years of old ages.
Demirtaş, *Açıklamalı Osmanlı Fetvâları: Fetâvâ-yı Ali Efendi Cild-i Evvel,* 183.

[54] 'Zeyd-i sağîr bâliğ olmadan vasî Amr'ın yedinde olan malını Amr'dan almağa kâdir olur mu? El-cevab: olmaz. Demirtaş, *Açıklamalı Osmanlı Fetvâları: Fetâvâ-yı Ali Efendi Cild-i Sani,* 329.

[55] 'Zeyd vasisi olduğu sağirin bazı eşyasını semen-i misliye nefsi için iştira etmek caiz olur mu? El-cevab: Olmaz. Kaya, *Fatâvâ-yı Feyziyye*, 205.

[56] 'Zeyd vasisi olduğu sağirin yeri dahi mülk bağını bilâ-müsevviğ-i şer'i Amr'a bey' ve teslim Amr dahi bir müddet zabt ve mahsulünü ahz ve istihlak ettikden sonra sağîr bâliğ olub bağı aldıkda mahsul-i müstehleki Amr'a tazmine kadir olur mu? El-cevab: Olur. Kaya, *Fatâvâ-yı Feyziyye*, 205.

issue and reveal a border that is not strict but is rather flexible, depending on one's physical development.

In the fatwa collections of Ebussuud Efendi, it is stated for both males and females that one needs to declare his/her attainment of puberty to be considered as *bâliğ/bâliğa*. Puberty (being bâliğ/bâliğa) was marked for girls by the first menstruation and boys by their first seminal emission.[57] If both females and males do not declare their having attained puberty, people should wait until seventeen years of age for girls and eighteen years of age for boys to consider them in the period of pubescence.[58] Observable physical maturity was also considered important to making a decision on one's attainment of age.[59]

From the perspective of the mufti, when an adolescent reaches maturity, it means that s/he can engage in adult practices and can be perceived and treated as adults. Radically different from the modern perception of adolescence, which considers this life phase as positioned between the childhood and adulthood, and as a preparation stage to the latter, early modern Ottoman adolescence was a period when the youngsters were considered as adults in terms of real life practices and obligations, but at the same time needed to be trained and acquiring experience. One of the most striking examples of this issue is 'child marriage'.[60] At this point, I want to clarify that modern scholars define as 'child marriages' those marriage contracts where one or both of the spouses are under 18 years of age, and consider them children in the modern sense. However, for the early

[57] Yazbak, *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures: Family, Body, Sexuality and Health vol. 3,* 'Child Marriage: The Ottoman Empire,' 57.
[58] Zeydin buluğuna kaç yaşında olmakla hükm olunur? El-cevab: İkrar ederse on ikisin tamam edicek olunur, eylemezse on sekizin tamam edicek değin olunmaz.' 'İnasdan olanların buluğuna kaç yaşın tamam etmekle hükm olunur? El-cevab: On yedi yaşın tamam etmekle olunur.' Düzdağ, *Şeyhülislam Ebussuud Efendi Fetvaları Işığında 16. Asır Türk Hayatı,* 33.
[59] Leslie Peirce, 'Seniority, Sexuality and Social Order: The Vocabulary of Gender in Early Modern Ottoman Society,' 173.
[60] In his article, '17. ve 18. Yüzyılda İstanbul ve Anadolu'da Çocuk Evlilikleri ve Erişkinlik Olgusu Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme' Yahya Araz tackles the issue of 'child marriages' in detailed way.

modern Ottoman society, it seems that these persons who were under the age of 18 were not regarded completely as children. For this reason, I will not use the term 'child marriage'; instead I will use the term 'minor marriages'.

Before reaching puberty, legally, each child had her/his own *veli*, who was the protector and caregiver of the child. The natural *veli* is the father, but if the father is absent, the right to be *veli* passes to paternal grandfather. The *veli* can make all decisions for a child or adolescent and can sign his/her marriage contract, no matter his/her age. However, both the shari'a law and social custom put emphasis on the distinction between contracting a minor marriage and its actual consummation.[61]

One of the questions that was directed to Ebussuud Efendi shed light on the making of the marriage contract for children and demonstrates that it is enough to take the consent of *veli*s, some witnesses and an authorized person to make a formal marriage contract. The question stated that in front of some people, the hind declares that 'I gave my little girl Zeyneb to the little boy of my brother Amr'. Then, Amr states that 'I took and accepted Zeyneb for Bekir'. The question asked whether the marriage was valid in the absence of the approval of a judge. Ebussuud Efendi proclaimed that it was necessary to take the judge's approval.[62] Furthermore, in adult marriages, the husband is obliged to provide the livelihood for his family, but one of Ali Efendi's *fetva*s demonstrate that there was no need for the husband to pay for the family's livelihood in marriages contracted for individuals who had not yet come of age.[63]

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[61] Yazbak, *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures: Family, Body, Sexuality and Health vol. 3,* 'Child Marriage: The Ottoman Empire,' 57.

[62] 'Hind, izn-i kadı yok ilken, bir kaç kimse huzurunda 'Kızım Zeyneb-i sağireyi, kardeşim Amr'ın oğlu Bekr-i sağîre verdim' deyip Amr 'Bekr için Zeynebi alıp Kabul ettim' dese nikah olur mu? El-cevab: Izn-i hâkimle olmak emr olunmuştur.' M. Ertuğrul Düzdağ, *Şeyhülislam Ebussuud Efendi Fetvaları Işığında 16. Asır Türk Hayatı,* 38.

[63] 'Zeyd, iki üç yaşında olan sağîre kızı Hind'i Amr'a tezvic eylese Hind'in nafakası Amr'ın üzerine lazım olur mu? El-cevab: Olmaz. Demirtaş, *Açıklamalı Osmanlı Fetvâları: Fetâvâ-yı Ali Efendi Cild-i Evvel*, 187.

Even though the parents organized the marriages for individuals who had not yet come to the age of puberty, the marriage contract could be broken by one of the marriage partners when he/she reached pubescence, if it was not concluded by the spouse's natural parents. In other words, if the contract had been made by the real mothers, fathers or paternal grandfathers of children, it was not possible to break it by pubescent boys or girls. However, if the contract had been made by the *veli* (not the real parents or paternal grandfather) of the children, it could be refused by the marriage partners. In the fatwa collection of Ebussuud Efendi, one asked, 'If Zeyd makes a marriage contract with Hind, who has not reached pubescence yet, is it valid or not?' Ebussuud Efendi explained, 'it will be valid, but if the contract is not made by the father or paternal grandfather, it could be repudiated at the age of pubescence.'[64]

Apart from the facility of breaking an agreement, attainment of puberty allowed minors to get married of their own accord. One of the questions in Ali Efendi's book is worth mentioning concerning this issue. The question involves a girl who declared her menstruation. The girl was nine years old and her physical maturity made her eligible to be accepted as an adult, so after she got married, the question was whether her protector (*veli*) could annul the marriage or not. The girl's declaration concerning her menstruation led Ali Efendi to give a negative answer to the question.[65]

In contrast to the marriage of a pubescent individual, fatwa collections include some questions that were asked about consent for the marriages of individuals who have not reached puberty. In Ali Efendi's fatwa book, it was asked, 'If judicious (*mümeyyiz*) little

[64] 'Hind-i nâ-bâliğayı, Zeyd nikah eylese sahih olur mu? El-cevab: Olur, amma veli babası yahud dedesi değil ise, hıyar-ı feshi vardır, hin-i buluğda.' Düzdağ, *Şeyhülislam Ebussuud Efendi Fetvaları Işığında 16. Asır Türk Hayatı,* 38.

[65] 'Tokuz yaşını tekmil idüb cüssesinin büluğa tahammüli olan Hind: 'Hayz görüb bâliğa oldum!' deyu ikrar itdikden sonra nefsini mehr-i misliyle küfvi Amr'a tezvîc eylese; veli-i akrebi ceddesi Zeyneb: 'Benim iznim bulunmadı!' deyu akd-i mezburu feshe kadire olur mu? El-cevab: Olmaz.' Demirtaş, *Açıklamalı Osmanlı Fetvâları: Fetâvâ-yı Ali Efendi Cild-i Evvel,* 64.

(*sağîr*) Hind gets married to Zeyd, is it valid or not?' Ali Efendi indicated that it was not.[66] *Mümeyyiz* was a person who was in the age of discernment, that is, knowing what is right or wrong for himself/herself; this would enable a child to comprehend abstract ideas, including the distinction between good and evil. In this sense, people seem to have been inclined to consent to prepubescent's marriages also. However, the mufti did not permit them, even though the child was said to have had the capacity to know whether the marriage is good or bad for her/him. Apart from marriage, according to fatwa collections, after reaching puberty, male and female persons were allowed to take their inheritance from the hands of their *vasi.* In this sense, muftis considered pubescents as capable of managing their own belongings.

Apart from these, as a social category, the Ottoman Muslim population asked questions about the social status of slave children.[67] The condition of slave children depended on the status of his/her mother. If a slave mother acquired her freedom, the child was regarded as free. But if the child was born from a slave mother and a free father, the child was regarded as a slave and his/her ownership belonged to the master of the mother. In this issue, Ali Efendi was asked if Zeyd matched his slave with a free man, whether the children born of this marriage would be slaves of Zeyd. Ali Efendi indicated that they would.[68] In the context of a slave family or a child born to a slave mother and a free father, the newborn infant comes to the world as a slave of his/her mother's master.

Furthermore, it seems that the protective attitude of fatwas toward children seems to be limited with Muslim children and adolescents. Since, according to Ottoman legislation,

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[66] 'Hind-i sağîr-i mümeyyiz, velisi izinsiz Zeyd'e nefsini tezvic eylese akd-i mezbur nâfiz olur mu? El-cevab: Olmaz.' Demirtaş, *Açıklamalı Osmanlı Fetvâları: Fetâvâ-yı Ali Efendi Cild-i Evvel*, 60.
[67] For detailed analysis of Ottoman slavery please see Zilfi, 'Ottoman Slavery and Female Slaves in the Early Modern Era,' 714-718.
[68] 'Zeyd, câriyesi Hind'i Amr'a tezvîc itdikden sonra Amr'ın Hind'den veledi olsa Zeyd ol veledi istirkaka kadir olur mu? El-cevab: Olur. Demirtaş, *Açıklamalı Osmanlı Fetvâları: Fetâvâ-yı Ali Efendi Cild-i Evvel*, 210.

non-Muslim boys and girls were allowed to be taken by force from their non-Muslim families, except Bosnian Muslim boys that I will write about in the following pages, it can be said that the atitude toward children and adolescents were subjected to change according to one's religion. In this sense, the religion of a child or an adolescent played a significant role to shape the perception of and attitude toward children and adolescent by Ottoman society.

Another issue concerning children Ottoman jurists dealt with was breastfeeding, *hakk-ı rada*. The questions related to breastfeeding were generally about *rada'*, which means in the restrictive sense of 'the suckling which produces the legal impediment to marriage of foster-kinship.'[69] According to this rule, those children who sucked from the same mother cannot get married. One also did not permit anyone to marry their milk sibling's child.[70]

To conclude, for Muslim population, considering children physically and intellectually weak and in need of protection, muftis issued numerous fatwas to protect children from their social environments. Fatwas indicated who should care for children in the case of the loss of parents (*hidâne*), how the *vasi* should keep and preserve a child's inheritance (*vesâyet*) and obliged the relevant people to provide for them (*nafaka*). In addition, there is a very thick line between adolescence and adulthood that separates two life phases from each other. The main element of this thick line was pubescence, which depended completely on the individual's physiological and mental development. Besides, non-Muslim children and adolescents were perceived as eligible to be enslaved and if a child born into a slave family, she/he was accepted as a slave.

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[69] Giladi, *Infants, Parents and Wet Nurses: Medieval Islamic Views on Breastfeeding and Their Social Implications*, 69.

[70] 'Hind, Zeyd'i müddet-i radada irda' eylese Hind'in oğlunun kızı Zeyneb'i tezevvüç itmek caiz olur mu? El-cevab: Olmaz. Demirtaş, *Açıklamalı Osmanlı Fetvâları: Fetâvâ-yı Ali Efendi Cild-i Evvel*, 107.

2.3 Conclusion

Categorizing and labeling people according to their gender, age and social status, Ottoman law books and fatwa collections aimed to keep society in order. Perceiving children as 'children' in the modern sense, Ottoman law books exempted children from legal responsibilities. Regardless of children's age group or gender, *kanunname*s refer to children with the word 'oğlancık'. However, when the issue is the *pençik* tax, the codes categorized and labeled children according to both their age and gender. Closely related to the legal burden that came with the pubescence, *kanunname*s ascribed different punishments to people who had reached puberty.

Highly correlated with the rules in the law books, fatwa collections provide insights into how Ottoman society in general and in particular the muftis, as the highest-ranking members of the religious establishment, classified life cycle phases of the people. Due to the fact that fatwas were composed as a result of questions that were asked by Muslim subjects, they enabled their readers not only to understand the perception and attitude of a mufti, but they also allowed their readers to have information about social attitudes toward children. In this regard, it can be said that fatwas go one step further from the law books in terms of the information they provide for its readers about the Ottoman Muslim adult perception of and attitude toward children and adolescents.

Even though different norms and regulations were created and attempts were made to apply them, social practices could be different. For instance, although the actual marriage of a little child was prohibited by law, there are some cases that ended up with the death of a female child because of early sexual relations.[71] Therefore, the legislation is a reflection of the rules and norms of the ruling elites. To understand the real life of children and adolescents, it is worth analyzing the social perception and status of the

[71] Araz, ''17. ve 18. Yüzyılda İstanbul ve Anadolu'da Çocuk Evlilikleri ve Erişkinlik Olgusu Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme,' 104.

children and adolescents in Ottoman society. In this way, I consider discourse and praxis together, and in relation to each other.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOCIAL STATUS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN EARLY MODERN OTTOMAN SOCIETY

Having identified the place of children and adolescents in Ottoman legislation, this chapter aims to highlight the social status of children and adolescents. Due to the fact that the early modern Ottomans were very attentive to distinctions of gender and social status, I will study Ottoman children and adolescents in two categories: the first group will be composed of the children and adolescents of the palace and the second one will include the children and adolescents of *re'aya*, the tax paying subjects of the Ottoman domains. By scrutinizing each group individually and considering gender differences, I will argue that there was not a monolithic concept of childhood and adolescence regarding their perception, child rearing practices, and expectations from these age and gender groups in early modern Ottoman society.

In the Ottoman imperial family, childhood and adolescence, regardless of gender, were conceptualized in ways that would serve state interests. Likewise, Ottoman imperial slaves' adolescence was conceptualized in a way that would prioritize service to the empire. The registers on recruitments, which were kept to indicate the rules of recruitment of *devshirme lavy,* are useful sources that demonstrate the borderlines between childhood and adolescence and adolescence and adulthood.

The Ottomans perceived children and adolescents as part and parcel of their family and physical environment and believed that family and physical environment had a big influence on development of their character and personality. Ottoman officers believed the impact of genetic, environmental as well as physical features on

the temperament of children and adolescents. For instance, they preferred to take the children of noble families instead of the children of shepherd families. Therefore, adolescents were not regarded as innocent or well mannered, yet they were considered to have the potential to be ill-tempered.

Furthermore, childhood and adolescence were considered as the life stages that needed to be shaped with education and training since the Ottomans believed that children and adolescents have cultivable minds and the personality that are eligible to be shaped. Character begins to develop at childhood and the way in which it is formed affects the future adult personality.

Different sources bring different understandings of childhood and adolescence to the fore. For instance, while the advice literature gave emphasis to the growing children as pious individuals, Ottoman poems of *şehrengiz* put forward a perception of Ottoman adolescents as objects of desire. Therefore, evaluating these sources together in this chapter will suggest multilateral yet complementary understandings and perception of childhood and adolescence.

3.1 Children and adolescents of the palace

3.1.1 Childhood of the princes and princesses

Taking their rights to govern from dynastic inheritance, the primary importance of the dynastic children comes from the imperial blood they bear. The right to rule belonged to the Ottoman family and the continuation of the lineage through birth had paramount significance. Since they were born into the royal family, membership in the dynasty determined their childhood, and their lives were shaped according to their potential future careers.

The temporal limits of pre-adulthood in the Ottoman palace as stated in fatwa collections were determined by birth and with the attainment of puberty. For imperial children, childhood and adolescence were the stages of life that were shaped in the shadow of priorities determined by Ottoman state interests. This childhood and adolescence required various celebrations to serve the display of sovereign prerogative. Through imperial rituals centered on the palace youths, the Ottoman dynasty was allowed to demonstrate their sovereign power and legitimacy and at the same time to show imperial munificence while amplifying and codifying the transmission of dynastic power and privileges. Even though the celebrations may seem to have been the same for boys and girls, some practices were different and show the privileged position of the boys over the girls.

The sons of an Ottoman Sultan were called *şehzade* and the daughters were called *sultan*. An imperial birth was a cheerful event and residents of the palace set to work before the delivery. The preparation for the birth of an infant was overseen by the *valide sultan* (the mother of the ruling sultan), and the birth of a baby into the imperial family was known as *veladet-i hümayun* (imperial birth). A *şehzade* or *sultan* could be given birth from the sultan's concubine or wife. In either case, one of the rooms in the *harem* was prepared and furnished for the newborn and the mother.[72]

The first event that put emphasis on the gender difference between girls and boys was the announcement of the birth. On the birthday of an infant, the date was not exactly known but from the seventeenth century on, a *hatt-ı hümayun* (imperial decree) was sent to the grand vizier to inform him of the birth. If the newborn was male, the decree was sent by *darüssaade ağası*, but if the infant was female, it was sent by one of the high-

[72] Tezcan, *Children of the Ottoman Seraglio: Customs and Customes of the Princes and Princesses*, 69.

ranking *saray ağası*.[73] *Darüssaade ağası* was the person who was the head of all the servants in the *Enderun* and *Harem.* He was the third significant person after the grand vizier and *şeyhü'l-islam* during this period.[74] The announcement of the birth of a male infant was made by a person who was superior to the *harem ağası*, who carried the news of female infants.

Just as the announcement of the birth was made to the grand vizier, it was announced to the populace of Istanbul, and this was differentiated according to the gender of the newborn. After the grand vizier took the rescript, the high-ranking officials gathered and visited the Sultan to offer congratulations. The Sultan presented *kürk*s (furs) and *hil'at*s (robs of honors) as gifts to his visitors. Having bestowed a special kind of beverage, *lohusa şerbeti,* to the residents of the palace, the birth was announced to the dwellers of Istanbul by firing cannons. The number of the cannon shots and festive days in Istanbul were dependent on the infant's sex; male newborns received seven and the female newborns received three shots five times per day.[75]

Another ceremony that was held for both males and females with minor differences was centered on the cradle of the new born. On the third day after the birth, a cradle was sent by *valide sultan* from the old palace to the new one with a crowd of lieutenants and assistants of the *valide sultan* in the Divan Yolu. Another cradle was sent by the grand vizier with a ceremonial procession. If the infant was male, the grand vizier also sent a turban ornament (*sorguç*) in addition to jewels. *Sorguç* was a precious ornament that was used solely by males and put emphasis on the gender of the newborn.

After the processions, the celebrations continued in the same way for both male and female infants. The cradles were brought to the palace and were first presented to the

[73] Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilatı,* 107.
[74] Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilatı,* 172.
[75] Tezcan, *Children of the Ottoman Seraglio: Customs and Customes of the Princes and Princesses*, 77.

sultan, and then they were sent to the room of the newborn.[76] The cradles were put in the center of the room and guests of the baby lay their presents around the cradle. The woman visitors stayed three days in the palace and were entertained with music and dances performed by concubines.[77]

Following the birth, approximately twenty servants called *usta* were assigned to the newborn and they were responsible for the welfare of the infant and the mother. Moreover, a *daye* (wetnurse) and a *dadı* (nursemaid) were carefully selected and given to the mother of the newborn to help with the education and care of the infant.[78] Apart from females, if the newborn was male, when he became one year old, four tutors were appointed for his education. The three younger ones were called *lala.* The oldest one was called *başlala* and he was the one responsible for the other three.[79] In this way, the supervision of the prince was ensured by experienced state officials for the first years of the child's life. However, it seems that the female children did not have the same opportunities as the males.

Gender differences between male and female children were also reflected in their games and playmates. Since they would have totally differentiated worlds in their professional lives, Ottoman palace boys and girls prepared for their future by playing separate games. Ottoman princes played with the boys in Enderun. Mehmed II's friend Mustafa, who was the son of a palace functionary, accompanied him to his *sancak* as his friend when Mehmed II was 11 years old. In addition, chess, *mangala* (mancala) and

[76] Tezcan, *Children of the Ottoman Seraglio: Customs and Customes of the Princes and Princesses*, 62-63.
[77] Tezcan, *Children of the Ottoman Seraglio: Customs and Customes of the Princes and Princesses*, 81.
[78] Tezcan, *Children of the Ottoman Seraglio: Customs and Customes of the Princes and Princesses*, 151.
[79] Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilatı,* 110.

dokuz taş (morris) were games that were played by the princes.[80] When it comes to the princesses, they played with the children and babies of the concubines, but there is not any remnant of the dolls or other toys in the Harem.[81]

In the Ottoman palace, boys and girls both needed to be educated properly. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı states that when a *şehzade* was five-six years old, he started to be educated on the Qur'an with *bed-i besmele alayı*.[82] I did not encounter any information about the celebration's girl version in his book. Çağatay Uluçay mentions *bed-i besmele alayı* for girls, but he does not indicate any age for the beginning of education.[83] The education of children continued for boys until they were appointed to their *sancak*s and for girls until they were married in the palace.

Sur-ı hitan, circumcision ceremony was another significant event in the lives of the princes in particular, and an occasion to show imperial power in general. Circumcision is a religious practice of Islam for boys. When the time of circumcision came, it was celebrated with lavish festivities that included various forms of entertainment, parades of statesmen, artisans and tradesman. The age of the circumcision has changed according to the condition of the state. The circumcision celebration of Mehmed II's sons Bayezid and Mustafa was held in 1457, when Bayezid was 9 and his brother Mustafa was 7 years old. The younger sibling Cem's circumcision took place when he was 13 years old. The circumcision of the grandsons of Mehmed II, Şehinşah, Ahmed (15 years old), Korkud (10 years old), Mahmut (not known), Alem (13 years old), Selim (10 years old) and Oğuz's circumcision was held in 1480 and celebrated with grandiose festivities in Edirne.

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[80] Tezcan, *Children of the Ottoman Seraglio: Customs and Customes of the Princes and Princesses*, 163.
[81] Tezcan, *Children of the Ottoman Seraglio: Customs and Customes of the Princes and Princesses*, 158.
[82] Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilatı,* 110.
[83] Uluçay, *Harem,* 86.

Even though it seems that the tender ages were preferable and more prevalent for the circumcision, Mehmed III's son Mahmud's circumcision age was 20. Concerning this issue, Leslie Peirce notes that Mehmed III did not want to engage in a grand circumcision festivity before the war with Hungary was over since it would serve either to celebrate victory or to counteract public disappointment at defeat.[84] Closely related to the needed imperial propaganda, the 16-years-old Mehmed III's circumcision date can be considered in a similar way. Murad III chose to hold a 50-day grand ceremony in 1582 to distract the population with a demonstration of imperial generosity and power, since it was a time of economic and social crisis due to devaluation of Ottoman coins in the markets, unemployment in countryside and the death of Sokullu Mehmed Pasha in Istanbul.[85]

3.1.2 Adolescence of the princes and princesses

Positioned between childhood and adulthood, adolescence was a life phase whose beginning and end differed from one person to other due to the fact that it depends on physical and mental maturity that were experienced by individuals. For the Ottoman youths in the palace, the age of adolescence was a life phase that paved the way for adulthood. Attainment of puberty immediately loaded the burden of the adult responsibilities on the shoulder of the youths, while at the same time adolescence was considered as the age of lack of knowledge and experience. On the one hand, since the necessity of education and training was underlined for this period, adolescence can be considered as it is close to childhood, but on the other hand, because adolescents were expected to join the adult world as mature persons, it can be evaluated with its proximity to adulthood.

[84] Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, 97.
[85] Terzioğlu, 'The Imperial Circumcisson Festival of 1582,' 85.

Having come of age, princes and princesses were treated as adults and were able to have sexual relations, take responsibilities on military exploits, have a role in government (for males), mother children and manage a household (for females). However, even though they immediately became able to engage in adult practices, their less-experienced personalities kept under the surveillance of veteran supervisors.

One of the important signs that indicates princes' entrance into adolescence was the departure from the palace for a *sancak* (a province in the Ottoman territories that had a basic military and administrative unit) to receive real political and military training in the administration of provinces and joining military operations. Those princes sent to provinces were called *çelebi sultan.*[86] It is difficult to assert that every prince went to his *sancak* immediately after childhood came to an end. However, assignment to a *sancak* indicated the readiness of princes to take political and militarily responsibilities. Therefore, although they were not mature enough, they were forced to take on the burden of administrative and military responsibilities.

The princes were sent to their provinces sometimes after, sometimes before the circumcision ceremonies, accompanied by their mothers, *lala*s and appointees from Istanbul. Princely courts were very similar to the imperial court. They had the same service divisions, such as inner and outer household, and were managed by officials with the same titles. Departure for the province was celebrated with ceremonies and it marked the *şehzade*'s political coming of age.[87] When a *şehzade* departed for his *sancak,* he would be given a *teşrif*, a register that contained the list of goods given to the prince for his use and the names of the people who would serve in his entourage, along with the

[86] Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilatı,* 122.
[87] Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire,* 46.

indication of their salaries.[88] The principalities were chosen from among the capitals of the Anatolian *beyliks* that the Ottomans had occupied.[89]

As provincial governors, princes had military and administrative responsibilities in their *sancak*s. First of all, until the time of Selim I (r. 1517-1520), *şehzade*s could go to war with their own armies and squash rebellions, or they could join wars to command the armies of their fathers as high-ranking commanders.[90] Moreover, saving the throne in the absence of the sultan, the appointment and dismissal of the officials, decisions on increases and decrease in salaries, the regulation of *tımar*s and economic activities in the province were among the administrative responsibilities of the *şehzade*s.[91] In this regard, representing the dynastic continuity through familial ties, *şehzade*s were considered heirs as political as well as military actors. As a consequence, symbolizing the transformation of power from the old generation to the younger, *şehzade*s were expected to engage in various activities regardless of their age. Their membership in the sovereign family prevailed their adolescence and young age. Therefore, regardless of their tender ages, they were viewed and treated as potential future rulers of the empire.

At this point, it would be useful to scrutinize the youth of Mehmed II, to have an idea about the link between the exact age and the capability of the princes in their adolescence. Having spent 11 years in the Edirne palace, Mehmed II was sent to Manisa. From then on, it can be assumed that he was not considered a child any more. So his childhood came to an end in his 11th year. Between the years 1444 and 1446, when he was 12 to 14 years of old, he became the sultan of Ottoman dynasty for two years, but with the anxiety of grand viziers, owing to foreign threats and the will of Mehmed II, Murad II

[88] Tezcan, *Children of the Ottoman Seraglio: Customs and Customes of the Princes and Princesses*, 95.
[89] Tezcan, *Children of the Ottoman Seraglio: Customs and Customes of the Princes and Princesses*, 89.
[90] Eroğlu, *Osmanlı Devletinde Şehzadelik Kurumu,* 10.
[91] Eroğlu, *Osmanlı Devletinde Şehzadelik Kurumu*, 162.

ascended the throne and Mehmed II returned to his post in Manisa and continued his life as a *çelebi sultan.*[92]

In Manisa, 14-year-old Mehmed II married Gülbahar Hatun. His marriage demonstrated that he had reached puberty and was allowed to marry at 14. Therefore, it would be assumed that the adolescence of Mehmed II was a short period that passed away in 3-4 years. When he was 16, he became the father of Bayezid II.[93] At 16 and 18 years of age, he went to Albania to fight along with his father's army. When he was on the campaign, Murad II consigned Edirne to Mehmed II. When he was 18, Mehmed II was the father of three children: Bayezid II, Gevher Sultan and Mustafa. His fourth son, Cem was born when Mehmed was 27 years old.

The youth of Mehmet II reveals that adolescence was a period in which one steps into the adult world and engages in adult practices such as joining the army as a commander and bearing responsibility for taking care of the empire. Concomitant to the social status that was ascribed to princes, both the ruling elites and the ruled population expected princes to behave as mature adults.

Pointing out the end of childhood, the age of the departure for the provinces, I think is also telling as it highlights the line between the childhood and adolescence. The first child of Mehmed II, Bayezid, was sent to the *sancak* when he was 6 years old.[94] His younger brother Mustafa's date of departure for the *sancak* is unknown. The *şehzade*s' circumcision ceremonies were held jointly, when Bayezid was 9 and his brother was 7 years of age. In this respect, it is worth noting that Bayezid and his brother's circumcision coincided with their end of childhood. Mehmed II's the youngest son Cem was sent to

[92] Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Sultanları: 36 Osmanlı Padişahı,* 86.
[93] Uluçay, *Padişahların Kadınları ve Kızları,* 18.
[94] Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Sultanları: 36 Osmanlı Padişahı,* 104.

Kastamonu when he was 10 years old.[95] Like his father, Mehmed II charged the 14-year-old Cem with overseeing the capital when he went to war in Otlukbeli.[96] Bayezid II's son Korkud was sent to Karaman when he was 13. Bayezid II became a father when he was *sancak* governor in Amasya at the age of 17.

Until the end of the sixteenth century, princes in *sancak*s had the opportunity to grow to adulthood, gain experience in fighting and ruling, and produce their potential heirs. As it is seen from their lives in the *sancak*s, they were positioned and treated like adults, but there was an emphasis on their supervision by *lala*s and their mothers. The adults around them behaved towards the princes as if they were mature, and at the same time, they were aware of their tender age and their need for education and training. So *şehzade*s continued their physical and intellectual training in the *sancak*s and had to fight to ascend to the throne. Mehmed II, Bayezid II and Selim I were the *şehzade*s who engaged in fratricide for the purpose of enthronement.

At the end of the sixteenth century, the assignment of princes to provinces ceased and the last prince who was sent to a *sancak* was Mehmed III. A lapse in princely governornance and a lapse in royal fratricide are linked phenomena and they led to seniority, which implies the succession to the throne of the eldest male dynast. During the reigns of Selim II and Murad III, the practice of honoring a single son, who was the eldest prince, functioned as the transition process to the system of seniority.[97]

With the reign of Mehmed III, the total confinement of princes to the palace started, probably since the princes became the sultans before reaching the traditional age for departure for the *sancak.* After Mehmed III, the male members of the dynasty spent their lives within the palace and were deprived of administrative and military experiences.

[95] Tektaş, *Katledilen Şehzadeler,* 192.
[96] Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Sultanları: 36 Osmanlı Padişahı,* 93.
[97] Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, 96-97.

Their official stipend became the lowest salary among the members of the sultan's family, in contrast to the amount of the money early princes received after they went to the *sancak*s. Furthermore, their lack of political status was stressed by forbidding them to father children, even though they were sexually mature and were given concubines.[98]

The transition to seniority, the absence of the princely governorate, the abolition of fratricide and being a 'child sultan' seem to be linked.[99] At this point, I want to point out the use of the phrase 'child sultan' in sources written by modern historians. Ottoman sultans who were enthroned before the age of 18 were labeled as 'child sultans' by modern authors with the meaning of 'child' in the modern sense. However, in writing about the sultans, state officials and political affairs, early modern Ottoman historians have not needed to add specific words in front of their names to indicate young ages except for Mehmed IV, who was enthroned at age 7.

In other words, closely linked to the perception of childhood and adolescence in the fatwa books and *kanunname*s, Ottoman historians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries ascribed prime importance to the attainment of puberty. When assigned to the throne, Ahmed I was 13 years old. Even though Solakzade Mehmed Hemdemi Efendi had no comment on the age of Ahmed I (enthroned when he was 13), Osman II (enthroned when he was 14) or Murad IV (enthroned when he was 11), he commented on the age of Mehmed IV (enthroned when he was 7) and emphasized his childhood. In his regular narrative, Solakzade Mehmed Hemdemi Efendi praised the sultans and indicated their age.[100] However, when narrating the discontent of the janissaries because of the age of Mehmed IV, he wrote that new *padişah* has not yet attain his puberty ('Yeni padişah

[98] Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, 99.
[99] For further information on transition to seniority and the political context of the time please see Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
[100] 'Solakzade Tarihi'

henüz büluğ çağına vasıl olmamıştı')[101] for the purpose of exposing unrest in the military. Furthermore, he referred Mehmed IV as 'çocuk padişah' when he wrote on the circumcision ceremonies of the sultan.[102]

Just as referring the sultans with the word 'child' was an exception for Mehmed IV only, Osman II is generally known as Genç Osman (Osman the youth) in modern Turkey. In this regard, demonstrating the various historiographies on dethronement of Osman II through the history books of the seventeenth to the twentieth century, Baki Tezcan demonstrates that there was a close connection between the Young Turks movement and ascribing Osman II the title 'genç'.[103] Mizancı Murad (d. 1917) was the first historian who mentioned Osman II using this title.[104] As shown in Ottoman history books, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood even 'youth' were socially constructed concepts exposed to change over time.

At the time of these sultans that I mentioned above, it can be seen that the high officers wanted to avoid their enthronement, so they point out their younger ages, and in the case of Osman II and Mehmed IV, they preferred an older member of the imperial family. When Ahmed I died, his oldest son Osman II was 14 years old. Instead of Osman II, his uncle Mustafa was chosen to be sultan. The explanations of the historians of this period indicate that the stress was on the privilege of the age and the interests of state officials. However, three months later, due to his incapacity to govern, Mustafa was deposed and 14-year-old Osman II ascended to the throne. When Osman II died, he had no sons and his oldest brother Murad IV was 12 years old. Instead of Murad IV, Mustafa was enthroned again, which suggests that the statesmen of the time considered it

[101] Çabuk, *Solakzade Tarihi*, 582.
[102] Çabuk, *Solakzade Tarihi*, 594. Since the text is modified to modern Turkish, I am not sure that whether Solakzade used the word 'çocuk' (child) or not.
[103] Tezcan, ''Genç' Osman Neden Tahttan İndirildi? Osmanlı Tarih Yazımında Bir Yolculuk'.
[104] Tezcan, ''Genç' Osman Neden Tahttan İndirildi? Osmanlı Tarih Yazımında Bir Yolculuk,' 64.

necessary to avoid having a young sultan if possible. However, due to his mental incapability, Mustafa was again deposed and Murad IV ascended the throne at 13 years of age. After 17 years of sultanate, Murad IV died without any male child and his brother İbrahim acceded the throne when he was 25 years of age. Even though İbrahim was not a child when he came to the throne, after his death, his oldest male heir, Mehmed IV, who was 7 years old and therefore a child, became the sultan.

The reasons for the preference for elder candidates could not be based solely on age; they also had to do with their lack of experience, since they were kept under control in the *harem* rooms and did not have enough contact with the military and bureaucracy. After Ahmed I died and Mustafa was enthroned in accordance with the rule of seniority, other princes started being closely supervised in the harem. Those princes lived in rooms called *kafes* (cage), which were covered boxwoods, *şimşir*, and the place that surrounded with high walls was called *Şimşirlik*. The princes had their concubines and *agha*s in their service, however, it was forbidden for them to talk with aghas.[105] They received their education from the concubines and learned some crafts such as jewelry and turnery.[106] It was also forbidden for these sultans to have children before enthronement.

Furthermore, their sexuality was tied to the patrimony. Even though these princes were old enough to have a sexual life with concubines, they were not permitted to have children. Many babies were slaughtered, since they were born before their father's enthronement.[107] In this way, princes were prevented from fathering children, which was a sign of the sexual and political maturity; furthermore, they had no chance to be assigned as *sancak* governors. This condition may have caused them to be perceived as children, at an age when their ancestors were not perceived as children any longer.

[105] Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilatı,* 114.
[106] Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilatı,* 116.
[107] Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, 19.

At this point, the childhood and adolescence of Mehmed II and these young sultans can be compared. Mehmed II had good training in the palace until he was 11 years old. Then he was assigned to the province and started to gain experience under the surveillance of his supervisors. Then, his father abdicated the throne to Mehmed II. The high-ranking officers of the time were worried because of the age of Mehmed II, but I think their anxiety was different from the anxiety that which seventeenth century statesmen had. They had the option of having the mature sultanate of Murad II and had good reasons to bring him back due to the increase of political threats. In addition, it is important to indicate that the lives of the seventeenth century's younger sultans also demonstrated the changes of the period at large. So even though some traditional practices such as birth, education and circumcisions ceremonies did not change, the lives of the princes did change.

When it comes to the adolescence of the *sultan*s, in the same way that the appointment of a *sancak* was a dramatic event for boys, so marriage was a considerable incident for girls. As I mentioned above, children and adolescents were prepared for their adult life through training that was determined by gender. Engaging in 'womanly' activities in their childhood and adolescence, the palace girls were espoused immediately after they attained puberty. In the formative phase of the Ottoman Empire, princesses were usually married to the sons of the rulers and the high-ranking officials of the small principalities that had contact with the Ottoman dynasty.

In time, due to the fact that possible rivals were eliminated and the Ottoman dynasty transformed itself into an empire, in the sixteenth century, princesses were married off to high-ranking state officials such as grand viziers and admirals.[108] Contributing to the formation of power dynamics in the palace and starting with the reign

[108] Artan, 'Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate: Instutuitional and Symbolic Change in the Early Eighteenth Century,' 340.

of Selim I (r. 1512-1520), these marriages, on the one hand, functioned as tools to coopt grand viziers into the imperial family.[109] On the other hand, it enabled princesses to be recognized and to gain a better status that was reflected by the increase of their stipends and the grand marriage ceremonies in the capital.[110] Since there are not enough registers about the birth dates of the sultans, it is difficult to know their age at marriage. Çağatay Uluçay indicates that during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the daughters of the dynasty were married off when they were 14 to 16 years old. Serving the state through marriage, the *sultan*s had no right to choose their spouses.[111]

Until the time of Ahmed I (r. 1603-1617), the sultans waited until they reached puberty to be married. However, after the reign of Ahmed I, the sultans' marriage contracts started being signed before the age of puberty. The daughters of Ahmed I, Ayşe Sultan and Fatma Sultan were married with high officials at the age of 13, in 1655. Çağatay Uluçay presented the plan of Kösem Sultan to increase her power by building strong networks with pashas as the cause of the beginning of this tradition in the palace. Among the daughters of Sultan İbrahim (r. 1640-1648) Gevher Sultan was married at 3 years of age and Beyhan Sultan at the age of 2. The three daughters of Mustafa II (r. 1695-1703) were 7 years old when they married. Among Ahmet III's (r. 1703-1730) daughters, Fatma Sultan was 5, Ümmügülsüm Sultan was 2 and Atike Sultan was 12 years old when they were married to statesmen.[112]

In the first half of the seventeenth century, one of the reasons that underlay the decrease in the age of marriage is related to the six sultans who were either young or

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[109] Artan, 'Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate: Instutuitional and Symbolic Change in the Early Eighteenth Century,' 341.
[110] Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, 130.
[111] Uluçay, *Harem,* 92.
[112] Uluçay, *Harem,* 93. For the information about the weddings of Fatma and Safiyye Sultans see Uluçay,'Fatma ve Safiyye Sultanların Düğünlerine Dair Bir Araştırma,' 135-165, Uluçay 'XVIII. Asırda Yapılan Sultan Düğünlerine Umumi Bir Bakış,' 80-90, Uluçay, 'Beş Yaşında İken Nikahlanan ve Beşikte Nişanlanan Sultanlar'

mentally ill, or who succeeded one another and created a shift in power from the sultan to the grand viziers. Apart from this, the celebration of wedding ceremonies also underwent a transformation during this period. In the same way as royal births and circumcisions, royal weddings of the *sultan*s were celebrated with parades and spectacles, but they were considered private affairs of the sultan's family and the celebrations were held on a relatively smaller scale. However, at the beginning of eighteenth century, ostentatious weddings that celebrated on a vaster scale than earlier periods were seen in Istanbul. The powerful grand vizier Damad İbrahim Pasha organized a triple wedding for the daughters of Ahmed III (r. 1703-1730): Hatice (14 years old), Atike (12 years old) and Ümmügülsüm (2 years old). Closely connected to Damad İbrahim Pasha's aim to gain public recognition and approval, these weddings can be evaluated as the 'invented tradition' of urban festivities.[113]

To conclude, similar to their male counterparts, palace girls' marriages in particular and lives in general served the interests of the state. In the palace of the early modern Ottoman Empire, it seems that people had two distinct categories in their mind for the life cycle phases: one of them is childhood and the other one is adulthood. They had also an idea of adolescence, but it is a category that passed away in a short time. Adolescents were expected to behave like adults, and at the same time they had to continue to learn and gain experience to be perceived as full adults. Like the princes, the lives of princesses were also shaped for the benefit of the Ottoman imperial family members. Marriage ceremonies of the Sultan's daughters and the circumcision ceremonies of the boys were celebrated with sumptuous festivities when needed. Ottoman male babies were more welcomed than girls. Ottoman male adolescents had relatively more chance to

[113] Artan, 'Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate: Instutuitional and Symbolic Change in the Early Eighteenth Century,' 341. For further information on 'invented tradition' and the royal marriages please see this article.

choose their sexual partners, but it seems that in the early modern Ottoman palace, females had no right to choose their spouses.

3.1.3 Adolescence of the slaves and concubines

The inhabitants of Ottoman Palace were composed of two groups of people: the first group consisted of the imperial family, and the second one included slaves. Even though the position of slavery in Islamic law was contested and different jurisprudents proclaimed various opinions on this issue, slavery, in the early modern Ottoman Empire, was a legally recognized institution.[114] Since, from the *şer'î* point of view, enslavement of the defeated people was common, Ottoman officers enslaved non-Muslim boys for the military and governmental services when it was necessary.[115] The enslavement of children and adolescents occurred in two ways. First of all, they were taken from war captives, and secondly they were forcibly taken from the Christian population. It is worth analyzing the process of their enslavement and recruitment to understand the conception of childhood and adolescence in mind of the early modern Ottomans.

For the Ottomans, childhood and adolescence were the life-phases that needed to be shaped with education and training. Character begins to develop in the early ages of life and the way in which it is formed dramatically affects the personality of the adult.[116] Children and adolescents have cultivable minds and the personalities that can easily be shaped. Therefore, sultans were careful to choose

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[114] For further reading of the nature of slavery in Islam, see William Gervase Clarence-Smith, *Islam and The Abolution of Slavery*.

[115] Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and its Demise, 1800-1909,* 3.
Generally accepted belief asserts that non-Muslim boys were recruited. However, according to the information in *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan* Bosnian Muslim boys were exempted from the rule. Toroser, *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan: Yeniçeri Kanunları,* 16.

[116] This notion comes from the medieval Muslim writer's accounts on the child raring practices that derived and adopted from the Hellenistic sources. Giladi, *Children of Islam: Concepts of Childhood in Medieval Muslim Society,* 49.

their slaves from the young population. The practice of taking one fifth of the war captives as slaves for the sultan started in the time of Murad I (r. 1362-1389), in Gelibolu, to meet the need for soldiers.[117] These captives were sent to an *acemi oğlanı ocağı* for training and becoming proper fighters.

According to the *Pençik Resmi* of 1520, the edict of the Sultan indicate the rules of enslavement, slave boys must be between 10 and 17 years of age. (The age limits also indicate the end of childhood and the beginning of adulthood, the age spectrum of adolescence as well.) Ones that were older than 17 years and seemed to be very talented could also be taken. Moreover, another entry in the same rescript stipulates that the boys should not only not have any disability or illness, or a beard. It is understandable that a healthy body of the slave would be determined, but the emphasis on the beard indicated their adolescence. Futhermore, it is important to note that growing a beard was linked to political and sexual maturity, and until the time of departure from the palace, they were not allowed to grow a beard.[118] After the time of Mehmed II, the *acemi oğlanı ocağı* was expanded, with the recruitment of more boys. According to the *Devshirme Kanunnamesi,* attributed to the time of Bayezid II[119], these boys should be 14-15, and at the most 17-18 years of age, as was indicated in *Pençik Resmi.*

In time, however, the age of the levied boys increased. Although boys aged 12 to 15 were recruited in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, the children conscripted in the early seventeenth century were between ages 6 to 20. Children under 12 were only 8 in number, as opposed to 2210 in the 16 to 20 age group.[120]

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[117] Toroser, *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan: Yeniçeri Kanunları,* 7.
[118] Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire,* 293.
[119] Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri,* v. 2, 124.
[120] Yılmaz, 'Son Kalan Eşkal Defterlerine Göre Devşirmeliğin Bilinmeyenleri: İşçi de oldular Sadrazam da,' 43.

The only two known *eşkal defteri*s, the documents where the physical and familial information of the levied boys were registered, are dated to 1490 and to 1603-1604 respectively. The children recruited in the late fifteenth century were, on average, aged 13.5, and in the early- seventeenth century this average age increased to 16.5.[121]

These *defter*s reveal the perception of the boys and present clues about the treatment of Ottomans, which was very biased. As I mentioned above, on the one hand, boys were perceived as trainable and educable, but on the other hand, they were not regarded as innocent or well mannered. They were considered as having the potential to be ill-tempered. For instance, it was forbidden to take parentless boys, since they were believed to be greedy and impudent.[122] Moreover, it was forbidden to recruit boys who visited İstanbul and then returned home, since they were accepted as barefaced.[123] These statements from the rules of recruitment not only reflect the punctilious and choosy attitude of the Ottomans, but also reveal their wish to conscript boys who were easy going and easily adaptable to the system.

In addition, as they were perceived as representing the qualities of their families, children and adolescents were chosen from among nobles. The entries in the *devşirme kanunnamesi* that were stated in *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan* indicate that the boys of grandees, priests and those boys with good linage should be taken. Recruiting the boys of village chamberlains was forbidden, since it was assumed that the sons of village chamberlains were contemptible, like their fathers.

Moreover, it can be understood from the rules of recruitment that Ottoman officers considered the impact of the social and material environment on the

[121] Yılmaz, 'The Devshirme System and the Levied Children of Bursa in 1603-4 A.D,' 924. For the probable reasons of the increase in the age please see this article.
[122] 'Babası ve anası ölüp yetim kalan oğlanı almayalar, gözü aç ve edepsiz olur'. Toroser, *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan: Yeniçeri Kanunları,* 14.
[123] 'İstanbul'a gelip, sonra vilayetine dönmüş oğlan alınmaya çünkü çok yüz görmüş olur, utanmaz olur.' Toroser, *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan: Yeniçeri Kanunları,* 14.

temperament of children. It was not allowed to recruit the sons of shepherds. Since they grew up in the mountains, they were thought to be imprudent.[124] Additionally, the recruitment rules were shaped by the preponderance of *ilm-i kıyafet* (physiognomy). They preferred not to take bald boys, because they were believed to be arrogant, and short boys, since they were believed to be intriguers.[125]

The first step of the recruitment was the punctilious selection of the best boys with the guidance of these rules. The events that followed constituted a radical rupture between the old and new life of the boys that can be evaluated as tools to develop new identities. After the boys were forcibly taken, even though they were war captives or *devshirme*s, they were brought to the capital and given a two to three day rest. Then they became Muslims by reciting the Islamic confession of faith. They were circumcised and assigned Muslim names. Some of these boys, generally the beautiful ones, were assigned to the inner service; some of them were sent to *acemi oğlan ocağı* and most of them were given to Turkish families to learn the language and customs of the Turks.[126]

Through this system the Ottomans were able to cut these boys off from their natural culture and build a new Muslim identity and environment. These boys believed that they were the slaves of the Sultan and this system ensured their loyalty to him. Hakan Erdem suggests that it is possible to regard the first seven years of the boys as the actual term of slavery, since they performed many tasks similar in nature to those which were performed by ordinary slaves that belonged to private

[124] 'Sığırtmaç ve çoban oğlunu almayalar, sığırtmaç ve çoban tayfasından taze olan oğlanı dahi almayalar çünkü onların her biri dağda büyümüştür, edepsizdirler.' Toroser, *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan: Yeniçeri Kanunları,* 14.
[125] 'Kel olan alınmaya, kibirli ve göze çirkin olur. Köse oğlan alınmaya, fitne ve fesat olduktan başka düşman gözüne çirkin olur.' Toroser, *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan: Yeniçeri Kanunları,* 14.
[126] Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilatından Kapıkulu Ocakları,* 23.

individuals.[127] However, after they spent six or seven years in service and had complete their training, they were dispatched to offices throughout the empire.

In addition to all this, it should be noted that the system of taking and training of the adolescents was not an unchanged phenomena in terms of praxis. For instance, it seems that the practice of giving the boys to Turkish families ceased at the beginning of seventeenth century.[128] In his book, *Mevâ'idü'n-Nefâ'is Fî Kavâ'idi'l-Mecâlis*, written in 1587, the Ottoman bureaucrat Mustafa Âli elaborates on the changed customs in the palace. When he wrote about the old custom of the enrollment in the palace service, Mustafa Âli stated that 'Inquiries should first be made as to their situation and origin. If he was an infidel, was he from a good family? This was to be ascertained. His features and form had to be shown to someone knowledgeable in the science of physiognomy. If it was determined that he was morally healthy and sound in physiognomy, they were to admit him.'[129] However, when he refers to his time, he draws a totally different portrait and writes about the corruption of early customs in the assignment of boys to palace services through nepotism.[130]

Just as their male counterparts, female slaves were taken to the palace in the age of adolescence. Some of them were chosen among the war captives and some of them were presented to the sultans as gifts from high-officials or from family members of the imperial household.[131] Since these concubines were considered the potential wives for the sultan and high-ranking officials, they were subjected to good quality training, and the Ottoman harem was an educational institution for them. By

[127] Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and its Demise, 1800-1909,* 10.
[128] İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı demonstrates two registers dated from 1622 and 1636 to indicate the cessation of the practice. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilatından Kapıkulu Ocakları,* 24.
[129] Âli, Mevâidü'n-Nefâis fî *Kavaidi'l-Mecâlis,* 15.
[130] Âli, Mevâidü'n-Nefâis fî *Kavaidi'l-Mecâlis,* 16.
[131] Uluçay, *Harem,* 14.

grooming concubines for roles as wives and mothers, education and training in the palace made them eligible to be the wives of the top of military and administrative officials.[132] Just as the princesses received recognition and higher status with marriage, so concubines played a role of significance through marriage to or being the mother of a *şehzade.* In this way, having been married off, concubines started to be considered women and their social status was immediately altered in a positive way.

Due to the fact that the birth dates of concubines are not known, it is difficult to identify their marriage age. It is useful to state a few of those that are known so as to have an idea about the passage of womanhood. The daughter of the Serbian king Mara (Despina) married Murad II when she was 16 years old.[133] The mother of Selim I, Hafsa Sultan, first became a mother when she was 16 years old.[134] Sultan Murad III made Safiyye Sultan his *haseki* when she was 14-15 years old.

In conclusion, male and female slaves in the early modern Ottoman period were perceived as tools to perpetuate the system of bureaucracy and military. They grew to adulthood under the tight grip of their trainers. It seems that Ottomans observed three life-cycle categories. Childhood was regarded as the age of care and provision of the life by parents or custodians, and little children neither allowed to be forcibly taken as *devshirme*s nor taken as concubines. Adolescence was considered as the stage of the progressing to adulthood in terms of physical development and experience, and the boys and concubines for the service of the palace were selected among this group. At this point, for boys, growing a beard was considered to distinguish an adolescent from an adult. Growing a beard was found appropriate for

[132] Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, 139.
[133] Uluçay, *Padişahların Kadınları ve Kızları*, 16.
[134] Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Sultanları: 36 Osmanlı Padişahı,* 148.

adults, but not for adolescents. It should be noted that it was also related to political maturity and linked to the enrolment in the posts in the bureaucracy or the military. Palace boys' and girls' adolescence were under the surveillance of the palace elites. They had to leave their childhood experience aside and enter into a new life with new faiths, a new language and be born to a new life in their phase of adolescence.

3.2 Childhood and adolescence of urban and rural populations

The Ottomans' writings of in various genres provide a wide range of sources which reveal how childhood and adolescence were defined and how they were understood by adults in the various strata of the society. For the purpose of providing a colorful account on the perception of childhood and adolescence by the Ottomans who have different social backgrounds, I looked at a number of poems and treatises of this period. The first literary genre that I will point out is *yaşname*. *Yaşname*s are the poems about the ages of life that reflect how a child or young person was considered by folk poets in particular.[135] Due to the fact that *yaşname*s belonged to the tradition of the common people, they allowed its readers to have an idea about the popular perception of the childhood and adolescence. In contrast to the elite literary culture of the urban areas, these poems were in circulation among the ordinary people of Anatolia, therefore they had the capacity to reflect their perception of life phases.

The second genre that I will touch upon is the *nasihatname*, advice literature that was penned by Ottoman intellectuals from various backgrounds. In this way, my aim is to bring an urban elite understanding of childhood and adolescence into the picture, and present an insight into how a child could be reared ideally from the perspective of Ottoman urban elites. Even though penned by people from the same

[135] For further information on *Yaşname*s, see Âmil Çelebioğlu, 'Türk Edebiyatında Yaşnameler,' *Türklük Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Marmara Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi 1984 1.

stratum of the society, *Şehrengiz* literature provides a radically different perspective and presents another view to apprehend the attitude toward adolescence.

Although the advices and educational ideas of the Ottoman intellectuals should not be considered as a direct reflection of the social practices of the time, such advices and ideas are valuable to highlight the mentality of religious scholars concerning ideal child rearing practices. Likewise, even though poems by the elite are not eligible to reflect the attitude towards adolescence by every strata of society, they allow the reader to have an idea about the elite conception of the adolescence. Besides, minstrels too draw the picture of the ages that displays the characteristics of the specific life phases. Therefore, it is possible to assume that written advices and poems had relevance to their immediate social environment and helped readers to grasp the mentality of the early modern Ottomans.

Moreover, urban population includes the elites as well as non-elites, likewise, the rural segments of society was composed of setteled peasants and nomads. The perception of childhood and adolescence and the social norms concerning these age groups could vary not only from one group of society to another but they were also subjected to change through different geographies as well. Therefore, it is worth noting that I will point out the social perception and social norms that I derived from the sources that are available for me.

3.2.1 Childhood and children of *re'aya*

Until the ages of 7 to 10, it is possible to assume that children were considered as 'children' in the modern sense by Ottoman population. They have to be protected, cared for and educated. *Yaşname* poems figure out the most prevalent futures of the each age group without making any discrimination concerning gender for the early

years of childhood. Poems seem to be written to describe the characteristic of both girls and boys. However, at the age of 12 to 14, it is understood that these poems were written by taking into consideration male readers. Drawing a picture that illustrates the prominent future of each age, *yaşname*s were written differently by various poets. On the one hand, each poet used different words to describe specific characteristics of ages, but they overlapped in terms of indicating the physical and psychosocial developments. These poems were useful to highlight how the Ottoman non-elite population in general and minstrels in particular characterize each age.

In these poems, a child of 1, 2 or 3 years of age was depicted with a stress on their lack of awareness toward the environment and their physical incapability. They emphasized that these age groups were liable to burn themselves or fall into rivers. Hasta Hasan, who was a folk poet from Axılkelek in origin and lived at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century,[136] writes that when he was one or two years of old, he was not aware of trees or stones, he did not know the fear of fire, and fell into little rivers.[137] Aşık Ömer (b. 1621- d. 1707), whose birthplace is disputed and indicated as either Konya or Kırım by different scholars, wrote his poems in seventeenth-century Ottoman Turkish[138], characterized children under four by stating that they sway like drunks and get entangled in things around them.[139] The age of three, four and five were narrated by the emphasis on physical development and ability to speak. Aşık Ömer points out this development that occur in children's bodies and writes that at four years of age children grow tall and put on airs, and he

[136] Hacılar, 'Axılkelekli Âşık Hasta Hasan'
[137] 'Bir yaşında vardım ben iki yaşa, Bakmadım ağaca keseğe taşa, Bilmirem korkuyu yanam ataşa, Düşerem odları akmalı çaya' Kaya, *Yaşnameler*, 193.
[138] Üşenmez, 'Modern Kırım-Tatar Edebiyatında Aşık Ömer,' 2056.
[139] 'İkisinde sarhoş gibi sallanır, Üç yaşında her nesneye dolanır' Kaya, *Yaşnameler*, 276.

likens them to a garden when they reached five.[140] Another folk poet who was born at the beginning of sixteenth century Sivas[141], Pir Sultan Abdal, points out that children walk at three, want to talk at four and talk well at five.[142]

With an emphasis on one's capability of thinking and behaving logically, children at the age of 7 to 10 are characterized by the emergence of self-consciousness. Aşık Ömer states that a child becomes ensured of his deeds at the age of eight.[143] Vartan, who was an Armenian folk poet of the eighteenth century,[144] and Pir Sultan Abdal, depict the age of six as the age of playing with friends. Vartan states that at his six, he played with his peers.[145] Pir Sultan Abdal indicates that children tussle with their friends at six.[146] Seven years of age is generally specified with the age of schooling and loss of the milk teeth. Hasta Hasan points out the changes of the teeth,[147] and Aşık Ömer mentions the loss of the teeth.[148] Different poets ascribe different futures to children of 7 to 12 years of age in terms of physical and psychological developments. However, for the ages of 12 to 15, generally they comment on love affairs.[149] Pir Sultan Abdal states that one falls in love at 11 and wants a hazel-eyed girl at 15.[150]

Risaletün fi Medhi Piri, attributed to the reign of Murad II (r. 1421-1444), was an advice book that was complied by Andrea Coscolo, a Venetian ambassador to the court of Murad II. One of the grandsons of Andrea Coscolo, Mario de Cavallo, who

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[140] 'Dört yaşında boy verir de ulanır, Beş yaşında bahçe bostana benzer.' Kaya, *Yaşnameler*, 276.
[141] Albayrak, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi,* 'Pir Sultan Abdal,' v.34, 278.
[142] 'Üç yaşında adım adım yürünür, dört yaşında söylemeye söz ister, beş yaşında dili civan sevişir' Kaya, *Yaşnameler*, 285.
[143] 'Sekizinde muhkem eder işini' Kaya, *Yaşnameler*, 276.
[144] Kaya, 'Başlangıçtan Günümüze Âşık Edebiyatı,' 5.
[145] 'Altı yaşımda yaştaşımla oynadım' Kaya, *Yaşnameler*, 347.
[146] 'Altısında uşağınan döğüşür'. Kaya, *Yaşnameler*, 285.
[147] 'Altıda yedide diş tazeledim' Kaya, *Yaşnameler*, 193.
[148] 'Yedisinde döker cümle dişini' Kaya, *Yaşnameler*, 276.
[149] 'Oniki de serim doldu sevdâya' Karacaoğlan, Çelebioğlu, 'Türk Edebiyatında Yaşnameler,' 185 'Varır varmaz onüç ondört yaşına, Kara sevdalara saldırdın beni' Karacaoğlan Çelebioğlu, 'Türk Edebiyatında Yaşnameler,' 176.
[150] 'Onbirinde başı girer sevdaya, On beşinde ala gözlü kız ister.' Kaya, *Yaşnameler*, 286.

was also an ambassador like his grandfather, wanted Murat Bey to translate this book, and then presented it to Süleyman I (r. 1520-1566).[151] At the very beginning of this book, there is a section about ages. In this treatise, *alem-i tufûliyyet* (the age of childhood) was defined as from the age of cradle to 9 years of age. This life phase is characterized by the words *mâsum* (innocent), suçsuz (blameless), *günahsız* (sinless), *zararsız ziyansız* (harmless) and their life is *fikirsiz* (thoughtless), *gamsız* ve *gussasız* (carefree). These children's only concern is playing games. Furthermore, he states that they are ignorant and cause people to bother and suffer hardship. They do not know about what is good or bad. He likens their nature to animals, so he states that wherever their nature wants to go, they go there. They also resemble monkeys in that they can laugh and cry at the same time. At the end of the depiction of childhood, Andrea Coscolo states that it is necessary for a person who gives advice to care for and train those children.

Andrea Coscolo names the ages between nine and fifteen as *âlem-i sabâvet*, and describes a life phase between childhood and adulthood. This age group of youths wants to prove themselves in society, but they are not capable of living as adults by themselves. He stresses the generosity of this age group. He indicates that they believe what they hear, and they do not know how to deceit or cheat. They do not want to get advice, and want to do whatever they want. Even if just for the slightest reason, they do not hesitate to harm people. He names the ages between fifteen and thirty as *mertebe-i şebabet* and emphasizes the attainment of puberty.

[151] Âmil Çelebioğlu states the original copies of this manuscript as Translation by Murad Bey, Nuruosmaniye Ktp. Nr. 3295, yk. 15-21 and Nasihat-ı Sultan Murad Han ve Medh-kerdenpiri Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Ktp. Revan bl nr. 407 yk 10-16. Published as Uçman, *Fatih Sultan Mehmed'e Nasihatler,* Çelebioğlu, 'Türk Edebiyatında Yaşnameler,' 175.

This age group was characterized by the extreme need of proving one's personality in society and acquiring a good reputation.[152]

This fifteenth century treatise of Andrea Coscolo is in alignment with the indications in *Yaşname*s and the advice literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. All of them point out the significance of the ages from 7 to 10 for both intellectual and mental development and 12 to 15 as starting of the interest in the opposite sex that can be evaluated as early adolescence. Those children and adolescents, depicted as inexperienced and ignorant in this genre, were treated in a more favorable light in advice books, and the necessity for them to be trained comes forth.

Children's souls are open to influences and according to Kınalızade Ali Efendi (b. 1510- d. 1572) this starts before birth. Kınalızade Ali Efendi, who was a moralist from the Ottoman *ulema* rank, penned his views on ethics in his book *Ahlâk-ı Alâî*. It was composed basicly of ethics in general, and family ethics and political ethics in particular.[153] Spending his life as a *müderris* and *kadı* in various cities of the Empire, Kınalızade Ali Efendi holds parents responsible for raising children. Just the physical characteristics of the mother and father passed to children through genetic, so is the morality and manners of the mother and father transmitted to children. Therefore, the expectant mother should be faithful and virtuous. She also should have a good lineage and *güzel ahlak,* that is, piety and good ethics, because morality or immorality passes from the parents to child.[154]

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[152] Çelebioğlu, 'Türk Edebiyatında Yaşnameler,' 173-175.
[153] In his article, 'Ethics as a Domain to Discuss Political: Kınalızade Ali Efendi and his *Ahlâk-ı Alâî',* Baki Tezcan points out the relation between the individual and state ethics, numerous copies and widespread circulation of the book.
[154] Toksöz, 'Osmanlı Klasik Dönem Ahlak Eserlerinde Çocuk Eğitimi,' 86.

Another influence directly comes from the wet-nurse. Since, through her milk, a nurse transmits to the infant her own physical, moral and mental traits, Kınalızade Ali Efendi suggests that a wet-nurse should be a healthy, sturdy, wise and honest person. He quotes an old saying that 'Er-Rada'u vilâdetün sâniyetün' (Sucking milk is a second birth) and implies that the nursling becomes similar to the nurse. He narrates that if the child has blue eyes and is wet nursed by a Habeşi woman (typical characteristic of an Ethiopian woman is dark skin and dark colored eyes), s/he will have black eyes. Since the infant copies not only physical features, but also the morality of the wet nurse through suckling, parents should be extremely punctilious.[155]

Moreover, Kınalızade Ali Efendi ascribes prime importance to ward off the detrimental affects of the social environment. Children interact with a variety of role models to form their personalities. Therefore, he suggests that children should be prohibited from gathering with adults, children and boys who have contemptible behaviors, such as prostitution, since Kınalızade Ali Efendi thinks that children are eligible to copy these unpleasant behaviors. At this point, he notes that 'tabî'at sâriktir, husûsen ki zemân-ı sabî ve mevsim-i sıgarda ola' (human nature is burglar (of temper), especially in the time of infancy and the season of childhood) and indicates that children are inclined to take role models, and imitate people who are in the immediate environment. Therefore, parents should take care of their children and protect them from the negative impacts of the people around them.[156]

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[155] 'Ve ba'dehu iyi dâye kılına ki sahihu'l cism, kâmilü'l-kuvâ, emrâz u eskâmdan berî ve aklı sahih ve hulku selim ola.(...) Ve dâyenin ahlâk u âdâtı, sütü gıdâ-yı mevlûd olmakla sirâyet edip mevlûd anın ahlâkı ile tahalluk eder. Hukemâ derler ki bir mevlûd kebûd-çeşm olsa, dâye-i Habeşiyyeye irdâ'la siyah-çeşm olur. Pes murdi'a suret-i zâhirde bir mertebe tagyîr ifâde edicek sıfat-ı bâtında dahi tagyîr vermesi mukarrerdir.' Kınalızade, *Ahlak-ı Alâ'i,* 734.

[156] Ve evvel-i te'dib oldur ki rezâyille mevsuf azdâd ile muhâlatasından men' oluna. Ve sefeh ü fuhşla mevsûm ve lu'b u lehve katı meşgul sıbyan u gılmanla mücâleset ü muşahabet ettirilmeye ki

Children's spirits were considered to be pure. However, they have the potential to be inclined toward both good and bad behaviors. In this sense, their environment has prime importance in shaping their characters. In his treatise, based on the book of Birgivi Efendi (b. 1523 - d. 1573), Kadızâde Mehmed Arif Efendi (d. 1759) tackles the issue of child raring. Kadızâde Mehmed Arif Efendi was born in Erzurum and was appointed as *müderris* and *mufti* in the same province.[157] Kadızade Mehmed Arif Efendi had a very protective attitude toward children. He emphasized that children should be taken to *ilim meclisi*, that is, places where religious issues were discussed. He believed they should join groups in which honest people conversed and talked about morality and ethics. In this way, the child would get exposed to good conduct and be able to acquire religious ethics, generosity and virtue.[158]

Furthermore, in his book Kadızade Mehmed Arif Efendi points out that children could have undesirable tendencies in their nature. Through scolding, it was thought, one could remove bad habits from the character such as asperity and insolence. Parents should not behave so warmly and instead should keep their children as their slaves in terms of exhibiting their love to them. Only in this way parents can help their children be mild-mannered and well-intentioned.[159]

In contrast to these ideas of affection, Kadızade Mehmed Arif Efendi also regards children as weak and vulnerable. He emphasizes the necessity of protection, and states that until the time they grow a beard, one should not allow his children to go anywhere with others. Then, he draws an analogy between birds and children, and indicates that if a squeaker gets out of the nest, it will be prey for the games.

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henüz sade olmakla anların ahlak u atvarıyla tahalluk eylemeye ki tabi'at sâriktir, hususen ki zemân-ı sabî ve mevsim-i sıgarda ola. Kınalızade, *Ahlak-ı Alâ'i,* 734.

[157] Akot, 'Kadızade Mehmed Arif Efendi'nin *Risale Fi Hased* Adlı Eseri ve Muhtevasının Analizi,'15,16.

[158] Kadızade, *Birgivi Kadızade Şerhi*, 239.

[159] *Birgivi Kadızade Şerhi*, 240.

As I mentioned above, in advice books, the most important and essential matter is the preparation of children to adult life as good Muslims. For this reason, there are many suggestions made by intellectuals to parents to teach their offspring the most elementary knowledge of faith. In this regard, Kınalızade Ali Efendi advises that children should learn not only the tenets of the faith and the deeds of the prophet, but they should also perform the commandments. At this point, he quotes a *hadith* that recommends parents to command their children to pray at seven years old. The *hadith* proposes that if they don't pray at ten, parents should beat their children.[160] Hence, Kınalızade Ali Efendi implies the children's liability to punishment started at age ten.

3.2.2 *Mekteb*s

It is possible to evaluate *mekteb*s as the reflection of these advises in real life. *Mekteb*s were basically places where children took their primary education, especially on religion. In *mekteb*s, reading and reciting the Qur'an occupied a central role, but children were also provided information about other religions, what is wrong and right to do in daily life and the principles of correct behaviors.[161] *Mekteb*s were generally constructed as independent buildings or as a part of a *külliye* in neighborhoods.[162] Mefail Hızlı, who deals particularly with the *mekteb*s in Bursa,

[160] 'Pes âdâb-ı din ve sünen-i şerâyi-i mürselîn ta'lim ü telkin edeler; ve farz u sünnet ve hill u hürmet nedir yap yap ta'lim ü telkin edeler; ve freâyiz ü vâcibata muvâzebet ü müdâvemet ettireler, nitekim hadis-i şerifte vârid olmuştur ki 'Etfâliniz yedi yaşına vardıkta namaz kılmak emr edin. On yaşına varıcak kılmazlarsa darb edin ve tekâsül ve tevâhünü hûy etmekten gayet sakınalar.' Kınalızade, *Ahlak-ı Alâ'i,* 736.
[161] Hızlı, *Mahkeme Sicillerine Göre Osmanlı Klasik Döneminde İlköğretim ve Bursa Sıbyan Mektepleri*, 79-80.
[162] Aksoy, *Osmanlı Devri İstanbul Sıbyan Mektepleri Üzerine Bir İnceleme*, 128.

presents the example of Bursa as a sample of the Empire and indicated that every *mahalle* must have own *mekteb* in early modern Ottoman provinces.[163]

When it comes to the students in the *mekteb*s, it is understood from the waqf records, endowment deeds, that the primary concern of the building of a *mekteb* was to provide education for orphans and the children of poor families. For instance, in one of the Mehmed II's vaqf registers, it is stated that after the *mu'allim* (teacher) was appointed to a *mekteb*, he should train *eytâm* (orphans). If there are no orphans, the *mu'allim* should train the *etfâl-i fukara* (children of the poor).[164] The same concern is also seen in another vaqf register from the time of Süleyman I. It states that *mu'allim* should train *sıbyan-ı fukarâ* (children of the poor) and *fukarâ-i sıbyân* (poor children).[165] Building *mekteb*s for orphans and poor children implies that children of the wealthy families took their primary education in their homes from tutors.

Even though the exact time span for this education is not known, Ottoman historians generally suggest 3-4 years for the first education of the children, and girls and boys were allowed to be trained together.[166] At this point, it is useful to note the difference between the perceptions of the boys and girls in terms of gender. In the beginning of the section on the nurturing of children, Kınalızade Ali Efendi suggests poor people should not to grieve after the birth of a female and consoles them by

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[163] Hızlı, 'Osmanlı Dönemi Bursa'sında Eğitim Öğretim Vakıflarına Genel bir Bakış,'183-191.
[164] 'Ve şart buyurdular, mahalle-i cedîdede müceddeden binâ buyurdukları Cami-i şerifin garba mâil kapısı yanında vâki' olan mektebde bir nefs-i enfes sahibi, rıza-yı Hak talibi muallim ta'yin oluna. Tâ ki eytâm bulunur ise ta'lîm-i eytam, bulunmaz ise etfâl-i fukara-yı müslimine ta'lime ikdam eyleyüb mukabele-i hizmetde külle yevmin altı akçe vazifeye mutasarrıf ola.' Hızlı, *Mahkeme Sicillerine Göre Osmanlı Klasik Döneminde İlköğretim ve Bursa Sıbyan Mektepleri,* 52.
[165] ' (...) ilm-i fıkha vâkıf ve vâcibat ü sünen-i salâta arif kimesne muallim olub sıbyan-ı fukarâ ve fukarâ-i sıbyana ta'lim-i Kur'ân-ı Azîm ve salata müteallık mesayili tefhim idüp (...).' Hızlı, *Mahkeme Sicillerine Göre Osmanlı Klasik Döneminde İlköğretim ve Bursa Sıbyan Mektepleri,* 52. For the other references about building *mekteb*s for the orphans and the poor, see Mefail Hızlı, Hızlı, *Mahkeme Sicillerine Göre Osmanlı Klasik Döneminde İlköğretim ve Bursa Sıbyan Mektepleri*, 72.
[166] Hızlı, *Mahkeme Sicillerine Göre Osmanlı Klasik Döneminde İlköğretim ve Bursa Sıbyan Mektepleri,* 72.

reminding them that God would provide their *rızk* (sustenance) and this newborn would bring an increase the family's *rızk* and would bring prosperity to her father. Moreover, he forbid the father to chastize his wife by saying that she gave birth a girl ('Duhter viladet ettin!'), and emphasized that giving birth to a female baby is not under the control of the wife. [167] This attitude of solacement can be a sign of the attitude of poor families toward female children. Since female children would not be beneficial to the family in terms of providing financial support or labor, they could be seen as a burden to poor families.

Another difference concerning the attitude toward male and female children manifests itself in education. Different intellectuals declare different ideas on the education of the girls. Kınalızade Ali Efendi indicates that Nasıraddin Tusi, who was the author of one of the most prominent advice books from the 13th century, precludes girls from the reading and writing. He adds that other *ulema* allowed the girls to read, but forbid them to write. Then, Kınalızade Ali Efendi suggests that parents to teach their daughters to read and write, and he mentions Aişe, the wife of the prophet, and the daughters of the some *ulema* as good examples of women scholars.

It also should be noted that the boys were expected to engage in 'manly' activities and the girls in 'womanly' activities. Like their counterparts in the palace, the girls were expected to be good housewives and mothers. At their early ages,

[167] 'Ve eğer duhter ise yâ fakir-i kesirü'l iyâl ise zinhâr bî huzur u müberrem olmaya –ki Hakk tebârake ve te'âlâ anın rızkını takdir etmişdir- mümkindir ki beğenmeyip teberrüm ettiği mevlûdunbaşında sa'adet ve rızkında vüs'at konulmuş olup emvâl kudumü pederine mûcib-i ikbâl ü irfâk ve sebeb-i vüs'at-i ü erzk ola. Ve ehline 'Duhter viladet ettin!' diye izhar-ı melalet eylemeye, zira ihtiyardan hâlidir, bî-ihtiyârı levm cehlden nâşidir. Kınalızade, *Ahlak-ı Alâ'i,* 732.

while female children were expected to learn sewing, cooking and slivering, male children were anticipated to learn horse riding and shooting arrows.[168]

Apart from Muslim society, the method of training the children of the non-Muslims of the Ottoman Empire seems to be similar. By the nineteenth century, the Ottoman state considered the non-Muslim population as divided into communities called *millet*. The most prominent non-Muslim populations were the *Rum Milleti* (for the Greek population), *Ermeni Milleti* (for the Armenian population), and *Musevi Milleti* (for the Jewish population). These communities had their own schools to teach the tenets of their faiths to the children of the community members. Just as Muslim *mekteb*s trained children to prepare them to live a good Muslim adult life, the non-Muslim community schools gave education to raise children as pious religious members.[169] Since each community had their own religious book, their education was given in the language of the books. The language of the Orthodox Bible was Byzantine Greek, and the Greek population used that language in education. Armenians used the 5th century Armenian Bible in their schools, and the Hebrew Torah occupied the central role in Jewish institutions.[170]

3.2.3 Adolescence and adolescents of *re'aya*

The limits of childhood were determined with not only by physical but also by psychological development. At this point it is useful to remember the age of *temyîz*. The age of *temyîz* implies that children were able to discriminate between right and wrong. It is the ability to decide what is good or bad for one's self. Even though it varies from one child to another, the age of *temyîz* was considered generally between

[168] Araz, 'Ölmek İçin Çok Erken: 17. Ve 18. Yüzyılda Anadolu'da Kazaların Sebep Olduğu Çocuk Ölümleri ve Yaralanmaları Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme,' 41.
[169] Somel, 'Gayri Müslim Okulları Nasıl 'Azınlık Okulu' Oldu,' 12.
[170] Somel, 'Gayri Müslim Okulları Nasıl 'Azınlık Okulu' Oldu,' 12.

7-10 years of age. When a child comes to these ages, s/he experiences not only intellectual improvement, but also physical development. Therefore, s/he is also called *müştehât* and *müştehâte* that indicates the physical condition of this age group and puts emphasis on their carnally desirable body. In this respect, by the age of *temyîz* and *müştehî/müştehâte,* childhood slowly comes to an end, and the child transforms into an adolescent.

After they coming to the age of *mekteb,* if they were lucky enough to take education, and taking their primary education in 3-4 years, children were able to go into adult life and take responsibilities in terms of obligations. Like the *şehzade*s of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries or slaves of the palace, they were obliged to take on responsibilities and share the burden of the family's livelihood. Males, depending on their family and social and economic conditions, were expected to grow into adulthood by engaging in various activities such as apprenticeship in a craft or helping the family on farms.

Having completed primary education, if they were lucky enough to take education in terms of familial economy, both non-Muslim and Muslim adolescents were expected to earn their living through acquiring a craft, working in the field, or continue to take education in religious schools in the case of non-Muslim religious schools or in *medrese*s for Muslims. A craft was learned through apprenticeship. Even though exact ages are not known for the beginning of craftsmanship, ideally, children were expected to take their primary religious education in *mekteb*s, and then became an apprentice and plunged into the world of adults.

Apart from apprenticeship to a craft, children and adolescents in rural areas were expected to help their families as much as they could. For instance, they were expected to carry the food and water for the farmers working in the fields, reaping

the fruits, herding the animals or collecting wood to burn at home.[171] In this way, they were prepared for adulthood while experiencing a real work environment and circumstances. For girls, early marriage, or at least, early betrothal was a common practice and adolescent girls of Muslim families were sent to future husband's family to live and serve in the domestic environment and to do housework. Cooking, cleaning, and childcare were the obligations of lower-class daughters. However, wealthy family members kept away their daughters and sons from these works, and prefered slaves for the running of houseworks. [172]

Furthermore, depending on family environment in terms of education, economic status and capability to have good social networks, the adolescent males could continue their education in *medrese*s and become a candidate for the Ottoman *ulema*. In her article, Madeline Zilfi elaborates on the patrilineal career of the *ulema* families, and she asserts that 'throughout the history of the Istanbul-based empire, son tended to follow father into the bazaars and fields as well as into the bureaus and *medrese*s'.[173] Therefore, children and adolescents of the *ulema* and *müderris* families were more advantaged than their peers in society in terms of continuing their religious education and getting a post of *ilmiye* in their adulthood.

Apart from the practical issues of the adolescent life, it is also useful to point out the conception of the period when girls and boys were regarded as objects of desire. In the learned elite circle of Ottoman society, some poets wrote poems to describe the beautiful boys of a particular city (*şehrengiz*). After Mesihi and Zati wrote their poems about the beautiful boys of Edirne in 1512, both the *şehrengiz* and the practice of writing ghazals on beautiful boys started to develop in Ottoman elite

[171] Araz, *16. Yüzyıldan 19. Yüzyıl Başlarına Osmanlı Toplumunda Çocuk Olmak,* 145.
[172] Zilfi, 'Servants, Slaves and the Domestic Order in the Ottoman Middle East,' 12.
[173] Zilfi, 'Elite Circulation in the Ottoman Empire: Great Mollas of the Eighteen Century,' 319.

culture. This culture flourished throughout the sixteenth century and continued to be popular until the end of eighteenth century.[174] In these poems, a boy's body was regarded as a worldly manifestation of immortal beauty.[175] These poems point out the existence of a homoeroticism, which often occurred between a master and his apprentice, and shows a sexual conception of adolescence.[176]

This phenomenon was seen not only among the Ottoman learned elites, but also among the *sufi* groups. Some *sufi* groups believed that God inhabits everything, and love for any object of creation can be the pathway of heavenly love.[177] In that vein, even though a large number of treatises were written against the dangers of gazing at beardless youths, *Sufis* directed their love and gaze to young males who were not sexually active yet.[178]

The consideration of beardless boys as the manifestation of heavenly love in poems or in the *Sufi* conception is not solely a sexual perception of adolescents. In his treatise, Mustafa Âli demonstrates that this admiration of boys' beauty is also reflected in real life as male sexual desire for adolescents and reverberated in the sexual practices. Mustafa Âli warns the palace *agha*s and says that 'The servant boys may all have nothing but peach down on their cheeks, but still some will be well-bred, some low-bred, some cultured, and some rabble. With this group of boys, excessive prudence is necessary. Wise men must firmly resolve that before these boys sprout a beard; they should reside for a lengthy time within the imperial palace. It is reprehensible to fondle and grope these boys or to subject them to ravishment at

[174] Andrews, *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early Modern Ottoman nd European Culture and Society,* 40.
[175] Kuru, 'Naming the Beloved in Ottoman Turkish Gazel,' 165.
[176] See Selim Kuru's 'Sex in the Text: Deli Birader's Dâfi'ü'l –gumûm ve Râfi'ü'-humûm and the Ottoman Literary Canon ,' 157-174.
[177] Ze'evi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourses in the Ottoman Middle East,* 82.
[178] Ze'evi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourses in the Ottoman Middle East,* 88.

the hands of vile men. Those who fall prey to immoral men, and are used by them as a female animal, lose their status and their honor in the same way as does decrepit old women.'[179]

The writings of Ottoman authors or poets from different social backgrounds reveal their thoughts and concerns about various issues. Children and adolescents of the Ottoman society were tackled in different ways in various genres. Thus, these different sources taken together suggest multilateral yet complementary understandings and perception of childhood and adolescence.

3.3 Conclusion

The perception of childhood and adolescence and attitude toward these age groups varies according to gender and social status in early modern Ottoman society. Instead of one monolithic understanding of childhood and adulthood, it is better to think of childhood and adolescence separately and evaluate them in their own gender and social statuses.

Imperial children and adolescents were perceived as special and privileged because they had the right to rule. The lives of imperial children and adolescents were devoted to the state interests. Like their counterparts in the imperial family, Ottoman imperial slaves also expected to serve the state. In contrast to the children and adolescents from the non-elite population of the Ottoman society, children and adolescents of the palace had totally different lives in practice and perception.

For all children from each strata of society, it seems that all legal and literary sources are in an agreement that, until the age of 7 to 10, children were perceived as children in the modern sense and boys were more welcomed than girls. Even though

[179] Âli, Mevâidü'n-Nefâis fî *Kavaidi'l-Mecâlis,* 17.

gender difference was not perceived as significant in terms of physical and psychological development, their style of training, formal education and games were kept separate and prepared them for different worlds of adulthood.

The end of childhood was determined to be from the age of 7 up to 10 years. Folk poetry provides more insight into the physical and psychological ability of these age groups, and elite poems portray them as objects of desire. The period of adolescence transforms children to carnally desirable creatures and attainment of puberty makes them responsible for their own deeds and decisions as legal sources stated. From this point on, slave children were eligible to be recruited and non-elite children could be sent to the *mekteb*s, while at the same age, the *şehzade*s were able to be sent to *sancak*s.

Children and adolescents were perceived as the part and parcel of their families in terms of morals and manners. They were considered creatures that needed to be protected, educated and trained. This perception is valid still in the adolescence, but an adolescent *şehzade* was expected to govern and fight in a *sancak*. Likewise, an adolescent peasant girl and boy were expected to work and to be active in the adult world. After attainment of puberty, they were also expected to marry and have children.

Having pointed out the concepts of childhood and adolescence in Ottoman society, I want to demonstrate how these age groups were visually portrayed in book paintings. The socio-legal status of children that I have indicated up until this point of my thesis will offer a basis for the examination of the context that anchored the paintings. By the same token, art historical evidence that I use from this point on will provide a unique medium that enables me to investigate the ideas about childhood and adolescence in early modern Ottoman society.

CHAPTER 4

PICTORIAL REPRESENTATIONS OF CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE IN OTTOMAN PAINTINGS

Focusing on the depiction of children and adolescents, this chapter aims to highlight the place of children and adolescents in book paintings and illuminate the conventions of representing children and adolescents in relation to their gender and social status. Furthermore, by focusing on the depictions of *Siyer-i Nebi*, this chapter discusses the perception of the sacred childhood of saints and the prophet. In this way, it will show that the perception of the childhood of saints and the prophet was different from the perception of the childhood of the elite and non-elite children.

In this chapter, I will arrange the paintings of children and adolescents thematically and I will put emphasis on the genres of books in terms of their representation of social status and gender of children and adolescents. Since the following discussion is largely thematic, I would like to touch upon the changes in Ottoman book art from the last half of the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. From the 1450s to the beginning of the sixteenth century, pictorial representations in book paintings remained hybrid and originated from Timurid, Turkman, Byzantine and contemporary Italian arts.[180] Up until the time of Süleyman I and the classification of the visual arts, artists in the royal court preferred not to depict children in book paintings, since the production was focused on the illustration of famous Persian stories and the depiction of children was limited to the visualization of childhood of the story characters.[181]

[180] Kafescioğlu, 'The Visual Arts,' 487.
[181] For the further analysis on the canonization of Ottoman art, please see Necipoğlu, 'A Kânûn for the State, A Canon for the Arts: Conceptualizing the Classical Synthesis of Ottoman Art and Architecture,' 194-216.

By the time of Süleyman I and the emergence of the completely novel style of illustrated Ottoman historical works, artists found a room to depict new themes and figures. While the texts were narrating the stories of the benevolence and justice of the sultans and high-ranking statesmen, the paintings that were accompanying the texts illustrated these narratives by visualizing the characters in the stories. Moreover, the images of children and adolescents were depicted to intensify the benevolent, supreme and fair image of the sultans and high-ranking state officials. In this way, concomitant to the development in the Ottoman book art that was illustrating different genres such as history books or books that narrated ceremonies, artists attempted to record historical events, sultans and grand viziers' stories pictorially and became able to represent the babies, children and adolescents of Ottoman society.

As far as I have been able to determine, the first baby to be represented by Ottoman artists was the infant of Isabella who appears in *Süleymanname* (1558), and in the preceding page of this book, recruited children appear in red garments. These conventions that show the baby swaddled and in the arms of the mother and children in small size reveal itself also in the following illustrated history books. The copies of *Şehname-i Selim Khan* (1571, 1581), the first and second volumes of *Şehinşahname* (1581, 1592), two volumes of *Hünername* (1584, 1588), *Surname-i Hümayun* of 1582 (1588) contain visual representation of children and adolescents both from the elite and non-elite segments of the society.

Depictions of children and adolescents appear frequently when Nakkash Osman and his team were at work in the imperial court, a trend that was closely related to the new trends of producing illustrated history books in the Ottoman court. This development was related to the shifting power bases of politics in the court.

During the second half of the sixteenth century, the political power of the sultans shifted to the grand viziers. By the end of the sixteenth century, political power started to transfer from viziers to eunuchs in the palace. These viziers and chief black eunuchs patronized various manuscripts to bolster their images in the court and make their bravery and benevolence more visible in the palace by patronizing illustrated history books and illustrate their achievements as provincial governors, campaign commanders or, as in the example of *Surname-i Hümayun of 1582*, successful organizer of an imperial circumcision celebration.[182]

The production of illustrated history books, popular at the end of the sixteenth century, decreased in the seventeenth century. Instead of producing illustrated history books, the Ottoman court preferred to create albums that were significantly different from the Ottoman illustrated histories. Instead of a well-ordered narrative and paintings that show the events in the text, courtly produced albums were composed of independent calligraphies, paintings and prose.

Mostly after the sixteenth century, the number of European merchants, diplomats and travelers who came to the Ottoman lands were increased. Some of these foreigners published their memories with the paintings. The albums that are generally known as 'costume albums' were produced for foreign markets and were composed of single page paintings that aimed to show the Ottoman society to foreigners.[183] Hence, in the album paintings, the depiction of daily life became popular and in this way many individuals from different segments of the society including children and adolescents were visible and represented in various contexts and scenes.

[182] Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court.*
[183] Bağcı, *Ottoman Painting,* 239.

The eighteenth century was a starting period of modernization in Ottoman painting that new styles and techniques were explored in all branches of art as well as in book paintings.[184] In the eighteenth century, with the innovations of Levni, sultanic portraitures were depicted individually on the single page folios sometimes with their young *şehzade*s, instead of being placed in medallions as in the sixteenth and seventeenth century's genealogy books.

At this point it is also worth mentioning the readers and the viewers of the books and book paintings. Many of the books that I will mention in this chapter were kept in the treasury of the palace. However, in the early modern period, the Ottoman treasury functioned as a lending library. According to Emine Fetvacı, there are the documents that show the records of the checking in and out of the books in Topkapı Palace. Therefore, it is possible to assume that, particularly illustrated history books, were read and viewed by the palace residents, and especially by the pages that were receiving education. The prescriptive nature of these books aimed to teach the next generation of the ruling elites the rules of hierarchy, the deeds of the ancestors and how the things were and must be in the Ottoman court.[185]

Moreover, the book registers in the *Harem* also show that the residents of the *Harem* also were able to reach some of these books, read and look at the paintings of them.[186] In this way, it becomes visible that the illustrated books and albums produced at the court were not solely created for the sultans or ruling elites. They were created to educate all of the palace residents and aimed to show the custom of the living in the palace and inform the readers on the deeds of their ancestors.

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[184] Bağcı, *Ottoman Painting*, 266.
[185] Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court.*

[186] Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court.*

Therefore, coinciding with the narratives, the benevolence, justice, bravery and skills of sultans and grand viziers were illustrated. In these illustrations children and adolescents played various roles that I will point out in the following pages.

Furthermore, different from the illustrated history books and courtly produced albums, the costume albums were produced for totally different audiences. As I mentioned, many costume albums were created with the aim of introducing the Ottoman society to the foreigners. Therefore, the paintings which are, most of the time, accompanied with short captions display the social status, ethnic origins and the professions of the people of the Ottoman society. Since the aim was demonstrating the Ottomans, their costumes and customs to the foreigners, artists preferred to depict various people from different ages, genders and social status, the scenes from everyday life and traditional practices such as bridal processions or circumcision ceremonies. In this way, thanks to the costume albums, the subjects of the paintings became common people in addition to the elites. Hence, the room for the paintings that are including Ottoman children and adolescents were expended.

In this chapter, I will present some of these paintings and, as in previous chapters, my focus will be on the children and adolescents from the palace and *re'aya* separately. My focus will be on the paintings from the mid sixteenth to the beginning of the eighteenth century. In this regard, I will deal mostly with Ottoman illustrated history books of the *Süleymanname* (1558), *Şehname-i Selim Han* (the first copy dated 1571 and the second 1581), the first and second volumes of *Hünername* (1584, 1588), the first volume of *Şehinşahname* (1581), the *Surname-i Hümayun* of 1582 and 1720 (1588, 1727) and the *Paşaname* (1623-1640).

Even though there are approximately 140 years between the *Surname-i Hümayun* of 1582 *and Surname-i Hümayun* of 1720, I preferred to tackle these two

books of circumcision ceremonies together, since they are in the same genre and the first *Surname-i Hümayun* constituted an example for the second one. Due to the fact that they narrate and visualize two big events in Ottoman history, I will evaluate them together with illustrated history books. Moreover, I will present the paintings from the albums of Ahmed I (dated 1610), Ralamb (dated seventeenth century), Taeschner (dated seventeenth century) and Diez (dated eighteenth century).

In the last part of this chapter, since they constitute a different genre, I will touch upon the paintings from various literary sources such as the *Siyer-i Nebi* (1595)*, Sinbadname* (sixteenth century)*, Kıssa-i Şehr-i Şatran* (1640) and illustrated biographical dictionaries such as the *Meşa'irü'ş-Şuara* (1590) and *Tercüme-i Şakâik'un-nu'maniye* (dated 1618-1622), respectively.

In this way, I will not only demonstrate that the representations of children and adolescents of early modern Ottoman society is dependent on gender and social status, but also the depictions of children and adolescents take different forms through the various genres of Ottoman book art.

4.1 Images of babies and children

4.1.1 Images of babies and children from *re'aya* in illustrated history books

Visual representations of children in book paintings go hand in hand with the perception of children and conception of childhood in society. The words '*sağîr*' (for males)/'*sağîre'* (for females) used in the fatwa books, '*oğlancık*' in *kanunname*s, and '*tıfl*' (for singular)/ '*etfal*' (for plural) in literary works referred to, roughly speaking, up to the age of 7 to 10. The prime characteristic of these images is the relatively small dimensions in the compositions. Moreover, just as it is emphasized in the fatwa

and advice literature, they were dependent on their families and needed to be protected, so they were illustrated with an emphasis on the physical connection with adults, probably with their parents. In this sense, it can be assumed that there is a bond forged between these children and babies and their caregivers. This bond is visualized typically with physical contact; babies were depicted in the arms of their mothers, and children were generally demonstrated holding their parents' hands.

Children and babies did not usually play a central role in book paintings, however, they were not completely ignored. They were visualized to complement the compositions that were narrated in the text, which is placed around the painting. Two images of the audience hall of the grand vizier Sokullu Mehmed Pasha from the *Şehname-i Selim Han* show two children and their mother in the context of the office of the grand vizier. Narrating events that have taken place in the reign of Selim II, the *Şehname-i Selim Han* was produced under the supervision of *şehnameci*[187] Loqman and his team for presentation to Murad III.[188] It was produced in three copies. The first draft is in the Topkapı Palace Museum Library, and it contains the entire text, but has not any illumination or illustrations. The second draft is in the British Library, and it includes only the introduction of the book and nine paintings that were completed in 1571. The third and the final one is also in the Topkapı Palace Library; it includes forty-four illustrations and was completed in 1581.[189]

The depictions of the audience hall of the grand vizier Sokullu Mehmed Pasha that I mentioned above belonged to the draft and final copy of *Şehname-i*

[187] *Şehnameci* was the permanent and salaried official of Ottoman court that his primary job was to compose literary accounts of contemporary or near contemporary Ottoman history. Appointed first by Süleyman I in 1550s. Further information on the post of *şehnameci,* see Christine Woodhead, 'An Experiment in Official Historiography: The Post of *Şehnameci* in the Ottoman Empire c. 1555-1605,' 157-82.
[188] Filiz Çağman, 'Şehname-i Selim Han ve Minyatürleri,' *Sanat Tarihi Yıllığı* 5 (1979): 411.
[189] Emine Fetvacı, 'The Production of the Şehname-i Selim Han,' 263.

Selim Han separately. The British Library painting shows a woman in a conversation with men. She holds her son in front of her, and her daughter is hidden behind her mother's dress. The girl was depicted in attire similar to her mother's, and she keeps her hands in her pocket (fig. 1). The depiction in the final copy shows two women, and again one male and one female child. However, in this depiction the woman holds the girl in her arms and holds the boy by his hand (fig. 2).

These two paintings were created to underline the justice provided by the court of grand vizier Sokullu Mehmed Pasha. The inscription on the British Library painting first of all praises Sokullu Mehmed Pasha and indicates that all women, children and other people are happy to live under the justice of the court. Showing people from different ages, for instance an old man conversing with the pasha, two non-Muslim boys, Muslim men and women, the painting in the British Library copy reflects the population that was mentioned in the inscription, and visualizes dispensing justice and generosity by Sokullu Mehmed Pasha in particular and Ottoman Empire in general, as the Topkapı Palace copy.[190] By including children in the scene, the artists are able to illustrate the text around the painting and complement the composition of the audience hall of Sokullu Mehmed Pasha.

[190] I owe thanks to Barry Wood for reading the inscription on British Library copy and help me to comment on the painting.



Figure 1. Audience hall of grand vizier Sokullu Mehmed Pasha, *Şehname-i Selim Han* (BL, Ms. Or. 7043), dated 1571 (Fetvacı, 'The Production of The *Şehname-i Selim Han*,' 280.)



Figure 2. Audience hall of Grand Vizier Sokullu Mehmed Pasha, *Şehname-i Selim Han* (TPML, A. 3595 fol. 27a), dated 1581 (Fetvacı, 'The Production of The *Şehname-i Selim Han*,' 294.)

The *Hünername*, a book of skills, is a courtly project that was planned to be written in four volumes and focuses on reflecting the bravery, power and benevolence of the Ottoman sultans. The initial volume contains the skills of the first nine sultans from Osman I to Selim I, and it was completed in 1584 by Seyyid Lokman. The manuscript includes forty-five paintings that were made by *nakkash* Osman and his team. The second volume, where child figures appear frequently, has an account of Süleyman I, and it was completed in 1588. The third and fourth volumes were never written.[191]

The first child image in the book appears in a painting that reflects a royal hunt of Süleyman I in Bagdad, and displays a woman who presents the sultan a basket of pomegranates (fig. 3). The main theme of the painting, as indicated on the page with red ink[192], is the presentation of pomegranates to the sultan and in return the woman was granted with the beneficence. Having been exposed to the Sultan's beneficence, numerous men wanted to marry her, and she married one of the men who had a girl and this girl married the woman's son.[193] In the text, the woman is referred to first as '*bir karı avret*' and after the meeting with the sultan she was called '*ol hatun kişi*', which probably refers to the changing status of the woman. His son is called '*yetîm oğulcuk*', indicating that he is an orphan. For the purpose of visualizing the narrative and generosity of the sultan, this painting draws attention to the child and his mother.

[191] Atasoy and Çağman, *Turkish Miniature Painting,* 145.
[192] 'Sultan Süleyman Han bahar eyyamı Bağdat etrafında şikar iderken bir hatun kişi bir sepet nar sunub behnemend olduğudur.'
[193] 'bir karı avert gelüb bir kaç yaşında küçük yetim oğulcuğu elinde bir sepet içinde bir kaç dane rumman-ı latifi getirib şehran-ı cihan penahe sundu.'



Figure 3. A woman and her son present pomegranate to the sultan, *Hünername*, vol. 2, (TPML, H. 1524. fol. 72a), dated 1588

A similar depiction appears on the following pages of the same book after a narrative that bolsters the image of the merciful sultan (fig. 4). In this painting, Süleyman I was depicted again in the hunt, and a woman who was in the harem of Bayezid comes and transmits a note to the Sultan.[194] Due to the fact that Bayezid died as a result of the fight with his brother Selim, the woman comes to apologize and wants to relieve herself from this fight.[195] In the narrative the woman is called '*hatun avret*' and her son is indicated with the phrase '*yetîm oğlancık'*. Depicting this child relatively smaller than the child who is presenting pomegranates to the sultan with his mother, the artist probably aimed to reflect the age difference between these children.

[194] The inscription on the painting indicates 'Sultan Süleyman Han'a şehzade Bayezid intikalinden sonra mezbur şehzade kullarının bir hatunu rak'a sunub min ba'd ol gavgadan halas olanların günahları afv buyurulduğudur.'

[195] 'Ve sekban beg dahi rak'a sahiblerin çağırıb sual itdikde meğer ol yetim yaranın babası şehzede sultan Bayezid ... devletinde yazılan sekbanlardan olduğun rak'asında beyan edib işte âl u 'inayet itmegin...'



Figure 4. A woman and his son present a note to the sultan, *Hünername,* vol. 2, (TPML, H. 1524, fol. 498a), dated 1588

The first volume of the *Hünername* also contains an illustration that depicts Mehmed I dispensing justice and the punishment of a soldier by the sultan due to the fact that the soldier stole beehives from a poor family.[196] The Sultan was depicted in the hunt, and instead of a Muslim woman and a son, a non-Muslim woman and her daughter were depicted, since the events occurred in Ruscuk. Dressed like her mother, the girl is holding her mother's hand.

[196] Bağcı, *Ottoman Painting,* 146.



Figure 5. Sultan Mehmed I punishes the soldier who stole the beehives, *Hünername* vol. 1, (TPML, H. 1523, fol. 121a), dated 1584.

In her article, 'Sultan Sencer ve Yaşlı Kadın Minyatürlerinin İkonografisi', Filiz Çağman points out that the story of an old woman and that Sultan Sencer was first written by Nizami-i Gencevi in the twelfth century in his *Hamse*, gave way to one of the most prominent depictions in book paintings. [197] The story basically narrates the story of a persecuted old woman comes to the sultan's hunting place and asks for justice. This story had been depicted in various iconographies through centuries along with copies of Nizami's *Hamse*. Pointing out the differences between Persian and Ottoman paintings about dispersing justice, Filiz Çağman indicates that this depiction from the first volume of *Hünername* is reminiscent of this Persian tradition.[198]

This painting, along with another one that represents a woman who presents a note to the sultan, can be evaluated in the same context. These paintings imply the

[197] The title can be translated as: The Iconography of Sultan Sencer and Old Woman Miniatures.
[198] Çağman, 'Sultan Sencer ve Yaşlı Kadın Minyatürlerinin İkonografisi,' 87-116.

availability of sultan to his people and underline the justice provided by him. Another painting from the second volume of the *Hünername* has similar theme. However, in this painting, instead of reaching the sultan in hunt, a woman goes to the hippodrome to ask for justice (fig. 6). A frame from the *Hünername* showing the hippodrome shows this woman in an oxcart and her baby in her arms. In this depiction, the baby does not play central role, but it is not ignored at all and is appended to the scene to show the baby in the text.[199]



Figure 6. A woman with her baby goes to Atmeydanı for finding justice, *Hünername*, vol. 2, (TPML, H. 1524, fol. 502a.), dated 1588

Another painting from *Paşaname* written by Tului, dated the first half of the seventeenth century, can also be evaluated in the context of asking for justice (fig. 7). According to the narrative, Kıptîs (the Roma population) in Drama were very

[199] The inscription on the painting indicates:'Bâyii olan gedâyin kapusından münâdî ile geçdikleri gibi ol gedâ-yı bî-nevây bu hali gördükde derhâl tahammül itmeyüp içerü evine girüb ve kese ile tıflın bahâsına aldığı akçeyi sırtına alub meded bana muslihciğim gerek deyü Atmeydanı'na dek paylarına düşer ve bi-nusretillâh hak zuhûr bulub mâ halakallâh.'

desperate since they were persecuted by the bandit Kara Yusuf, one of whose crimes is kidnapping children and demanding ransom from parents to give the children back. Immediately after hearing the coming of Kenan Pasha and his army to Drama, Kıptîs took to the road and meet with Kenan Pasha. They complained about Kara Yusuf and asked for justice.[200] Among the population, three children and a baby in a swaddle appear. These children and the baby not only visualize the children and the babies in the narrative, but also can be evaluated as the new interpretation of the old scene of asking for justice that placed in Nizami's *Hamse*.



Figure 7. The Kıptîs complain on Kara Yusuf to Kenan Pasha, *Paşaname*, (BL, Sloane 3584, v. 19a.), dated 1623-1640 (Değirmenci, 'Sözleri Dinlensin, Tasviri İzlensin: Tuluî'nin *Paşanamesi* ve 17. Yüzyıldan Eşkiya Hikayeleri,' 136.)

Furthermore, the scenes of the sieges emphasize the need to protect and care for babies and children. In these depictions, they were painted as the main possessions and the part of the families. While the main theme of the depictions is

[200] Değirmenci, 'Sözleri Dinlensin, Tasviri İzlensin: Tulû'i'nin *Paşaname*'si ve 17. Yüzyıldan Eşkiya Hikayeleri,' 135.

the conquest of a fortress and a fight between soldiers, children and babies were put into the composition and are shown as being protected by their parents or relatives as they run away from the newly conquered cities.

In *Şehname-i Selim Han*, in the painting that shows the conquest of the Habb castle in Yemen, the tent of Behram Pasha and his conquest occupies a central role (fig. 8). On the top left corner of the depiction, people who are leaving the castle are portrayed with two women carrying two babies in swaddles and two children are accompanying the adults that are running away from the citadels. The depiction of one on the shoulders of the woman is striking.



Figure 8. Conquest of Habb Castle, *Şehname-i Selim Han* (TPML, A. 3595 fol. 90a), dated 1581(Atasoy and Çağman, *Turkish Miniature Painting,* Plate 19)

Another scene portraying a conquest and the flight of people was illustrated in the first volume of *Şehinşahname* produced by Seyyid Loqman and his team in 1581 (fig. 9). Covering the entire reign of Murad III, *Şehinşahname* was produced in two volumes. The first volume was completed in 1581, and it is located in the

Istanbul University Library. The second volume was completed in 1597 and it is in Topkapı Palace Museum Library.[201] The painting displays the conquests of the fortress of Kafsa by Haydar Pasha. Even though at the center of the painting the fevered battlefield is depicted, at the upper left corner of the painting three people are seen walking out of the castle. With sorrow on her face, a woman holds a baby in her arms. Like other baby depictions, this little baby is also in a swaddle.



Figure 9. The Conquest of the fortress of Kafsa in North Africa by Haydar Pasha, *Şehinşahname*, vol. 1 (İUL, F 1404, fol. 50b), dated 1581 (Atasoy and Çağman, *Turkish Miniature Painting,* Plate 19)

Moreover, in the second volume of *Şehinşahname*, babies and minor children in their mothers' arms are illustrated to complement the scene of the funeral of Nurbanu Sultan, and they were shown accompanying their mothers (fig. 10). Nurbanu Sultan was the mother of Murad III, and died in 1583. Murad III appears in front of the coffin, among the crowd, women with white covers and babies in their

[201] Atasoy and Çağman, *Turkish Miniature Painting,* 30, 50.

arms are watching the procession of a funeral ceremony and at the same time they are waiting for funeral pray with uplifted hands.



Figure 10. Funeral of Nurbanu Sultan, *Şehinşahname,* vol. 2, (TPML, B 200, fol. 146 a), dated 1597 (Atasoy and Çağman, *Turkish Painting,* Plate 30)

Correlated with the thematic novelties of historical books, artists also depicted the busy daily life. In the representation of an urban environment or rural settings, children were depicted as part of everyday activities. A painting from the *Hünername* shows the construction of walls and fortress to build a village between Aleppo and Damascus by Süleyman I (fig.11).[202] A mother and a child are illustrated in a tent. A child is in action and is pointing outside the tent, and the mother is holding his hand and probably does not want to let him go. Another painting shows the revilement of a resident between Haleb and Şam by Süleyman I (fig. 12). On the right a camel caravan enters through the gates and some food is being prepared. A

[202] The inscription on the painting; 'Sultan Süleyman Han Mısır Huccâcına menazil müraca'atından …. nâm on sekizinci konakda su kuyuları kazdurub ve bir köy ve kal'a bina edib hayr-ı cemîl etmişdir.'

father and son are seen conversing at the center of the painting. The father is holding the son's hand and is pointing to the food.[203]



Figure 11. Sultan Süleyman's charity works, *Hünername,* vol. 2, (TPML, H. 1524, fol. 584a), dated 1588



Figure 12. Sultan Süleyman's charity works, *Hünername* vol. 2 (TPML, H. 1524, fol. 579b.), dated 1588

[203] The inscription on the painting; 'Sultan Süleyman Han Haleb ve Şam semtinde derbendin ihya edub bir kasaba yapdurub câmi' ve han ve 'imaret bina itdügidir'

Unlike the paintings in the illustrated history books I mentioned so far, in one of the images from *Şehname-i Selim Han*, a child is depicted at the center of the composition (fig.13). The main theme of the painting and the text around it, is the exhibition of a head of a hippopotamus that was brought from Egypt to a zoo in the hippodrome and the participation of the population in this demonstration. As in the illustration of the reception hall of Sokullu Mehmed Pasha in the same book, the artist put figures from different ages into the scene to represent children, adolescents, adults and the old in Ottoman society. However, the artist seems to want to make this painting more striking by picturing an astonished boy in the center of the composition. A male child is pointing to the head of a hippopotamus and is showing it to the old man accompanying him while he is pulling the old man's clothes or keeping his hand.

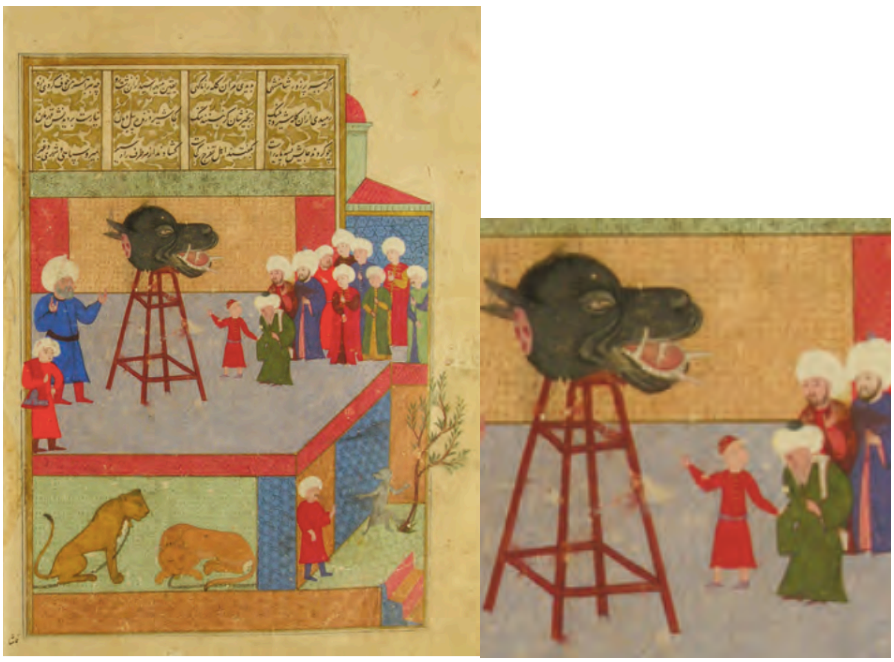


Figure 13. The display of the hippo head, *Şehname-i Selim Han* (TPML, A. 3595 fol. 59b), dated 1581(Fetvacı, 'The Production of The *Şehname-i Selim Han*,' 299)

So far, my emphasis has been on the images that include children for the purpose of showing the children who are mentioned in the narratives, and on the images that show children to complement different compositions such as conquests or daily life. From this point on, I want to focus on the depictions of the imperial circumcision ceremonies. *Sur-ı hümayun*s, the grand circumcision festivities of the princes were reflected visually in the historical books and in manuscripts specifically devoted to describing celebrations. Children were depicted in these paintings as bystanders, but in the action of circumcision, they played a central role.

Two paintings from the second volume of *Hünername* illustrate two children near adults. The first one focuses on the depiction of the procession of princes, the sons of Süleyman I, for the festivities toward Hippodrome (fig. 14).[204] At the lower right corner, among the people collecting the coins that were thrown by the Sultan's entourage, a child appears to be picking up the coins. The second painting illustrates the hippodrome where Süleyman I and *ulema* were reading books and having a scholarly discussion; in the crowd outside, a child depicted in a conversation may be enjoying a levity with a jester (fig. 15).[205]

[204] Inscription on the painting: 'Sultan Süleyman Han şehzadeleri ki Sultan Mustafa, sultan Muhammed ve Sultan Selim Han sünnet düğünü için bi'l cümle izz i 'ikbal ile At Meydanı sarayına geldükleridür.'

[205] The inscription on the painting: 'Şehzadeleriyle Sutan Mustafa düğününde vâk'i olan ders-i amm asarıdır.'



Figure 14. Procession of Süleyman I and şehzades toward İbrahim Pasha Palace, *Hünername*, vol. 2, (TPML, H. 1524, fol. 207b, 208a)



Figure 15. Ders-i ‘amm in the circumcision celebration of Mustafa, *Hünername*, vol. 2, (TPML, H. 1524, 245b, 246a), dated 1588

Other lively depictions took place in the *Surname-i Hümayun*, that is, the book of prince Mehmed’s circumcision festival that was celebrated in 1582. The *Surname-i Hümayun* was written by İntizami, who was a secretary of the imperial council and the illustrations of the book were supervised by Nakkash Osman.[206] Numerous children were depicted in various poses as a part of an audience crowd, but again in an attachment to their parents (figs. 16, 17, 18, 19).

[206] Bağcı, *Ottoman Painting,* 150.



Figure 16. Parade of *seyyid*s, Surname-*i Hümayun,* (TPML, H. 1344, fol. 14b), dated 1588 (Atasoy, *1582 Surname-i Hümayun: Düğün Kitabı*, 30)

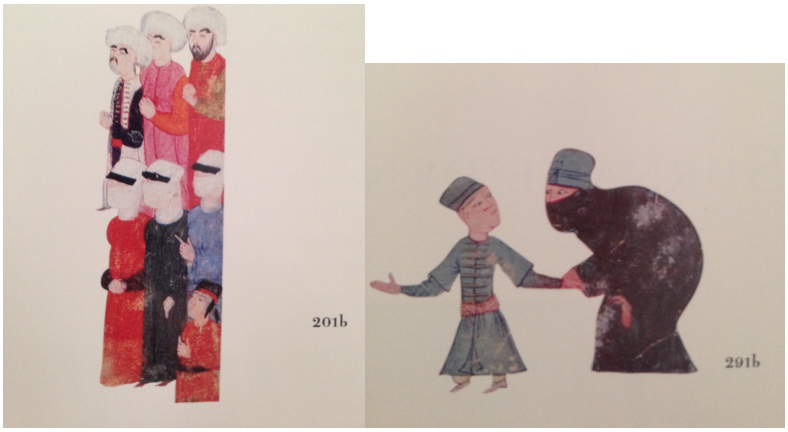


Figure 17. Audience crowd, graphic interventions to details from Nurhan Atasoy's book *1582 Surname-i Hümayun: Düğün Kitabı*



Figure 18. Audience crowd and the parade of prisoners, graphic interventions to details from Nurhan Atasoy's book *Surname-i Hümayun*: *Düğün Kitabı*

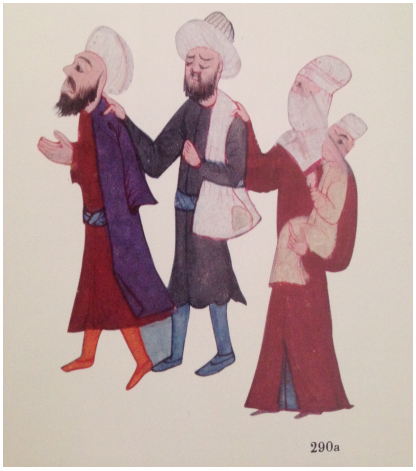


Figure 19. The poor plead for mercy by Sultan, graphic interventions to details from Nurhan Atasoy's book *Surname-i Hümayun*: Düğün Kitabı

Furthermore, the images showing children among the spectators transformed into the large group of the candidates of circumcision in the book of the 1720 celebrations. *Surname-i Hümayun* of 1720 was written by Vehbi and painted by Levni to demonstrate the circumcision festival of the four sons of Ahmed III. In these paintings, instead of various depictions of children in terms of their style and pose, a formalized child figure repeats itself, creating an image of a chain of boys while at the same time increasing the visibility of boys in the painting that they appear hand in hand with each other and the janissaries, probably to keep an eye on them, is striking (figs 20, 21).



Figure 20. Boys who will be circumcised, *Surname-i Hümayun,* (TPML, H. 3593, fol. 42b), dated 1727



Figure 21. Boys who will be circumcised, *Surname-i Hümayun*, (TPML, H. 359 fol. 28b), dated 1727 (Atıl, *Levni ve Surname: Bir Osmanlı Şenliğinin Öyküsü*, 19)

In addition to the bystanders and the candidates for circumcision, children were depicted as the main actors in the illustrations. One of the paintings in the *Hünername* reflects a performance of little children who are riding horses and holding spears in the celebration of 1530 (fig. 22). Another book painting from the second volume of *Şehinşahname* depicts children at the moment of circumcision (fig. 23).



Figure 22. Children performing a play, *Hünername,* vol.1, graphic interventions to details from Yahya Araz.[207]



Figure 23. Circumcission, *Şehinşehname,* vol. 2, graphic interventions to details from Yahya Araz

The depictions of children and babies from *re'aya* are generally found in official histories of the Ottoman court. Illustrated manuscripts of Ottoman history put forth a majestic image of the Ottoman sultans, bolstered the image of the empire and visualized many themes related to the successes of sultans, viziers and pashas. Especially in the last half of the sixteenth century, courtly patrons, sultans, and viziers, as well as pashas collaborated with *şehnameci* Loqman, *nakkash* Osman and his team to produce novel history books and paintings. Mostly concentrating on the last decades of the sixteenth century, the paintings depicted battlefields, conquests,

[207] Araz, 'Osmanlı İstanbulunda Çocuk Olmak,' 477.

daily life and imperial celebrations. In this way, Ottoman artists were able to find a place to depict public population. Babies and children were an indispensible element of the society, and they became crucial figures in paintings to represent the Ottoman population. In this regard, Nakkash Osman and his team gave paramount importance to creating new artistic conventions, scenes and painting modes. Those children and babies I pointed out above were mostly the production of this team, and they reveal the innovative contributions of this team to Ottoman painting.

Baby and child figures were depicted as smaller in relation to other human figures. They were attached their parents. On the one hand, artists depicted children and babies to complement the pictorial scenes; on the other hand, they put them into the paintings to illustrate the characters in the narrative that is located around the paintings. Considering all illustrations, the boys are more frequently depicted than girls. The reasons behind this imbalance can be revealed through looking at the manuscripts in and itself. For instance, in the book of circumcision ceremonies, it is reasonable to expect more boys than girls, since the main theme of the book is related to boys. However, in the other books, like the *Hünername* or the *Şehname-i Selim Han*, artists seem to depict both sexes equally. The same balance appears also in the depiction of children among the audience crowds of 1582 the *Surname-i Hümayun*. When it comes to babies, there is no need to specify their gender; the artists' main concern seems to depict a baby without indication of their maleness or femaleness.

4.1.2 Images of babies and children from *re'aya* in album paintings

Although they were popular in the late sixteenth century, the production of illustrated books in the Ottoman court was decreased in the seventeenth century. Instead of

illustrated history books, artists preferred to produce albums that would 'showcase examples of calligraphy, painting and drawing.'[208] Album paintings constitute a significant change from earlier Ottoman illustrated manuscripts with linear narratives where, at least on the surface, the text and the image serve together with the dominant narrative. However, juxtaposition of the text and images that narrate similar account was abandoned in album paintings, instead independent paintings, prose, calligraphies and poems come together in the albums.[209]

In her article, Emine Fetvacı suggests some reasons for the decrease in the production of illustrated history books and an increase in the production of albums in the seventeenth century. According to Fetvacı, this change was highly correlated to specific aesthetic and social changes in the Ottoman court. For instance, by the early seventeenth century, visual artists started to have prestige that previously only literary artists had and they became able to walk the career path through vizierate as bureaucrats. However, the individuals who raised this status could able to do this only by military career before.[210] The earliest examples of albums date as far back as the middle of the sixteenth century, possibly prepared for Süleyman I in a courtly environment.

Courtly produced albums such as *The Album of Ahmed I* include many paintings that illustrated imagery or real personalities to aid the visualization of the widespread stories that were narrated by Ottoman storytellers. Furthermore, the figures in the paintings of albums were related to historical characters and

[208] Fetvacı, 'Enriched Narratives and Empowered Images in Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Manuscripts,' 243.
[209] Fetvacı, 'Enriched Narratives and Empowered Images in Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Manuscripts,' 252.
[210] Fetvacı, 'Enriched Narratives and Empowered Images in Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Manuscripts,' 247.

protagonists, so there were iconographic transfers from the historical events and stories to the album paintings.[211]

The album of Sultan Ahmed prepared by Kalender in 1610 has illustrations from daily life.[212] One of the paintings portrays the charity of Yalvaç Bey who was one of the ancestors of the Ottoman family as he bestowed alms and clothes to the poor (fig. 24).[213] At the bottom of the depiction, four women, two children and a baby in a swaddle are shown. In addition, two entertainment scenes contain little musicians and a dancer among the adults with masks on their faces (fig. 25).



Figure 24. Charities of Yalvac Bey, *Album of Ahmed I* (fol. 6b), dated 1610 (Fetvacı, 'The Album of Ahmed I,' 131)

[211] Değirmenci, 'Osmanlı Tasvir Sanatında Görselin Okunması: İmgenin Ardındaki Hikayeler (Şehir Oğlanları ve İstanbul'un Meşhur Kadınları)', 28.
[212] For the further information on the album Sultan Ahmed I see Emine Fetvacı, 'Love in the Album of Ahmed I' and 'The Album of Ahmed I'.
[213] The inscription on the painting states that 'Âl-i Osman ecdadından Yalvac Bey fukaraya tasadduk ve libas verdiğidir.'



Figure 25. Musicians and entertainers, *Album of Ahmed I* (fol. 19a), dated 1610 (Fetvacı, 'The Album of Ahmed I,' 135)

Different from the courtly produced albums, throughout the seventeenth century, albums were also produced outside the palace. Generally known as 'costume albums', these albums were usually produced by foreigners who visited Istanbul and were composed of single-page paintings that aimed to introduce the Ottoman society to foreigners.[214] In this way, the daily life of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the individuals from different segments of society were visible in the paintings that were put into albums.

Ralamb's costume album, which dates from the middle of the seventeenth century and was commissioned by Ralamb, a Swedish statesman who stayed in Istanbul in 1657-1658, also has a painting depicting a child. [215] Illustrating a woman and probably her son on the way to bathhouse, the painting shares the same artistic conventions of representing a woman with a white scarf and attire, and a child in

[214] Bağcı, *Ottoman Painting,* 239.
[215] For the detailed account on the time of Ralamb's stay and the life in Istanbul in particular and Ottoman Empire in general, see Cemal Kafadar, 'The City that Ralamb visited: The Political and Cultural Climate of Istanbul in the 1650s,' 53-87.

small size with a childish dress and headgear (fig. 26). It is also possible to find pictorial representations of children in various contexts of daily life in the album of Franz Taeschner, who published an Ottoman album that dates from the time of Murad IV (r. 1623-1640) (figs. 27, 28, 29, 30).[216] Moreover, Diez album from the eighteenth century also includes a depiction that shows a male child in the garden of a kiosk (fig. 31).



Figure 26. A woman and her son on the way to bathhouse, *The Album of Ralamb,* Stockholm National Library, dated seventeenth century (Adahl, *The Sultan's Procession: the Swedish Embassy to Sultan Mehmed IV in 1657-1658 and the Ralamb Paintings,* 259)



Figure 27. Children in school, *Taeschner Album,* dated seventeenth century (Taeschner, *Alt Stambuler Hof-Und Volksleben,* 54)

[216] Kıel, 'Taeschner, Franz,' *İslam Ansiklopedisi,* 368.



Figure 28. *Müezzin* and two children on the minaret, *Taeschner Album,* dated seventeenth century (Taeschner, *Alt Stambuler Hof-Und Volksleben,* 45)



Figure 29. Circumcision, *Taeschner Albume,* dated seventeenth century (Taeschner, *Alt Stambuler Hof-Und Volksleben,* 35)



Figure 30. Bridal procession, *Taeschner Albume,* dated seventeenth century (Taeschner, *Alt Stambuler Hof-Und Volksleben,* 32)



Figure 31. A child in the garden of kiosk, Diez Album (Diez A fol. 73), dated eighteenth century

4.1.3 Images of babies and children of the palace

Children who were born into the imperial house and who appear in the book paintings underscore the significance of the dynastic legacy of the ruling family and transmission of the sovereignty to the future generations. In this regard, as the significance of the princes derived from their membership in the imperial family and their potential to take over the rule by inheritance, their depictions in the book paintings should be considered in that context. In other words, the figures of imperial children or adolescents are linked to the dynastic practices and conventions to which prime importance was ascribed.

In contrast to the illustrations of children from *re'aya*, the book paintings seem to ignore the depictions of children from the imperial family. From another point of view, it can also be said that artists preferred to illustrate imperial children in their life-phase of adolescence. The visibility of children of *re'aya* as 'children', with small forms, in modest clothes and stressing their dependency on their parents give way to depictions of princes with an emphasis on their social status. In this regard, the depictions of princes correlate with the conception and perception of the childhood and adolescence of the members of the imperial family as well as of the offspring of the *re'aya.*

The *Surname-i Hümayun* of 1720, I think, provides a good example to demonstrate the difference between the depiction of non-royal and royal children. In the 1720 celebration, imperial festivities were held for the sons of Ahmed III: Süleyman, Mehmed, Mustafa and Bayezid. At first glance, the juxtaposition of the *şehzade*s near each other in the paintings gives the impression that *şehzade*s were depicted according to their age. However, in 1720, Süleyman was 10, Mehmed and Mustafa were 3 and Bayezid was 2 years old. They were shown in the heavy *kaftan*s, which look like that of their father, and they were distinguished with similar headgear and the same poses and attitudes.

In a similar vein, in the book of the 1582 circumcision, the 16-year-old Mehmed was depicted near Murad, in a small size (fig. 37), and if a comparison is set between the depiction of Mehmed and the sons of Ahmed III, it will be seen that there is not much difference between the representation of the 16-years-old Mehmed and the10-year-old Süleyman. In this sense, it is possible to assume that there was an established way of representing *şehzade*s in circumcision ceremonies in particular

and book paintings in general, and Levni has followed this tradition in painting the *Surname-i Hümayun* of 1720.

In the first painting of the book, the princes and the Sultan were depicted in the gardens of Eski Saray (fig. 32). Princes were illustrated together with Süleyman, being the largest figure, with Mehmed and Mustafa much smaller than one another. The same mode of depiction is frequently repeated in other paintings. However, the illustrations sometimes demonstrate two of the princes, and in other instances solely Süleyman (fig. 33). The only painting that shows the four princes together in one scene, at the same time, the only painting represents the youngest prince Bayezid is the depiction of them in the bed while they are resting in Bağdat Köşkü after the circumcision (fig. 36). It is also interesting to note that the older *şehzade* Süleyman comes to the palace in *Sünnet Alayı* on horseback, but the other little *şehzade*s preferred to come on the hourse car probably because of their inability to ride horses (figs. 34, 35).



Figure 32. *Şehzade*s and Ahmed III is in a garden, *Surname-i Hümayun,* (TPML, H. 3593, fol. 7a), dated 1727(Atıl, *Levni ve Surname: Bir Osmanlı Şenliğinin Öyküsü,* 245)



Figure 33. *Şehzade*s and Ahmed III watching the demonstrations, *Surname-i Hümayun,* (TPML, H. 3593, fol. 89b), dated 1727 (Atıl, *Levni ve Surname: Bir Osmanlı Şenliğinin Öyküsü,* 170)

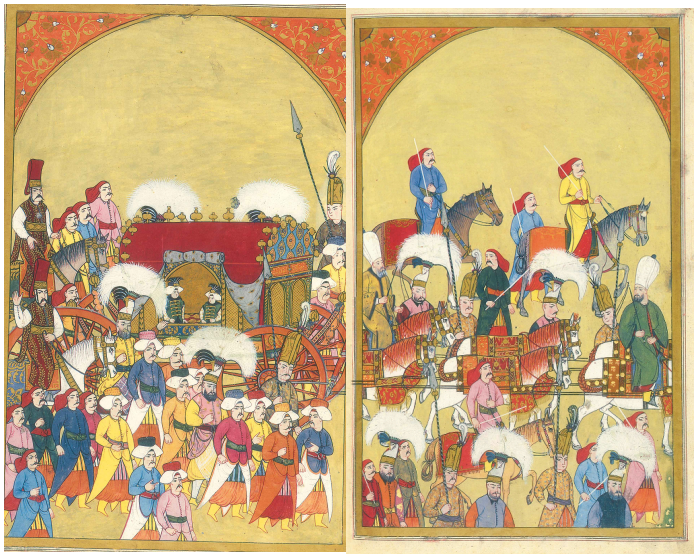


Figure 34. *Şehzade*s are proceeding toward the palace, *Surname-i Hümayun* (TPML, H. 3593, fol. 169b), dated 1727(Atıl, *Levni ve Surname: Bir Osmanlı Şenliğinin Öyküsü,* 118)



Figure 35. *Şehzade*s are proceeding toward the palace, *Surname-i Hümayun* (TPML, H. 3593, fol. 169b), dated 1727(Atıl, *Levni ve Surname: Bir Osmanlı Şenliğinin Öyküsü,* 118)

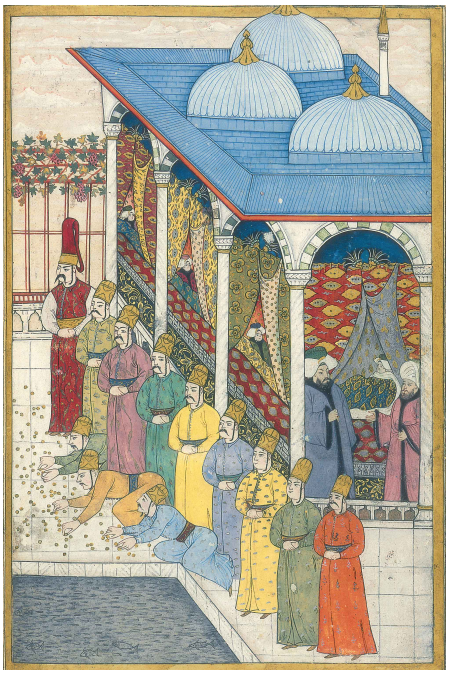


Figure 36. *Şehzade*s are in the circumcision beds, *Surname-i Hümayun,* (TPML, H. 3593, fol. 175a), dated 1727 (Atıl, *Levni ve Surname: Bir Osmanlı Şenliğinin Öyküsü,* 108)



Figure 37. Parade of glassmakers, *Surname-i Hümayun,* Topkapı Palace Museum, dated 1588.

At this point, I think it is beneficial to set a comparison between the depiction of boys from the *re'aya* and the images of *şehzade*s. In the painting from the 1720 *Surname-i Hümayun* illustrating both groups of children together is a composite of two contrast frames in one scene (fig. 38). At the right side of the painting Süleyman, Mustafa and Mehmed appear near their sultan father in ostentations *kaftan*s and precious headgears with the sultan's entourage and high-ranking officials. They are surrounded by luxurious carpets and textiles. In contrast, the boys in different ages from the *re'aya* were depicted in modest attire and headgear. They are shown in the plain edge of the exhibition field and are about to proceed toward the circumcision tent.



Figure 38. *Surname-i Hümayun,* (TPML, H. 3593, fol. 28b, 29a), dated 1727

Furthermore, if a comparison is set between the illustrations of the 1582 and 1720 celebrations, one can see that Nakkash Osman and his team were more sensitive than Levni in depicting the female children. In the audience, it is possible to encounter little girls in the book of 1582 celebration. However, in the *Surname-i Hümayun* of 1720, Levni prefers to depict just boys from various ages as candidates of circumcision. It could be derived from the different tendencies of the artists that Nakkash Osman and his team wanted to depict girl children in the compositions, but Levni probably did not.

In the book paintings of the Ottoman royal court, there is no female child of any kind. The female children of the palace, little sultans, must be hidden, whereas the males must be presented. The absence of the females of the palace should be correlated with the idea of being a *muhaddere.* According to this social perception in the Ottoman society, the elite women should be invisible, not seen in public. Therefore, the artists preferred not to draw female children and female adults from the imperial family. Nurbanu Sultan's coffin and the carriage of sultan mother,

probably Hatice Turhan Sultan, the mother of Mehmed IV, were the only paintings related to royal women I encountered among the pages of the manuscripts of the early modern period (figs 10, 39).

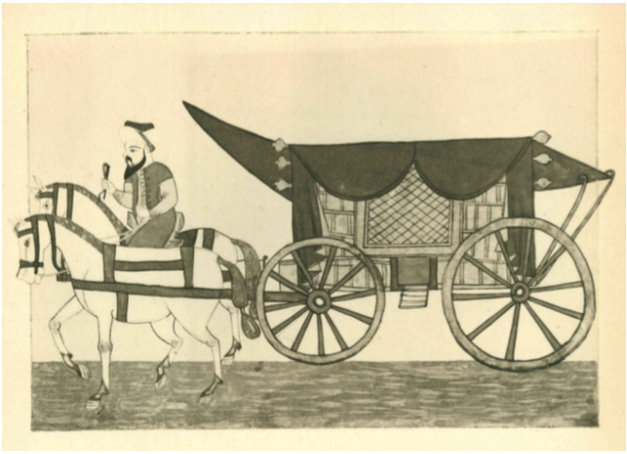


Figure 39. The cottage of the Queen Mother, Taeschner Album, dated seventeenth century (Taeschner, Alt Stambuler Hof-Und Volksleben, 28)

In a similar vein, I also did not encounter any image of babies from the royal family. It is probably because their presence conveys no message for the narrative or the glorious themes about the lives and deeds of the Sultans, the artists find to draw *şehzade*s more meaningful in older ages. However, a baby from another royal family was depicted in the *Süleymanname.* Penned by Arifi Fethullah Çelebi, the *Süleymanname* was the fifth and last volume of the Ottoman history series, and some of its depictions were painted by artists affiliated with Safavid-Tabriz-Qazvin tradition, completed in 1558.[217] Focusing on the reign of Süleyman I, one of the paintings of the *Süleymanname* represents the reception of Quinn Isabella (fig. 39). After the annexation of Hungary, in 1541, Süleyman I received Queen Isabella and infant king Stephen. The painting from the *Süleymanname* depicts the conversation of Isabella and Süleyman I. In a long flowing robe and hooded cloak, Isabella holds

[217] Bağcı, *Ottoman Painting,* 104.

her son in her arms. Like the other depictions of babies in the book paintings, the infant Stephan is painted in a swaddle, but his swaddle is blue, in contrast to the many white swaddles of the babies from the *re'aya.*

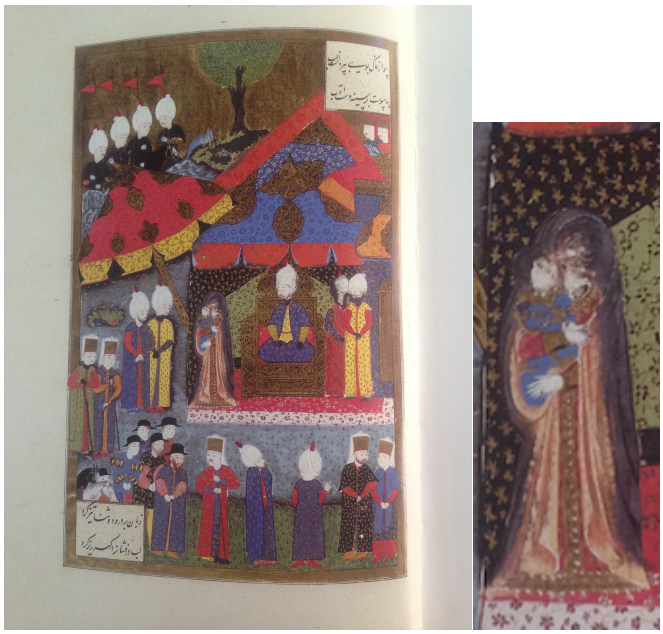


Figure 40. Reception of Quinn Isabella, *Süleymanname*, (TPML, H. 1517, fol. 441a), dated 1558 (Atıl, *Süleymanname: The Illustrated History of Süleyman the Magnificent,* 187)

Even though Ottoman child *şehzade*s did not appear with childish attitudes and in simple attire, the son of Erdel Beg was depicted in the clothes and style that is applied to the illustrations of the children from *re'aya* in the second volume of the *Hünername.* The son of King Erdel and his mother were depicted paying homage to Süleyman I (fig. 40).[218] The son of Erdel Beg kneels down in front of the seated Süleyman I and probably kisses his skirts. He is depicted in the format of the image of children and wears modest children's clothes. He has no headgear. In this painting, two adolescents are also attracting attention and constitute a good visual

[218] The inscription on the painting states that; 'Sultan süleyman Han tekrar Budun'a varub beglerbegi ta'yin olunub ve şerayi-i İslam icra kılınub ve anda Olan Erdel Kralının oğlu anasıyla el öpüb yurt ve ocakları olan vilayet Erdele vardığıdır.'

scene for the comparison of drawings of children and adolescents. These beardless boys were depicted with their different outfits that are the sign of their religious difference and ethnicity, and waiting to express their deference to the Sultan. ,



Figure 41. Son of Erdel king, *Hünername* vol. 2, (TPML, H. 1524, fol. 534a.), dated 1588.

Completed in 1558, the creaters of the *Süleymanname* preferred to illustrate the prominent events in the reign of Süleyman I. Among the depictions, it is not possible to find children or adolescents from the Ottoman *re'aya* in the way that Nakkash Osman and his team depicted. However, the *Süleymanname* has the same conventions of representing babies as Nakkash Osman and his team. In a similar vein, probably related to preferences of the artists, the first volume of the *Hünername,* produced in 1584, contains only one depiction of a child that was mentioned in the related text. Hence, it is possible to link the new artistic conventions to the depictions of children with the Nakkash Osman and his team.

The absence of royal female children in the book paintings can be explained not only by the concept of '*muhaddere*' but also the masculine form of domination.

The lack of female children also coincides with the imbalance between the number of men's and women's images in the book paintings. The large number of male child representations is linked to the patrilineal nature of the Ottoman society as well as the imperial hereditary tradition of the rule. Concomitant to the difference between the perception of a royal child and a non-royal child, Ottoman child *şehzade*s were depicted in stable modes and gestures, in contrast to the their peers, who were depicted trying to flee from the hand of their parents, or pointing out something that caught their attention.

The absence of royal babies can be explained in the same way. The representation of a royal baby probably was not needed due to the fact that a baby image is not able to transmit serious messages related to the power or courage. It is also not appropriate to draw them in the ceremonial heavy attires and a flatulent pose. Besides, the depiction of a baby needs a mother. If it is a royal baby, it necessitates a depiction of a royal entourage of women. The artists's unwillingness to depict a royal baby may stem from their unwillingness to picture a courtly woman. Drawing the image of a baby in the arms of a male servant seems to have been impossible for Ottoman artists. Apart from all these, it also should not be forgotten that Ottoman palace books were ordered by male patrons and written, painted, organized as well as bound by same gender groups.

4.2 Images of adolescents

Adolescence is a period that was figured by Ottoman scholars to be between childhood and adulthood. It is a life cycle that boys and girls who were experiencing it were considered as people who were capable of doing things that adults were accustomed to doing, while at the same time they were required to gain knowledge and experience

about life. Having this conception of adolescence in their minds, Ottoman artists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries depicted this age group without beards and moustaches, as in the same way that adolescents were mostly pointed out in the imperial edicts for the recruitment of *devshirme* levy, poems of *şehrengiz* and the treaties of the Ottoman scholars.

Adolescence is a phase of life that transforms children into fully formed adults. Although they were in a developmental stage, and not yet considered as full adults, this age group was expected to live in the adult world and engage in adult activities. The adolescent section of the Ottoman society was not homogenous. While some of the members of this group were appreciences of artists and craftsmen, some of them were the sons of farmers and the main source of the work force of the family to gain the livelihood. In addition, there were privileged adolescents in the palace. Just as the perception of childhood changes from the royal family to non-royal ones, the lives and training of rural adolescents differs from their royal counterparts. Gender difference is again an issue, given the number of males and females in the book paintings.

4.2.1 Images of adolescents from *re'aya* in illustrated history books

The adolescents from the *re'aya* did not appear in the illustrated history books very often. When the narrative required the presence of them, the artists put their illustrations into the scene. The most prominent examples of the representation of adolescents appears in the *Surname-i Hümayun*s, in the depictions of the processions of artisans as apprentices. With their beardless faces and thin bodies, adolescents were depicted as an indispensible part of the processions. A painting from the *Surname-i Hümayun* of 1720 shows an adolescent boy on a camel, reading the Qur'an in the procession of farmers and bakers (fig. 41). The boy on the left top of the painting

represents an apprentice of a baker. Another painting demonstrates adolescents in work as butchers and cooks (fig. 42). In a similar mode of depiction, Nakkash Osman and his team also illustrated adolescents from the *re'aya* in1582 *Surname-i Hümayun* (fig. 43).



Figure 42. Procession of farmers and bakers. *Surname-i Hümayun,* (TPML, H. 3593, fol. 71b), dated 1727



Figure 43. Procession of butchers and cooks, *Surname-i Hümayun,* (TPML, H. 3593, fol. 73b), dated 1727 (Atıl, *Levni ve Surname: Bir Osmanlı Şenliğinin Öyküsü,* 182)

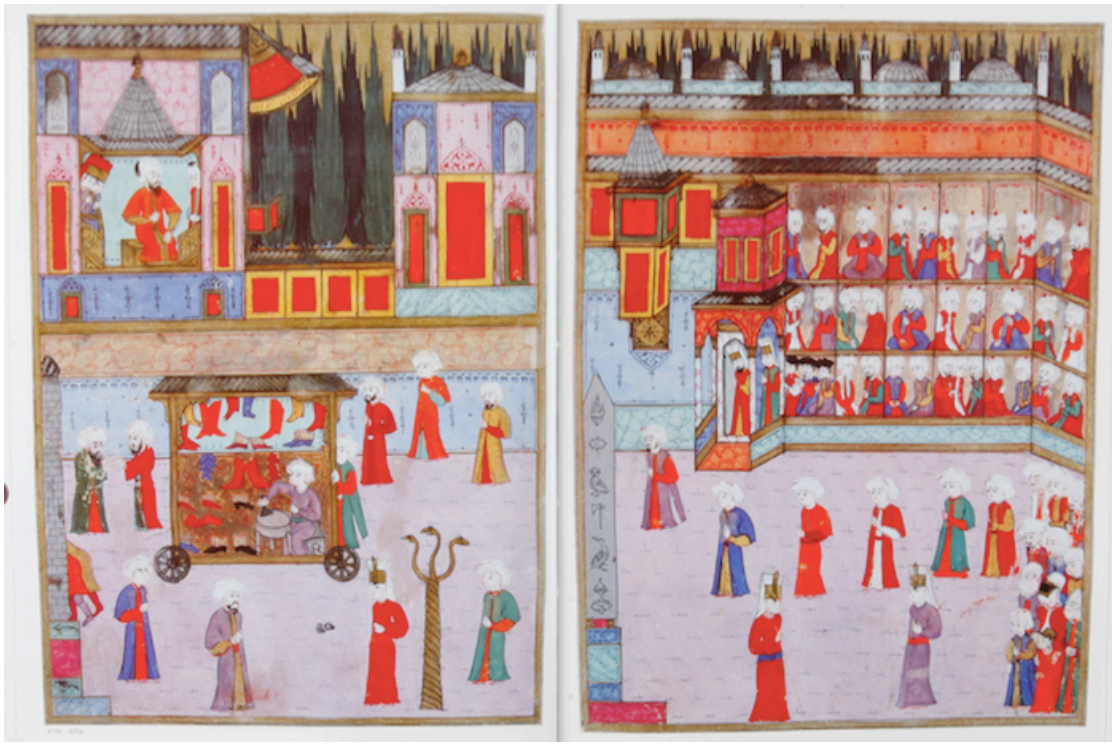


Figure 44. Adolescents from the procession of cobblers, *Surname-i Hümayun,* (TPML, H. 1344, fol. 419b, 420a.), dated 1588

4.2.2 Images of adolescents from *re'aya* in albums

In a totally different concept and composition, adolescents were depicted in *mecmua*s, costume albums and single-page paintings. Becoming popular mostly in the seventeenth century, *mecmua*s and single-page paintings were produced not only in the palace, but also in itinerant artists outside of the palace.[219]

In the beginning of the eighteenth century, Levnî created numerous single-page paintings showing the city boys in the age of adolescence in various poses. One of his paintings demonstrates a boy holding a cup and decanter in a reclining position (fig. 44). Another painting illustrates the young-girl version of this painting and shows a young female holding a decanter and lying on the ground, just as her male counterpart

[219] For further information on bazaar artists see Metin And '17. Yy Türk Çarşı Ressamları', '17. yy Türk Çarşı Ressamlarının Padişah Potreleri and Tülün Değirmenci 'An Illustrated *Mecmua*: The Commoner's Voice and the Iconography of the Court in seventeenth century Ottoman Painting'

(fig. 45). These depictions recall the boys in the gatherings of poetry (*meclis*), which was a middle class elite activity that was popular in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that these depictions of the beloved boys and girls of the city coincided with the time of *şehrengiz* poems.



Figure 45. Adolescent boy, (TPML, H. 2164), eighteenth century (Stchoukine, *La Peinture Turque* D'apres les Manuscirits Illustres, vol. 2, LXXXII)



Figure 46. Adolescent girl, (TPML, H. 2164), eighteenth century (Stchoukine, *La Peinture Turque* D'apres les Manuscirits Illustres, vol. 2, LXXXII)

Moreover, images of the adolescents were depicted with some figures that I think convey messages about their age and identity. For instance, in numerous paintings, adolescents are holding or carrying books. A painting from the seventeenth century demonstrates a boy holding a small book in his left hand (fig. 46). In another painting from the same century, a young male appears reading a book (fig. 47). Since adolescence is a period that was conceived by the Ottomans as the age of training and learning, the artists probably wanted to emphasize their need to learn by attaching the

image of books to the illustrations of boys. Moroever, the books that are featured in these images also convey the message of the prestige of the literati class. The ability to read a book or to engage in writing or reading was elite activity and sign of a higher social status. Another painting from the same book illustrates an apprentice of a barber working that can be evaluated as a reflection of the social practice of apprenticeship (fig. 49).[220]



Figure 47. An adolescent holding a book, (TPML, H. 2155 fol. 36 v.) seventeenth century

[220] In her article, Tülün Değirmenci suggests to interpret the boys and girls who were depicted in the albumes as 'youths' and the representations of city boys who were a group of youths that lived in Istanbul. She also evaluates these images as the representation of popular city boys and heros of widespread city stories popular in the seventeenth century. Değirmenci, 'Osmanlı Tasvir Sanatında Görselin Okunması: İmgenin Ardındaki Hikayeler (Şehir Oğlanları ve İstanbul'un Meşhur Kadınları)', 25-55.



Figure 48. Adolescent reading a book, (TPML, H. 2169 17r), seventeenth century (İnal, 'Tek Figürlerden Oluşan Osmanlı Albüm Resimleri,' XXXIX)



Figure 49. Apprenticeship of a barber, *Album of Ralamb,* Stockholm National Library, dated 17th century

4.2.2 Images of the adolescents of the palace

The depiction of young princes constitutes a form, and this form was applied to the paintings of the early modern Ottoman books. Tightly connected to the depiction of the category of adolescence, and since the same form applied to the adolescents from the *re'aya,* Ottoman princes were depicted as bigger than children but slightly smaller than

adults. Concomitant to the themes of the narrative, they were generally seen on royal hunts and at imperial celebrations.

Two hunting scenes from the second volume of the *Hünername* demonstrate princes watching their father (figs 50, 51). The texts around the images narrate the bravery and power of Süleyman I as reflected by his superior hunting skill. In the time of the Engürüs campaign, in 1541, Süleyman I stopped to rest in the Filibe Palace with his sons Mehmed and Selim. The two *şehzade*s talked about the supercilious hunting talent of Tehemten and Behram Gur. Thereupon, Süleyman I wanted his servants to bring three wild beasts, kill them with the same arrow and show his talent to his sons.[221] In the painting depicting this narrative, Mehmed and Selim are talking with each other and watching the show at the same time. They were dressed in ostentatious *kaftan*s and their headgear was similar to the sultan's. In the same painting, in the same circle of their life phase, pages appear with yellow headgear and in more modest tunics. In 1541, at the time of Filibe campaign, *şehzade* Mehmed was supposed to be 20 years old and Selim 17 years old. Their young age and being at the status of prince caused the artist to depict these *şehzade*s with an appearance of adolescence.

In the second painting from *Hünername,* a similar hunt scene was set with the representation of *şehzade* Cihangir. Like his brothers, he was depicted in precious attire and located near his father watching shooting arrow. According to the information in the text, a wild deer caused some pages to die in Eski Saray. Süleyman I killed the deer and ridded the pages and residents of the palace from the horror of the beast.[222] There is not a date indicated for this occasion in the text, but

[221] Inscriptions on the painting: 'Sultan Süleyman Han Filibe Sarayında bir ok ile üç kara canavarı vurub demirini karşu ağaca sapladuğudur.'
[222] Inscription on the painting: 'Sultan Süleyman Han eski sarayda bir zahîm esrik dağ sağanın ok ile urub yıkdığudur.'

when Cihangir's death age at 22 is considered, it is possible to assume that he was in the years of boyhood.



Figure 50. Süleyman's shooting arrow, *Hünername*, vol. 2 (TPML, H. 1524. fols. 109b, 110a), dated 1588



Figure 51. Süleyman kills a wild deer, *Hünername*, vol. 2. (TPML, H. 1524, fol. 173b, 174a)

The *Süleymanname* has paintings with the same theme, but with different illustrations of hunting (figs 52, 53). When Süleyman I was returning from the Pulya campaign to Istanbul, in 1537, he stopped in Yenice to hunt with his sons.[223] In contrast to the *Hünername* paintings, the painting shows Süleyman at the top of the painting with his falcon as viewer, and Selim and Mehmet at the moment of action.

[223]Atıl, *Süleymanname: The Illustrated History of Süleyman the Magnificent,* 175.

Selim and Mehmed are galloping alongside each other and kill a wild boar simultaneously.

Having heard of the death of young Mehmed, at 22 years of age, Süleyman I went hunting with Selim. Another depiction from the same book reflects this hunt and illustrates Süleyman I on a black horse, turning around to shoot two gazels. Selim appears to be turning back to shoot, riding a chestnut horse. In the first painting, Selim was supposed to be 13 years old. *Şehzade* Mehmed died in 1543 and at that time Selim was 19 years of old. If a comparison is set between the former and the latter paintings, it can be seen that there is no difference between the drawings of the two Selims in two different compositions. The *Süleymanname'*s book paintings were made toward the end of the reign of Süleyman I, therefore it is logical to expect the painters to know every detail about the age of the *şehzade*s. However, instead of reflecting the difference between the 13-year-old and the 19-year-old Selim, they seem to prefer to depict him in the same format since, I think, the artist perceived him in the age of adolescence and created the images according to the conventions of representing adolescence.



Figure 52. Süleyman hunting with *şehzade*s, *Süleymanname* (TPML, H. 1517, fol. 393a), dated 1558 (Atıl, *Süleymanname: The Illustrated History of Süleyman the Magnificent,* 174)



Figure 53. Süleyman hunting with Selim, *Süleymanname*, (TPML, H. 1517, fol. 462b.), dated 1558 (Atıl, *Süleymanname: The Illustrated History of Süleyman the Magnificent,* 192)

However, the depiction of the 30-year-old *şehzade* Selim is radically different. Shortly after the death of Cihangir, Süleyman I and crown prince Selim went hunting together outside Aleppo. On the top of the painting, a 59-year-old bearded Süleyman I observes the hunt with a falcon in his hand.[224] In the winter of 1553-1554, Selim was 30 years old and in the painting he was depicted with a long moustache, which is the sign of adulthood (fig. 54).

A similar style for the depiction of Bayezid was applied in another painting in the same book (fig. 55). After departing from Istanbul to confront the Safevids in 1553, Süleyman I received his son Bayezid at Yenişehir.[225] The painting demonstrates the father and son in a conversation. In contrast to the beards of Süleyman I, the 28-year-old Bayezid was depicted with a moustache. It seems that having beards correlated with the older stages of adulthood and in terms of social

[224] Atıl, *Süleymanname: The Illustrated History of Süleyman the Magnificent,* 221.
[225] Atıl, *Süleymanname: The Illustrated History of Süleyman the Magnificent,* 219.

hierarchy it was conceived in the upper level than moustaches. Hence, hierarchy and senior supremacy were reflected through the depiction of beards and moustaches.



Figure 54. Selim hunting with Süleyman I, *Süleymanname*, (TPML, H. 1517, fol. 576a), dated 1558 (Atıl, *Süleymanname: The Illustrated History of Süleyman the Magnificent,* 220)



Figure 55. Bayezid conversing with his father, *Süleymanname*, (TPML, H. 1517, fol. 570a), dated 1558. (Atıl, *Süleymanname: The Illustrated History of Süleyman the Magnificent,* 218)

Concomitant to the physical development of a male body and attainment of puberty, males became eligible to have moustaches and beards. Implying the necessity to recruit boys in the age of adolescence, it was stressed in the *Pençik* and *Devshirme* regulations that boys who were candidates for recruitment should not have beards. Correlated to the rule that obliges *şehzade*s in the *sancak*s to cut their beards and send it to the palace, growing a beard is also related to political power. Like *şehzade*s in the *sancak*s, *iç oğlanlar* were also not allowed to grow beards up until the time of *çıkma*, the appointment to a post. In addition, beards were related to sexual maturity that coincided with fathering children. Just as the Ottoman elites did not allow *şehzade*s to have beards, they also prohibited them from having children in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, when they were kept in the palace instead of sending them to *sancak*s. In this regard, in early modern Ottoman elite society, and probably in the non-elite populations also, growing a beard symbolized adulthood and sexual as well as political power.

In addition, it is worth noting that having a long beard also represents advanced age and having moustaches can also be evaluated in this context. The depiction of Süleyman I in the second volume of the *Hünername* attaches importance to show him considering the chronology of events and the life phase of Süleyman I. In the former paintings, Süleyman I appears with his moustache and toward the end of the book he is illustrated with a long beard.

Due to the fact that Selim II became a father and reached adulthood, instead of beards he was depicted with moustaches. In this way, the artist was able to show him in the age of adulthood at the same time differentiate from adolescents. Moreover, when they were depicted together, the images of Süleyman I and Selim II conformed to the rule of hierarchy reflected in the painting.

Although it is not widespread, there are examples of the drawings of *şehzade*s with beards. Mustafa was the crown prince and served as the governor of Amasya. He was accused of planning to overthrow his father and was executed by Süleyman I. The painting from the second volume of the *Hünername* depicted the death of Mustafa by bow-string (fig. 56). When he was killed, he was 37 or 38 years of age, and the artist illustrated him with his long beard. This illustration of Mustafa could be explained by his advanced age. However, at the same time, it raises a question in my mind about whether or not the artist wanted to depict Mustafa with a long beard to highlight his political power and to remind his plan of overthrowing the sultan to the viewers.



Figure 56. The death of Mustafa, *Hünername*, vol. 2, (TPML, H. 1524, fol. 355b.), dated 1588

The hierarchy, as well as the convention representing an adult sultan with his beard and an adolescent *şehzade* by beardless face, manifests itself in the following *şehname*s produced by the court and portraits of the sultans. In 1596, Ta'liki Zâde Suphi Çelebi replaced Lokman as the court historian and started to write a *şehname* called *Şehname-i Talikizade.* One of the paintings in this book represents Murad III

talking with his son Mehmed (fig. 57).[226] While Süleyman I was painted sitting cross-legged with his long beard and bigger body, his son was deicted in a smaller size, with a beardless face and respectful attitude.

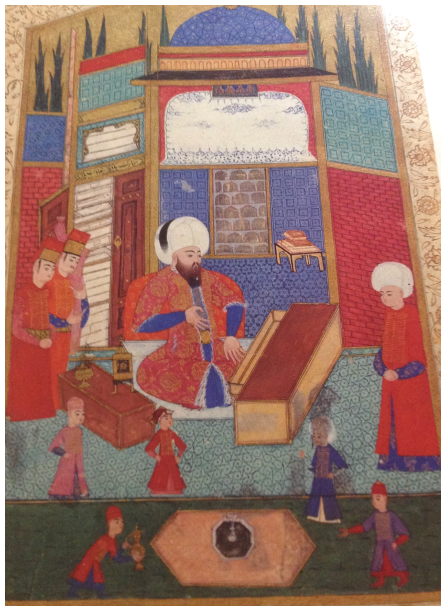


Figure 57. Murad III conversing with Mehmed, *Shahname-i Talikizade*, (TPML,A 3592, fol. 79a), dated 1596-1600. (Atasoy and Çağman, *Turkish Miniature Painting,* Plate 34)

Beginning in the reign of Mehmed II and symbolizing dynastic provenance and continuation, the tradition of portraiture of the sultans helped construct the dynastic identity of Ottoman Empire.[227] In the sixteenth century, portraits corresponded to the texts and they were at times placed in medallions. However, in the eighteenth century, portraits of the sultans were painted individually on single pages with novel styles and in some examples sultans and their *şehzade*s were painted together. Levni painted Ahmed III and his son in a manner that suggested contrasts regarding their pose, size and attitude (fig. 58). In addition, the painting of

[226] Atasoy and Çağman, *Turkish Miniature Painting,* 56.
[227] Necipoğlu, 'The Serial Portraits of Ottoman Sultans in Comparative Perspective,' 22-61.

Mustafa III and his son, created in 1766, can be evaluated in the same vein, although the representation is more realistic and the *şehzade* seems more childish (fig. 59).



Figure 58. Ahmed III and his son Mustafa, *Kebir Musavver Silsilename,* (TPML, A 3109 fol. 22b), dated 1710-1720 (Bağcı at all, *Ottoman Painting,* 266)

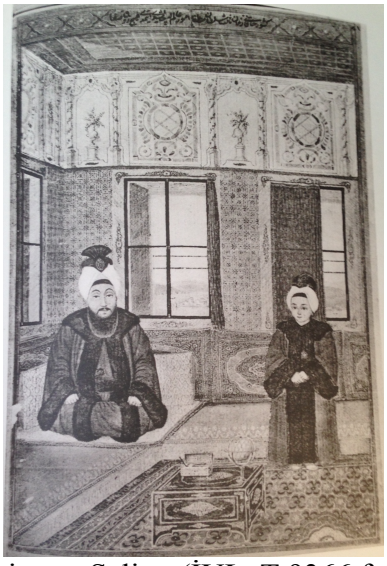


Figure 59. Mustafa III and his son Selim, (İUL, T 9366 fol. 25 v), dated 1766. (Stchoukine, *La Peinture Turque* D'apres les Manuscirits Illustres, vol. 2, XCV)

Apart from these paintings, the figures of the *şehzade*s played a significant role in the illustration of ceremonies. One of the paintings from the second volume of the *Hünername* demonstrates the circumcision ceremony of the sons of Süleyman I (fig. 60). Even though their ages are different, Mustafa, Mehmed and Selim were depicted in a similar way. In 1529, Mustafa was 14, Mehmed was 8 and Selim was 5 years old. The artist, who drew them approximately sixty years after the festivities, did not pay attention to the age difference among the *şehzade*s and drew them on horsebacks in the same style and size. Depicting *şehzade*s on horseback as an artistic style manifest itself also in the *Surname-i Hümayun* of 1582 (figs. 61,62). Two paintings of the arrival of the prince Mehmed to *Atmeydanı* have a similar style of representing the prince.



Figure 60. Süleyman and *şehzade*s proceed toward İbrahim Pasha palace
Hünername, vol. 2, (TPML, H. 1524. fol. 207b, 208a.)



Figure 61. Prince Mehmed proceed toward İbrahim Pasha Palace, Surname-*i Hümayun,* (TPML, H. 1344, fol. 11b., 12a., 9b., 10a.), dated 1587



Figure 62. Prince Mehmed proceed toward İbrahim Pasha Palace, Surname-*i Hümayun,* (TPML, H. 1344, fol. 11b., 12a., 9b., 10a.), dated 1587

This convention, which was used to represent adolescence, was also used to illustrate adolescent sultans. One of the portraits of Ahmed I (enthroned when he was 13 years old), created during his reign, demonstrates him as an adolescent boy (fig.

63). [228] Likewise, the portraits and images of Osman II show him in the life phase of adolescence (figs 64).



Figure 63. Portrait of Ahmed I (İUL, T 9366, fol 26r) (Kangal, *The Sultan's Portrait: Picturing the House of Osman*, 306)



Figure 64. Osman II, (TPML, H. 2169, fol. 13r), ca. 1620. (Wikimedia: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:II_Osman.jpg)

Furthermore, one of the paintings of the sultan Mehmed IV is worth mentioning here to reveal the difference between the illustration of child and adolescent sultans. When Ralamb was living in Istanbul from 1657 to 1658, the reigning sultan was Mehmed IV and he was probably 15 years old. Mehmed IV

[228] Mahir, 'Portraits in New Contexts,' 307.

ascended the throne when he was 7 years old and his image in the Ralamb album represents him in a more childish size and attitude.



Figure 65. Mehmed IV on the throne, The Album of Ralamb, Stoclholm National Library, Cod. Ral. 8:0 no.10. seventeenth century (Adahl, The Sultan's Procession: the Swedish Embassy to Sultan Mehmed IV in 1657-1658 and the Ralamb Paintings, 204)

4.2.3 Pages of the palace

In addition to the members of the imperial family, slave boys appeared in book paintings in various contexts. One of the most meaningful depictions from the *Süleymanname* demonstrates the recruitment of *devshirme* boys (fig. 66). Six boys were taken from their families. Their new red garments and caps signify and differentiate them from the other boys of the town. The scene shows women and men of the Christian population and the gestures of the two women and the monk imply their disapprobation due to the recruitment. These boys, relatively smaller than other figures in the painting, probably represent children and adolescents from different ages gathered by officials and carried out to the palace.

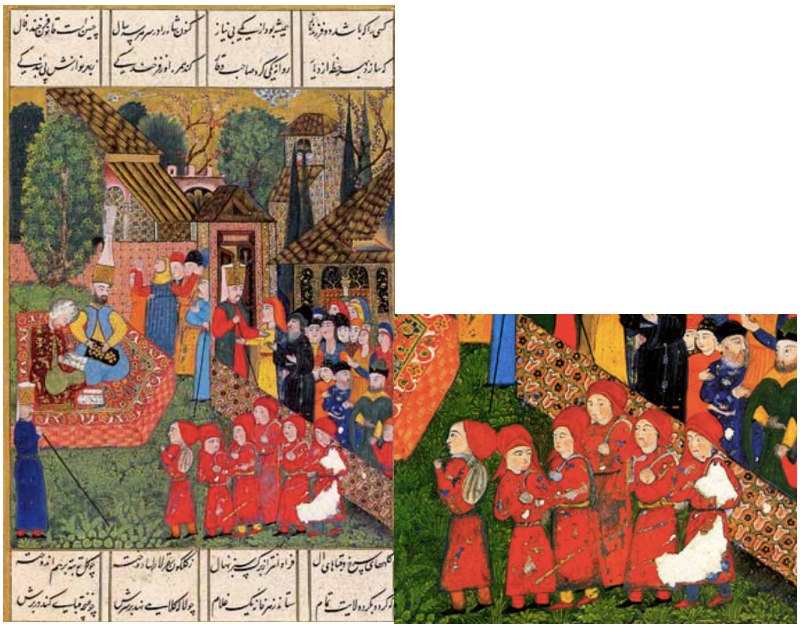


Figure 66. Recruitment of children, *Süleymanname*, Topkapı Palace Museum (H. 1517, fol. 31b.), dated 1558. (Atıl, *Süleymanname: The Illustrated History of Süleyman the Magnificent,* 95)

Having been recruited, these boys in their life phase of adolescence were trained in the palace until appointment to an office in the military or the bureaucracy. Numerous book paintings demonstrate them in various scenes such as royal hunts and celebrations as well as in the depictions of the daily life. A painting from the *Hünername* illustrates some of these boys at the circumcision ceremony of Mustafa, Mehmed and Selim riding their horses.[229] They are illustrated with short and long garments and little caps. Their beardless faces and fragile bodies are striking (fig. 67).

[229] The inscription on the painting: 'Şehzadeleriyle Sultan Mustafa düğününde vâki' olan koşu teferrücüdür.'



Figure 67. Horse riding, *Hünername*, vol. 2 (TPML, H. 1524. fol. 251b, 252a.), dated 1588

Another painting from the same book depicts *devshirme* boys in the bathhouse (fig. 68). Images of the boys riding horses are in line with the images of the boys in the *hamam.* According to the narrative of this painting, one of the servant boys of the bathhouse drops a precious *hamayıl* and breaks it. Then, he became afraid and pastes it together with beeswax. Süleyman I gets out of the bath, becomes aware of the broken *hamayıl,* but he does not show any aggression toward the servant.[230] The hairless bodies and heads refer to the servants' young age. Apart from these paintings, it is possible to encounter these boys in a number of paintings that have various themes.



Figure 68. Pages in the bathhouse, *Hünername,* vol 2, (TPML, H. 1524, fol. 295b.), dated 1588

Images of adolescents from *re'aya* and the palace conform to the same rules that adolescents should be depicted as smaller and thinner than adults, and bigger and thicker than children. However, on the one hand, the depictions of *şehzade*s underline the importance of the dynastic legacy of the family by implying familial association and continuity; on the other hand, having no significant mission, adolescents from *re'aya* were depicted in various modes that were closely related to the perception of adolescence in society. In album paintings, adolescents appear with their books in their hands, emphasising studentship, or as the members of *esnaf ta'ifeleri* (craftsman) of Istanbul. In addition, some of them appear as the epitome of beauty and represent the beloved boys of the city. Although adolescent girls are not seen in the book paintings, they do appear in the albums in the mode of beloved ladies.

4.3 Representation of children and adolescents in literary works

The earliest surviving manuscript of the Ottoman court, a copy of *Dilsuzname,* which was the work of Badi-ad-din Tebrizi, is dated 1455-56. From this point on, up until the middle of the sixteenth century, books took their subject matter from Persian literature and were copied and illustrated under the influence of several Eastern miniature schools as well as Western Christian art.[231] The last decades of the sixteenth century in particular witnessed a radical increase in the production of lavishly illustrated Ottoman history books that not only glorified the sultans but also bolstered the images of Ottoman state officials. The reason for this increase was tightly connected to the aims of patrons who wanted to make their identities visible in the Ottoman court through illustrated in manuscripts.[232] However, literary works also continued to be produced with novelties in themes and illustrations.

As historical books where the image of children and adolescents generally serve to complement the composition in the paintings and to illustrate children and adolescents in the texts, in literary works, children and adolescents appear when the narrative requires their presence. In other words, they were depicted to personify heroes or visualize the characters of the stories. To exemplify the depiction of children and adolescents in literary works, I want to focus on the *Sinbadname* since his hero's age is known from the text and *Kıssa-i Şehr-i Şatran* due to the fact that it has a prominent child hero. Furthermore, I also want to point out the perception of sacred childhood by analyzing the illustrations of *Siyer-i Nebi.* In addition, I also want to touch upon the depiction of adolescents in biographical works.

[231] Atasoy and Çağman, *Turkish Painting,* 20.
[232] For further information on the relationship between the production of historical books and the patronage of high ranking officials, see Emine Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court.*

The copy of *Sinbadname*, translated by Muhammad ‘Abd al-Kerim b. Muhammad under the title of *Tuhfat al-Akhyar* from the Walters Art Gallery has the depiction of a 10-year-old prince.[233] The manuscript has six illustrations and dates from the sixteenth century. According to the narrative, having prayed a long time, a king had a son. However, the astrologers of the kingdom declared that unfortunate events awaited the son in his life. When the son was 10 years old, his father appointed tutors to educate him. However, the son was not able to learn anything. Then Sinbad, who was one of the philosophers of the country, comes onto the scene and manages to teach the son.[234]

The paintings from the *Sinbadname* illustrate the prince listening to Sinbad’s lesson, in conversation with a concubine and in a hunting scene. The prince was depicted smaller and thinner than Sinbad. In the education scene, the depiction of the prince on a throne higher than the position of the teacher points to his superior position in the hierarchy. His beardless face and relatively fragile body contrast with his teacher’s long beard and bulky body (fig. 69).

[233] Renda, ‘Sinbadnama: An Early Ottoman Illustrated Manuscript Unique in Iconography and Style,’ 311.
[234] Renda, ‘Sinbadnama: An Early Ottoman Illustrated Manuscript Unique in Iconography and Style,’ 312-314.



Figure 69. Sinbad is teaching to the king's son, *Sinbadname* (Walters Art Gallery, Ms. W. 662), dated sixteenth century.

Another painting illustrates the prince again sitting on the throne and listening to a concubine who wants to make the prince break his silence (fig. 70). Since the prince still has difficulty in learning, Sinbad advised him not to speak for seven days. The concubine was depicted in the painting trying to learn the reason for the silence of the prince.



Figure 70. Concubine is trying to convince the king's son to talk, *Sinbadname*, (Walters Art Gallery, Ms. W. 662), dated sixteenth century.

For the purpose of hearing a word from the mouth of the prince, the concubine tells him that she can make him the king. The prince forgets his promise and asks how that could be. The concubine answers: 'by poisoning your father'. Then the prince was horrified and fled. News of event spread and finally the king wanted the prince to be killed. Thereupon, the viziers and concubines wanted to temporize the king and started to narrate different stories to prevent him from killing the prince. One of the concubines told a story of a prince hunting with his father's friends.[235] Depiction of this story shows a young prince on a horse with his entourage and the hunting animals. Even though the king's son was not yet ten years of age, his young body is depicted in a bigger size. Two illustrations of the child prince visualize the focal points of the Sinbad's story concerning the narrative. In this way, they represent the child hero and bring him into view. The form of depiction corresponds to the artistic form of illustrating children and adolescents in other sixteenth century manuscripts (fig. 71).



Figure 71. Prince at hunt, *Sinbadname*, (Walters Art Gallery Ms. W. 662), dated sixteenth century

[235] Renda, 'Sinbadnama: An Early Ottoman Illustrated Manuscript Unique in Iconography and Style,' 314.

Another child figure appears in *Kıssa-i Şehr-i Şatran*, which narrates the story of the city of Şatran, dated 1589-1590. In the story, the kidnapping of the Merzeban is narrated. Merzeban was to be the future shah of Şatran. When he was a child, Samek killed numerous women who protected the child, and then took him on his arms and removed him from the camp.[236] This moment is depicted in the book and shows Merzeban in the arms of Samek in the bottom left corner of the painting (fig. 72). The artist/s of *Kıssa-i Şehr-i Şatran* are not known, but the style of its paintings differs from the other paintings produced from the same period. Even though the style is different, the illustrations of the child in the arms of Samek is reminiscent of other book paintings that include child depictions produced at that time.



Figure 72. Samek kidnaps Merzeban, *Kıssa-i Şehr-i Şatran*, (İUL, T. 9303, fol. 145v), dated 1640 (Stchoukine, *La Peinture Turque* D'apres les Manuscirits Illustres, vol. 2, XXXIV)

When required by the narrative, the presence of children and adolescents appears in a variety of contexts and gestures in the literary works like the cases I

[236] Mimiroğlu, 'İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi'nde Bulunan Kıssa-i Şehr-i Şatran (iükt. 9303) Yazmasının Minyatürleri' Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 59.

exemplified above. In addition to these, it is worth mentioning the illustrations of the childhood of the prophet Muhammed in *Siyer-i Nebi* to carry my argument on changing perceptions of childhood further.

Siyer-i Nebi is a book that focuses on the life of the prophet Muhammed. The book was completed by Mustafa Darîr in 1388 and presented to the Mamluk Sultan Berkuk. After the conquest of Egypt by Selim I, the book was brought to Istanbul.[237] Under the patronage of Murad III, the book was copied and painted by the team of Seyyid Lokman and Nakkash Osman in the royal court of Istanbul. It was produced in six volumes with 814 book paintings.[238]

Before analyzing the paintings and Darîri's work, I want to touch upon the notion of sacred childhood. In his article, "He Never Took the Path of Pastime and Play: Ideas of Childhood in Ottoman Hagiography", Gottfried Hagen sets a comparison between Darîri's text, which was written in 1388, and a chapter from *Bedâyi*'ü'l-vekayi, which was penned by Koca Hüseyin (d. after 1647), one of the Bosnian *reisü'l-küttab* of the Ottoman Empire in 1636. Then Hagen demonstrated that the two chapters on the childhood of Muhammed differ from each other. In his text, narrating the stories of miracles and wisdom of Muhammed, Darîri tells explicitly that 'Muhammed was not a child, and not comparable to ordinary children'[239] However, this understanding changes in the text of Koca Hüseyin produced in seventeenth century. Koca Hüseyin reflects Muhammed as a real child playing with his friends.[240]

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[237] Dikmen, 'Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi H. 1221 No'lu Siyer-i Nebî'de Metin Minyatür İlişkisi' Doktora Tezi, 44.
[238] Bağcı at al., *Ottoman Painting,* 159.
[239] Hagen, ''He Never Took the Path of Pastime and Play': Ideas of Childhood in Ottoman Hagiography,' 115.
[240] Hagen, ''He Never Took the Path of Pastime and Play': Ideas of Childhood in Ottoman Hagiography,' 104.

In addition to these, even though it underwent a change in Koca Hüseyin's text, there was a tradition of hagiography writing that does not reflect childhood as an age of its own right characterized by playing games and insufficiency in intellectual ability. For instance, in the late sixteenth century text, *Menakıb-ı İbrahim-i Gülşeni,* it was stated that when he was 7-10 years old, Gülşeni spent his nights in pious exercises and 'he never took the path of pastime and play'.[241] Therefore, I think Ottomans had a special understanding of the childhood of saints and prophets that I will call sacred childhood, which was different from the perception of royal and elite children and the children of *re'aya*.

Considering all these things together, the paintings of *Siyer-i Nebi* can be evaluated by taking into consideration Dariri's perception of the childhood of Muhammed and the Ottoman artist's interpretation. Tightly connected to the narrative concerning the depictions of specified miracles, the perception of sacred persons' childhoods in their minds, Ottoman artists ascribed a sacred role to the paintings, and the child Muhammed appears performing miracles in *Siyer-i Nebi* even though he is shown as small. In other words, all depictions of the prophet's childhood emphasize his spiritual career and remark on his prophecy by illustrating him with covered face and a golden halo, while at the same time he appears as a child or a baby.[242]

The depictions of the infancy of the prophet show him in a white swaddle and a big golden halo (fig. 73). According to the story in the book, after his birth three angels came to visit Muhammed. The painting related to this event shows him with his mother Amine. The baby is lying on the floor and touching the objects that were

[241] Hagen, ''He Never Took the Path of Pastime and Play': Ideas of Childhood in Ottoman Hagiography,' 104.
[242] For the representation of the childhood of the prophet in Darîri, see Gottfried Hagen, ''He Never Took the Path of Pastime and Play': Ideas of Childhood in Ottoman Hagiography,'

brought by the angels. He has no hair and the nudeness of his upper body is striking. Apart from this painting, the infant Muhammed was illustrated in the arms of his mother, his wet nurse and his grandfather, fully covered by white swaddling and a veil (figs. 74, 75, 76).



Figure 73. Infant Muhammed receiving the gifts from angels, *Siyer-i Nebi,* (TPML, H 1221, fol. 223b), dated 1595 (Tanındı, *Siyer-i Nebi: İslam Tasvir Sanatında Hz. Muhammed'in Hayatı*, 3)



Figure 74. Infant Muhammed in the arms of his granddad, *Siyer-i Nebi,* (TPML, H 1221, fol. 233a), dated 1595 (Dikmen, 'Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi H. 1221 No'lu Siyer-i Nebi'de Metin Minyatür İlişkisi,' Ph.D dissertation, 208)

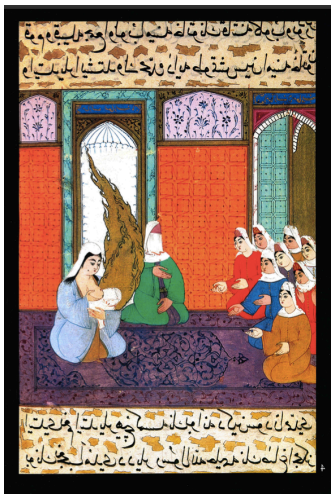


Figure 75. Infant Muhammed was feeding by his wet nurse Halime, *Siyer-i Nebi,* (TPML, H 1221, fol. 255a), dated 1595 (Tanındı, *Siyer-i Nebi: İslam Tasvir Sanatında Hz. Muhammed'in Hayatı*, 4)



Figure 76. Infant Muhammed in the arms of his mother, *Siyer-i Nebi,* (TPML, H 1221, fol. 234b.), dated 1595 (Dikmen, 'Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi H. 1221 No'lu Siyer-i Nebi'de Metin Minyatür İlişkisi,' Ph.D dissertation, 208)

Similar to the depiction of his infancy, the illustrations of his childhood are anchored in his prophet identity. The child Muhammed is depicted in several paintings performing miracles. One of the stories in the book narrates that since the friends of Muhammed wanted to eat dates, Muhammed performs a miracle and dried date palm produces dates. The depiction of this miracle shows the child prophet with his friends where all of them are illustrated smaller than the adult woman who is watching the miracle with an astonished look. Muhammed is depicted with garments

that are worn by other children as well. However, unlike his friends, his dress is always painted green. Moreover, he is depicted with a veil covering his face and a golden halo over his body. The following painting shows a woman bowing respectfully in front of him as a result of his miracle with the date palm (fig. 75).

Another scene shows child Muhammed taming a lion (fig. 76). In a meadow environment, Muhammed holds a lion by its ear with one of his hands and fondles it with the other. The other two figures notice with astonishment that the lion is tilting his head in front of the child Muhammed.

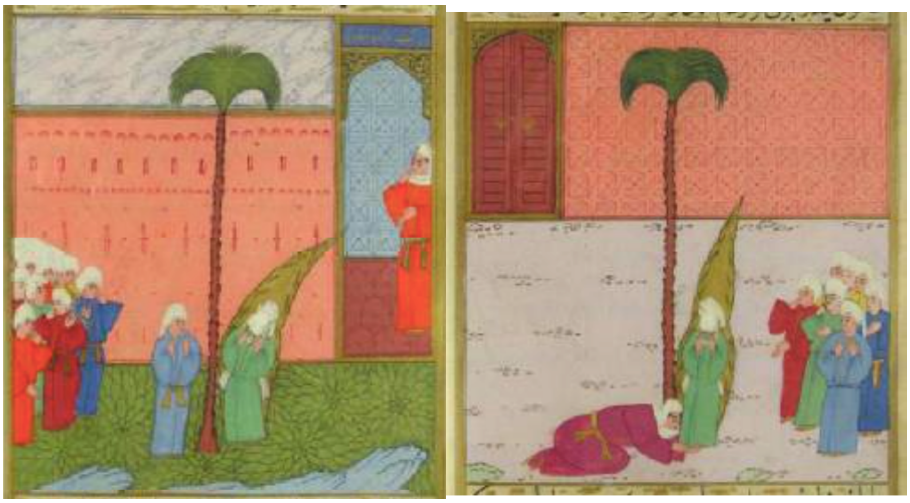


Figure 77. Miracle of date, *Siyer-i Nebi,* Topkapı Palace Museum (H 1221, fol. 283b, 302b.), dated 1595 (Dikmen, 'Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi H. 1221 No'lu Siyer-i Nebi'de Metin Minyatür İlişkisi,' Ph.D dissertation, 204)



Figure 78. Miracle of Lion, *Siyer-i Nebi,* (TPML, H 1221, fol. 262a), dated 1595 (Tanındı, *Siyer-i Nebi: İslam Tasvir Sanatında Hz. Muhammed'in Hayatı*, 5)

Although a sacred childhood is ascribed to Muhammed in the paintings, Ottoman artists, like Koca Hasan, also put emphasis on his 'childhood'. For instance, the child Muhammed was depicted in front of a teacher learning how to read and write. An open book that shows the letters of the Arabic alphabet appear on the small table, and the prophet and his teacher are depicted in a conversation where the teacher is talking and Muhammed is listening (fig. 77). Another painting showing his voyage from the house of the wet nurse to the house of his mother illustrates him in a very childish depiction. On horseback, behind his wet nurse, the child Muhammed appears tightly connected to his wet nurse and is holding onto her to avoid falling from the horse (fig. 78).

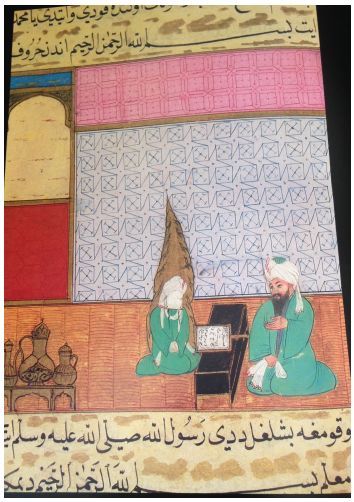


Figure 79. Child Muhammed and his teacher, *Siyer-i Nebi,* (TPML, H 1221, fol. 290a), dated 1595 (Tanındı, *Siyer-i Nebi: İslam Tasvir Sanatında Hz. Muhammed'in Hayatı*, 6)



Figure 80. Child Muhammed and his wet nurse are on the way, *Siyer-i Nebi* (TPML, H 1221, fol. 269a.), dated 1595 (Tanındı, *Siyer-i Nebi: İslam Tasvir Sanatında Hz. Muhammed'in Hayatı*, 6)

To conclude, as I mentioned above, in literary works, when their presence was required children and adolescents were depicted in relatively smaller forms sometimes as the main characters of the depiction, sometimes among the bystanders. The depiction of these figures correlated with the perception of the status of the children and adolescents in the society. For instance, artist/s depicted the son of a king in a palatial environment and put emphasis on his status in the hierarchy by

drawing him on the throne. However, ordinary boys were depicted in their social environments without any emphasis on their presence. In this regard, it is possible to conclude that artists reflected their understanding and perception of children and adolescents from different social status in their paintings and drew their figures according to the requisites of the social position.

Moreover, the perception of the childhood of the prophet differs from other child paintings. Ottoman artists ascribed sanctity not only Muhammed's prophecy years that started when he was forty years of age, but also his childhood and infancy as well. In this regard, the perception of childhood that changes from royal to non-royal also changes when it comes to the childhood of sacred persons, and these different perceptions are reflected in the book paintings.

Apart from these, two bibliographical works and their depictions are worth mentioning in the context of illustrated literary works in general and depictions of adolescents in particular. The illustrated copy of *Meşa'irü'ş-şuara,* written by Aşık Çelebi in 1568 and illustrated in 1590s, has various depictions showing poets and their adolescent servants and disciples.[243] *Meşa'irü'ş-şuara* was composed of biographies of poets and selections from their poems as well as the portraits of some of them. For instance, the poet İşretî, who has a poem on *sâki* (server of wine) was depicted with his servant serving a cup of wine, and the poet Nigari was depicted in a conversation with his adolescent servant (figs. 79, 80).

[243] Bağcı, *Ottoman Painting*, 133.



Figure 81. İşretî and his servant, *Meşa'irü'ş-Şuara,* Millet Library Ali Emiri (y. 470 b.), ca. 1590. (İnalcık, *Has-bağçede 'Ayş u Tarab: Nedimler, Şairler, Mutribler,* 182)



Figure 82. Figani and his servant, Meşa'irü'ş-Şuara, Millet Library Ali Emiri (267 a), ca. 1590 (Kalpaklı and Andrews, The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society, 67)

These boys were mentioned in *Kavaidü'l Mecalis* as beardless boys that were the servants of *ekâbir* and obliged to serve wine in *meclis-i 'işret* (gatherings of the elite members of the court to read poems, eat, and drink wine) and meet their master's sexual needs.[244] They are called *sâki* in Divan Literature. The prime

[244] İnalcık, *Has-bağçede 'Ayş u Tarab,* 181.

characteristic of these boys, are their beardless faces, which indicate their adolescence period and lack of sexual power.

Similar forms were also applied in *Şakâ'iku'n-nu'maniye*, which was written by Taşköprizade Ahmed in 1558 in Arabic, translated by Muhtesibzade Mehmed Haki into Turkish (d. 1567) and illustrated during the reign of Osman II (r. 1618-1620).[245] *Şakâ'iku'n-Nu'maniye* was the biography of Ottoman *ilmiye* officials, and is similar to *Meşa'irü'ş-şuara*, which was composed of the portraitures of poets. It contains the selective portraitures of *ulema*s.[246] One of the paintings in this book represents Molla Hüsameddin with probably his student (fig. 81). They were reading or talking about the book that they are holding in their hands. Another painting illustrates Bebek Çelebi holding a tree and his servant is bringing him a cup of wine.

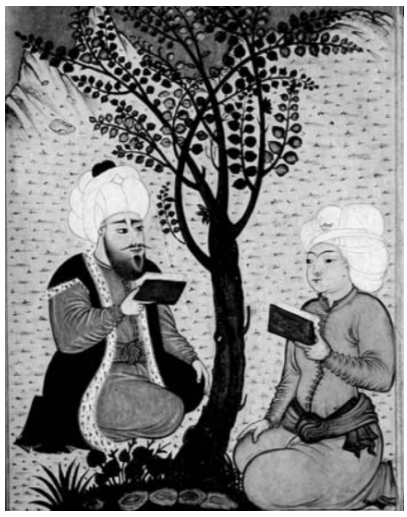


Figure 83. Molla Hüsameddin with his student, *Tercüme-i Şakâik'un-nu'maniye,* Topkapı Palace Museum (H. 1263 y. 132 b), dated 1618-1622 (Değirmenci, 'Osmanlı Sarayının Geçmişe Özlemi: *Tercüme-i Şakâik'un-nu'maniye*, 129)

[245] Değirmenci, 'Osmanlı Sarayının Geçmişe Özlemi: Tercüme-i *Şakâ'iku'n-Nu'maniye,'* 105.
[246] In her article Osmanlı Sarayının Geçmişe Özlemi: Tercüme-i *Şakâ'iku'n-Nu'maniye'* Tülün Değirmenci argues that the reason behind the production of illustrated copy is the will of Osman II to remind contemporary scholars the collaboration of earlier sultans with *ulema*s.



Figure 84. Bebek Çelebi with his servant boy, *Tercüme-i Şakâik'un-nu'maniye,* (TPML, H. 1263 y. 132 b), dated 1618-1622 (Stchoukine, *La Peinture Turque* D'apres les Manuscirits Illustres, vol. 1, CVIII)

Mehmet Kalpaklı and Walter G. Andrews refer to these boys as beloveds in their books *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society.* Kalpaklı and Andrews refer to the period from the late fifteenth century to the early seventeenth century 'the age of beloveds' due to the fact that most of the love-poetry that was produced by the elite culture from this period is about beardless boys as poets' beloveds. Considering the relationship between the poems and the images, and images and real life, most of these boys, in their life phase of adolescence, seem to occupy a considerable place in Ottoman society.

Moreover, in his article, 'The Sexual Intertext of Ottoman Literature: The Story of Meâlî Magistrate of Mihalich', Walter G. Andrews outlines of an upper-class Ottoman outlook on sexual behavior consistent in the sixteenth century. In the Ottoman society, it was expressed by poetic tradition that the beloved boy should be young and of lower status. The sign of the appropriate youth was the condition of the

facial hair, which Andrews clarifies it in his article as 'peach fuzz' and states that 'when the youthful hair becomes a true beard, the young man is no longer a suitable love-object since intercourse with him would presumably require an adult male to assume a passive, and hence reprehensible, role'.[247] In this way, it seems that in early modern Ottoman society homosexual relationship with adolescent boys was appropriate, while it was not acceptable with children or adult males, and the life phase of adolescence was singled out as the period for being a passive objet of desire.

[247] Andrews, 'The Sexual Intertext of Ottoman Literature: The Story of Meâlî, Magistrate of Mihalich,' 45.

4.4 Conclusion

Concomitant to the enrichment of the themes in the Ottoman manuscripts, the subjects of book paintings became diversified. Illustrations of history books produced in the second half of the sixteenth century contained various depictions related to the court and the public environment. The variegation of the themes caused artists to work on new subjects in new styles and a limited scope of the literary works was avoided. In this way, it became possible for royal and non-royal babies, children and adolescents to be visible in book paintings. Starting with illustrated history books, children and adolescents of the Ottoman society were represented more in album paintings through depictions of daily life.

Just as they were emphasized in fatwa collections, Ottoman folk poems and advice literature, children under the age of 7-10 were perceived as dependent on their families who needed to be protected and cared for. Ottoman artists drew children and babies with their parents or caregivers. Visualized in the arms of their mothers, babies were depicted in their swaddles. Children up to 4 years of age sometimes appear in the arms of their mothers similar to babies, but many times they were depicted in childish actions such as pointing to something with an astonishment, walking or conversing with their parents, holding their hands or watching the shows of circumcision ceremonies.

Children and babies, regardless of gender and especially from the non-elite population, were depicted to visualize the members of the stories in the text around the painting. Moreover, they were put into the scenes to complement compositions, for instance, they were put into conquest scenes to represent the conquered population or into everyday scenes to represent the children part of society in illustrated histories or album paintings. Moreover, children were represented in the

paintings of circumcision ceremonies to visualize children performing plays, waiting to be circumscribed or bystanders in the crowd.

In contrast to the illustrations of children from *re'aya*, the images of children and babies from the imperial family were not preferred to be depicted. Instead, children of the palace were visualized as they were in the age of adolescence. Closely related to the perception of childhood of the princes that is different from the perception of an ordinary childhood, the representation of children of *re'aya* as 'children' with the small forms, in modest clothes and accompanying their parents transform itself to the depictions of the princes with an emphasis on their social status with luxurious clothes and headgears in stable poses and attitudes. Moreover, girls and babies from the imperial family do not appear in paintings, but it is possible to encounter female children in books.

When it comes to the representation of adolescents, closely related to the perception of adolescence in the society, Ottoman artists depicted this age group without beards and moustaches, smaller and thinner than the adults, but bigger and stronger than the children. As they were mostly pointed out in the imperial edicts for the recruitment of *devshirme* levy, poems of *şehrengiz* and the treaties of the Ottoman scholars, adolescents from *re'aya* were depicted in various compositions. For instance, they were depicted as the indispensible part of the artisan processions in circumcision ceremonies, as the beloved boys of the poetry *meclis* and the prototype of the adolescents from various social groups in the costume albums. Depictions of sultans and princes in their adolescence appear mostly in portraitures, royal hunts and imperial celebrations to visualize their personalities with stress on their dynastic identity, legitimacy to rule and their privileged status.

In literary works, similar to history books, children and adolescents appear when the narrative requires their presence and they were represented by the same artistic conventions. Moreover, the depiction of infants and the child Muhammed not only conforms to the rules of depicting babies and children, but also demonstrates that the perception of childhood that changes from royal to non-royal, which also changes when it comes to the childhood of sacred people.

Having identified the limits of childhood and adulthood in the first two chapters, the last chapter of my thesis shows that there is a connection between the artistic production of book paintings including the depiction of children and adolescents and the broader social and cultural environment that these paintings were anchored in. Like two puzzles that complement each other, Ottoman written sources and book paintings provide a visual and textual interplay and highlight the age limits, perception and lives of children and adolescents in early modern Ottoman society.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Having been very influenced by the world of Ottoman illustrated books, the way children were visually portrayed in Ottoman book paintings was my main question at the very beginning of this study. While I was searching for the images of children, I came across figures that were depicted smaller than bearded or mustached adults but bigger than tiny children. These figures that were depicted with beardless faces and relatively tiny bodies were referred to as 'youths' in some art historical studies. While I was pondering upon these figures as well as the images of children, I thought that such representations might best be understood through evaluating them in their particular social and cultural contexts.

Due to the fact that every artwork is anchored in the social environment that it was produced in, before focusing on the illustrations, I decided to highlight what childhood was and what it meant for the early modern Ottomans. First of all, I wanted to understand how Ottoman legal discourse described childhood, and in the first chapter, I focused on *kanunname*s and fatwa collections. According to Ottoman law, children were not considered responsible for their deeds and were exempted from legal burdens. When they reached puberty, they were immediately subjected to the law. Fatwa literature considered children as physically and intellectually immature persons who needed care and protection. The fatwas issued on *nafaka, hidâne* and *vesâyet* not only demonstrate the protective attitude toward Muslim children but also the obligation of adults to provide a safe environment for them to grow up in.

After reading many law codes and fatwas, I realized that there was a transitional period between childhood and adulthood and I proposed to use the term

adolescence for this period. Even though there was not a strictly specified life-cycle category as adolescence in early modern Ottoman society in contrast to today's world, in this study I suggest that there was a life-cycle period between childhood and adulthood that has been pointed out by many literary sources as well as by paintings. This study suggests that the figures depicted as bigger than children but smaller than adults in the paintings are representations of adolescents. Denoted as 'oğlan' and 'kız' in law codes, adolescents were individuals that were not regarded as children anymore, and their bodies were regarded as transforming to male and female bodies in this developmental stage. It is also worth nothing that, when a comparison set up between boys and girls, the life phase of adolescence is more visible, easy to determine and long for boys than girls.

As it was indicated in the *devshirme* and *pençik kanunname*s for the males, this period extended from age 10 to age 17. If adolescents did not declare the physical changes that make them *bâliğ*, this period was thought to have ended before 17 years of age. Even though there is not such a specific statement in the law codes, fatwas drew the same approximate boundaries for females. Adolescence, for the early modern Ottomans, was a period that implies the departure from childhood towards complete incorporation into the adult world. In other words, it was a life stage where boys and girls experiencing it were considered as people who were capable of doing things that adults were accustomed to doing, while at the same time they were required to gain knowledge and experience about life.

Having identified the legal status, I explored the social status of children and adolescents in the second chapter of my study. Drawing evidence from various literary sources, I planned to go into detail on the issue of perception and conceptualization of childhood and adolescence. I have argued that there was not a

monolithic understanding of these life phases, but rather, notions of childhood and adolescence changed according to gender and social status. Emphasizing differences between childhood and adolescence of the elites and the *re'aya*, I have suggested that the childhood and indeed the adolescence of palace children, for both the royal family and slaves, was devoted to the state interests. They were perceived as the sources of perpetuation of the Ottoman state and legitimation of dynastic rule.

The second chapter demonstrated that gender played a central role in the perception and construction of childhood and adolescence. First of all, it is clear that the infant boys were more welcomed than infant girls in the early modern Ottoman society. With the clear aim of preparing girls for their future social roles as wives and mothers and forming the boys for their future 'manly' careers, social practices had a very gendered nature and gender had a central role in the social construction of childhood and adolescence.

Reading various sources to understand writers' and poets' approach to childhood and adolescence, I realized that different sources have a different understanding of these life phases that sometimes do not correspond with the legal norms. While the advice literature provides an idealized picture of child rearing and has a protective agenda to save adolescents from the sexual desires of the adult world, Ottoman elite poems of *şehrengiz* perceive adolescents as objects of desire. *Yaşname*s preferred to depict childhood and adolescence as how they were actually experienced. They depicted the children as 'children', very close to the modern sense of children, and put forward the images of adolescents with an emphasis on physical, psychological, and sexual development. Even though legal norms put restrictions on child marriages, there are cases when people disobeyed the rule, which sometimes even caused girls to die. By using evidence from various literary sources, I aimed to

draw a comprehensive picture of childhood and adolescence, since I realized that every source and every point of view from the various strata of society had presented different, but not mutually exclusive understandings. I have aimed to present a comprehensive view of these various approaches.

In the last chapter, I focused on the pictorial representation of children and adolescents. Like the photographs of children and adolescents of the early modern Ottoman society, book paintings showed me many things that I indicated in the first and second chapters of my thesis. In the paintings, little children were depicted with their mothers or caregivers, in accordance with the fatwas that stated that they needed to be cared for and protected. The depictions of the heirs to the throne, regardless of their age, were illustrated to contrast the royal and non-royal children and adolescents. The absences of royal female children and adolescence in the paintings highlight the fact that the different realms of women and men were also valid for male and female children and adolescents in society.

The images of children and babies from *re'aya* were painted to bolster the image of the fair and benevolent Sultan. These images underlined the justice and benevolence provided by the sultans and high-ranking officials to everybody who lived under the rule of Ottoman Empire, even babies and children. Apart from functioning as the intensifier of the themes of justice and generosity, children and adolescents were depicted as indispensable actors of everyday life, as bystanders at the circumcision ceremonies and war wearies in the conquest scenes. Furthermore, they were depicted to visualize particular characters in literary works.

The illustrated life of the prophet, *Siyer-i Nebi*, was among the sources I consulted. Although I expected to find ordinary children in the book, I found not only images of ordinary children, but also the depiction of the child Muhammed.

Different from other child figures, Muhammed as a baby and a child was depicted with an emphasis of his sacredness. This led me to conclude that the prophet's childhood, like a saint's childhood, was perceived in a different way. They were not like other royal or non-royal children. In contrast, they were sacred and capable of performing miracles. Throughout the thesis I have proposed to look at the perception of childhood and adolescence in a nuanced way, and studying the *Siyer-i Nebi* allowed me to strengthen my argument that the conception of these life phases changes depended on social status, gender, and also notions of sacredness.

Having identified the perception, meaning and limits of childhood and adolescence in the first two chapters, the last chapter of my thesis shows that there is a connection between the artistic production of book paintings, including the depictions of children and adolescents, and the broader social and cultural environment in which these paintings were anchored. Like pieces of a puzzle that complement each other, Ottoman written sources and book paintings provide a visual and textual interplay that highlights age limits and the perception of the lives of children and adolescents in early modern Ottoman society. In addition, the artistic conventions of depicting children and adolescents show the differences in the perception of elite and non-elite children and adolescents and the childhood of sacred people.

Concerning art history and the history of childhood, this thesis first attempted to approach childhood and adolescence in early modern Ottoman history in a nuanced way, and second, it aimed to locate the images of these age groups in early modern Ottoman book paintings. This thesis intended to deal with a subject that has not been studied in an art history framework before and aimed to contribute to the study of Ottoman art and visual culture by exploring the depiction of children and

adolescents in visual representations in connection to their socio-legal and cultural dynamics of the early modern Ottoman world.

One of the challenges that I encountered in this study was to determine the limits of childhood and adolescence. Especially, it was difficult for me to describe the life period of adolescence. Adolescence is a topic that has not attracted the attention of Ottoman historians before. Even though adolescence was not a life phase that was underlined by Ottoman sources as a categorical life period as it is today, Ottoman literary sources and paintings suggest the notion of a life cycle phase that corresponded to the stage between childhood and adulthood. In this study, by tracing the clues from the Ottoman sources, I have tried to describe a life cycle period between childhood and adulthood. I have aimed to present a more detailed perspective for age categories in the framework of Ottoman childhood studies and to draw attention to stages of pre-adulthood in a nuanced manner. Moreover**,** due to the diversity of biological phases that every human being experiences and the diversity of social and legal frameworks, it is impossible to set fixed age limits for these periods. Therefore, I have avoided making strict statements about the boundaries of the life stages; instead, I have preferred to provide a more flexible point of view to generally categorize age groups as children or adolescents.

In addition, as a master's thesis, my study has certain unavoidable limitations. First of all, I focused solely on the status of Muslim children, since I was able to read Ottoman Turkish well. I was not able to search for other accounts that were written in the languages spoken by communities under the governance of Ottoman Empire, such as Greek, Armenian, or Judaeo-Spanish. If research is conducted for the other religious and ethnic groups in Ottoman society, it will be possible to reach a more comprehensive picture of childhood in the territories of the Ottoman Empire.

The visual material in the thesis is in large part from published material, online libraries, unpublished manuscripts in the Istanbul University Library and the *Hünername* from Topkapı Palace Library. I wish I had been able to study other manuscripts that I could not get, as I would like to have presented a broader scale of images of children and adolescents in my thesis. However, due to limitations of time and scope, I was unable to expand the research base of this study.

Furthermore, my thesis was devoted solely to the visual representations of Ottoman children and adolescents. However, in addition to Ottoman paintings, a study of Safavid and Mughal paintings of this period would allow for a more comprehensive contribution to Islamic art history. In this way, it would be possible to make comparisons between different schools of Islamic painting, and to contribute to the study of childhood and adolescence in early modern Islamic societies at large.

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