POLITECNICO DI TORINO

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE BOSPHORUS YALI IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES

A Comparative Analysis of Spatial and Architectural Change

Master's Thesis

Student Name

Yeşim Ergen

Supervisor

Sergio Pace

Abstract

The Bosphorus yalı represents a distinctive form of Ottoman residential architecture shaped by the close relationship between domestic life, water, landscape, and movement along the Bosphorus. This thesis investigates the transformation of the yalı during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in relation to the broader urban, social, and cultural changes associated with Ottoman modernization. It examines how changing conditions of mobility, domestic and social life, and architectural representation were reflected in a residential typology whose spatial organisation had developed in close connection with the particular environmental and urban conditions of the Bosphorus.

The research combines historical and urban analysis with the chronological study of fourteen yalıs selected according to a consistent set of criteria, including chronological range, geographical distribution, topographical and shoreline conditions, architectural configuration, state of preservation, and availability of documentation. The same case-study group is maintained throughout the comparative analysis and examined through a consistent framework: shoreline relationship and access; the organisation and changing relationship of haremlik and selamlık; architectural composition, ornamentation, and monumentality; and spatial organisation and circulation through the relationship between rooms, the sofa, and other distributive spaces.

The comparative analysis reveals that these aspects of the yalı transformed through different patterns and degrees of change. The increasing importance of land-based circulation developed alongside the continuing role of maritime access, while the relationship between haremlik and selamlık changed through varying degrees of separation, connection, and integration. Architectural expression demonstrates increasing monumentality and ornamental articulation in several nineteenth-century examples, although considerable variation remains across the chronology. At the same time, the sofa persists as an important organiser of rooms and movement, while circulation becomes more varied through the incorporation of additional distributive spaces.

By maintaining the same selected cases across each category of analysis, the study makes it possible to trace these transformations chronologically within a consistent architectural sample and to examine how different aspects of the same residences responded to broader changes associated with Ottoman modernization. The analysis demonstrates that the yalı did not transform as a single architectural system in which all of its characteristics changed together, but through the selective adaptation of different components while others maintained a stronger degree of continuity. The contribution of the study therefore lies in connecting broader historical transformations to architectural change through a systematic comparative framework, revealing the yalı as a residential typology in which changing and persistent spatial principles operated simultaneously.

Keywords: Bosphorus, yalı, Ottoman residential architecture, Ottoman modernization, waterfront architecture, domestic architecture, Istanbul

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1. Introduction

My architectural education in Europe encouraged me to reconsider Istanbul through the different ways in which cities accommodate collective and domestic life. In Istanbul, this relationship is not necessarily expressed through clearly defined public spaces or a formally organised urban structure, but through a more complex spatial fabric in which domestic life has historically held a significant place. Against this background, the Bosphorus presents a particularly distinctive condition. Along its shoreline, residential architecture developed through an unusually direct relationship with water, landscape, topography, and movement, creating an environment that differs considerably from the dense urban fabric of the city.

The yalı represents the most direct architectural expression of this condition. Rather than being simply a house positioned beside the water, its spatial and architectural character developed through its relationship with the Bosphorus. The water constituted its frontage and view, while also historically functioning as an important means of access and as part of the immediate setting of domestic life. On the opposite side, gardens connected the residence with the land and the rising topography behind the shoreline. Quays, piers, and boathouses further extended the residence toward the water, creating a condition in which architecture, landscape, and movement were closely interconnected.

This relationship was also inseparable from the particular social context in which the yalı developed. These residences were associated primarily with members of the Ottoman court, high-ranking officials, and wealthy families, whose position allowed them to occupy privileged sites along the Bosphorus and construct extensive waterfront residences. The yalı therefore represents a particular condition within Ottoman residential architecture, shaped simultaneously by established domestic traditions, the environmental characteristics of the Bosphorus, and the social practices of an elite group. It was this relationship between a familiar domestic culture and an exceptional waterfront setting that initially led me to investigate the typology more closely.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries provide a particularly significant period through which to examine the yalı. By the eighteenth century, the Bosphorus had become established as an important residential landscape for the Ottoman elite, while the following two centuries corresponded to substantial transformations within Ottoman society and Istanbul. Political and institutional reforms developed alongside changing cultural relations, social practices, patterns of mobility, and approaches to urban development. During the nineteenth century in particular, the increasing importance of land-based transportation and interventions along the shoreline began to modify a landscape that had historically depended strongly on maritime movement. At the same time, changing domestic and social practices and increasing interaction with European architectural culture introduced new influences into elite residential architecture. Modernization in this context cannot therefore be understood exclusively through the adoption of Western architectural forms, but as a broader process affecting the conditions in which architecture was produced, inhabited, and experienced.

The interest of this period does not lie in an immediately visible distinction between yalıs belonging to different centuries. On the contrary, many characteristics of the typology remained recognisable despite the transformations occurring around them. This raises a more significant question: what

happened to a residential type so closely connected to a particular landscape and way of inhabiting the city when the urban, social, and cultural conditions surrounding it began to change? Examining the yalı across this period therefore provides a way of investigating not only architectural transformation, but also persistence and adaptation.

Existing scholarship provides an extensive basis for understanding both the architectural characteristics and the historical development of the Bosphorus yalı. Sedad Hakkı Eldem's studies constitute a fundamental documentary source, recording individual residences through architectural descriptions, plans, elevations, historical photographs, and reconstructions, including buildings that have subsequently been altered or lost. Doğan Kuban further examines the architectural development of the yalı comparatively, identifying changes in plan organisation, the sofa, circulation and staircases, the relationship between haremlik and selamlık, the position of the residence between the sea and the land, and architectural expression. His analysis places these transformations within the broader development of Ottoman residential architecture and considers the increasing presence of Western architectural influences alongside the continuation and transformation of established spatial characteristics.

Building upon this existing scholarship, this thesis introduces a comparative framework in which a defined group of fourteen yalıs is examined according to the same set of architectural criteria. While Kuban's comparative analysis traces the development of architectural and typological characteristics through different representative examples, the criteria adopted in this research are derived from the broader urban, social, and cultural transformations associated with Ottoman modernization discussed in the preceding chapters. Changes in mobility are examined through the relationship between the residence, the shoreline, and modes of access; transformations in domestic life through the changing organisation of haremlik and selamlık; changing cultural and representational tendencies through architectural expression; and continuity and adaptation in spatial organisation through the relationship between the sofa, surrounding rooms, and circulation. The same framework is then applied to the selected case-study group, as far as the available documentation permits, allowing these relationships to be examined comparatively across different chronological moments and geographical conditions along the Bosphorus.

Based on this premise, the thesis investigates how the architectural characteristics of the Bosphorus yalı transformed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in relation to the broader processes of Ottoman modernization. More specifically, the research considers how changes in transportation and the growing importance of land-based circulation affected the relationship between the residence and the Bosphorus; how the spatial relationship between haremlik and selamlık developed; how changing architectural and cultural influences were reflected in the expression of the waterfront residence; and how established principles of spatial organisation, particularly the relationship between the sofa, rooms, and circulation, persisted or adapted across the chronology. In this way, transformation is examined alongside continuity rather than as the complete replacement of an earlier architectural model.

The geographical scope of the research is limited to selected settlements along the European and Asian shores of the Bosphorus. The shoreline is not approached as a uniform geographical condition. Bays, valleys, steep slopes, narrow waterfront strips, and more open coastal areas produced different relationships between settlement,

architecture, water, and landscape. The selected settlements and case studies therefore allow chronological transformation to be considered alongside the influence of different topographical and morphological conditions.

The architectural investigation is based on a group of fourteen yalı case studies belonging primarily to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The late seventeenth-century Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı is included as an earlier reference case, providing a point of comparison for the architectural and spatial characteristics observed in subsequent examples. The case studies were selected not as isolated monuments, but as a group representing different chronological moments, locations, topographical conditions, states of preservation, and architectural configurations. Their selection therefore establishes a comparative sample that combines chronological range and geographical diversity, while the availability of architectural documentation provides the material through which the comparison can be developed.

Each case is examined through the available plans, sections, elevations, historical photographs, archival material, and published documentation. The analysis considers the relationship of the residence with the Bosphorus and its means of access; domestic organisation, including the configuration of haremlik and selamlık, the role of the sofa, circulation, and the distribution of domestic and representational spaces; construction systems and materials; architectural expression; and interior characteristics. The same analytical framework is applied across the case studies as far as the available documentation allows, providing a common basis for their subsequent comparison. Where the surviving documentation does not allow a particular characteristic to be established with sufficient reliability, this limitation is stated explicitly rather than treating the absence of evidence as an architectural condition.

The cases are then brought together through chronological comparative analysis. The aim is not to establish a rigid evolutionary sequence in which every yalı undergoes the same transformations. Differences in topography, shoreline configuration, patronage, alterations, reconstruction, and available documentation inevitably produce variations within the sample. Instead, the comparison seeks to identify broader tendencies while also recognising exceptions and continuities. Maintaining the same group of case studies across the comparative framework allows these tendencies to be examined through a consistent set of criteria, while also making visible the cases in which the available evidence or particular conditions of the residence complicate the broader patterns. In this way, the individual cases can be used to investigate how wider changes in Istanbul and Ottoman society intersected with the specific architectural and environmental conditions of the Bosphorus.

The thesis moves from this broader historical and urban context toward the architectural scale of the individual residence. It first examines the political, social, and cultural transformations of the Ottoman Empire during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and their relationship with changes in Istanbul. The Bosphorus is then considered as an urban and residential landscape, followed by an examination of the yalı as a specific waterfront residential typology. After establishing the methodological framework, the selected case studies are analysed individually and chronologically. Finally, the comparative analysis brings the cases together to examine how transformations in mobility, domestic and social organisation, and architectural expression interacted with persistent spatial principles in the development of the Bosphorus yalı.

2. The Late Ottoman Empire: Socio-Political and Cultural Transformation

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries marked a period of profound transformation within the Ottoman Empire, characterised by extensive reforms affecting political administration, military organisation, education, urban development, and social life. Rather than representing a single process of Westernisation, these centuries witnessed a broader process of modernization through which existing Ottoman institutions gradually adapted to changing internal conditions and an evolving international context. In the context of this thesis, modernization is understood as the interconnected transformation of political, social, urban, and cultural structures that progressively reshaped both the city of Istanbul and its architectural environment. These developments provide the historical framework for understanding the architectural characteristics of Bosphorus yalıs examined in the following chapters.

Since the sixteenth century, Europe had undergone significant economic, technological, and intellectual transformations, driven by capital accumulated through colonial expansion and agricultural production. These processes reconfigured European societies by strengthening centralised states and enabling the development of new administrative, military, and economic systems. Port cities emerged as important centres of international trade, attracting large-scale migration from rural areas and stimulating rapid urban growth. Consequently, new building types, infrastructures, and public institutions transformed the physical organisation of European cities, while architecture increasingly responded to changing administrative, commercial, educational, and industrial functions.

Following its political and military peak during the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire gradually experienced structural difficulties characterised by military defeats, territorial losses, and administrative inefficiencies.

These challenges became particularly evident after the Treaty of Karlowitz (1699), which not only resulted in significant territorial concessions but also revealed the growing disparity between the Ottoman administrative system and the increasingly centralised European states. As Europe strengthened through institutional reform, technological development, and urban expansion, Ottoman administrators increasingly recognised the need to reconsider existing structures and seek new approaches to governance, military organisation, and administration. Europe therefore became not simply a political or military reference, but also a source of new organisational, technical, and cultural knowledge that would gradually interact with established Ottoman traditions.[1]

An early manifestation of this process emerged during the Tulip Era (1718–1730). Increased diplomatic exchanges, including the Ottoman embassy to France, facilitated the circulation of European cultural and intellectual influences within the imperial court. The presence of European artists and the education of Ottoman elites abroad introduced new aesthetic references and cultural practices that began to appear within elite environments. The establishment of the printing press further contributed to the dissemination of scientific, geographical,

1 Necla Arslan, *Gravür ve Seyahatnamelerde İstanbul (18. Yüzyıl Sonu ve 19. Yüzyıl)* (İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı, 1992), 16.

and historical knowledge, reflecting an increasing interest in new forms of learning and representation.[2]

Nevertheless, the transformations of the Tulip Era remained largely confined to courtly and elite circles. Rather than introducing fundamental structural change, they were primarily expressed through selective cultural adoption and aesthetic experimentation. Resistance from established institutions, particularly the ulema and the Janissary corps, limited their wider societal impact, culminating in the Patrona Halil Revolt of 1730. Consequently, although new architectural tastes and cultural practices began to emerge, they did not fundamentally alter the broader spatial organisation of Ottoman society.

A more comprehensive process of modernization developed during the nineteenth century through the Tanzimat reforms, formally initiated by the Gülhane Edict of 1839. These reforms sought to strengthen central authority through the reorganisation of legal, administrative, military, and educational institutions. Military reform introduced new forms of technical education and professional expertise, while administrative restructuring generated new governmental institutions and educational facilities. Rather than replacing existing systems entirely, these reforms gradually interacted with established urban and social structures, producing long-term transformations in the organisation of Ottoman society.

Beyond institutional reform, "modernization increasingly influenced the physical structure of Istanbul itself. The expansion of transportation networks, new administrative institutions, changing patterns of mobility, and evolving forms of domestic life progressively reshaped the city's urban fabric."[3] The relationship between land and water, patterns of accessibility, and the organisation of residential environments were gradually redefined. These developments extended beyond questions of architectural style, influencing the ways buildings were organised, inhabited, and connected to their urban context.

For the purposes of this thesis, these interconnected transformations constitute the broader process of Ottoman modernization. Rather than understanding modernization solely through the adoption of Western architectural forms, this research considers it as a combination of urban, social, cultural, and political changes that found expression in architecture. It is within this historical context that the Bosphorus yalı is examined, not merely as an architectural object, but as a residential typology whose documented architectural characteristics provide insight into the changing relationship between architecture and modernization during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

2 Doğan Kuban, *İstanbul: Bir Kent Tarihi: Bizantion, Konstantinopolis, İstanbul* (Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996), 308–33.

3 Doğan Kuban and Cemal Emden, *Osmanlı Mimarisi* (YEM Yayın, 2007), 499–508.

3. Urban Transformation and Spatial Reconfiguration of Istanbul

3.1 The Inward City

Until the eighteenth century, Istanbul functioned as a predominantly inward-oriented urban system whose organisation was defined less by spatial continuity than by the aggregation of autonomous urban units. Although physically contained within its historic walls, the city was not only bounded geographically but also structurally, as its organisation did not extend beyond this boundary in any systematic manner. Rather than operating as a continuous urban fabric, Istanbul developed through the coexistence of self-contained neighbourhoods and architectural complexes.

Doğan Kuban states that the movement within the city relied almost entirely on pedestrian circulation, as no formal land-based transportation infrastructure existed. Streets were narrow, irregular, and poorly maintained, lacking hierarchy and continuity. Rather than constituting an organised circulation network, they functioned primarily as residual spaces between buildings. The absence of sidewalks or planned routes further reinforced the fragmented nature of movement, where circulation responded to immediate necessity rather than to an integrated urban structure.

This fragmented condition extended beyond circulation to the broader spatial organisation of the city. Urban space was not conceived as a continuous public realm but as a series of enclosed or semi-enclosed environments. Social and collective life took place within bounded architectural complexes such as mosques, külliyes, hans, and bedestens, while streets rarely functioned as civic or social spaces. Consequently, unlike many contemporary European cities, Istanbul lacked formal public squares and a network of interconnected public spaces. The city was experienced through a succession of enclosed environments rather than through continuous urban space.

The same spatial logic characterised the residential fabric. “Neighbourhoods developed around mescits, forming localised clusters that operated with considerable autonomy from one another. These neighbourhoods did not establish extended spatial relationships across the city; instead, connections emerged through everyday patterns of movement and use rather than through deliberate urban planning. In this sense, urban space was produced through occupation rather than design.”[4]

The absence of centralised planning further reinforced this condition. Major architectural interventions were generally commissioned by members of the imperial court and materialised as self-contained complexes responding to local needs rather than contributing to a broader urban structure. As a result, Istanbul developed as an accumulation of autonomous architectural entities rather than as a coordinated urban system. This condition is clearly illustrated in Matrakçı Nasuh’s representation of the city, where Istanbul appears not as a continuous urban network but as a dense aggregation of individual architectural units.

This inherited urban structure provides the point of departure for the transformations examined in this thesis. While it had successfully accommodated the social and political organisation of the classical Ottoman

4 Kuban, *İstanbul: Bir Kent Tarihi*, 189–243.



Figure 1. Illustration of Istanbul. Source: Matrakçı Nasuh, *Beyan-ı Menazil-i Sefer-i Irakeyn*, 1532.

city for centuries, its fragmented spatial logic increasingly proved incapable of responding to the demographic, administrative, and infrastructural demands that emerged during the eighteenth century. The gradual reconfiguration of Istanbul therefore did not arise from a single planning initiative but from the growing inability of the existing urban model to accommodate new forms of movement, settlement, and governance.

3.2 Pressures and Instabilities

By the eighteenth century, the limitations of Istanbul's inward and fragmented urban structure had become increasingly apparent. The spatial organisation that had successfully accommodated the classical Ottoman city for centuries was no longer capable of responding to the growing environmental, demographic, and administrative pressures confronting the capital. Rather than resulting from a single event, the transformation of Istanbul emerged from the accumulation of multiple challenges that progressively destabilised the inherited urban system.

Among the most significant of these pressures were the recurrent fires that repeatedly devastated the predominantly timber-built city. Beyond their immediate physical destruction, these events exposed the vulnerability of the existing urban fabric and interrupted its long-term continuity. "The Cibali fire of 1716 is considered one of the most destructive in Istanbul's history, while the fire that broke out near the gates of Balat in 1727 reportedly destroyed approximately one-eighth of the urban fabric. Between 1754 and 1757, during the reign of Osman III, a succession of fires again caused widespread destruction, and a later Cibali fire during the reign of Abdülhamid I is estimated to have destroyed nearly 20,000 houses. Collectively, these disasters displaced almost one-fifth of the city's population."[5] Entire neighbourhoods were, in some cases, erased and subsequently rebuilt, disrupting the continuity of the urban fabric and preventing the consolidation of a stable spatial structure.

At the same time, demographic growth intensified pressure on an already insufficient urban infrastructure. The provision of water, security, and other public services within the historic core became increasingly inadequate, while available space within the city walls proved progressively incapable of accommodating a growing population. "As noted by M. Aktepe, citing G. A. Olivier, by 1793 settlement had begun to expand into the suburbs, resulting in the gradual occupation of gardens and productive open land."[6] These developments suggest that population growth, together with infrastructural limitations, was generating increasing spatial pressure that extended settlement beyond the traditional urban core.

These internal pressures coincided with broader political and cultural transformations taking place across the Ottoman Empire. As discussed in the previous chapter, increasing interaction with Europe introduced new administrative practices, institutional models, and architectural ideas, while the reform agenda of the Ottoman state generated new military, educational, and governmental institutions. These emerging functions required forms of spatial organisation that the inherited urban structure was increasingly unable to accommodate. Consequently, the limitations of the existing city became not only a physical problem but also an administrative and institutional one.

Taken together, these environmental, demographic, and institutional pressures revealed a growing mismatch between Istanbul's inherited urban structure and the changing needs of the eighteenth-century capital. The inward, self-contained city

5 Doğan Kuban, İstanbul 1600 Yıllık Bir Müzedir: Kent ve Mimarlık Tarihi Üzerine İstanbul Yazıları (YEM Yayın, 2020), 67.

6 Kuban, *İstanbul 1600 Yıllık Bir Müzedir*, 68.

was no longer capable of accommodating expanding patterns of settlement, new institutional functions, or evolving systems of movement. Rather than producing an immediate transformation, these conditions gradually redirected urban development beyond the historic walls, preparing the spatial reconfiguration of Istanbul examined in the following section.

3.3 Shift to the Shoreline

In response to these pressures, Istanbul gradually underwent a spatial reconfiguration. Rather than resulting from a comprehensive urban plan, this transformation emerged through changing patterns of settlement that were subsequently reinforced by infrastructural interventions. As the historic core became increasingly saturated, the city expanded beyond its walls, which progressively functioned as constraints rather than effective urban boundaries.

This outward expansion did not occur uniformly in all directions. Instead, it followed the shoreline, reflecting the long-established importance of maritime transportation within the city. Since water had always constituted the principal system of movement, the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn provided the most accessible framework for urban growth. Consequently, Istanbul developed as a linear urban system extending along its waterfront rather than expanding radially into the hinterland.

This transformation unfolded within a landscape that was already occupied by fishing villages, agricultural settlements, and small-scale coastal communities, which continued to structure the Bosphorus alongside new patterns of development. At the same time, the decline of earlier recreational and courtly landscapes, particularly around the Golden Horn and Kağıthane following the Patrona Halil Rebellion, increased the attractiveness of the Bosphorus as a setting for leisure and elite residence.

The gradual shift of population and activity toward the shoreline is reflected in a range of historical indicators. According to Kuban, "the distribution of eighteenth-century fountains suggests that new investments in water infrastructure increasingly served neighbourhoods beyond the historic walls. Likewise, contemporary descriptions, engravings, and quantitative data on maritime activity point to a growing concentration of movement along the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn. The number of small boats (pereme) increased from 1,444 in 1680 to 3,996 by the end of the eighteenth century, while C. Orhonlu notes that traffic between Ayvansaray and Samatya more than doubled between 1680 and 1751."[7] Similarly, "the proportion of newly constructed mosques located within the historic walls declined during the eighteenth century, reflecting the gradual redistribution of population and urban investment beyond the traditional urban core."[8] Collectively, these indicators demonstrate that the city's expansion increasingly followed the shoreline.

Kuban continues, infrastructure did not initiate this process but facilitated and reinforced it. As settlement gradually extended beyond the historic centre, investments in water supply brought services to districts such as Taksim, Üsküdar, Kasımpaşa, Tophane, Galata, and the Bosphorus settlements, supporting an increasingly permanent pattern of occupation. At the same time, developments in maritime transportation improved the capacity, regularity, and reliability of movement along the shoreline. The introduction of steam navigation during the

7 Kuban, *İstanbul 1600 Yıllık Bir Müzedir*, 67–83.

8 Kuban, İstanbul: Bir Kent Tarihi, 250–64.

nineteenth century and the establishment of regular passenger services strengthened the Bosphorus as a continuous corridor of movement, further reinforcing existing patterns of waterfront development.

Certain political decisions accelerated this process even more directly. The gradual relocation of the Ottoman court from Topkapı Palace toward the Bosphorus, beginning under Mahmud II and formalised through the construction of Dolmabahçe Palace under Abdülmecid, shifted the symbolic and political centre of the empire toward the shoreline. Subsequent waterfront palaces, including Beylerbeyi and Çırağan, consolidated this movement. The presence of the imperial court acted as a catalyst for the concentration of elite residences, yalıs, and mansions, reinforcing the Bosphorus as one of the principal residential landscapes of nineteenth-century Istanbul.[9]

Taken together, these developments fundamentally reconfigured Istanbul's spatial organisation. Movement, infrastructure, political representation, and elite residential development became increasingly concentrated along the Bosphorus, integrating the shoreline into the city's expanding urban structure while preserving its distinct spatial character. Rather than developing as a continuous extension of the historic city, the Bosphorus evolved as a linear residential landscape composed of villages, palaces, gardens, and waterfront residences connected primarily through maritime circulation.

The significance of this transformation extends beyond urban geography. As the Bosphorus emerged as a privileged landscape for elite residence, broader processes of Ottoman modernization became increasingly visible through its domestic architecture. Changing patterns of accessibility, social life, and residential occupation gradually reshaped the organisation and representation of waterfront houses, providing the historical and urban context within which the Bosphorus yalı developed. It is within this evolving residential landscape that the following chapter examines the yalı as the architectural typology through which these broader transformations can be understood.

9 Kuban, İstanbul 1600 Yıllık Bir Müzedir, 67–83.

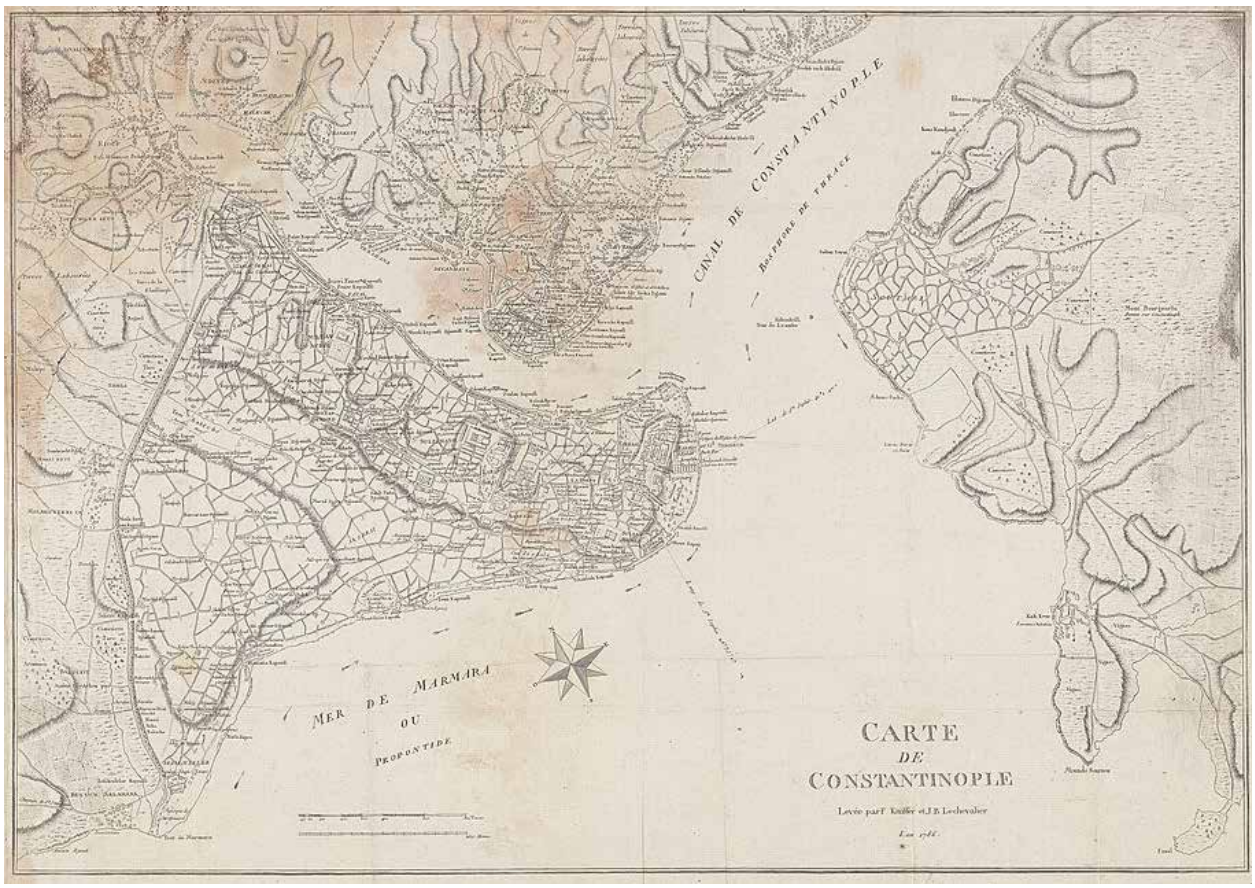


Figure 2. *Carte de Constantinople*, 1786 by Franz von Kauffer and J. B. Lechevalier. Source: Salt Research.

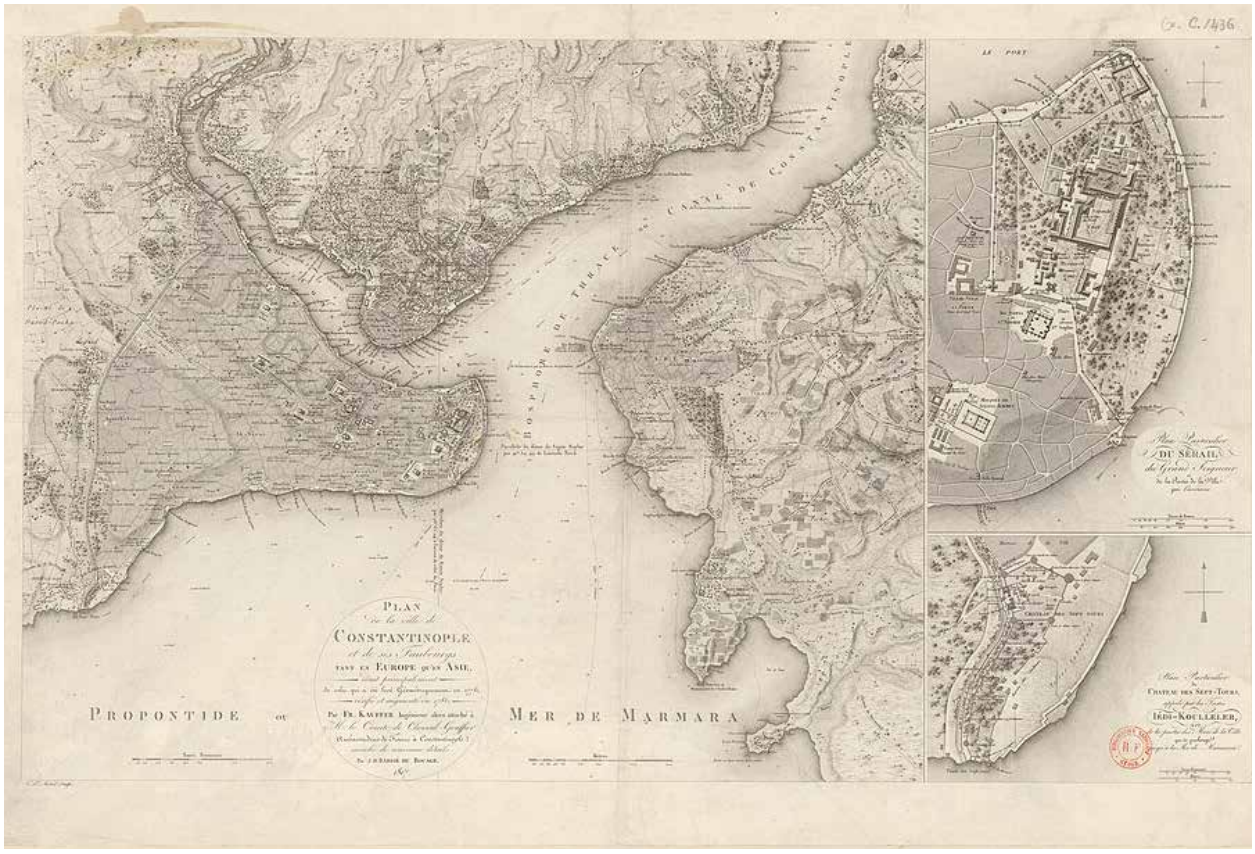


Figure 3. *Plan de la ville de Constantinople*, 1819 by Antoine Ignace Melling. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

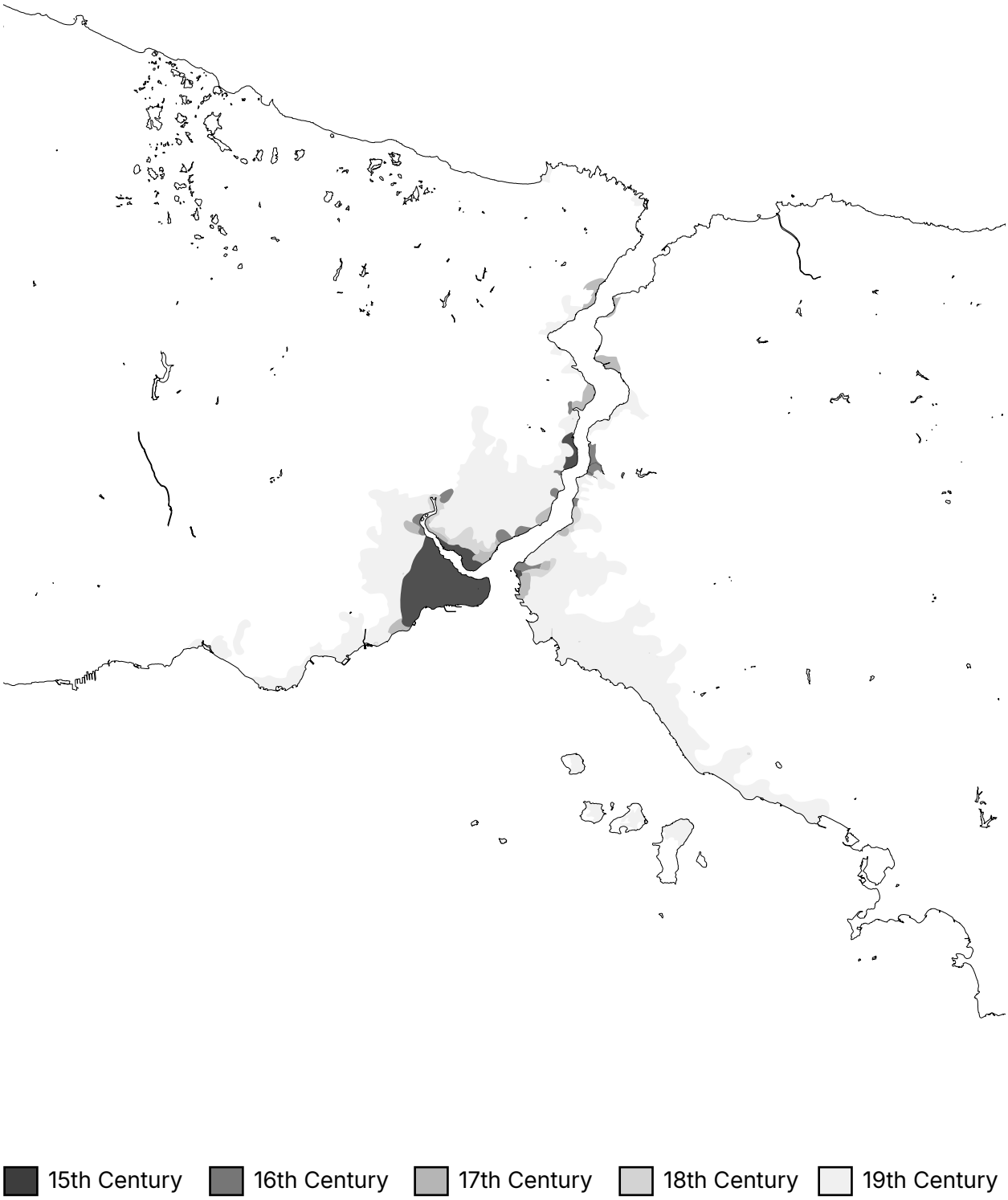


Figure 4. Urban development of Istanbul. Source: redrawn after Doğan Kuban, *Kent ve Mimarlık Üzerine İstanbul Yazıları*, 29.

4. The Bosphorus as an Urban and Residential Landscape

4.1 The Bosphorus as a Spatial System

The Bosphorus is characterised by a distinctive topographical condition in which steep slopes descend directly toward a narrow and continuous shoreline. This configuration creates a limited buildable edge where the relationship between land and water becomes the primary organising element of space. Rather than functioning as a physical boundary, the shoreline establishes the principal framework through which settlement develops and movement is organised.

The terrain is structured by a series of valleys formed by small streams flowing toward the Bosphorus. These valley mouths, typically characterised by relatively flat ground, provide the few locations where settlement can develop more easily, while the surrounding slopes restrict expansion inland. As a result, habitation is concentrated along the waterfront, producing a predominantly linear pattern of settlement shaped by the interaction between topography and the shoreline.

Extending approximately thirty kilometres, the Bosphorus follows a sinuous course determined by the topography of the land on both sides. The changing orientation of the shoreline, together with the rising terrain toward the north, creates a sequence of distinct spatial conditions rather than a homogeneous landscape. The hills running parallel to the water form a continuous backdrop while simultaneously limiting the depth of urban development. Consequently, settlement develops as a succession of relatively autonomous waterfront communities rather than as a continuous urban fabric.

Movement within this landscape has historically been determined by the water. Until the nineteenth century, access to the Bosphorus was provided primarily by sea, while inland routes remained limited by the steep terrain. The shoreline therefore functioned not only as the physical edge of the land but also as the principal axis of circulation, exchange, and everyday life. Settlements consequently oriented themselves toward the water, reinforcing the Bosphorus as the connective element linking different communities along its length.

Within this framework, the Bosphorus developed not as a continuous city but as a sequence of spatially distinct yet interconnected settlements. The interaction between topography, shoreline conditions, and water-based movement produced a fragmented pattern of occupation in which each settlement responded to its own geographical setting while remaining connected through maritime circulation. “The spatial organisation of the Bosphorus was therefore defined less by territorial continuity than by a network of settlements structured around the water’s edge.”[10]

This spatial logic remained remarkably consistent throughout different historical periods. Although the number, character, and significance of individual settlements evolved over time, the Bosphorus continued to function as a sequence of identifiable nodes distributed along the shoreline. As illustrated through the comparison between ancient reference points, nineteenth-

10 TMMOB Mimarlar Odası İstanbul Büyükkent Şubesi, İstanbul Mimarlık Rehberi: Boğaziçi ve Asya Yakası (TMMOB Mimarlar Odası İstanbul Büyükkent Şubesi, 2015), 11–13.

century representations such as those by Julia Pardoe, and the contemporary neighbourhood structure, the Bosphorus is better understood as a continuous system of interconnected settlements than as a territory defined by fixed boundaries. The nineteenth-century representation is particularly significant, as it documents the period during which these settlements became more clearly articulated, corresponding to the gradual emergence of the Bosphorus as Istanbul's principal waterfront residential landscape.

4.2 Bosphorus Villages

Understanding the Bosphorus as a spatial system is fundamental to the present study. The interaction between topography, settlement, and maritime circulation established the physical framework within which waterfront residences developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This relationship between landscape and settlement not only determined where the Bosphorus yalı could be built, but also influenced its orientation, accessibility, and relationship with the water, providing the geographical context for the architectural analysis developed in the following sections.

Although the Bosphorus functions as a coherent spatial system, its settlements are not geographically uniform. Variations in topography, shoreline configuration, valley formation, and coastal accessibility create distinct local conditions that influence the organisation of settlement along the waterfront. While all villages share the Bosphorus as their principal axis of movement and orientation, each developed within a particular physical setting that shaped its spatial character.

These local variations become evident when the Bosphorus is read in relation to its topography and settlement pattern, revealing a landscape structured not by continuous urbanisation but by a sequence of distinct yet interconnected settlements. This interpretation is reinforced by nineteenth-century representations such as Julia Pardoe's map of the Bosphorus, which depicts the waterfront as a continuous sequence of villages while preserving the individual identity of each settlement. Together, the analytical reading of the landscape and contemporary representations illustrate the Bosphorus as a coherent residential system composed of interconnected localities rather than a homogeneous urban fabric.

The following examples examine selected Bosphorus villages chosen to represent different conditions of topography, enclosure, coastal alignment, and shoreline configuration. Rather than presenting a historical account of each settlement, the discussion focuses on the physical characteristics that shaped their spatial organisation, establishing the geographical context within which the Bosphorus waterfront residences examined in this thesis were constructed.

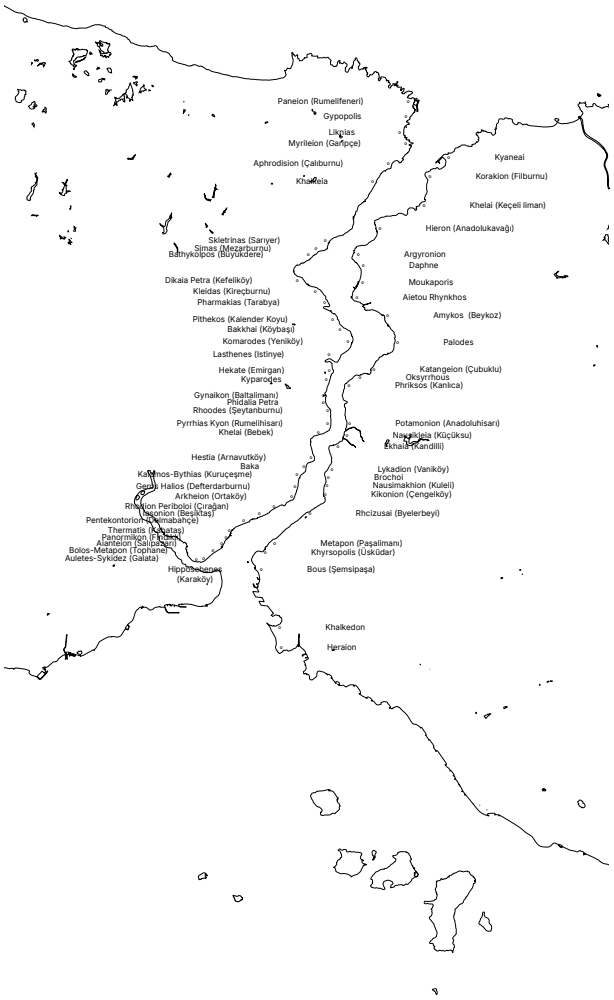


Figure 5. Bosphorus villages in ancient times. Source: redrawn after Reha Günay, *Boğaziçi'nin Ahşap Konutları ve Yalıları*, 17.

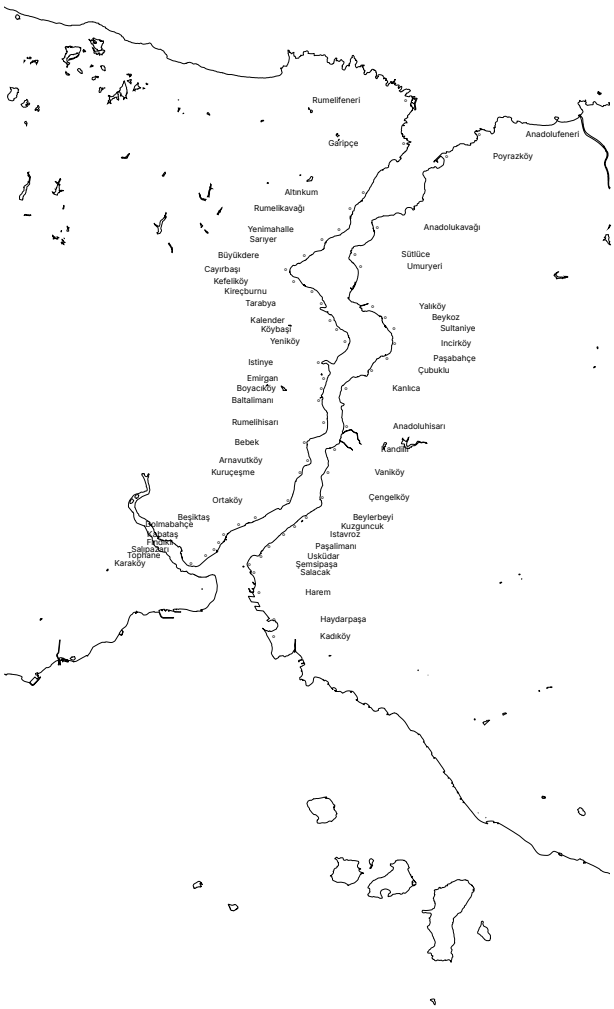


Figure 6. Bosphorus villages today. Source: redrawn after Reha Günay, *Boğaziçi'nin Ahşap Konutları ve Yalıları*, 19.

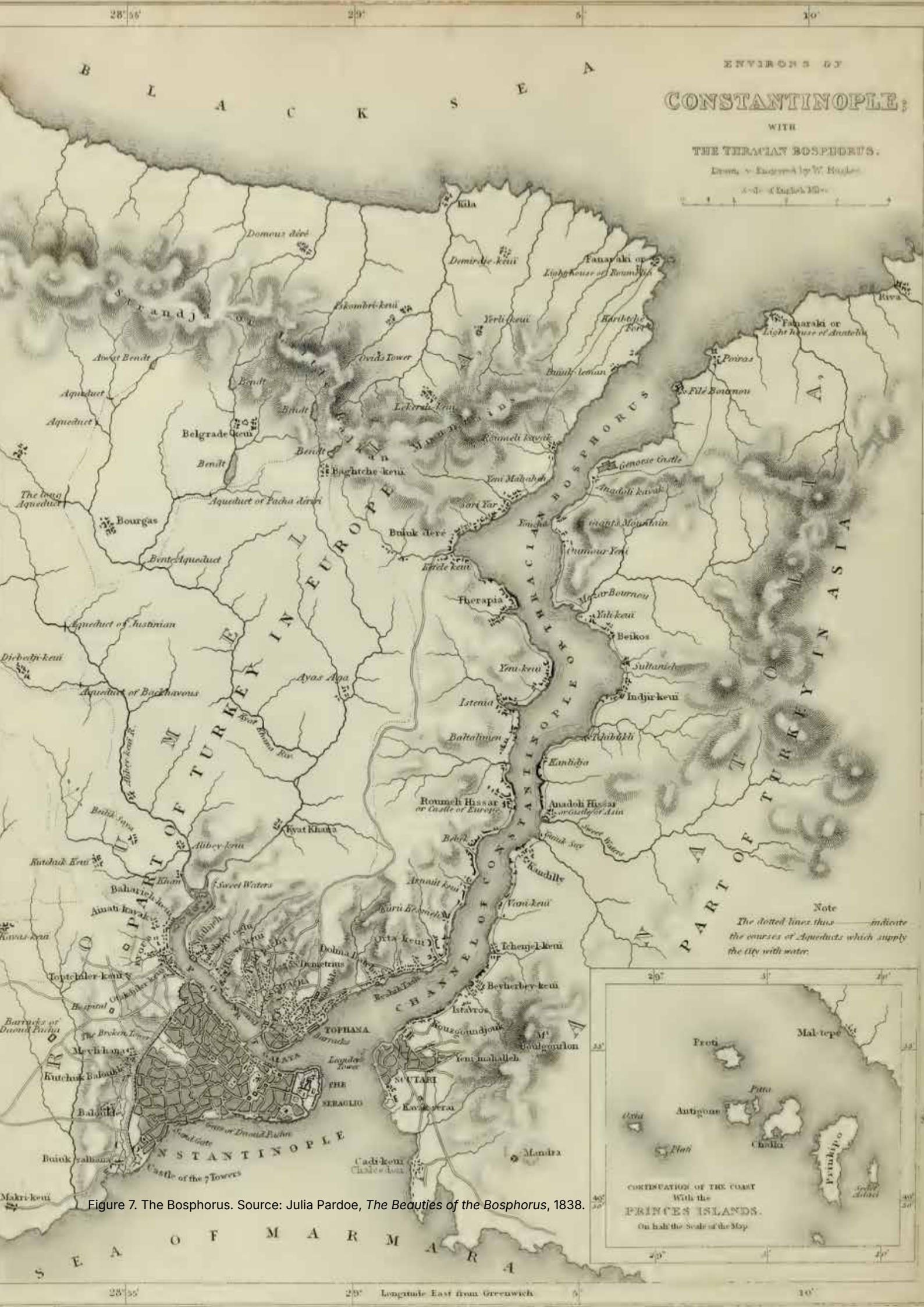


Figure 7. The Bosphorus. Source: Julia Pardoe, *The Beauties of the Bosphorus*, 1838.

Ortaköy



Figure 8. Maps of Beşiktaş, Ortaköy, Bomonti. Source: SALT Research.



Figure 9. Photograph of the Ortaköy shoreline from the Bosphorus by Abdullah Frères. Source: Eski İstanbul Fotoğrafları Arşivi.



Figure 10. Photograph of the Ortaköy waterfront from the Bosphorus, 1876 by Abdullah Frères. Source: Eski İstanbul Fotoğrafları Arşivi.

Located on the European shore of the Bosphorus, Ortaköy developed around a compact waterfront where the settlement is closely connected to the water. The shoreline forms a relatively narrow coastal strip, while the terrain rises inland, concentrating much of the historical settlement between the Bosphorus and the slopes behind it. Along the water, the continuity of the built fabric is interrupted by the opening of the waterfront square and pier, which form a distinct focal point within the settlement. Religious and public buildings positioned directly along the shore reinforce this relationship with the Bosphorus, while residential structures historically formed a continuous built edge along the shoreline. From this coastal centre, the settlement extends inland towards the rising terrain behind it. The combination of a compact waterfront, sloping hinterland, and direct maritime access therefore gives Ortaköy a spatial character in which the Bosphorus functions as both the principal edge of the settlement and an integral part of its urban structure.

Bebek



Figure 11. Maps of Makriköy, Kuruçeşme, Rumelihisarı, Arnavutköy, and Bebek, 1918. Source: SALT Research.



Figure 12. View of Bebek on the Bosphorus, 1836. Source: Thomas Allom.



Figure 13. Bebek Bay. Source: Eski İstanbul Fotoğrafları Arşivi.

Located on the European shore of the Bosphorus, Bebek developed around a sheltered bay framed by rising terrain and the valleys of the Büyük Bebek and Küçük Bebek streams. The earliest settlement was concentrated along the Bosphorus shoreline, where yalıs began to form a residential waterfront, while later development extended inland following the two stream valleys. This topographical structure produced two branches of settlement, associated with Büyük Bebek and Küçük Bebek, which gradually expanded from the waterfront towards the surrounding hills. Along the coast, the curved form of the bay creates a distinct and relatively enclosed waterfront, while the sloping terrain behind provides a green backdrop to the settlement. The combination of the sheltered bay, stream valleys, and rising hills therefore gives Bebek a spatial structure in which development extends both along the Bosphorus and inland through natural openings in the topography.

Emirgan



Figure 14. Maps of Aya Stefanos, Makriköy, Kuruçeşme, Arnavutköy, Bebek, Rumeli Hisarı, Boyacıköy, Emirgan. Source: SALT Research.



Figure 15. Photograph of the Emirgan waterfront and its coastal residential fabric along the Bosphorus by Abdullah Frères. Source: Eski İstanbul Fotoğrafları Arşivi.



Figure 16. Photograph of the Emirgan pier and waterfront yalıs. Source: SALT Research.

Located on the European shore of the Bosphorus, Emirgan developed along a narrow coastal strip defined by a close relationship between the waterfront and the green topographical landscape rising behind it. The settlement extends primarily along the shoreline, where yalıs and other residential structures historically formed a continuous waterfront edge, while the terrain behind gradually rises into wooded slopes and large gardens. The presence of Emirgan Grove reinforces this character, preserving a substantial green landscape immediately behind the waterfront settlement. Along the shore, the pier and public and religious structures establish a local centre directly connected to maritime circulation. Emirgan is therefore characterised by the contrast between its relatively narrow, linear waterfront settlement and the extensive green landscape rising behind it, creating a strong spatial continuity between the Bosphorus, the residential shoreline, and the inland slopes.

Yeniköy

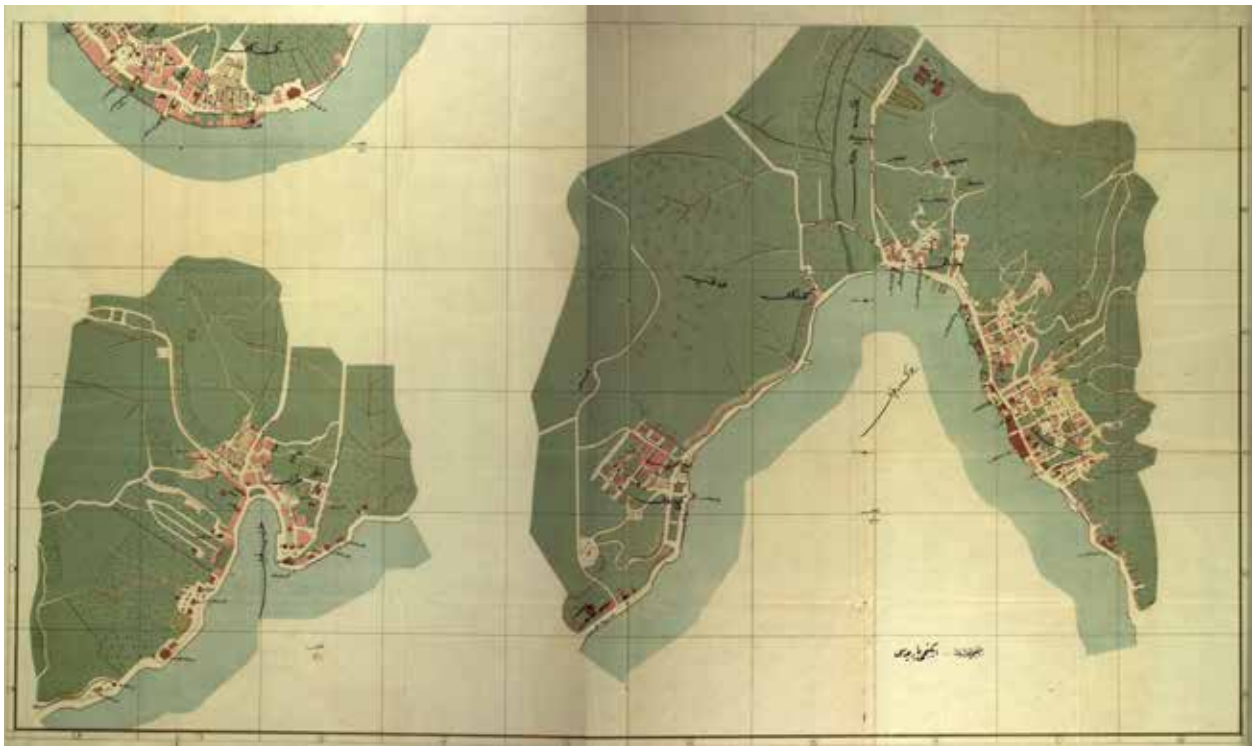


Figure 17. Maps of Yeniköy, Tarabya and Büyükdere, 1918. Source: SALT Research.



Figure 18. Engraving of the Yeniköy waterfront and its coastal residential fabric along the Bosphorus, 1839. Source: W. H. Bartlett, *The Beauties of the Bosphorus*.

Located along the European shoreline of the Bosphorus, Yeniköy developed as a predominantly residential waterfront settlement characterized by the continuity of its coastal fabric and the linear arrangement of yalıs along the shoreline. Unlike the more topographically fragmented or monument-centered settlements of the Bosphorus, the spatial character of Yeniköy emerged through the relatively uninterrupted relationship between the residential fabric and the water. The settlement extended parallel to the shoreline through a sequence of two- and three-story projecting waterfront residences accompanied by small quays and private piers, reinforcing the linear morphology typical of Bosphorus village. Yıldırım and Konyalı state that "due to the strong winds and currents affecting the shoreline, the humid ground floors of the yalıs were generally designed as blind facades facing the water, while access to the residences was often provided directly from the sea. Behind the waterfront, vineyards and strawberry gardens occupied the inland areas, contributing to the relationship between the residential shoreline and the cultivated landscape extending toward the hills behind the settlement."[11]

11 Sercan Özgencil Yıldırım and Ali Konyalı, Kentin Anlam Haritaları: Gravürlerde İstanbul (Kitabistanbul, 2008), 301.

Büyükdere

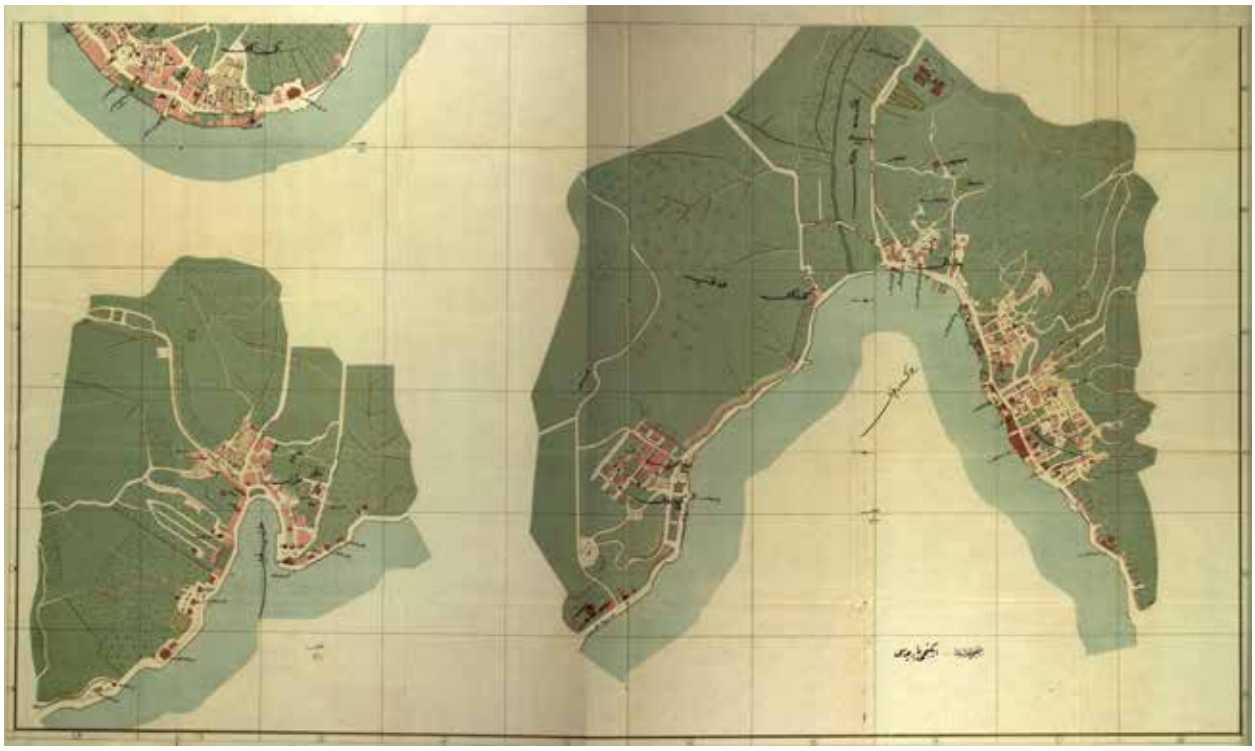


Figure 19. Maps of Yeniköy, Tarabya and Büyükdere, 1918. Source: SALT Research.

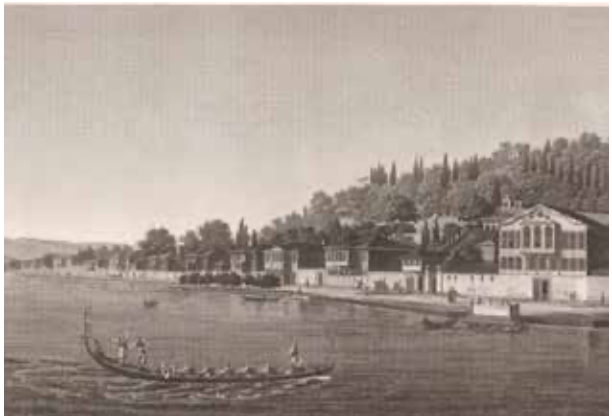




Figure 20. Engravings of the Büyükdere waterfront illustrating the linear coastal settlement pattern, residential fabric, and relationship between the shoreline and the Bosphorus topography. Source: Antoine Ignace Melling.

Situated along one of the widest sections of the Bosphorus, Büyükdere developed within a more open spatial relationship between the two shores compared to the narrower parts of the strait. Located north of Tarabya, where the European shoreline turns northwest to form a broad bay, the settlement developed as a spacious waterfront fabric characterized by two- and three-story residences aligned along the shoreline. The bathhouse, marketplace, mosque, and pier formed an important village center connected to maritime activity, while the green hills behind the settlement reinforced the relationship between the waterfront and the topographical landscape. Due to its exposure to northern winds and relatively cooler climate, Büyükdere also emerged as a favorable summer settlement during the nineteenth century as Yıldırım and Konyalı point out.[12]

12 Yıldırım and Konyalı, Kentin Anlam Haritaları, 314.

Kanlıca

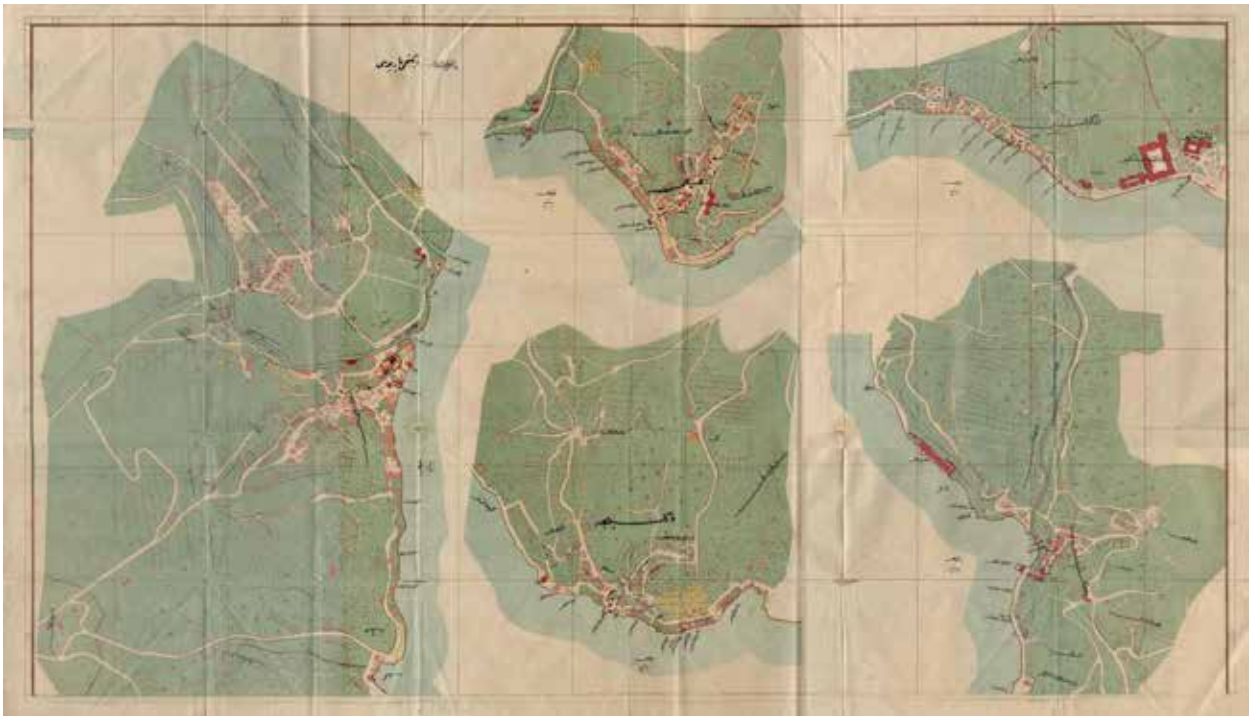


Figure 21. Maps of Anadoluhisarı, Kandilli, Kanlıca and Çengelköy, 1918. Source: SALT Research.



Figure 22. Panoramic view of Kanlıca. Source: SALT Research.

Located on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus between Anadoluhisarı and Çubuklu, Kanlıca developed along a comparatively level section of the coastline. The relatively flat waterfront provides a broader zone for settlement between the Bosphorus and the rising terrain behind it, distinguishing Kanlıca from villages where steep slopes approach the water more directly. Along the shore, yalıs historically formed a continuous residential frontage, while the pier and the public buildings surrounding it established a local centre closely connected to maritime circulation. Behind the waterfront settlement, gardens, vineyards, and green areas extended towards the higher terrain, creating a gradual transition between the built shoreline and the vegetated landscape inland. The combination of a relatively level coastal zone, continuous waterfront development, and green landscape behind it therefore gives Kanlıca a spatial character defined by a gradual relationship between the Bosphorus, settlement, and inland topography.

Anadoluhisarı

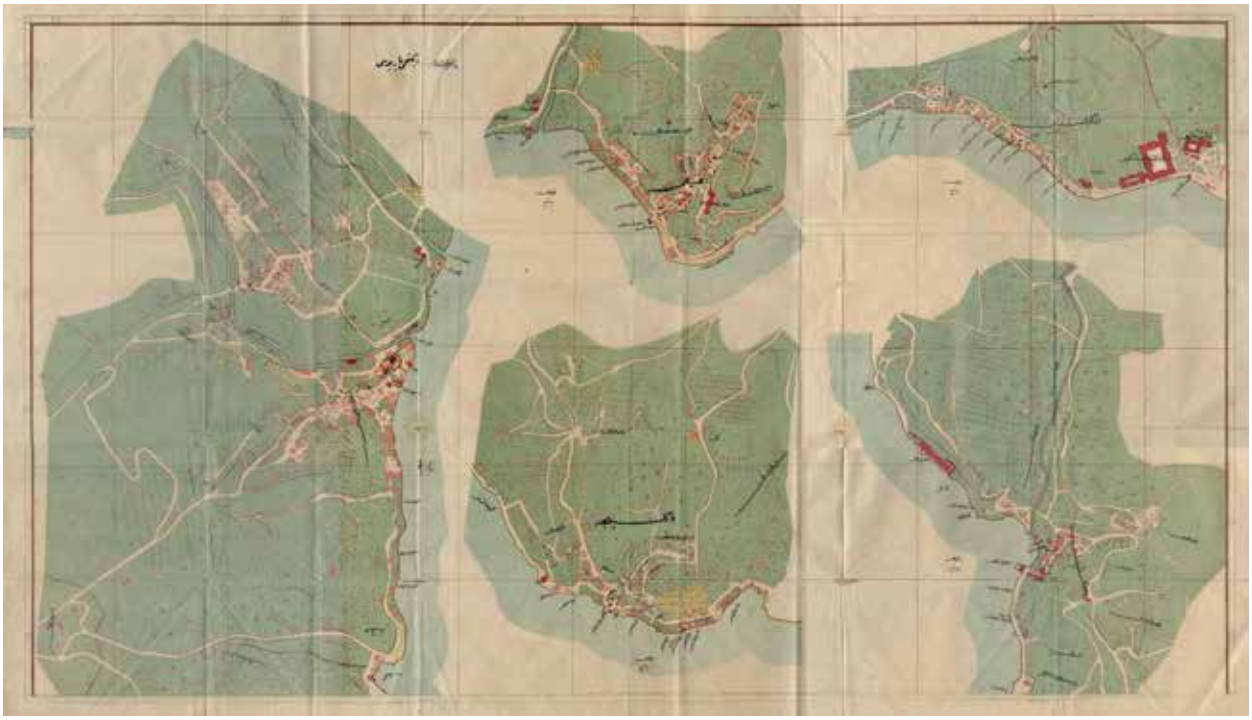


Figure 23. Maps of Anadoluhisarı, Kandilli and Çengelköy, 1918. Source: SALT Research.



Figure 24. Engraving of the Bosphorus viewed from above Beşiktaş looking north, illustrating the relationship between the shoreline settlements, topography, and maritime activity along the strait. Source: W. H. Bartlett, 1839.



Figure 25. Engraving of Anadoluhisarı and Rumelihisarı illustrating the relationship between the defensive structures, shoreline settlements, and Bosphorus topography. Source: W. H. Bartlett, 1839.

Located on the narrow area where the Göksu stream meets the Bosphorus on the Anatolian side, the settlement developed within a landscape defined by waterways, steep topography, and rocky terrain. The presence of the fortress established an important focal point within the settlement. Göncüloğulu highlights that "due to the rocky geological structure of the area, the settlement benefited from abundant underground water resources. Seasonal maintenance and dredging activities carried out along the streams also indicate the importance of waterways within the spatial organization of the settlement."[13] Beginning from the early nineteenth century, wooden houses gradually started to occupy the area between the fortress and the Göksu stream, contributing to the formation of a dense waterfront residential fabric integrated with the shoreline and topographical contours of the Bosphorus.

13 Süleyman Faruk Göncüoğlu, Fatih Selçuklu, and Begüm Yavaş, *Osmanlı İstanbul'unun İlk Yapıları: Hisarlar ve Mahalleleri* (Türkiye Turing ve Otomobil Kurumu, 2016), 134–42.

Kandilli

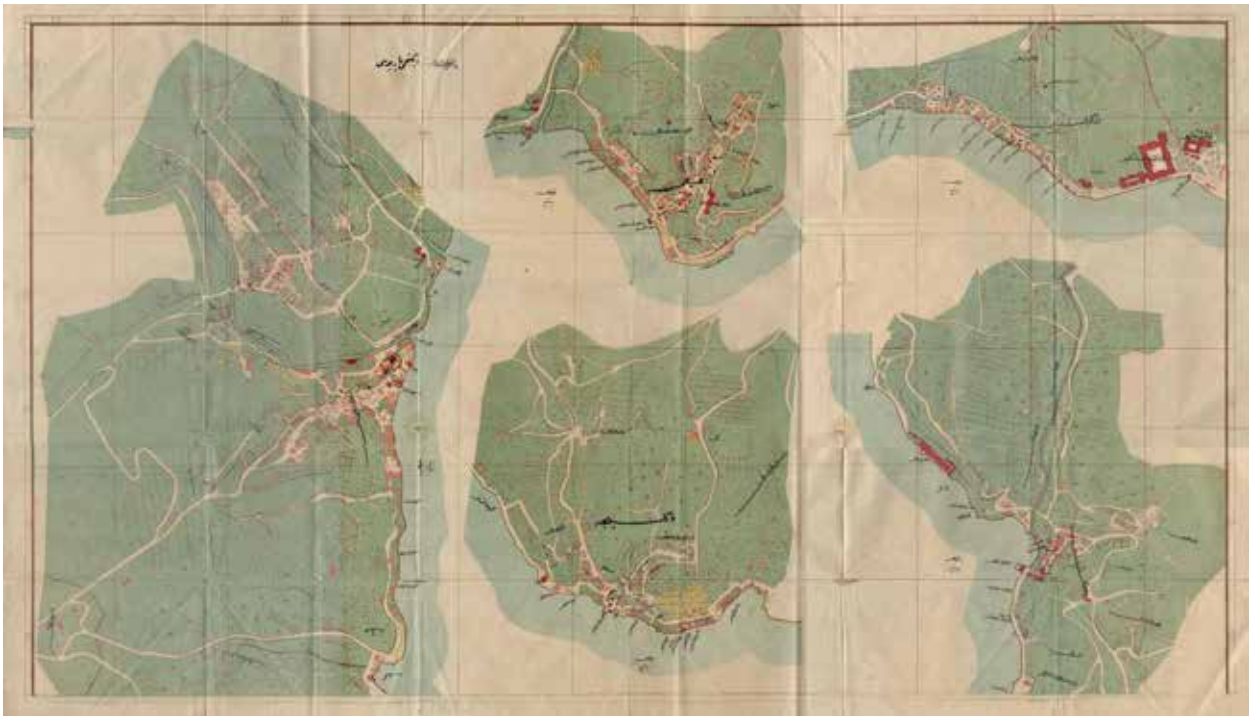


Figure 26. Maps of Anadoluhisarı, Kandilli and Çengelköy, 1918. Source: SALT Research.



Figure 27. Panoramic engraving of Kandilli and the Bosphorus illustrating the relationship between the shoreline settlements, topography, and maritime activity along the strait. Source: W. H. Bartlett, 1839.



Figure 28. Photograph of the Kandilli waterfront and its coastal residential fabric along the Bosphorus by Abdullah Frères. Source: Eski İstanbul Fotoğrafları Arşivi.

Kandilli developed along a steep topographical landscape where the settlement gradually expanded upward from the shoreline toward the hills behind the Bosphorus. This sloped terrain produced a layered settlement pattern in which waterfront residences maintained visual and spatial relationships with the water while extending into the upper elevations. Although fragmented by the natural topography, the settlement preserved a continuous shoreline character defined by the alignment of yalıs and coastal residences along the water's edge. The bay of Kandilli projects outward toward the Bosphorus, "intercepting the strong currents arriving from Rumelihisarı and redirecting them toward Arnavutköy."[14] This geographical condition reinforced the distinct spatial relationship between the settlement, the shoreline, and maritime circulation, while also contributing to the formation of a prominent coastal edge along the Bosphorus.

14 Yıldırım and Konyalı, Kentin Anlam Haritaları, 291.

Çengelköy

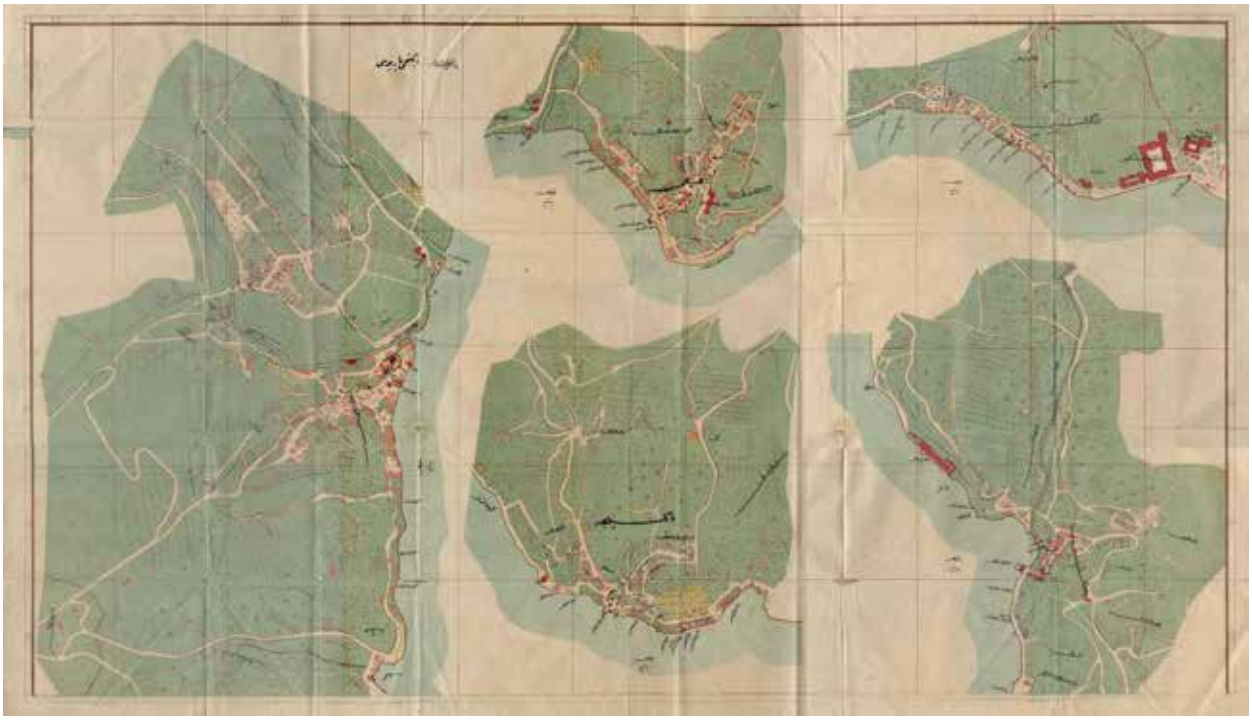


Figure 29. Maps of Anadoluhisarı, Kandilli and Çengelköy, 1918. Source: SALT Research.



Figure 30. Photograph of the Çengelköy pier and its waterfront residential fabric along the Bosphorus. Source: N. Parodi.

Located on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus, Çengelköy developed along a gently curving section of the coastline, with the settlement extending from the waterfront towards the rising slopes behind it. The historical residential fabric was concentrated along the shore, where yalıs formed a continuous built edge directly facing the Bosphorus, while the pier established an important point of connection between the settlement and maritime circulation. From this narrow coastal zone, streets extend inland and climb the sloping terrain, creating a close relationship between the waterfront settlement and the topography behind it. Historically, gardens and cultivated areas occupied parts of these inland slopes, contributing to the transition from the densely built shoreline towards a greener landscape at higher elevations. The combination of the curving shoreline, narrow residential waterfront, and rising inland terrain therefore gives Çengelköy a compact spatial character in which settlement, topography, and the Bosphorus are closely interconnected.

5. The Bosphorus Yalı

5.1. Defining the Yalı

The spatial conditions that define the Bosphorus as a system of distinct yet interconnected shoreline settlements also give rise to specific architectural responses. Among these, the waterfront mansions, or yalıs, emerge as a particular residential typology shaped by their direct relationship with the water and the constraints of the coastal terrain. Rather than existing independently from the village structure, these buildings are embedded within and conditioned by the spatial logic of the Bosphorus.

Reha Günay defines yalı as a residential typology shaped by the particular environmental, spatial, and social conditions of the Bosphorus. Located directly along the shoreline, these waterfront residences established an immediate relationship with the sea, sometimes separated only by a narrow coastal path. Primarily owned by members of the Ottoman elite, including viziers, pashas, and high-ranking state officials, yalıs functioned not only as seasonal residences but also as spaces of representation and social life. Due to the absence of a continuous and comfortable land transportation system along the Bosphorus during much of the Ottoman period, maritime transportation constituted the primary mode of access, making piers, docks, and boathouses essential architectural components of the residence.[15]

TMMOB Mimarlar Odası supports this definition, "Unlike urban houses embedded within the dense fabric of the city, the yalı developed through a direct relationship with both the sea and the topography of the Bosphorus. Since the shoreline generally consisted of narrow flat strips positioned between the water and steep wooded slopes, the architecture adapted itself to this intermediary condition. In this sense, the yalı cannot be understood solely as a house located by the sea, but rather as an architectural system generated through the interaction between maritime infrastructure, shoreline geography, and topographical conditions."[16]

Although the yalı developed under the specific conditions of the Bosphorus, Kuban points out that their architectural organisation remained connected to broader Ottoman residential traditions present across Anatolia and the Balkans. Ottoman domestic architecture was historically shaped through typologies such as the hayat house and the eyvanlı house, both organised around transitional and collective spaces mediating between rooms and the exterior. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, these traditions increasingly encountered Western architectural movements, particularly within Istanbul, producing hybrid forms of residential architecture.[17] The yalı emerged within this context, preserving certain spatial principles of Ottoman domestic architecture while simultaneously incorporating new stylistic and representational tendencies.

Early examples of the yalı typology, such as the Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı and the Şerifler Yalısı, retained architectural elements associated with traditional Ottoman residential architecture, including eyvans, projections, wide eaves, tepe windows, and lattice screens. Nevertheless, Kuban states,

15 Reha Günay, *Boğaziçi'nin Ahşap Konutları ve Yalıları* (YEM Yayın, 2023), 35–39.

16 TMMOB Mimarlar Odası İstanbul Büyükkent Şubesi, *İstanbul Mimarlık Rehberi*, 11–16.

17 Günay, *Boğaziçi'nin Ahşap Konutları ve Yalıları*, 21.

"These residences cannot be understood as direct continuations of the traditional hayat house. Instead, they represent transitional architectural expressions in which Ottoman spatial traditions were selectively reinterpreted within the emerging Bosphorus residential culture."[18] Throughout the nineteenth century, yalıs such as the Sadullah Paşa Yalısı and the Saffet Paşa Yalısı further transformed this architectural language while continuing to preserve recurring organisational principles, particularly the central role of the sofa within the plan layout.

By the second half of the nineteenth century, increasing Western influence introduced new architectural expressions into the yalı typology. Kuban points out, "Balconies, monumental staircases, tower-like cihannümas, and eclectic decorative programmes incorporating Neo-Classical, Baroque, Empire, and Art Nouveau influences became increasingly visible within Bosphorus residences. At the same time, traditional Ottoman architectural motifs continued to coexist with these imported stylistic vocabularies, producing hybrid and eclectic architectural compositions rather than a complete rupture from earlier traditions." [19]

Despite differences in plan schemes, scale, chronology, and stylistic expression, yalıs continued to share a common architectural language shaped by their relationship with the Bosphorus, their spatial organisation, and their integration of Ottoman domestic traditions with evolving architectural influences. Their repeated reconstruction, alteration, and adaptation over time further demonstrate that transformation itself constituted an intrinsic condition of the typology rather than an exception.

5.2. Spatial Organisation and Plan Logic

The spatial organisation of the yalı developed through the reinterpretation of broader Ottoman domestic traditions while simultaneously responding to the environmental, social, and representational conditions of the Bosphorus. Ottoman residential architecture in Anatolia and the Balkans was historically shaped through typologies such as the hayat house and the eyvanlı house, both organised around transitional collective spaces mediating between interior rooms and the exterior environment.[20] Within Ottoman domestic architecture, residential space was often structured through the distinction between haremlik and selamlık. The haremlik constituted the private and family-oriented section of the residence, while the selamlık functioned as the semi-public area where guests and representational activities were accommodated. Kuban states, "although these organisational principles continued within the yalı typology, they were selectively transformed according to changing social conditions and Western architectural influences emerging in Istanbul during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries."[21] Compared to ordinary Ottoman urban houses, Bosphorus residences often displayed a more flexible interpretation of these spatial divisions due to the elite and cosmopolitan social profile of their owners.

Kuban continues, despite considerable variation in scale, composition, and stylistic expression, the central sofa remained the primary organisational principle structuring circulation and domestic life within the residence. Typically positioned parallel to the longer axis of the building, the sofa opened toward rooms arranged along its sides and could appear either as a single unit or through the combination of multiple sofa schemes, demonstrating the flexibility of the

18 Doğan Kuban, "İstanbul'un Ahşap Konut Mimarisi," in *Ahşap İstanbul: Konut Mimarisinden Örnekler*, ed. Martin Bachmann and M. Baha Tanman (Suna ve İnan Kıraç Vakfı İstanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2008), 14–15.

19 Kuban, "İstanbul'un Ahşap Konut Mimarisi," 16.

20 Kuban, "İstanbul'un Ahşap Konut Mimarisi," 14.

21 Kuban and Emden, *Osmanlı Mimarisi*, 505–8.

typology.[22]

The selected examples illustrate different interpretations of this organisational principle. The Saffet Paşa Yalısı exemplifies this organisational logic particularly clearly, with one side of the residence functioning as the haremlik and the other as the selamlık, both organised around a central circulation space. The Köçeoğlu Yalısı demonstrates the flexibility of the sofa-centred scheme through the combination of two central sofa plans within a single residence, while the Sadullah Paşa Yalısı illustrates the synthesis of the central sofa arrangement with a cross-shaped plan organisation. Similarly, the Kont Ostrorog Yalısı and the Hasip Paşa Yalısı demonstrate later variations of the central sofa system. The Kıbrıslı Yalısı further reveals the adaptability of this organisational logic through a sectional arrangement in which the central sofa rises through two floors while the adjacent side masses remain lower, producing movement within the façade composition and responding directly to the sloping topography of the Bosphorus shoreline. Together, these examples demonstrate that although spatial articulation evolved considerably throughout the nineteenth century, the organisational role of the sofa continued to persist.

Spatial hierarchy within the yalı interior was reinforced not only through plan organisation but also through level changes, lighting conditions, and the integration of architectural elements into daily life. The transition from the sofa into the room often involved a gradual elevation sequence beginning with the entrance threshold and continuing toward the raised seating platform of the sedir. This hierarchy was reflected in the spatial configuration of the room itself. Interior elements such as sedirs, cupboards, niches, fireplaces, railings, and windows were conceived not as independent furnishings but as integral architectural components forming a unified domestic environment. Light also articulated spatial hierarchy through layered window systems, coloured glass, and lattice screens, producing differentiated atmospheres within rooms, sofas, and transitional spaces.

The divanhane constituted another important spatial element within the organisation of elite Bosphorus residences. “Originally associated with imperial and administrative gathering spaces within palaces and kiosks, the divanhane gradually evolved into a semi-public reception space within elite domestic architecture. In yalıs, divanhane-like spaces illustrate the transformation of representational architectural forms into residential contexts. The Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı represents one of the earliest surviving examples of this spatial adaptation within Bosphorus residential architecture.”[23]

Saner agrees with Kuban that, despite increasing Western influence throughout the nineteenth century, the underlying spatial logic of the yalı largely persisted. At the same time, social transformation contributed to greater freedom within domestic planning, including the opening of ground floors toward the street and the gradual disappearance of lattice screens. Nevertheless, Bosphorus residences continued to preserve a distinct architectural identity rooted in Ottoman domestic spatial traditions despite these stylistic and social transformations.[24]

5.3. Relationship to the Bosphorus

One of the principal characteristics distinguishing the yalı from ordinary urban residences in Istanbul was its direct relationship with the Bosphorus. While houses embedded within the

22 Kuban and Emden, *Osmanlı Mimarisi*, 505–8.

23 Kuban and Emden, *Osmanlı Mimarisi*, 488–89.

24 Turgut Saner, “İstanbul’daki Ahşap Konut Mimarisinde Üslup ve Karakter,” in *Ahşap İstanbul: Konut Mimarisinden Örnekler*, ed. Martin Bachmann and M. Baha Tanman (Suna ve İnan Kıraç Vakfı İstanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2008), 64–87.

urban fabric generally established their connection through streets, courtyards, and neighbourhood structures, the yalı was fundamentally organised around maritime access. Yıldırım and Konyalı suggest, during much of the Ottoman period, "the absence of a continuous, safe, and comfortable land route connecting the Bosphorus to the city centre made transportation by sea not simply a preference but a necessity."[25] Consequently, the Bosphorus emerged as an infrastructural, spatial, and environmental framework shaping the organisation of the residence itself.

This condition strongly influenced the orientation and circulation of the residence. Yalıs were typically positioned parallel to the shoreline in order to maximise visual continuity with the Bosphorus, while the principal rooms consistently occupied privileged positions facing the water. Although the identity and function of these important rooms evolved over time, their orientation toward the Bosphorus remained constant. "Spatial organisation further reinforced this continuity through two principal entrances positioned perpendicular to the shoreline: one opening toward the sea and the other toward the garden and land. In this way, the yalı functioned simultaneously as an architectural threshold and a circulation interface between maritime and terrestrial systems," as Kuban notes.[26]

The maritime character of Bosphorus life generated specific architectural components within the yalı typology. Since transportation primarily occurred through small boats, docks, piers, boathouses, and waterfront decks became integral parts of the residential organisation. In many early yalıs, these maritime elements occupied architecturally prominent positions directly integrated into the structure itself. Rooms frequently projected over the water, while boathouses were sometimes positioned beneath the residential spaces. Large waterfront residences often extended from narrow quays toward gardens climbing the slopes behind them, creating layered spatial relationships between sea, greenery, and architecture. Divanhanes, revaks, sofas, and garden pavilions opened simultaneously toward the Bosphorus and the surrounding landscape, producing a highly permeable architectural environment.

Wide eaves, projecting volumes, and extensive window openings reinforced the visual continuity between interior space and the Bosphorus landscape, allowing the sea to become an active component of everyday domestic life. In this sense, the yalı cannot be understood solely through its proximity to water, but through its capacity to integrate maritime and natural conditions into a unified residential system specific to the Bosphorus.

During the nineteenth century, increasing urbanisation and the development of new transportation infrastructures gradually transformed the relationship between the yalı and the sea. As roads began to extend along the Bosphorus shoreline, direct maritime access progressively lost its infrastructural necessity, and the insertion of roads between the residence and the water weakened the immediate physical continuity that had originally defined the typology. Nevertheless, even as transportation systems changed and the functional importance of docks and waterfront access diminished, the architectural organisation of the yalı continued to preserve its orientation toward the Bosphorus. The sea remained the primary spatial reference shaping the residence, demonstrating that the relationship between the yalı and the Bosphorus extended beyond infrastructure alone and constituted a defining architectural principle of the typology.

25 Yıldırım and Konyalı, *Kentin Anlam Haritaları*, 273–74.

26 Doğan Kuban, *Kent ve Mimarlık Üzerine İstanbul Yazıları* (Yapı Endüstri Merkezi YEM, 1998), 195–200.

5.4. Construction System and Material Logic

The construction system of the yalı developed in close relation to the environmental conditions of the Bosphorus. Waterfront exposure, humidity, shoreline geography, and topographical constraints directly influenced the selection of materials and structural systems employed within the typology. Positioned along narrow strips of land between the sea and steep wooded slopes, yalıs required stable foundations capable of adapting to shoreline conditions. For this reason, quays constructed on piles driven into the waterfront were frequently employed in order to create level and durable platforms upon which the residence could be established.

Timber remained the dominant construction material due to its lightweight, flexible, and modular qualities, which facilitated construction along the waterfront while reducing structural load and construction costs.[27] The use of timber also enabled relatively open and bright interior environments while accommodating the spatial requirements of Bosphorus residences. Although masonry construction increasingly gained prominence following the Tanzimat reforms, yalıs largely continued to employ timber structural systems because of their compatibility with waterfront conditions and established construction traditions. Since the portions of the building directly connected to the sea were particularly vulnerable to humidity and deterioration, masonry was frequently employed at the shoreline level and lower structural sections in order to reinforce and protect the building. Consequently, many yalıs developed through hybrid timber-masonry systems distinguishing elite waterfront residences from ordinary Ottoman domestic structures, where fully timber construction remained more common.

Ottoman timber construction employed relatively lightweight structural frameworks composed of vertical uprights, horizontal beams, and diagonal supports assembled into flexible skeletal systems. Compared to the heavier timber-framed traditions of Central Europe, Ottoman construction techniques generally produced lighter and more adaptable structures, qualities that proved particularly suitable for the seismic and environmental conditions of Istanbul. This constructive system also enabled flexible spatial organisation and modular expansion well suited to the evolving spatial requirements of Bosphorus residences. At the same time, the relative softness of timber construction contributed to the vulnerability of these buildings to fire, humidity, and long-term deterioration, factors which partly explain the repeated reconstruction and transformation of many yalıs throughout the nineteenth century.

The nineteenth century introduced substantial transformations in construction techniques, material production, and decorative practices. Industrially manufactured building elements progressively replaced handcrafted production methods, contributing to the standardisation and simplification of structural systems. Roofing materials particularly reflected this transformation, as traditional overlapping roof tiles were gradually replaced by imported industrially manufactured grooved tiles. Similarly, individually carved decorative elements increasingly gave way to machine-produced ornaments, milled wooden details, and prefabricated façade components. While earlier yalıs generally concealed their masonry foundations behind timber cladding, later examples began incorporating lower structural sections more actively through decorative stonework, imported industrial bricks, marble entrance elements, and emphasised base articulations.

27 Günay, *Boğaziçi'nin Ahşap Konutları ve Yalıları*, 61.

Investigations carried out on surviving Bosphorus residences further reveal the gradual transformation of timber construction techniques throughout the nineteenth century. Studies conducted on the Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı demonstrate that earlier structural systems employed carefully prepared oak beams of relatively substantial dimensions, while later examples increasingly relied upon standardised and industrially produced timber profiles. Nevertheless, hardwood elements often continued to be retained within the principal structural framework even as softer woods became more common within secondary construction elements and façade cladding systems.

Interior construction similarly reflected the transition between traditional craftsmanship and industrial production. During the first half of the nineteenth century, interior construction gradually shifted from carved and painted wooden ceiling systems toward stucco-based applications. "Yet traditional construction and decorative practices were never entirely abandoned and periodically re-emerged within later Bosphorus residences. This coexistence of traditional craftsmanship with industrially produced materials demonstrates that transformation within the yalı typology occurred not through complete rupture, but through layered processes of adaptation and reinterpretation."[28]

5.5. Façade Organisation and Architectural Expression

The façade organisation of the yalı developed in direct relation to the environmental conditions of the Bosphorus and the representational character of waterfront life. Positioned parallel to the shoreline, Bosphorus residences were designed to maximise visual continuity with the water through wide openings, projecting volumes, and permeable façade compositions.

Principal rooms facing the Bosphorus were generally emphasised externally through larger windows, çıkmas, and extended viewing spaces overlooking the sea. Wide eaves protected the façades from sunlight and rain while simultaneously reinforcing the strong horizontal character of Bosphorus residences. In this way, the façade functioned not simply as an exterior surface, but as an architectural interface mediating between interior life and the Bosphorus landscape.

Early Bosphorus residences such as the Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı and the Şerifler Yalısı retained many architectural features associated with traditional Ottoman residential architecture, including çıkmas, wide eaves, tepe windows, lattice screens, and timber consoles. However, these elements were increasingly reinterpreted within the Bosphorus context through stronger visual engagement with the waterfront and more open façade compositions. The organisation of openings also reflected changing approaches toward privacy, light, and representation. Layered window systems, coloured glass elements, and lattice screens simultaneously regulated visibility, filtered daylight, and produced differentiated interior atmospheres.

Timber construction played a decisive role in the articulation of Bosphorus façades. The flexibility and lightweight nature of timber systems enabled the extensive use of projections, consoles, overhangs, and large window openings characteristic of waterfront architecture. Exterior surfaces were generally covered with horizontal timber planks attached to the structural framework, creating rhythmical and layered façade compositions. Kuban reports, "consoles supporting projecting upper floors became particularly significant architectural elements, often expressed externally through curved and visually prominent forms. During the

28 Kuban, *Kent ve Mimarlık Üzerine İstanbul Yazıları*, 195–200.

nineteenth century, the dimensions and treatment of timber façade cladding gradually changed, evolving from wider hand-crafted wooden planks toward narrower and increasingly standardised prefabricated elements."[29]

During the nineteenth century, Bosphorus façades increasingly incorporated Western architectural influences alongside traditional Ottoman elements. Neo-Classical, Baroque, Empire, eclectic, and later Art Nouveau expressions gradually entered residential architecture, introducing new façade elements such as balconies, small towers, monumental staircases, pediments, decorative iron railings, pilasters, arches, and attic floors. Yet these imported stylistic elements were rarely applied independently. Instead, they coexisted with traditional Ottoman features such as wooden projections, broad eaves, lattice systems, and consoles, producing highly eclectic architectural compositions unique to the Bosphorus.

The increasing industrialisation of the nineteenth century further transformed the decorative character of Bosphorus façades. Individually carved wooden ornaments increasingly gave way to machine-produced decorative details and prefabricated ornamental elements. Decorative programmes became progressively enriched through Neo-Classical and Art Nouveau motifs inspired by European examples, particularly Italian and Austrian influences. At the same time, masonry bases, marble entrance elements, and decorative stonework became more visibly incorporated into façade compositions, contributing to the growing visual complexity of late nineteenth-century yalıs. Residences such as the Nazime Sultan Yalısı illustrate this increasing integration of eclectic and Art Nouveau decorative programmes within Bosphorus residential architecture.

The relationship between spatial organisation and façade articulation remained particularly visible in certain Bosphorus residences. The Kıbrıslı Yalısı demonstrates how sectional variations within the central sofa system generated movement within the façade composition itself, as the elevated central volume rising above lower side masses created a dynamic silhouette responding directly to the sloping topography of the Bosphorus shoreline.

According to Saner, despite the considerable stylistic transformations that occurred throughout the nineteenth century, Bosphorus residences continued to preserve "a distinct architectural identity shaped through the interaction between waterfront conditions, timber construction, and evolving architectural expression."[30]

5.6. Interior Space

Interior space within the yalı was conceived not simply as a collection of rooms, but as an integrated architectural environment in which built-in elements, ornamentation, light, and material articulation collectively shaped everyday life. Rather than relying primarily on movable furniture, Bosphorus interiors incorporated elements such as sedirs, yüklüks, cupboards, niches, fireplaces, railings, and windows directly into the architectural fabric of the room itself. In this sense, the interior operated through a unified spatial system where architecture, decoration, and inhabitation became closely interconnected.

Kuban identifies the atmospheric quality of Bosphorus interiors being strongly shaped through light. "Layered window systems, coloured glass, plastered upper windows, and lattice screens generated differentiated

29 Doğan Kuban, *Türk "Hayat"Iı Evi* (Muhittin Salih Eren, 1995), 104–6.

30 Saner, "İstanbul'daki Ahşap Konut Mimarisinde Üslup ve Karakter," 64–81.

lighting conditions throughout the residence. Light entering through upper rows of coloured or filtered openings produced softer and more diffuse interior environments, while lower windows mediated visibility, privacy, and visual continuity toward the Bosphorus. As a result, each interior space developed distinct atmospheric qualities through varying degrees of openness, filtered light, shadow, and reflection. Large window openings and projecting spaces facing the water further reinforced the sensory relationship between interior life and the Bosphorus landscape."[31]

Interior decoration similarly played an important role in the articulation of Bosphorus domestic space. During the eighteenth century, and particularly following the Tulip Era, decorative programmes increasingly incorporated floral motifs, fruit compositions, rosettes, painted and gilded surfaces, muqarnas forms, and naturalistic vegetal ornamentation. Ceilings became especially important surfaces of decorative expression through carved wooden compositions, painted trims, and ornamental detailing.

During the nineteenth century, changing social conditions and increasing Western influence gradually transformed the decorative character of Bosphorus interiors. Stucco-based ceiling systems, eclectic furniture arrangements, Neo-Classical decorative elements, Art Nouveau ornaments, monumental staircases, and increasingly open interior configurations entered Bosphorus residential architecture alongside traditional Ottoman interior components. At the same time, greater spatial openness emerged through the gradual disappearance of lattice systems and the increasing visual continuity between interior spaces and the exterior environment. Nevertheless, Kuban observes that the traditional decorative practices continued to coexist with imported stylistic vocabularies, producing layered interior environments characteristic of late Bosphorus residences.[32]

The preceding discussion has shown that the Bosphorus yalı cannot be understood through a single formal or stylistic definition. Rather, it emerges as a residential typology shaped by the interaction between the environmental conditions of the Bosphorus, Ottoman domestic traditions, and the social and cultural transformations of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Its relationship with the shoreline, spatial organisation, construction system, architectural expression, and interior environment together constitute the principal architectural characteristics through which the typology can be understood.

Although these characteristics display considerable variation from one residence to another, they provide a consistent analytical framework for examining the evolution of the yalı. Rather than treating each building as an isolated example, the following chapter adopts these characteristics as the basis for the comparative analysis of the selected case studies, allowing the transformations of the typology to be examined in relation to the changing urban, social, and environmental conditions of the Bosphorus.

31 Kuban and Emden, *Osmanlı Mimarisi*, 485.

32 Kuban, *Türk "Hayat"lı Evi*, 104.

6. Case Study Framework and Methodology

6.1 Analytical Approach

This study aims to understand the evolution of the Bosphorus waterfront mansions (yalıs) as a residential typology shaped by broader socio-political and urban transformations, as well as by the specific spatial and environmental conditions of the Bosphorus.

The methodology is based on the architectural analysis of selected case studies supported by archival plans, sections, elevations, historical photographs, and other available documentary sources. These documents are used as analytical tools to investigate the architectural characteristics of each residence rather than simply to illustrate them.

The yalıs are approached as part of a broader architectural system rather than as isolated historical objects. For this reason, case studies from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, located in different parts of the Bosphorus, are selected. This allows the investigation of both continuity and variation within the typology while situating each example within its specific geographical and historical context.

The case studies are selected to represent the chronological, geographical, and architectural diversity of the yalı typology along the Bosphorus during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The selected residences belong to different periods and display different architectural configurations, allowing both continuity and transformation within the typology to be examined over time. Their distribution across different villages and areas of the Bosphorus also ensures that the study is not limited to a single geographical context, but reflects the broader spatial extent within which the yalı developed.

The selection includes both surviving and lost or substantially altered yalıs. This allows the study to consider the historical development of the typology beyond the examples that have survived to the present day and avoids limiting the analysis to the current architectural landscape of the Bosphorus.

Within these criteria, the final selection is determined by the availability of sufficient archival and documentary material to examine each residence through the established analytical framework. The availability of plans, sections, elevations, historical photographs, and published documentation therefore provides the necessary basis for a consistent architectural analysis and comparison of the selected cases.

6.2 Analytical Criteria

The analysis adopts a relational approach, examining each yalı through a set of interconnected architectural characteristics rather than through stylistic classification alone. These characteristics correspond to the defining components of the typology identified in the previous chapter: the relationship between the building and the Bosphorus, its spatial organisation, its construction system, its architectural expression, and its interior environment.

Rather than considering these characteristics independently, the study investigates how they interact to generate the architectural identity of each residence. This approach allows the yalı to be understood as an architectural system shaped by the relationship between environmental conditions, domestic organisation, construction, and architectural expression. Each case study is analysed through a consistent sequence, moving from the general context of the building to its architectural characteristics.

The analysis begins with a brief overview of each yalı, including its historical background, date of construction, ownership, and location.

It then examines the relationship between the building and the Bosphorus through its position along the shoreline, its relationship with the quay, methods of access, orientation, and its connection with the surrounding landscape.

The study subsequently analyses the spatial organisation of the residence, focusing on the organisation of the site, the relationship between the different buildings within the complex where applicable, the arrangement of the haremlik and selamlık, the organisation of the floors, circulation patterns, the location and configuration of the sofa, and the overall plan logic.

This is followed by an examination of the construction system and material logic, considering the structural system, construction techniques, and material organisation of each residence.

The façade organisation and architectural expression are then analysed through the relationship between the plan and the façade, examining elements such as symmetry, monumentality, projections, windows, roof forms, and decorative elements.

Finally, the analysis considers the interior environment through the organisation of interior spaces and their architectural characteristics where documentation is available.

Rather than treating these characteristics as isolated categories, the analysis considers the relationships between them in order to understand how each residence responds to the environmental, social, and cultural conditions of its time.

The same analytical method is applied to each case study in order to establish a consistent basis for comparison. The cases are organised chronologically, allowing transformations and continuities to be observed across the period examined.

6.3 Comparative Framework

The comparative analysis does not reproduce every category examined within the individual case studies. While the case-study analysis provides a broader architectural understanding of each residence, the comparative framework focuses specifically on those characteristics through which the broader urban, social, and cultural transformations discussed in the preceding chapters can be examined. The comparative criteria are therefore derived from the relationship between these historical transformations and their possible architectural manifestations within the yalı.

Changes in mobility and transportation are examined through the changing relationship between the yalı and the shoreline, particularly modes of access and the increasing importance of land-based circulation. Transformations in domestic life are considered through the changing configuration and relationship of the haremlik and selamlık. Changing cultural and architectural influences are examined through architectural expression, particularly compositional order, ornamentation, and monumentality.

Spatial organisation and circulation are examined through the relationship between the sofa, surrounding rooms, and other distributive spaces. This comparison considers both the persistence of the sofa as an organising element and the ways in which circulation was adapted or diversified around it. The aim is therefore not to describe the development of the yalı as a linear replacement of one architectural model by another, but to identify the coexistence of transformation and continuity within the

typology.

The same comparative criteria are applied across the selected group of case studies as far as the available evidence permits. Where sufficient evidence is available, each residence is considered within the relevant comparative category. Where a particular architectural characteristic cannot be established reliably from the surviving documentation, this limitation is stated explicitly rather than interpreting the absence of evidence as an architectural condition. The comparative diagrams therefore draw on the cases for which sufficient evidence exists for each specific aspect, while the complete group of case studies establishes the broader chronological framework.

Rather than classifying the buildings according to predetermined stylistic categories, the comparison emerges from relationships observed across the case studies. This allows the yalı to be understood as an architectural type that adapted to changing urban and social conditions while retaining fundamental aspects of its established spatial organisation.

6.4 Limitations and Scope

The analysis is based on available archival sources, published drawings, historical photographs, and other documentary material. In some cases, incomplete documentation or later alterations limit the extent to which certain architectural aspects can be examined.

These differences in documentation inevitably affect the depth to which the analytical framework can be applied to individual cases. For this reason, limitations affecting particular comparative criteria are identified explicitly within the analysis. A case is excluded from a specific comparison only where the available evidence does not permit that architectural characteristic to be established with sufficient reliability.

Despite these limitations, the consistent analytical framework provides a common basis for the architectural reading and comparison of the selected case studies. As the study focuses on analysing the evolution of the architectural characteristics of the yalı rather than reconstructing each building in its entirety, differences in documentation are treated as a limitation of the available evidence and are made explicit within the comparative analysis.

7. Case Studies

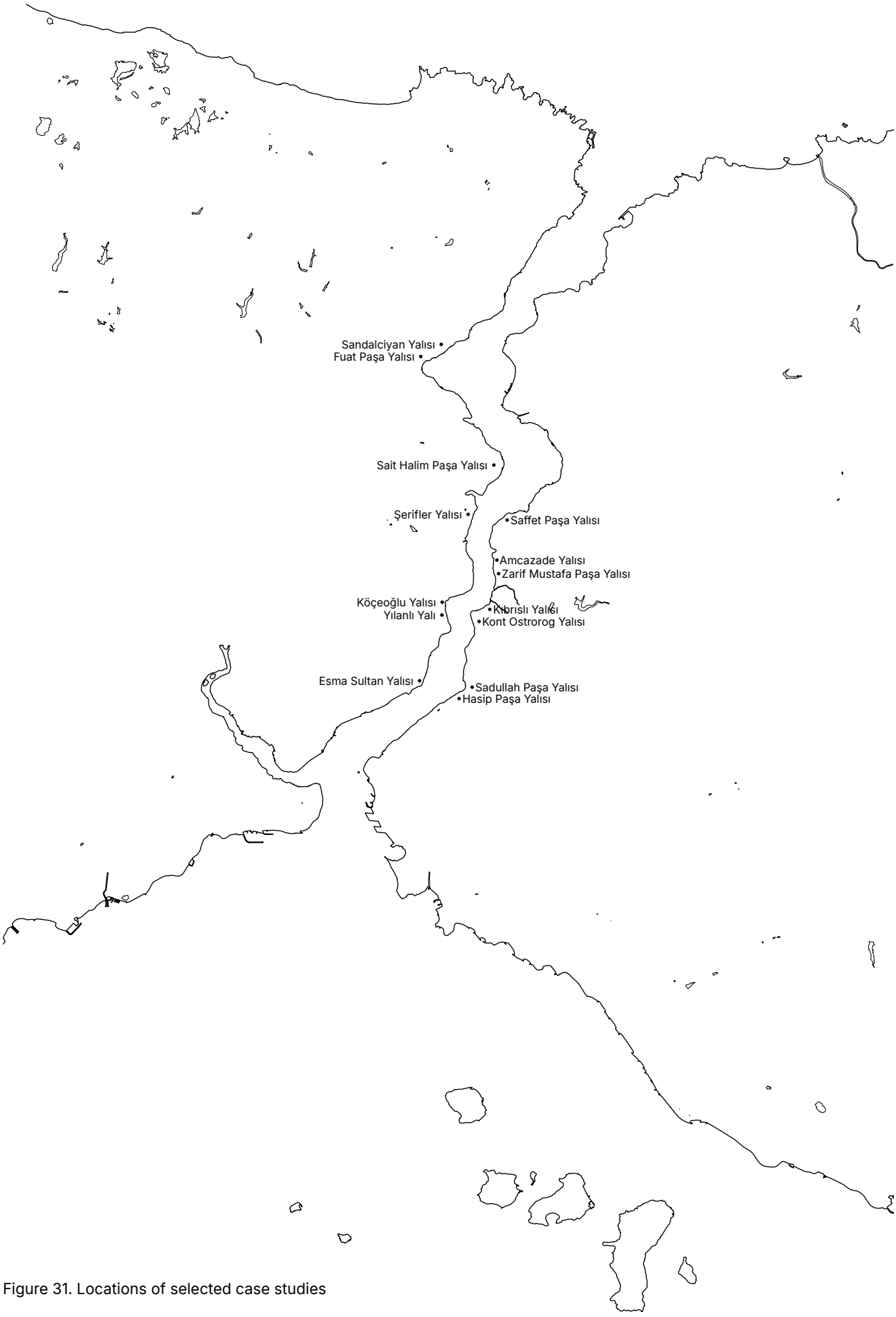


Figure 31. Locations of selected case studies

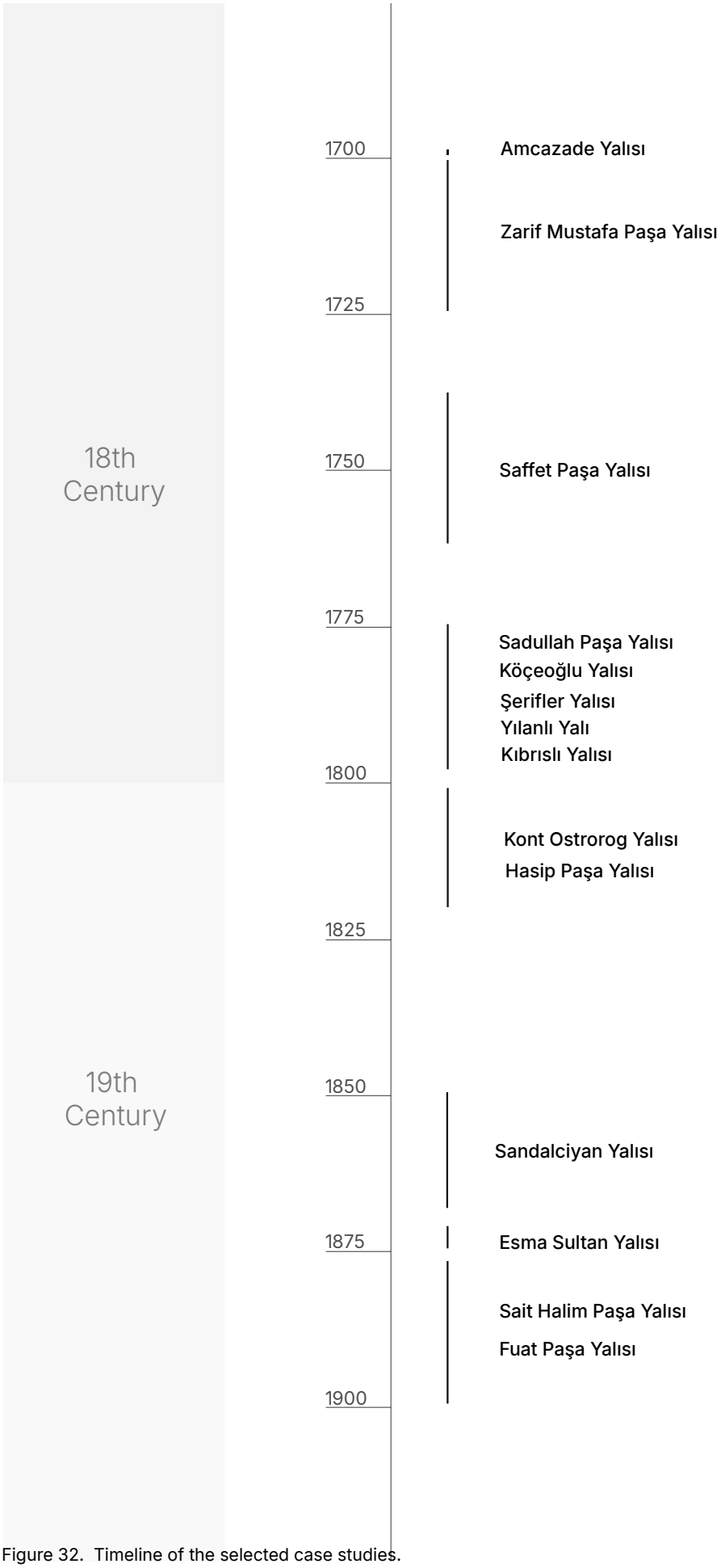


Figure 32. Timeline of the selected case studies.

Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı



Figure 33. Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı, photograph by Ali Öz. Source: SALT Research.

Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı was built at the end of the 17th century, during the reign of II. Mustafa. It is considered the oldest timber yalı in Istanbul. It is located on the Anatolian coast of the Bosphorus, in Anadoluhisarı. The architect is unknown. Sahilhaneler reports that, according to a chronogram couplet found in Nazım Divanı, it was built in 1699, and since its owner, Hüseyin Paşa, is the son of the uncle of Grand Vizier Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed Paşa, it is known as "Amcazade."

Hüseyin Paşa was an Ottoman statesman who took part in the Vienna War and was imprisoned afterwards. Following his release, he served as the muhafız of the Kastamonu sancak and later as the muhafız of Gelibolu Çardak. He was then appointed as a vizier at the Boğazhisar guardianship and later became Istanbul kaymakamı. In 1694, he served as Kaptanı derya, during which he led the invasion of Chios and subsequently served there as muhafız.

During his period as Kapudan Pasha, he introduced new kanuns and made adjustments to improve the naval forces. After this role, he became the vali of Karaman and Adana, which was followed by his appointment as the muhafız of Belgrade. After the Vienna War, he became sadrazam. During his time as sadrazam, he signed the Treaty of Karlowitz and, with the Russians, the Treaty of Istanbul.

During its existence, many important figures were hosted in the yalı, such as the Austrian ambassador Oettingen, the Polish ambassador, the Iranian ambassador Murtaza Kulu Han, and the sultan of the time, II. Mustafa, as Hisarlar ve Mahalleleri reports.

Towards the end of the 1860s, the main buildings were either destroyed by fire or demolished, leaving only a two-storey wooden structure. Today, only the Divanhane (selamlık) part remains, as Göncüloğlu, Selçuklu and Yavaş note.[33] Since the surviving documentation primarily concerns

33 Göncüloğlu, Selçuklu, and Yavaş, *Hisarlar ve Mahalleleri*, 130–34.

the selamlık, the original relationship between the haremlik and selamlık cannot be reconstructed with the same degree of certainty as the surviving spatial organisation. The architectural understanding of the Amcazade (Köprülü) Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı, as discussed in Köşkler ve Kasırlar, is not derived from a single, fixed source, but rather reconstructed through a layered reading of drawings, photographs, and partial remains. The most significant visual documentation, particularly the drawings attributed to Fossati, presents a highly ordered and symmetrical interpretation of the building, with a clearly defined central hall and balanced lateral extensions. However, as the comparison with existing traces suggests, these representations cannot be read as exact measured records. Instead, they reflect a tendency to regularize and idealize the structure, smoothing out irregularities and imposing a more coherent geometrical order than may have existed in reality. This introduces a critical distance between the represented building and its material condition, requiring the drawings to be approached as interpretative rather than purely documentary sources.

Subsequent restitution drawings further reinforce this condition, as they rely on partial evidence and analogical reasoning to reconstruct the original form. While certain aspects remain consistent across all representations (such as the presence of a central divanhane, the lightweight timber construction, and the strong orientation toward the Bosphorus) the exact spatial configuration, degree of symmetry, and decorative articulation remain open to interpretation. The Amcazade Yalısı, therefore, should not be understood as a fully recoverable architectural object, but rather as a partially constructed model through which early waterfront domestic architecture can be studied. This condition is particularly significant, as it reveals that the formation of the yalı typology is not only an architectural process, but also one shaped by the ways in



Figure 34. Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı as it was around 1930. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Köşkler ve Kasırlar 2*, 153.



Figure 35. Painting showing a yalı, attributed to Th. Frere, identified as Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı, first half of the nineteenth century. Courtesy of E. R. Gallagher. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Köşkler ve Kasırlar 2*, 154.



Figure 36. Photograph from the same viewpoint. The eaves originally had a wider overhang resembling those depicted in the painting. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Köşkler ve Kasırlar 2*, 155.



Figure 37. Same view in its present condition. The projecting eaves have been shortened and a decorative frieze added. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem*, Köşkler ve Kasırlar 2, 165.*

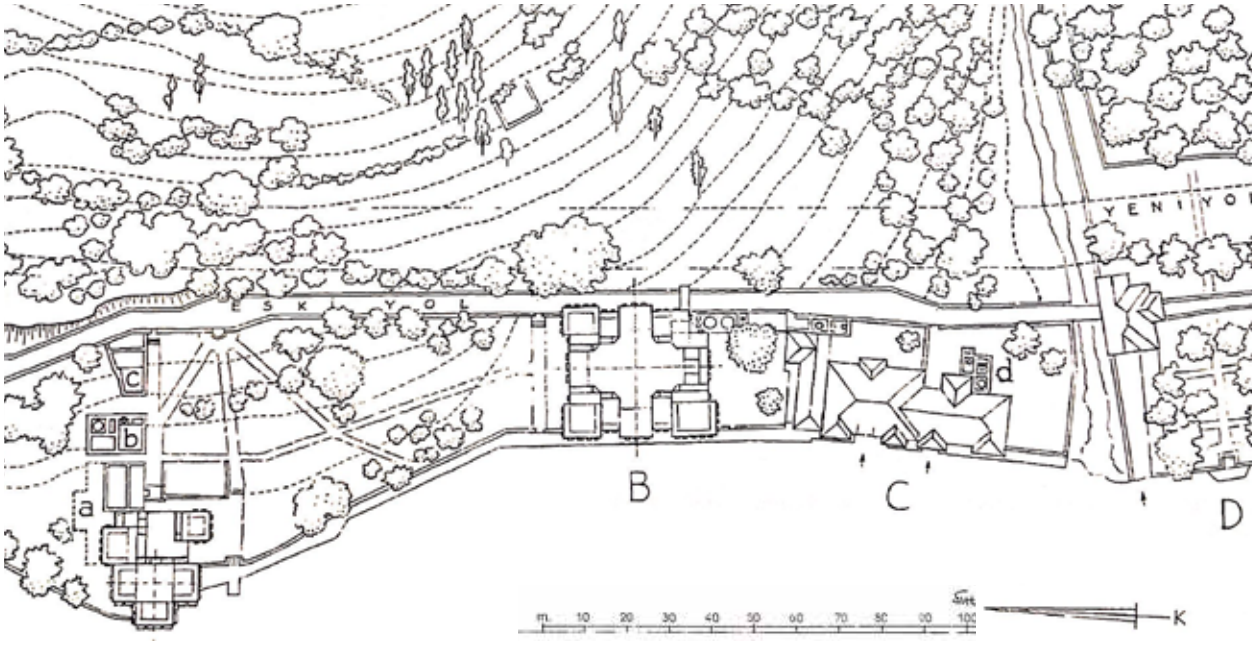


Figure 38. Site plan of Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Köşkler ve Kasırlar 2, 160.*

which these buildings have been recorded, represented, and reconstructed over time. Göncüloğlu, Selçuklu and Yavaş describe the yalı as, it consists of two wooden yalı structures parallel to the Bosphorus and one divanhane. There is an hammam behind. From the sketches and plans drawn during the years when the single-storey wooden yalı, partly built on piles driven into the sea, was still entirely intact, it is understood that the portion of the building on the landward side consisted of two sofas separated by two columns. The first of these sofas included an entrance hall. On either side of the hall, apart from the toilet and stair spaces, there was one room on the right and one on the left. Later, these rooms were replaced by wooden mansions. The main hall, divanhane of the yalı presents a three-armed architectural configuration in the shape of a "T." At its center, there is a square area paved with marble, within which a large and elegant pool is located. The fountain of the pool is pierced and ornamentally carved. The three sofas all open onto this central space. Particularly on the section of the yalı facing the Bosphorus, there are numerous windows, all fitted with shutters.[34]

The building shows a strong connection to the exterior and is directly integrated with water. It is elevated and it extends outward.

Meanwhile Günay observes there are large windows at eye level and the ceilings are high. Even though the ceilings are high, there is no use of alçı windows; instead, all the attention is directed toward the exterior view. There is a wooden dome (kubbe) at the central space (orta mekân), which is enclosed within the roof.[35]

The façade is symmetrical, with a strong horizontal emphasis, and the windows are aligned along the eye level. The building is supported by piles driven into the sea, which connects the façade both visually and technically to the Bosphorus. The façade is functional and climate-responsive, rather than heavily monumental. It is further defined by wide eaves.

The building is constructed with a timber

34 Göncüoğlu, Selçuklu, and Yavaş, *Hisarlar ve Mahalleleri*, 135.

35 Reha Günay, *İstanbul'un Kaybolan Ahşap Konutları* (YEM Yayın, 2014), 58.

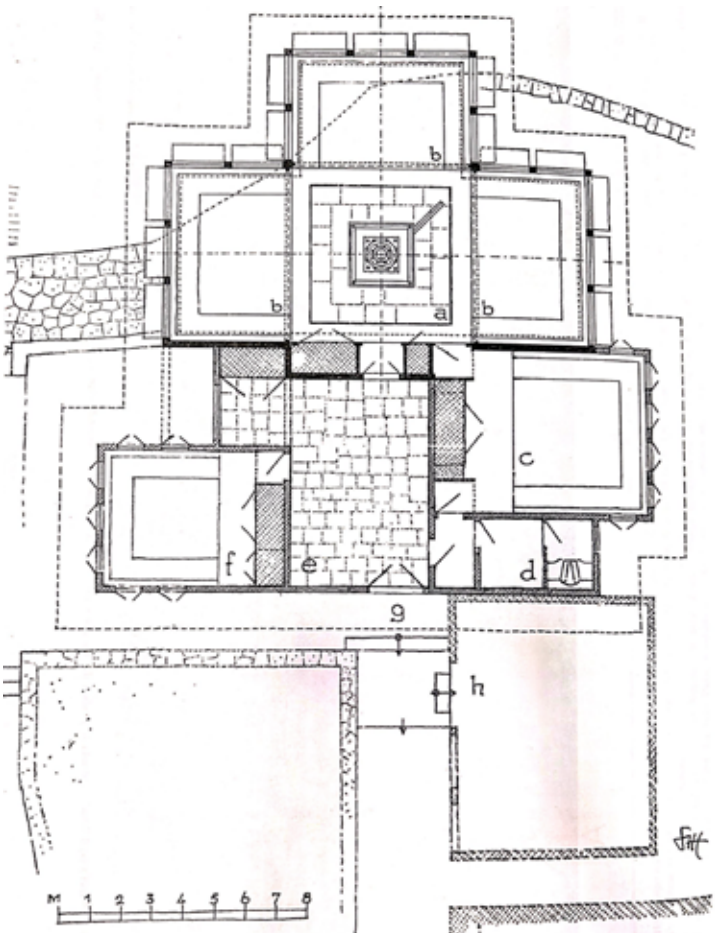


Figure 39. Plan of Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Köşkler ve Kasırlar 2, 162*.

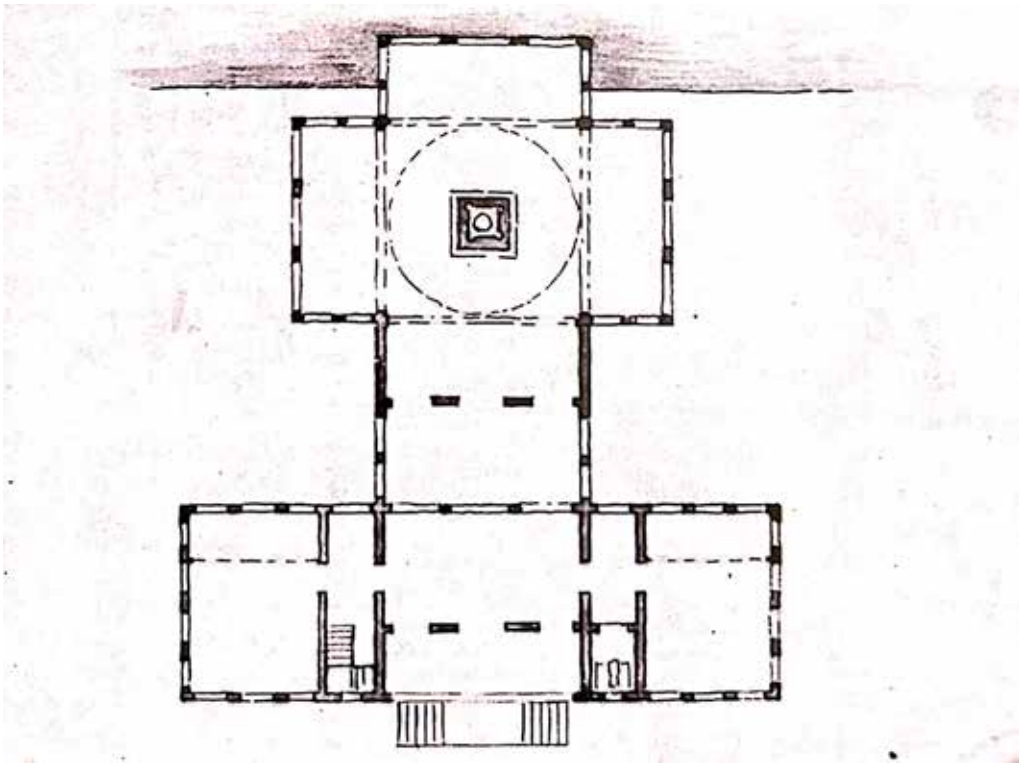


Figure 40. Fossati plan of Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Köşkler ve Kasırlar 2, 156*.

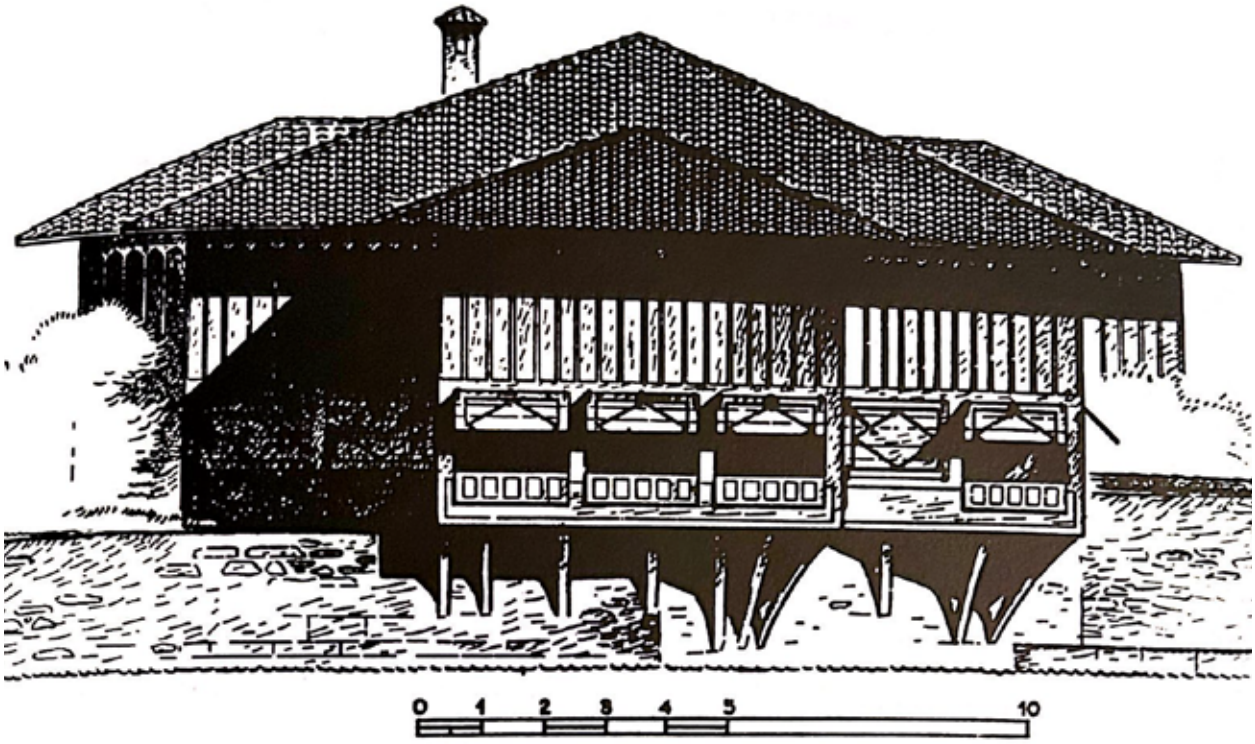


Figure 41. Elevation of Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Köşkler ve Kasırlar 2, 164.*

frame system. It is raised on wooden piles over the water, allowing the structure to project outward towards the sea and emphasize its waterfront presence. The base is masonry.

Günay continues, the interior is characterised by wooden panelling, within which ornamentation is directly integrated into the architectural elements. The upper part of the continuous shelf running above the windows is decorated with arched panels reminiscent of clerestory windows, extending up to the ceiling. These panels are framed with gilded relief plaster mouldings, and within them, various flowers are depicted in blue-and-white Chinese vases.

The central hall, defined by a decorative ceiling, is organised beneath a dome, under which a square pool is placed with a domed fountain. A similar fountain can also be seen in the selamlık room of the Afghanlar Tekke.

The doors and cupboards of the pavilion are panelled and unpainted, and are inlaid with ivory and filigree.[36]

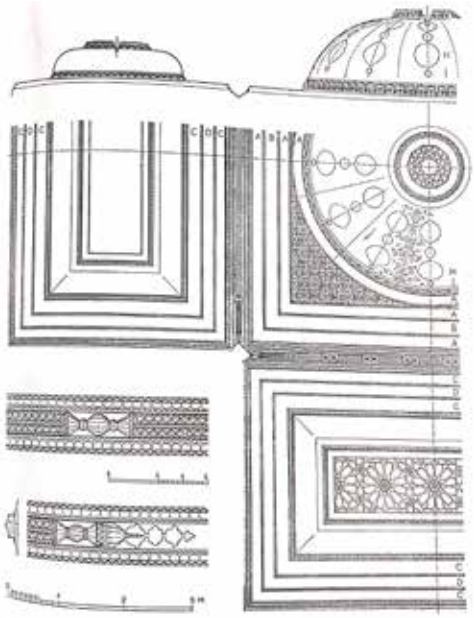


Figure 42. Interior elevation of Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Köşkler ve Kasırlar 2, 167.*

36 Günay, *İstanbul'un Kaybolan Ahşap Konutları*, 35.

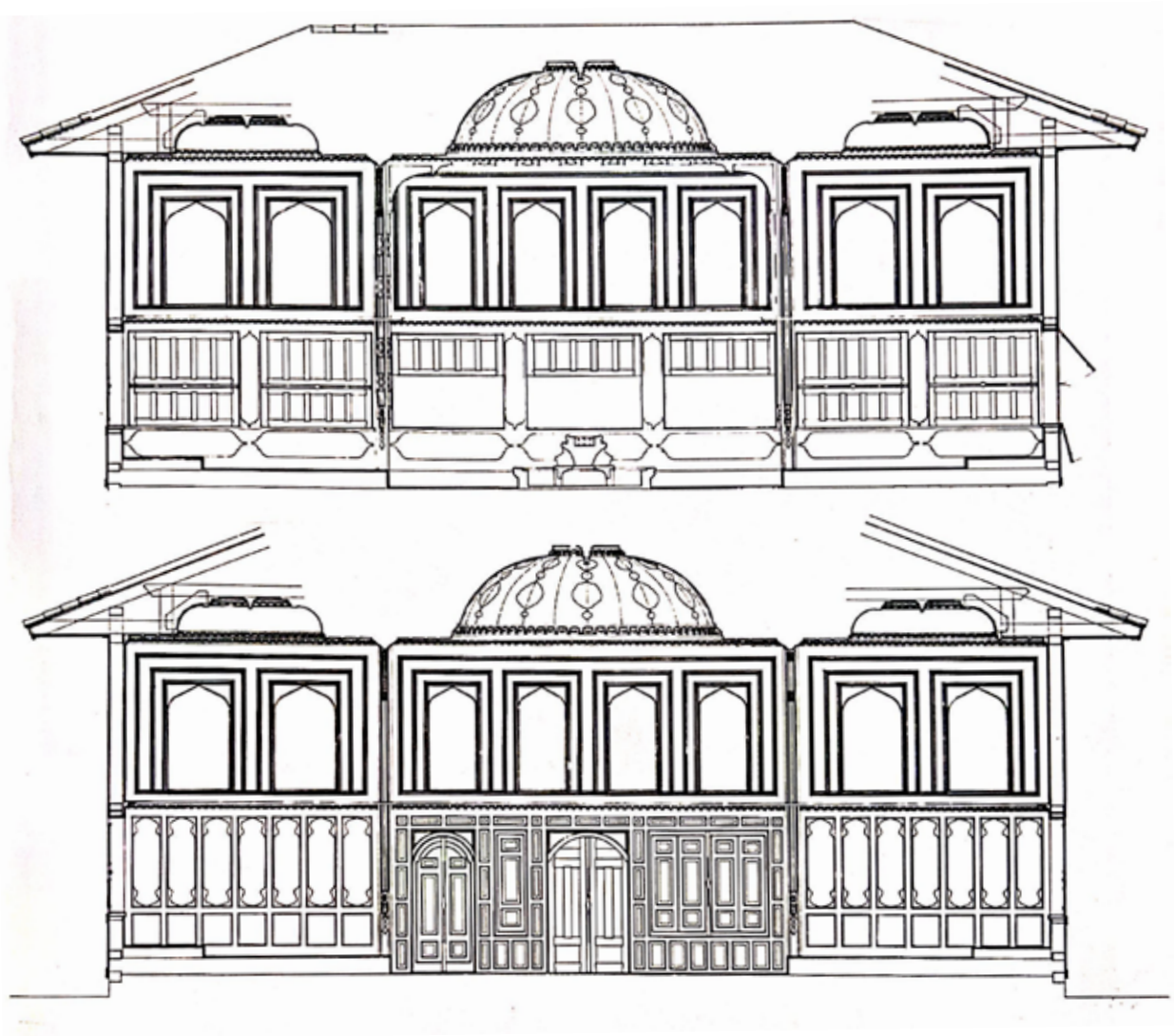


Figure 43. Interior façade reconstruction of Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 85.

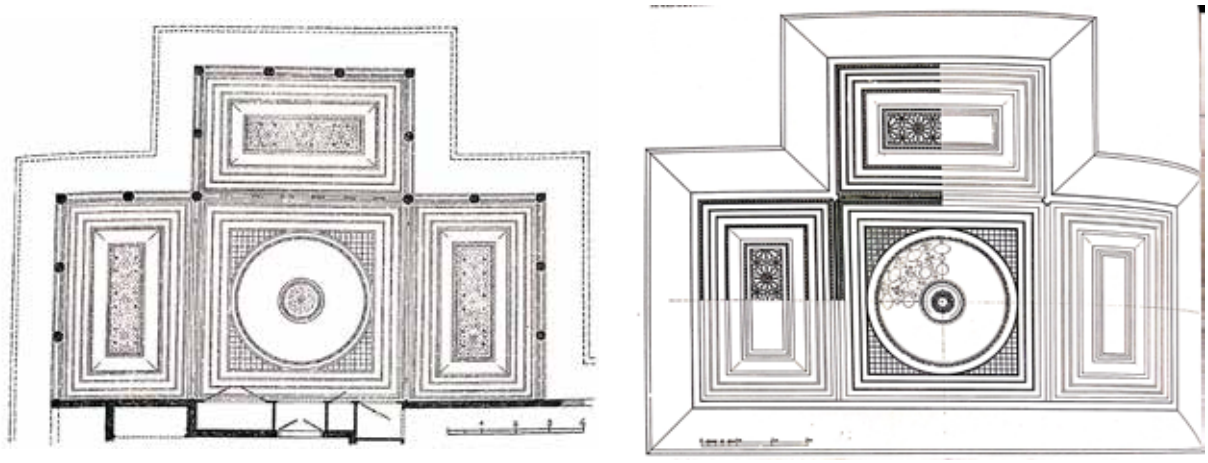


Figure 44. Interior façade reconstruction of Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 84.

Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı



Figure 45. Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1, 147.*

Zarif Mustafa Paşa Mansion was built at the beginning of the 18th century. Zarif Mustafa Paşa, the owner after whom the mansion is known today, purchased the property in 1848. Before his ownership, the mansion belonged respectively to Berberbaşızade and Mustafa Ağazade, according to the Bostancıbaşı registers. It is located on the Anatolian coast of the Bosphorus, in Anadoluhisarı, between the Amcazade and Yasinci Mansions. The mansion, which was among the largest on the Bosphorus prior to the demolitions that took place during the First World War, existed in 1938 as three separate buildings: the haremlik section, the selamlık section, and the Mehtabiye Mansion. The selamlık section is also known as the Esat Bey Mansion, named after the grandson of Zarif Mustafa Paşa. As all three sections became independent structures over time, they should therefore be referred to as separate buildings.[37]

37 Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1: Anadoluhisarı, Üsküdar* (İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı, 1993), 147–48.

Mehtabiye Mansion

Mehtabiye mansions are a type of auxiliary residential structure built next to or behind the main mansion to which they are connected. They are generally located deeper within the natural landscape and maintain a strong relationship with their surroundings. In this case, the Mehtabiye Mansion is situated on the right side of the selamlık section and includes a private boathouse directly connected to the sea.Based on its materials, overall form, ornamentation, and roof typology, the Mehtabiye Mansion is considered to have been constructed shortly after the main mansion. According to Erdenen, the Mehtabiye Mansion survives in a highly altered condition compared to its original state.[38]

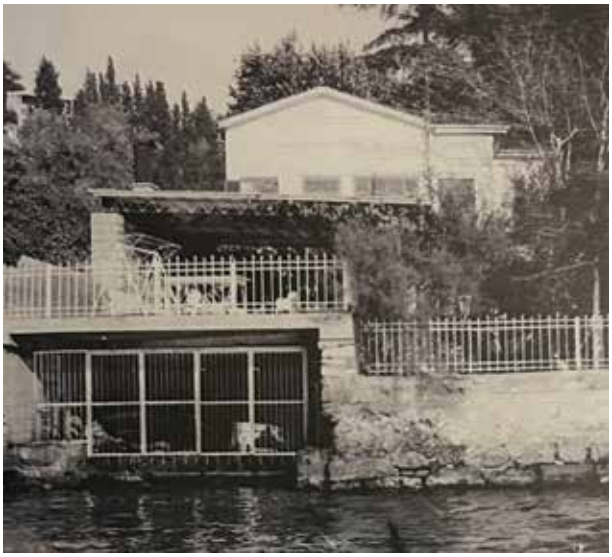


Figure 46. Mehtabiye Mansion of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1,* 145.

Haremlik Section

The haremlik section was first partially demolished between 1918 and 1919. The remaining parts were later destroyed following a ship accident, which caused the neighbouring Ferruh Efendi Mansion to collapse onto the haremlik structure. Today, the haremlik section no longer exists. Erdenen reports, the section originally featured a central sofa measuring approximately 75 × 7 meters, decorated with stamped floral motifs, ornaments, and embroideries. It included a dedicated storage room, along with additional built-in storage units located within the rooms. As the family expanded over time, new spatial divisions and rooms were added to the original layout. The façade was clad in red-ochre painted timber and articulated with windows framed by white architraves. Erdenen adds, the hammam connected to the mansion which was around 1000 square meters is a rare mansion hammam that is hard to find other examples of.[39]





Figure 47. Harem section of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı before its demolition. On the right, the remains of Ferruh Bey Yalısı, destroyed following a ship collision, are visible. By the end of 1972, the area occupied by these yalıs had become an empty plot. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 153.

38 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1,* 145.

39 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1,* 150.

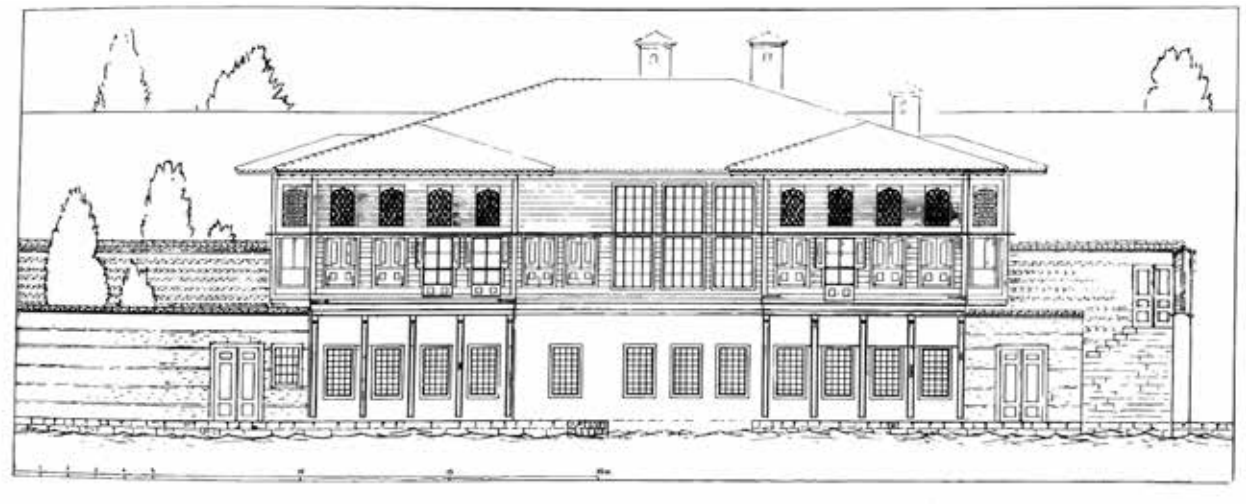


Figure 48. Elevation of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 89.

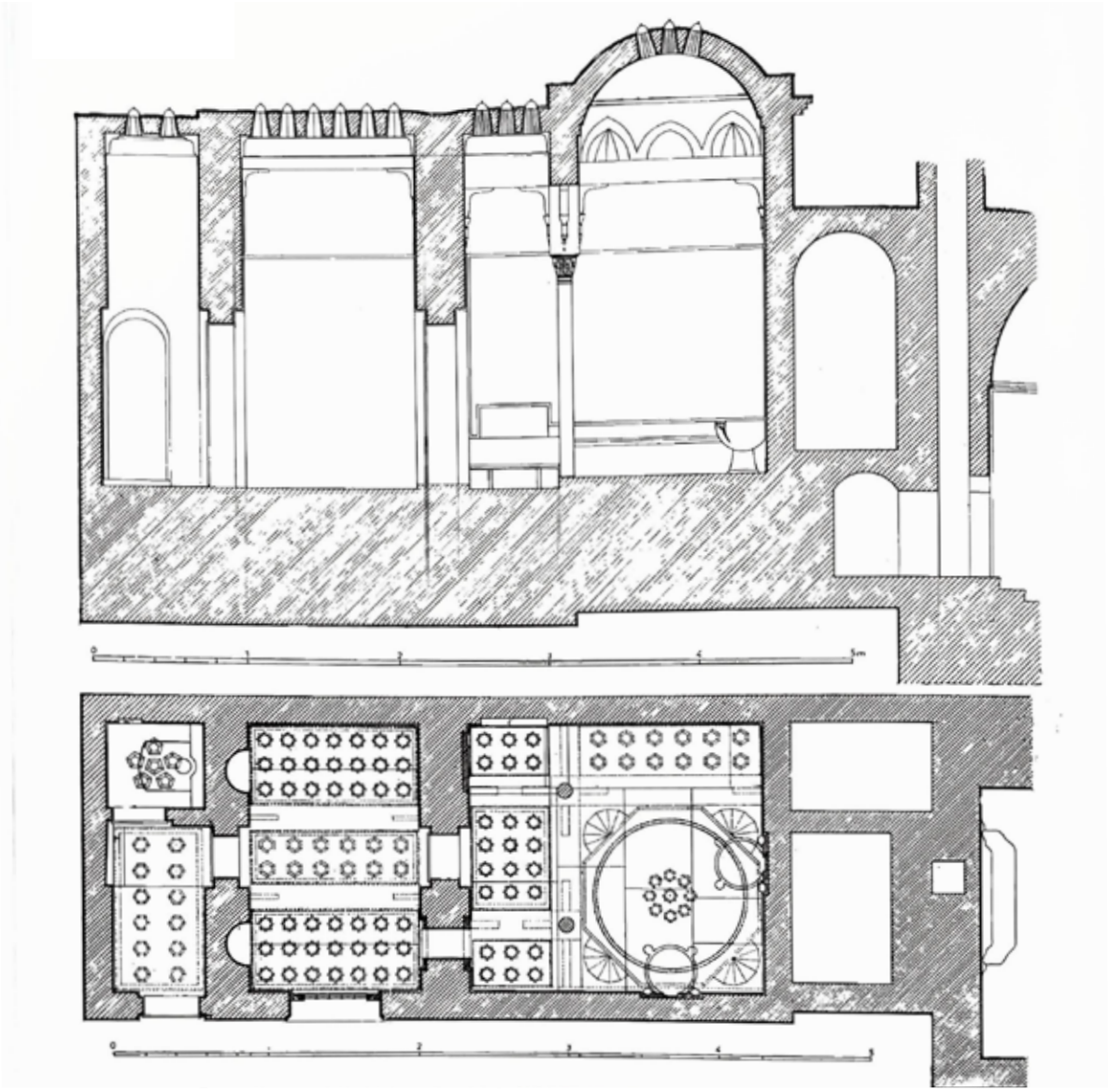


Figure 49. Section and plan of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı Hammam. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 92.

According to archaeologist Ergün Ataçeri, the hammam dates back to the 16th century up to the level of the lower exit. Above this level, the structure is constructed in brick and stone masonry with articulated joints and is crowned by projecting eaves characteristic of the period. At ground level, a small wooden door provides access to a former narrow passage approximately three meters wide.[40] This passage belonged to the earlier shoreline condition before the construction of the Bosphorus coastal road, providing further evidence of the complex's original relationship with the waterfront.



Figure 52. Hammam of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1,* 152.



Figure 50. Narrow road passing beneath Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı before the construction of the Bosphorus coastal road. The wall visible on the left belongs to the bath section of the yalı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1,* 152.



Figure 51. Harem section of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı before its demolition. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1,* 152.

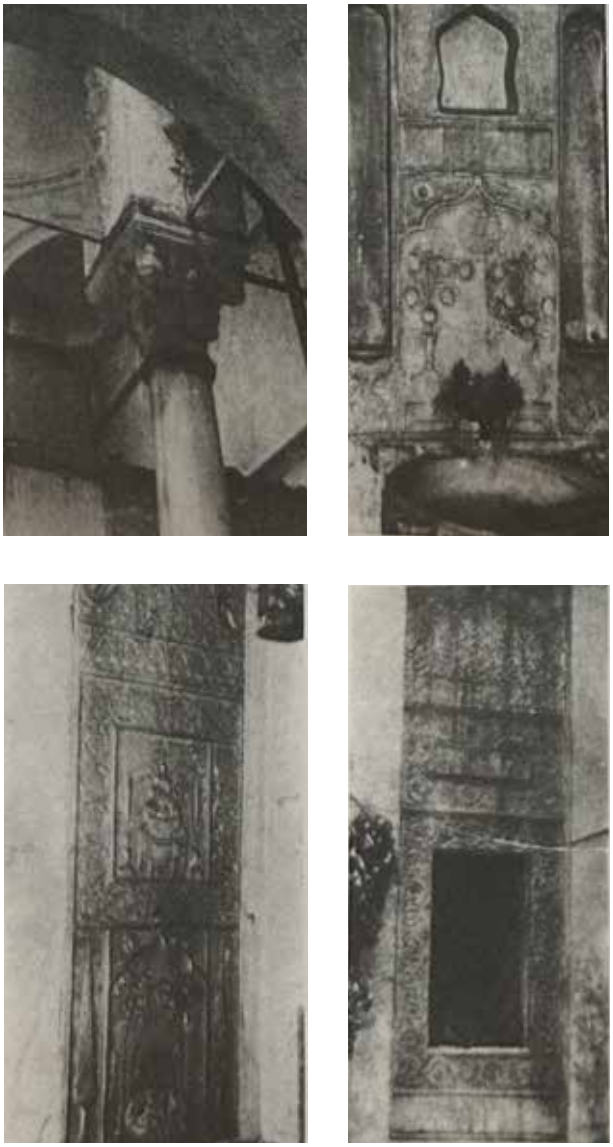


Figure 53. Interior details of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2,* 92.

40 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1*, 150.

Selamlık Section

The selamlık section is the only part of the mansion that survives today and is currently in private ownership. The façade is characterised by a yellowish exterior colour, which contrasts with the rich and colourful interior decoration dominated by floral motifs.

It is strictly symmetrical along a central axis and is organised through clear horizontal divisions into a base, a middle zone, and an upper level. The central part is emphasised by a slight projection and by a denser arrangement of openings. On both sides of this central zone, the façade becomes more solid and repetitive, with smaller, identical windows arranged at regular intervals and separated by vertical elements, creating a consistent rhythm. The upper level continues this order with evenly spaced openings that include shutters, maintaining alignment with the levels below while introducing a subtle variation. At the ground level, the façade appears heavier, defined by masonry construction, while the upper structure is timber. The roof extends beyond the façade with a wide overhang and a continuous sloped form.

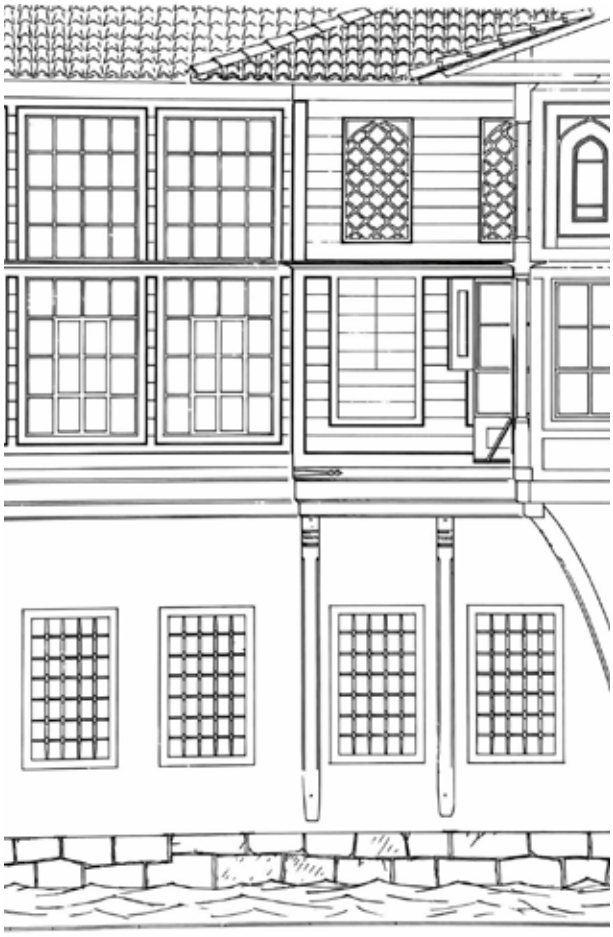


Figure 54. Elevation of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı Hammam. *Source:* Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 93.



Figure 55. Selamlık section of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1,* 149.

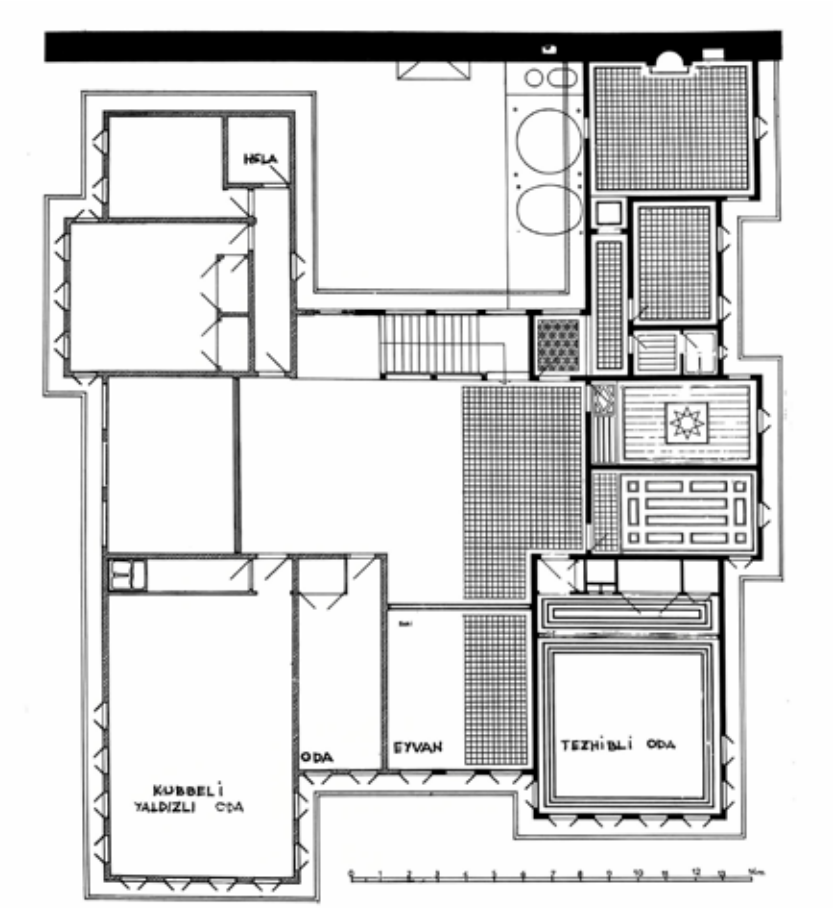


Figure 56. Upper floor plan of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 88.

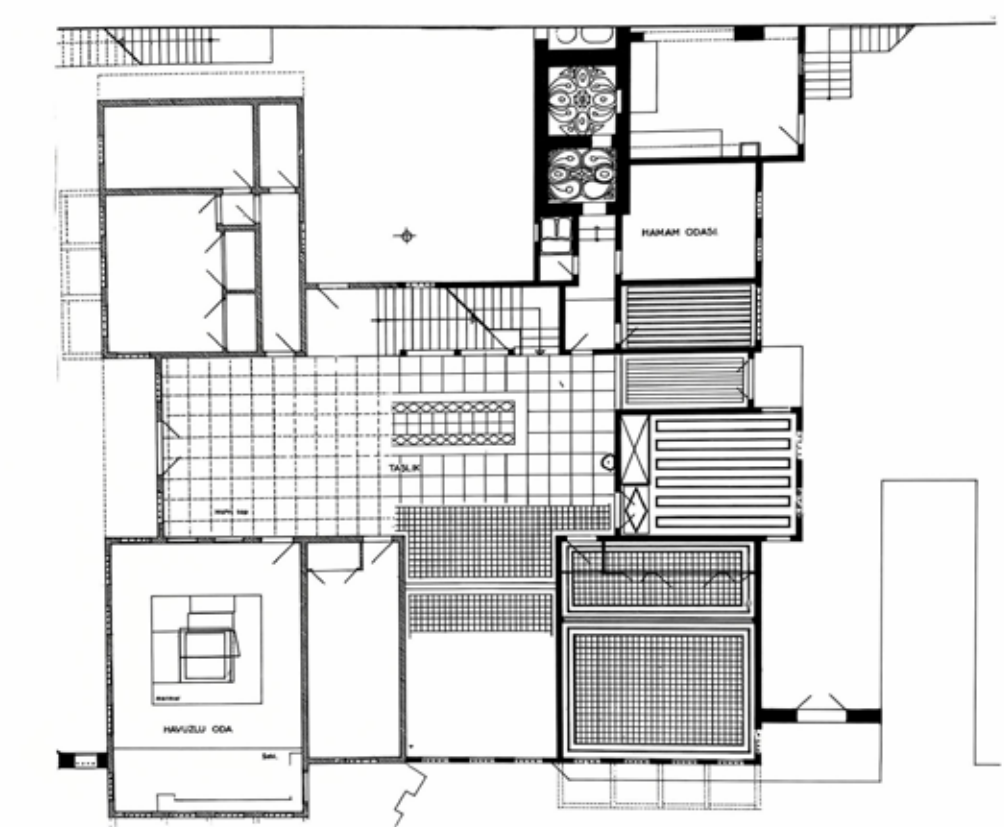
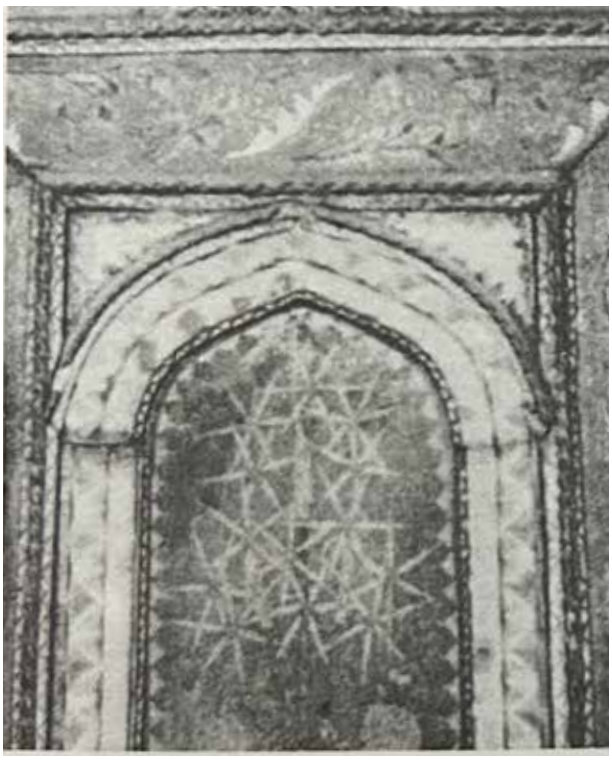


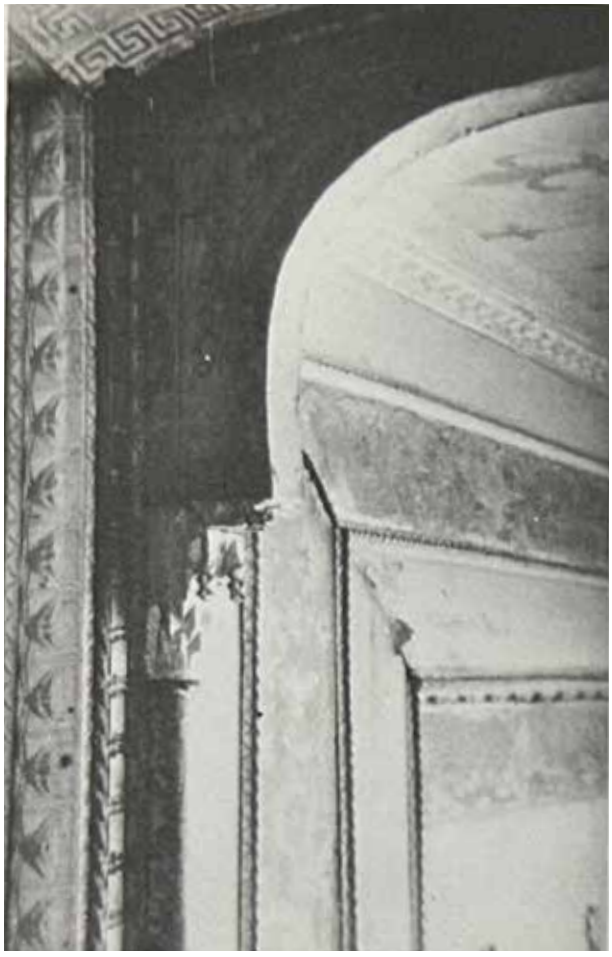
Figure 57. Ground floor plan of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 89.

The rooms of the selamlık were named by the grandsons of Zarif Mustafa Paşa according to their distinctive qualities, such as the Ocaklı Room and the Starry Room.

The Starry Room receives abundant natural daylight. Its walls and ceilings are decorated with colourful floral and fruit motifs, together with gold star ornaments. Along two sides of the room, there are wooden writing panels accompanied by built-in storage units. The doors are ornamented, as are the wooden wall coverings. At the entrance of the room, Bursa-arched buttresses articulate the transition into the space.

The room contains a wooden panel measuring approximately 6.6 × 2.05 meters, composed of six separate pieces.[41]





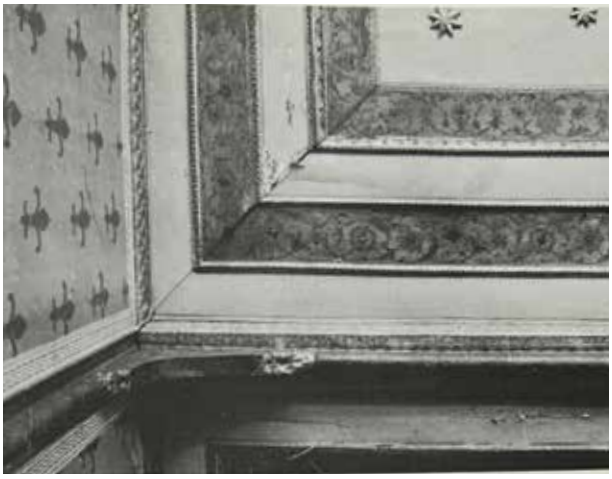




Figure 58. Interior details of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2,* 91.

41 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1*, 148.

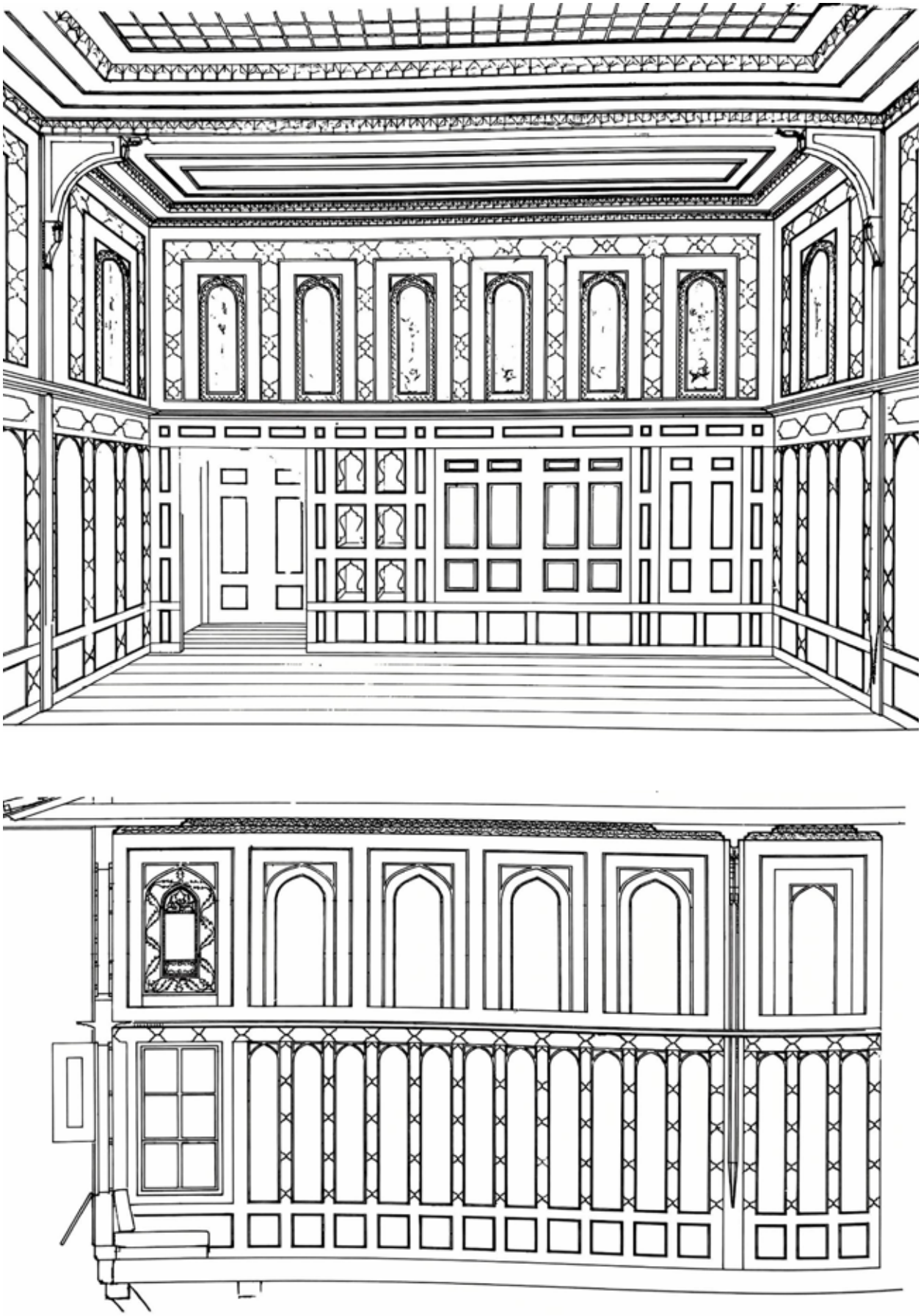


Figure 59. Interior details of Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 90.

Saffet Paşa Yalısı

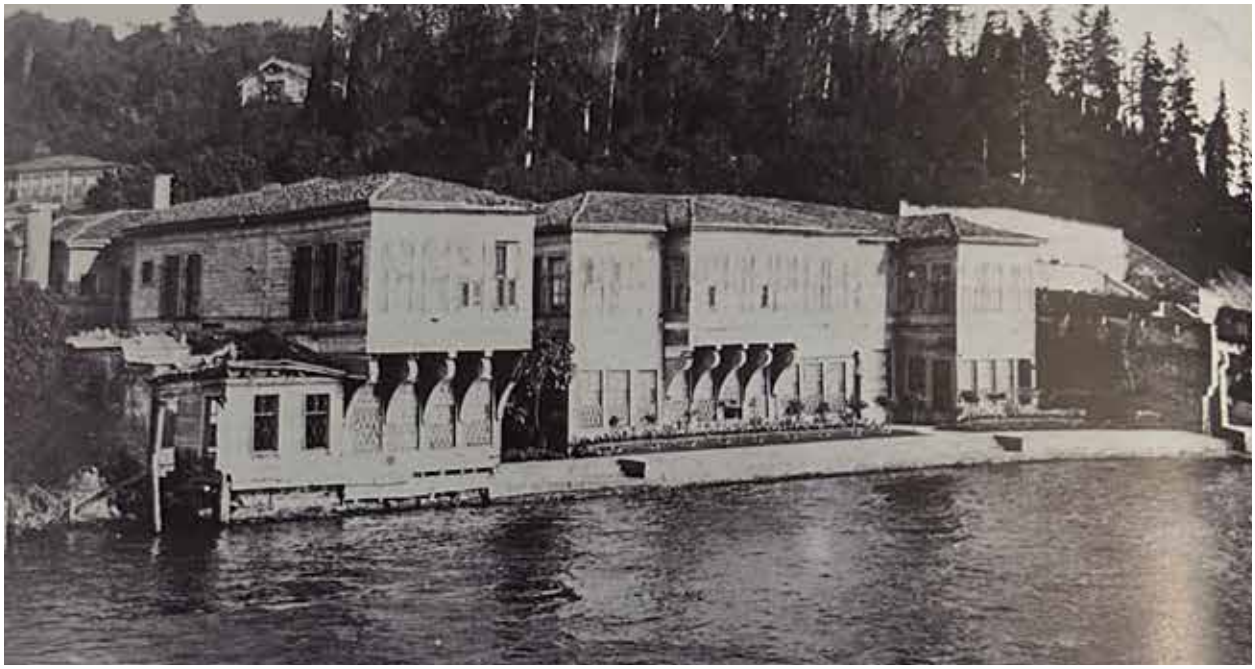


Figure 60. Saffet Paşa Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1,* 88.

Saffet Paşa Yalısı was built in the mid-18th century on the Anatolian side of the Bosphorus, in Kanlıca. It is one of the oldest mansions on the Bosphorus. The architect is unknown. It was commissioned by Ethem Efendi. Saffet Paşa, after whom the mansion is known, was a government official who worked in the Hariciye Nazırlığı and, for a short period, served as grand vizier. The yalı was inhabited by his lineage until it was destroyed by a fire in 1976. When he purchased the yalı, it was in very poor condition, but he repaired it without making any changes, as Erdenen reports.[42]

42 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1*, 88.

The yalı consists of two floors, including 13 rooms, two sofas, two staircases, and service spaces on both levels. It is positioned directly along the waterfront, separated from the Bosphorus only by a narrow quay and a small flowerbed, while the coastal road passes behind the building. According to Lloyd, this establishes a direct and uninterrupted relationship between the house and the water, reinforcing its orientation toward the Bosphorus.

According to Macide Ekimoğlu, the plan is organized around two sofas located at the centers of two sections, connected by corridors that remain largely uninterrupted despite the insertion of doors and cupboards. One of the staircases is completely open and positioned at the end of the sofa, while the other is enclosed between built-in cupboards. At the junction of the two sections, a large projecting room oriented toward the sea dominates the façade, functioning as a central salon connected to both parts of the building. This projection strengthens the visual and spatial relationship with the waterfront, extending the interior toward the Bosphorus. The space behind this salon operates as an internal service area, where cupboards are integrated and used by servants for sleeping.

Lloyd continues, within this spatial organization, the interior is further defined by carefully articulated elements, among which Room No. 2 stands out due to its 18th-century ceiling. The carvings, reliefs, and wall paintings of this room have retained their original colours, and the ceiling decorations, produced by the boat builders of Hasköy, demonstrate a close relationship between craftsmanship and architectural expression.[43]



Figure 61. Interior views of Saffet Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2,* 53.

43 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1*, 89.



Figure 62. Side façade of Saffet Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 50.



Figure 63. Section of Saffet Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 50.



Figure 64. Land façade of Saffet Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 50.



Figure 65. Sea façade of Saffet Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 50.

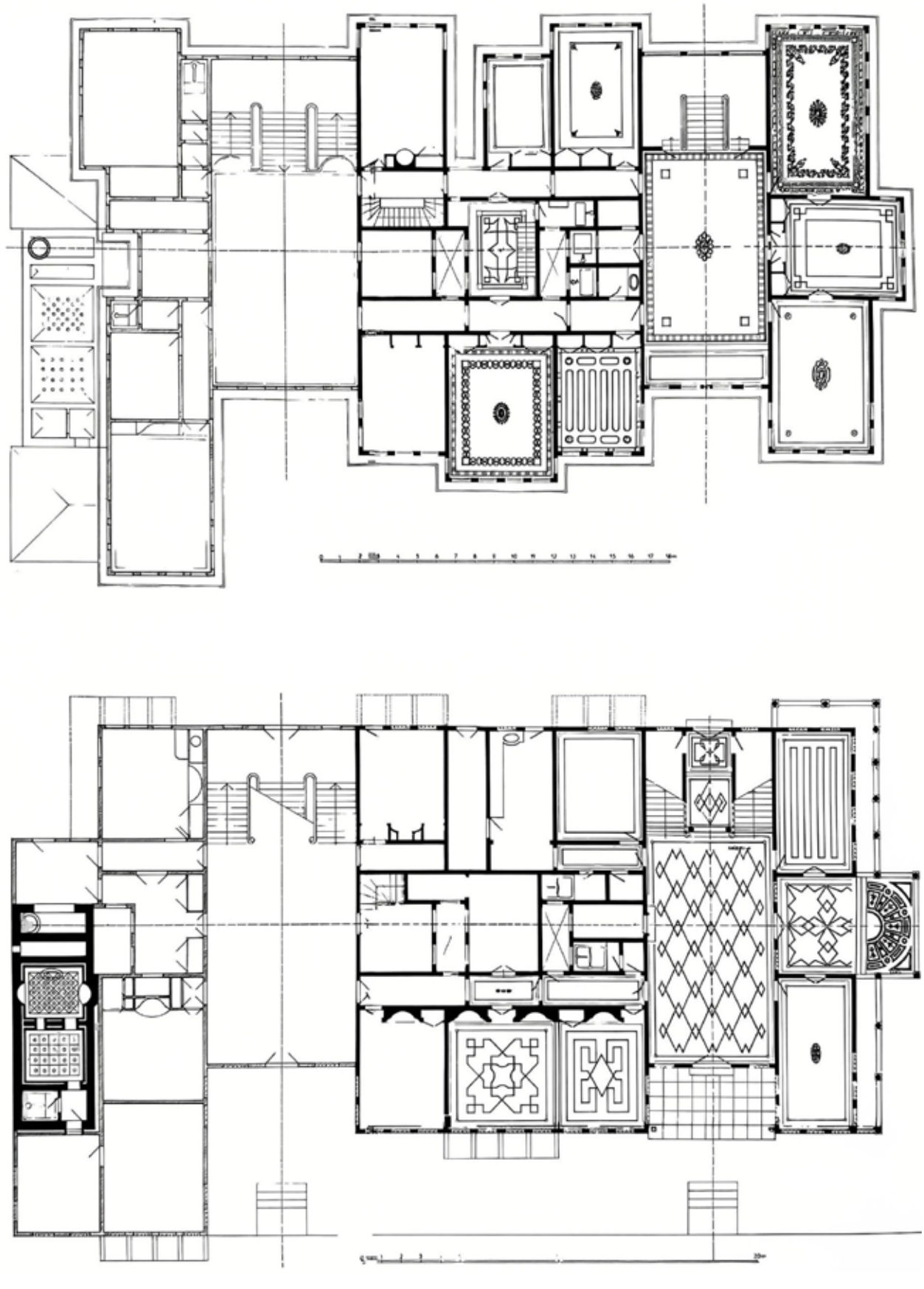


Figure 66. Floor plans of Saffet Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2,* 48.

Unsal reports that, over time, the original spatial organization of the yalı underwent significant transformations. Nineteenth-century interventions introduced a connecting corridor between the harem and selamlık sections, along with bathrooms, toilets, light wells, and other service spaces. These additions altered the original spatial clarity of the plan, creating a more fragmented and asymmetrical configuration in which secondary spaces occupied the center of what had traditionally been an open and light-filled system.

Further modifications affected both proportion and structure. The imbalance between rooms adjacent to the ground-floor entrance of the selamlık was later resolved on the upper floor through the merging of spaces, requiring additional structural support in the form of columns. However, these elements remained inconsistent with the overall composition, particularly on the side and rear façades, contributing to a sense of fragmentation.

Unsal continues that, in contrast, the sea façade largely preserved its classical character, with wide eaves, horizontal window bands, wooden cladding, bay windows, and consoles, while shutters were added in later periods. The most significant transformation occurred in the interior, where traditional elements were replaced or supplemented with foreign decorative motifs and furnishings. Following the partial destruction of the building in the twentieth century, the yalı lost much of its architectural integrity, and the new structure built on the site no longer reflected its original character.

Taken together, these interventions demonstrate how later additions gradually disrupted the original spatial logic and architectural coherence of the building.[44]

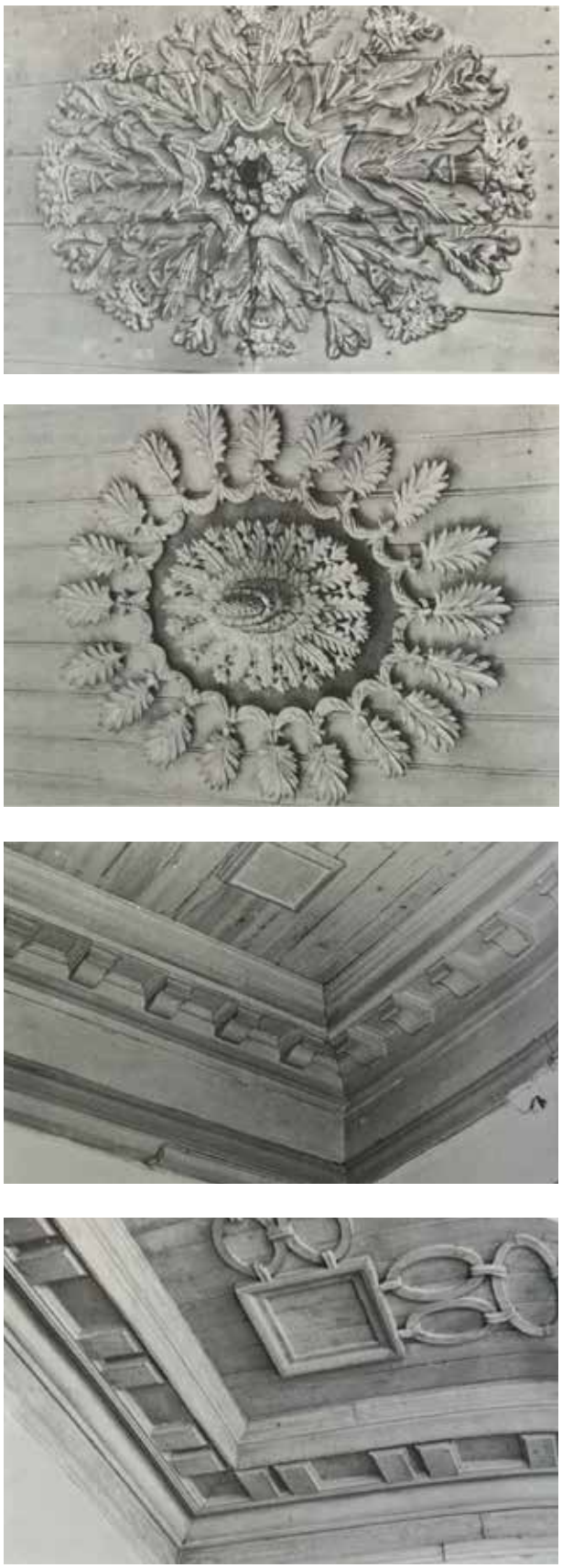


Figure 67. Ceiling decorations. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2,* 54.

44 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1*, 95.

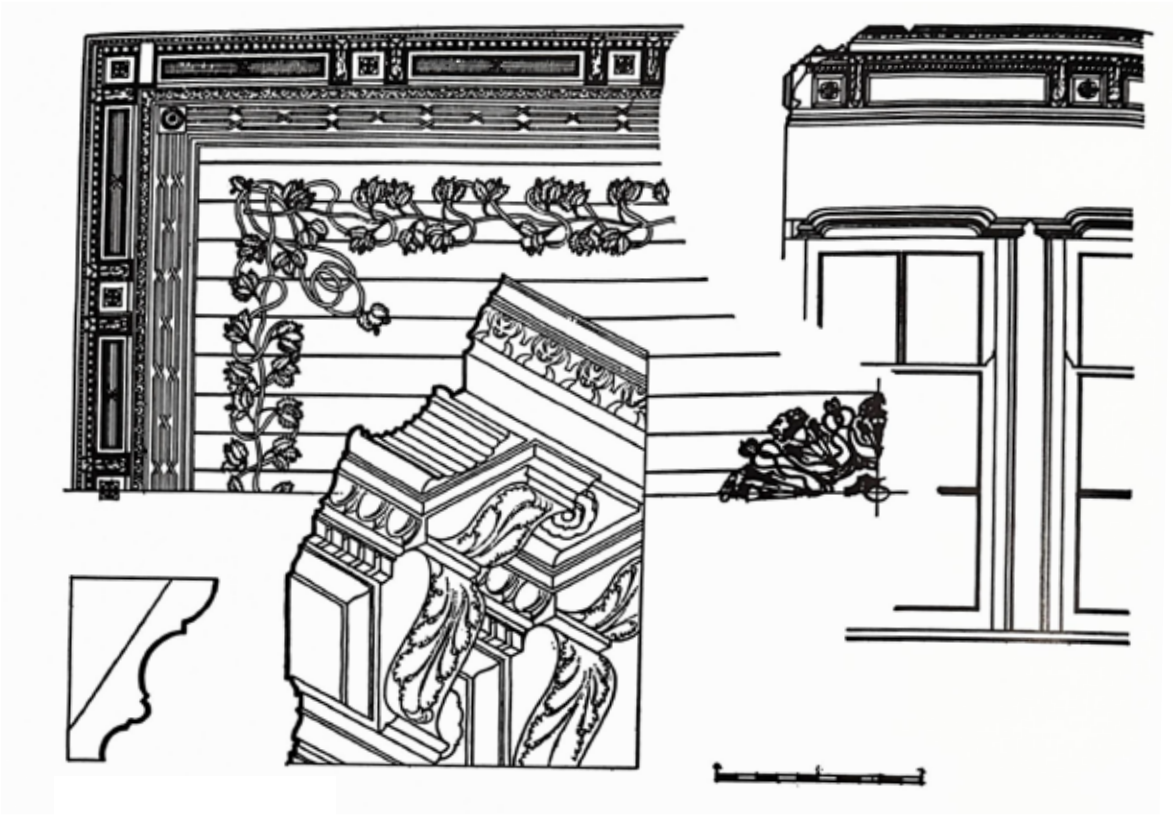


Figure 68. Ceiling decorations of Saffet Paşa Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 1,* 54.

Sadullah Paşa Yalısı



Figure 69. View of Sadullah Paşa Yalısı from the Bosphorus. *Source:* Google Maps Street View, Istanbul, accessed January 2026.

Sadullah Paşa Mansion was built in the second half of the 18th century. It is located on the Anatolian coast of the Bosphorus, in Çengelköy. The architect of the mansion is unknown. It has changed many owners throughout the years. According to the files of the Eski Eserleri Koruma Encümeni, its first owner was Darüssade Mehmet Ağa, whose death led to the ownership passing to Yusuf Paşa, and then to Emine Hanım. After her death, the ownership passed to her son, Hamdi Paşa, who was one of the former grand viziers and, at the time, the governor of Baghdad. Due to his financial situation, he had to put the mansion up for sale, which was then purchased by the grandfather of Sadullah Paşa, Esat Paşa, who was a grand vizier and an important literary figure in the Ottoman Empire. After him, the mansion was passed on to Sadullah Paşa, after whom it is known today. After his death, the mansion was sold to Ferit Tek, who restored it in 1948. After 1974, due to a lack of funds, the mansion was donated to the TAÇ Foundation. Today, it exists as a historical landmark.[45]

45 Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2: Anadoluhisarı, Üsküdar* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı, 1993), 288–89.

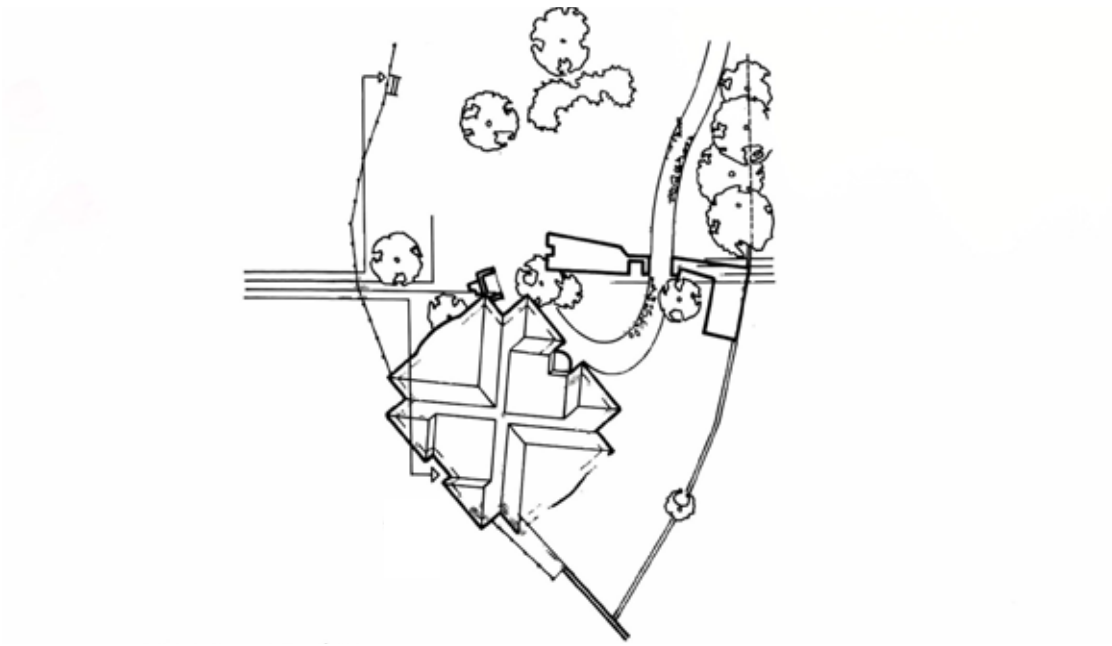


Figure 70. Site plan of Sadullah Paşa Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 293.

Erdenen describes, the façade is symmetrical and has a regular rhythm, with rectangular openings aligned both horizontally and vertically. Depth and movement are created by the slightly larger rooms on the upper floor, which project outward and are supported by angled consoles, as well as by the recessed entrances on the west and east sides. These projections are formed through timber cantilever beams and directly reflect the structural system. The rooms facing the Bosphorus contain a long sedir placed along the five windows, while the central hall is visually connected to the Bosphorus through the extension of the iwan toward the west. The eastern extension, in turn, provides views of the garden.

The building is constructed with a timber frame system resting on a masonry base at the waterfront level. While the stone substructure protects the building from humidity and sea contact, the upper floors are entirely timber. The structural system is based on the central oval sofa, which acts as the main core of the building. Loads are carried by timber posts and beams with non-load-bearing infill walls, while the central dome is formed by a radial timber rib system transferring its load to the surrounding structure.

The mansion has a square plan organized around a central hall. Access is provided from all four sides of the building, with each entrance leading directly to the rectangular central hall measuring 8 × 11 meters. The eastern entrance opens from the garden, while the western entrance is reached from the dock, connecting the building to the sea. The northern and southern entrances open onto the two main staircases. Two rooms are positioned at each corner of the central hall.

The building consists of two floors that follow the same general organization. The main difference between the levels is the form of the central hall, which is rectangular on the ground floor and elliptical on the upper floor. The symmetrical plan observed today largely results from the 1977 restoration, which remained faithful to the original layout, with the exception of the north wing, previously connected to the selamlık, and the southern wing, which originally accommodated the kitchen and service spaces.[46] Although

46 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2*, 291–92.

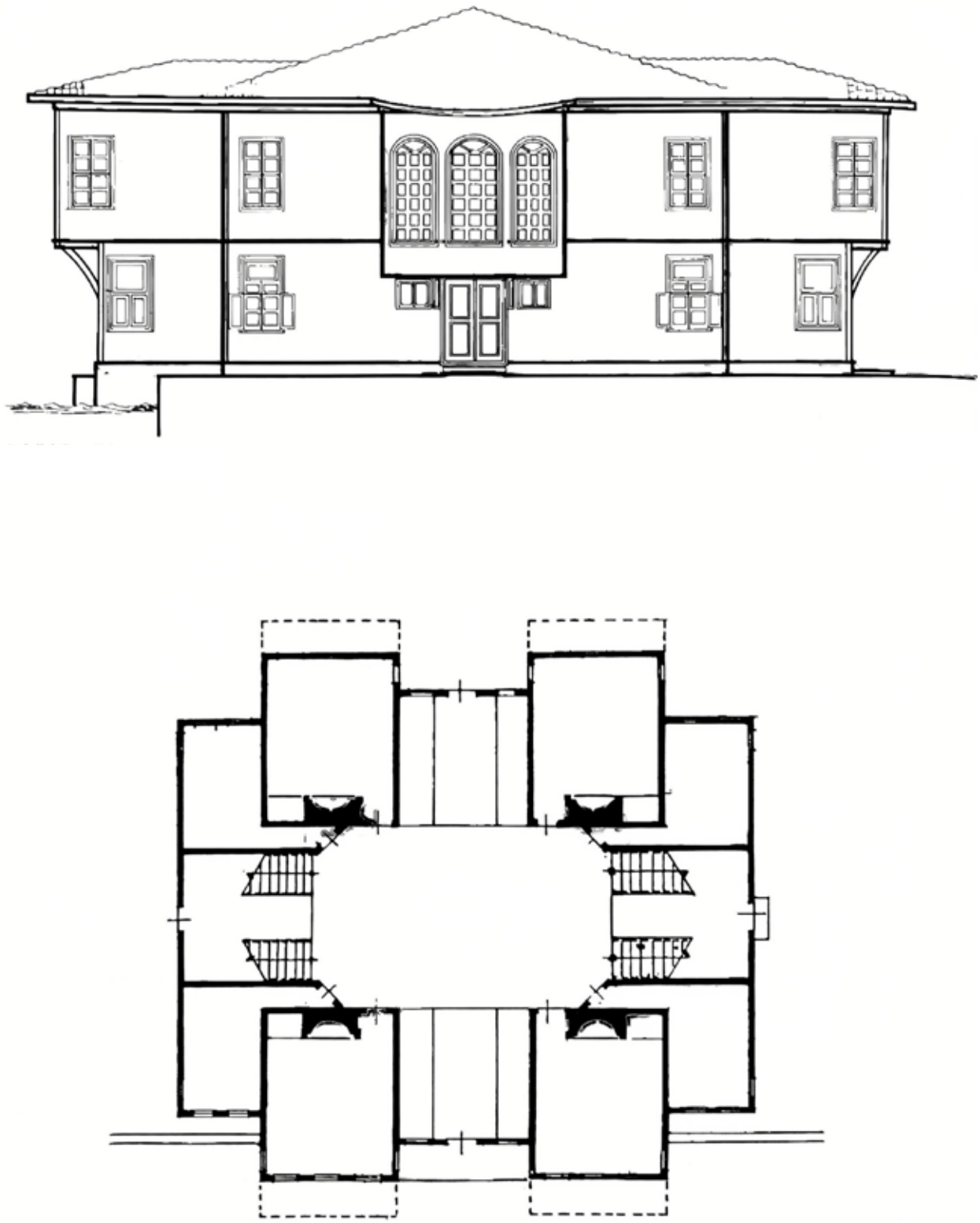


Figure 71. Section and first floor plan of Sadullah Paşa Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 294.

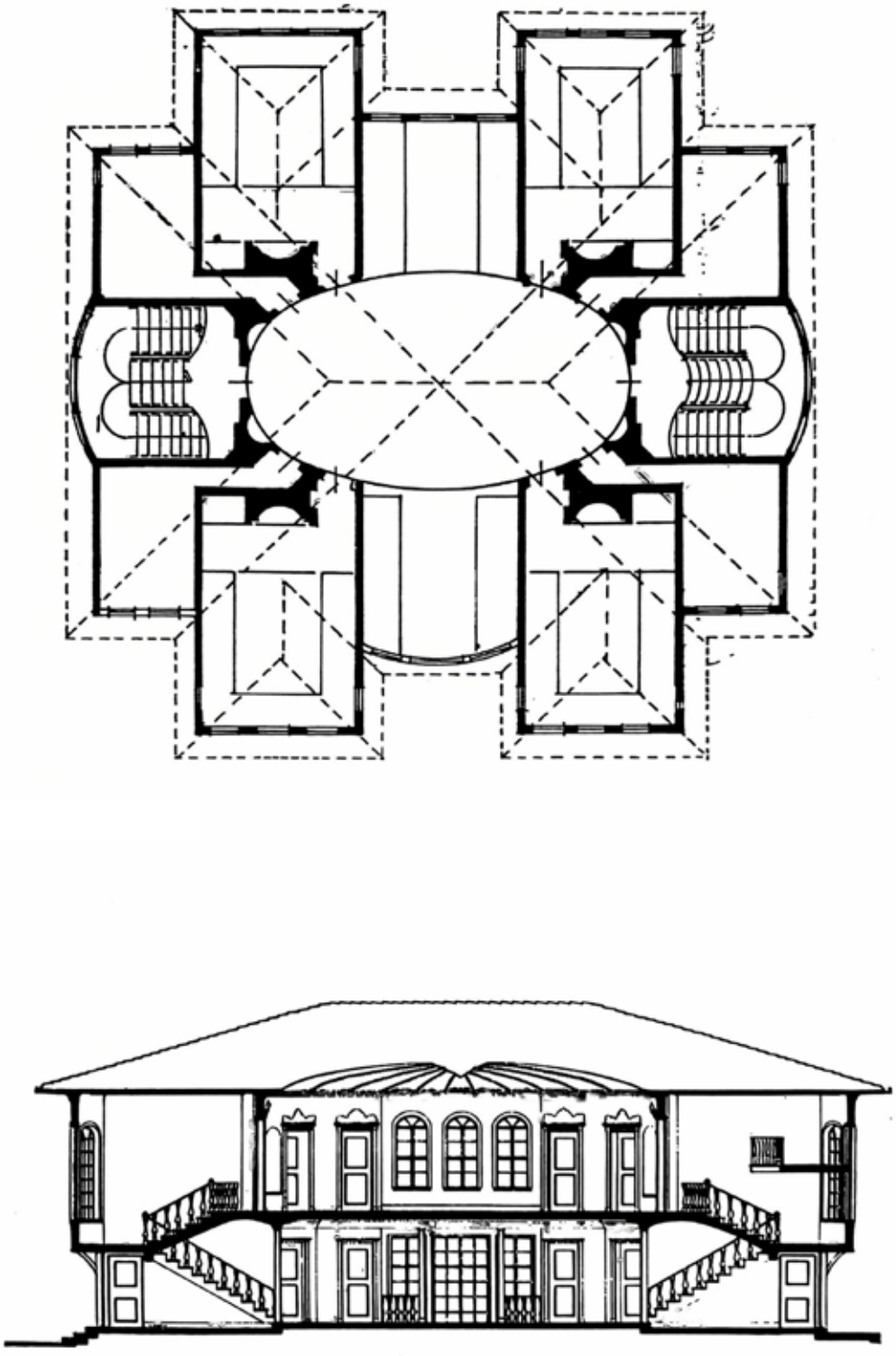


Figure 72. Second-floor plan and section of Sadullah Paşa Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 295.

the documented configuration therefore indicates a connection with a separate selamlık component, the available plans do not provide sufficient information to reconstruct the complete haremlik–selamlık organization of the original complex.The rooms have plaster moldings on the ceilings with different patterns, such as flowers, fruits, and vegetables, while those on the upper floor are more elaborated compared to the ones on the ground floor. The ceiling of the elliptical central hall is blue, reminiscent of otağ curtains and ropes.Several special drawings were revealed on the walls of the rooms during the 1948 restoration of the mansion, following the removal of the wallpaper. On the upper floor, the room on the west, known as the Pink Room, contains a wall painting depicting the Şerefabad Kasrı across from the mansion. In the room in the southwest, the Yellow Room, there is a trompe-l'œil painting showing a hall opening toward the sea, while on the opposite side a white mansion is depicted. In the room in the northwest, the Blue Room, the walls and ceilings are decorated with pink roses over a blue background. In addition, paintings of Istanbul are located within the wall niches of the rooms.



Figure 73. Wall painting from the Sadullah Paşa Yalısı depicting Istanbul in the eighteenth century. Source: SALT Research Archives.

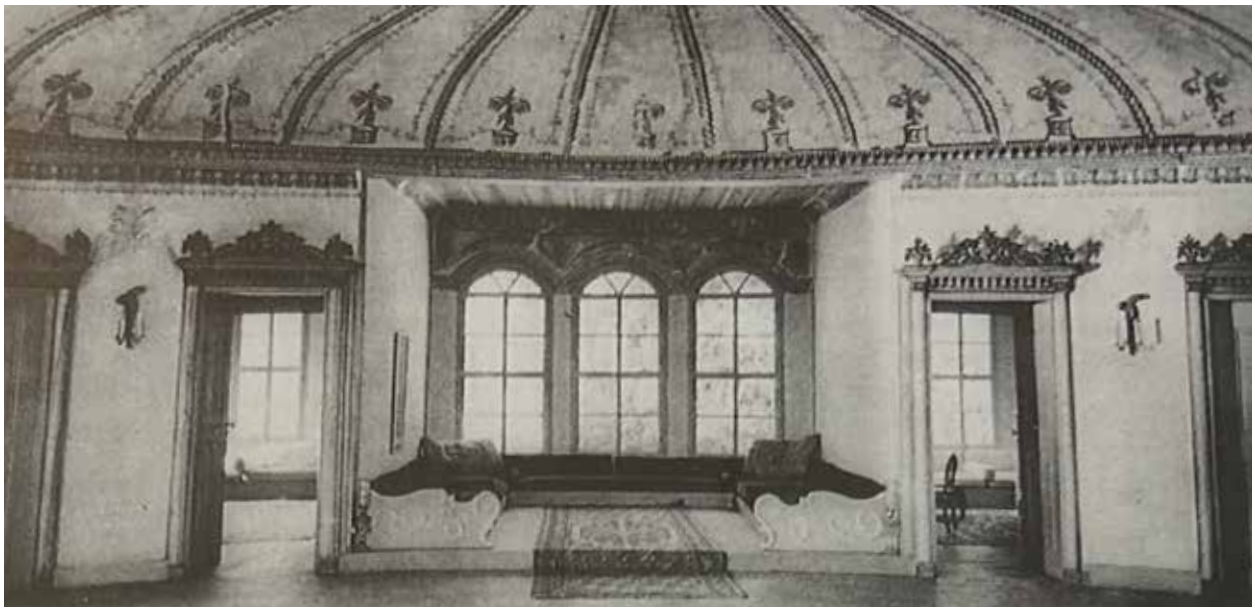


Figure 74. Second-floor central sofa of Sadullah Paşa Yalısı, illustrating the ceiling, built-in sedirs, and partial views of the adjacent side rooms with carved corniced doors. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 290.

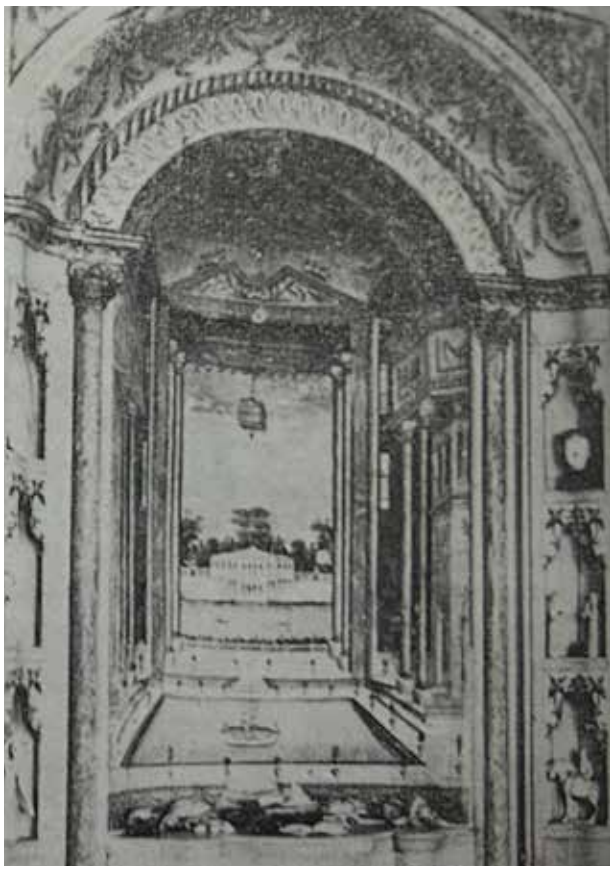


Figure 75. Wall painting depicting the White Mansion, identified by Prof. Sedat Hakkı Eldem as the Şeref-Abad Pavilion, located in the large niche of the western upper-floor room of Sadullah Paşa Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 292.

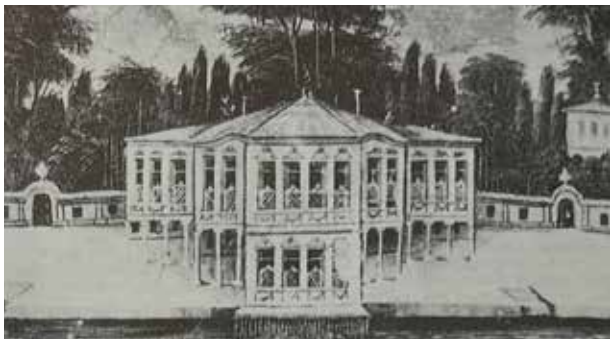


Figure 76. Detail of the wall painting shown above. *Source:* Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 292.



Figure 77. Interior detail showing wooden colonettes and wall niches in Sadullah Paşa Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 291.

Köçeoğlu Yalısı



Figure 78. Köçeoğlu Yalısı from the Bosphorus. Source: Eski İstanbul Fotoğrafları Arşivi.

Köçeoğlu Mansion is located in Çengelköy on the Anatolian shore of the Bosphorus and is believed to have been constructed around 1780. The building is considered one of the mature examples of the central sofa plan type. [47]

The mansion was positioned within an extensive garden composition extending toward the sloping landscape behind the waterfront. Although the garden was later interrupted by a road on the landward side, the site plan demonstrates that it originally continued upward as a broad plateau. The plan identifies several landscape elements and structures, including the upper kiosk, pool, gardens, former and later entrances, and additional sections attached to the original structure. A large pool was positioned in front of the pavilion located on the upper terraces behind the mansion. These elements indicate that the mansion formed part of a larger residential and garden complex rather



Figure 79. Köçeoğlu Yalısı site plan. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 160.

47 Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları: Anadolu Yakası* (Vehbi Koç Vakfı, 1994), 166.

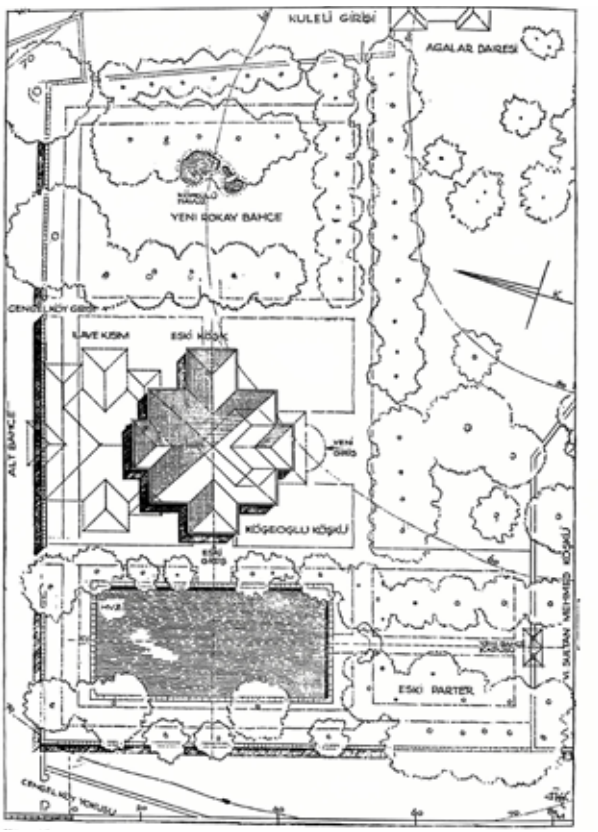


Figure 80. Köçeoğlu Yalısı site plan. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 160.

than functioning as an isolated waterfront structure.

The site plan and elevations demonstrate the strong relationship established between the mansion and the Bosphorus shoreline. The building is positioned parallel to the water while maintaining a direct spatial relationship with the gardens behind it. The articulation of the façades through projections and recessed surfaces strengthens this connection with both the waterfront and the landscape. The elevations show that the upper floor is visually lighter and more articulated through projecting bays, wide window groups, and continuous rows of shutters, while the lower level appears heavier and more solidly grounded. The sea-facing projections and recessed surfaces admit the sea into the façade composition and constitute one of the characteristic features of the mansion. The quay walls are constructed of dressed stone.

The section drawing clarifies the vertical organisation and structural articulation of the building. The lower level is directly connected to the garden and entrance spaces, while the principal sofa and main rooms are positioned on the upper floor. The staircase rises through the building toward the attic level located above the main hall. The drawings additionally reveal the distinction between the heavier lower walls and the lighter upper portions of the building, suggesting a masonry lower level supporting lighter timber-framed upper floors. The projecting upper sections are structurally supported through the wall and floor system visible in the section and elevations.

The spatial organisation of the mansion is structured around a central sofa occupying the core of the plan. Eldem reports, according to the available records, the mansion actually consists of two separate houses connected together, with the harem section forming the larger and more significant part of the

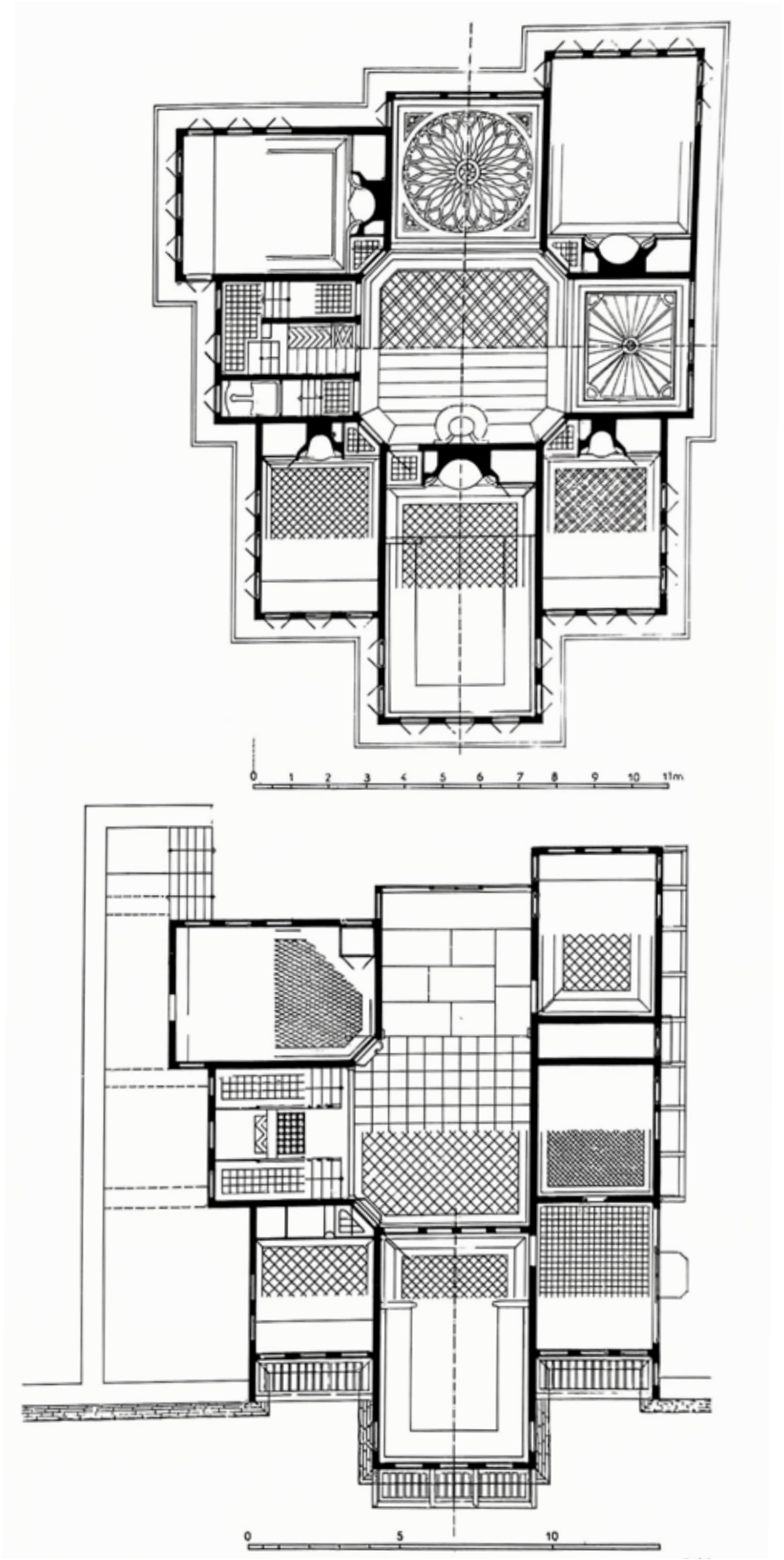


Figure 81. Floor plans of Köçeoğlu Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2,* 161.

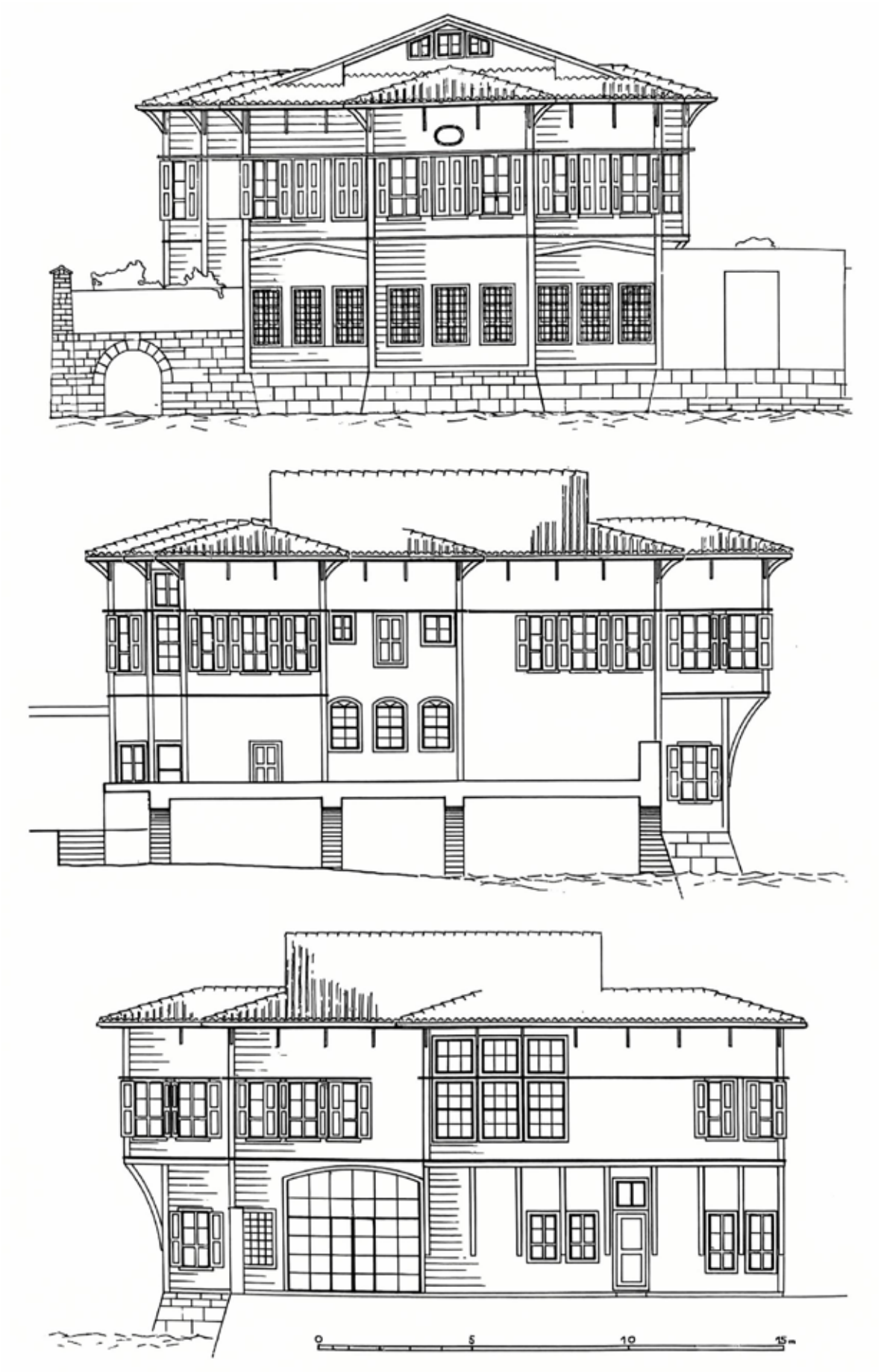


Figure 82. Façades and a section of Köçeoğlu Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2,* 162.

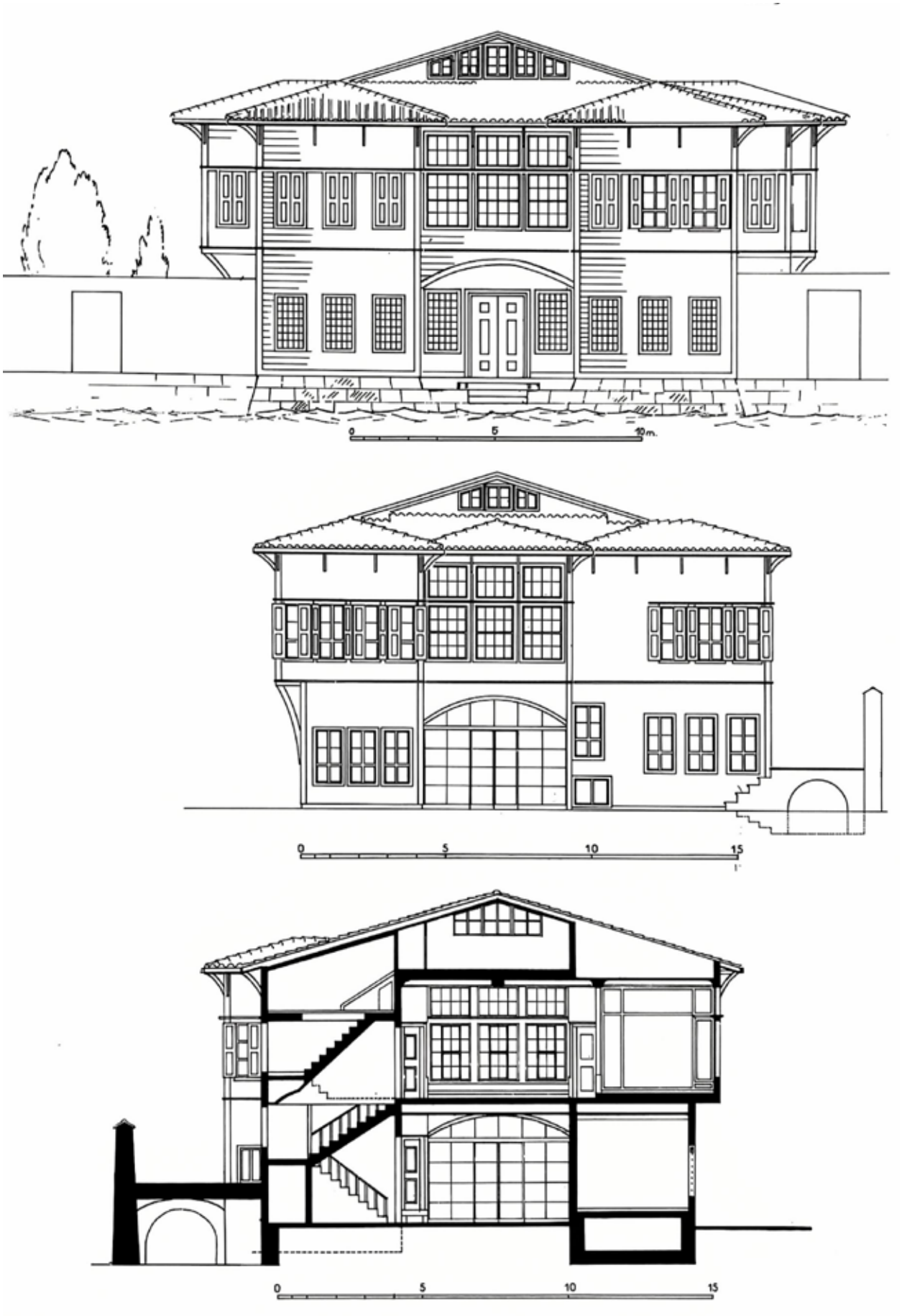


Figure 83. Elevations and cross section of Köçeoğlu Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 163.

composition. [48]The harem possessed both a broader façade facing the sea and a greater depth than the selamlık section. Although the sofa constitutes the central weight of the composition, the different orientations of the eyvans and the variation in the size and geometry of the rooms prevent the plan from producing a rigid symmetry. The upper floor sofa is described as possessing a balanced geometry shaped through bevelled corners and rooms opening in different directions. Large windows surrounding the hall allow daylight to penetrate deeply into the interior. According to Eldem, the sofa functions as the principal distributive element of the upper floor, organising circulation between the surrounding rooms and eyvans.[49]

Eldem describes, "The ground floor differs from earlier waterfront mansions in that it is not organised as a closed service basement. Instead, it is positioned directly at garden level and supports only a single principal floor above it. The large number of windows and sliding glass doors establishes a more direct and open relationship with the gardens. The entrance passage is paved with marble slabs; the kitchen and servants' quarters are located on the right side, while the rooms on the left open toward the garden. Opposite the entrance, separated through large glass panels that could be raised, is a large sitting room projecting toward the sea."[50]

The staircase arrangement forms one of the notable spatial elements of the mansion, as Eldem points out. The staircase is partially enclosed by the wall on the right side and is identified as an early example of the triple-stair arrangement later encountered in Bosphorus waterfront mansions. While the first-floor landing follows an axial organisation, a concealed continuation of the staircase extends upward toward the attic level.[51]

The interior decoration constitutes the richest and best-preserved aspect of the mansion. The ceilings reinforce the architectural articulation of the spaces through varied and elaborate decorative compositions. Motifs described as yelkovan, şemse, and şişe are employed, while heavily carved ceiling bosses are positioned at the centres of the compositions. The walls are decorated with shallow relief plasterwork combined with painted imitation marble surfaces. A restrained colour scheme of black, white, and grey was intentionally used to emphasise the richness of the ceilings and woodwork, where brighter colours such as orange, blue, green, and red were introduced. Built-in cupboards, sitting benches, and patterned armrests were preserved, although the cushions are missing. The large marble fountain positioned within the upper hall is identified as one of the most significant interior elements of the mansion. The interior decoration is believed to date from the second half of the eighteenth century, probably between 1760 and 1780.

Eldem continues, compared to the richness of the interior, the exterior articulation of the mansion remains relatively restrained. The windows and shutters are positioned almost flush with the wall surfaces, while the eaves are supported through projecting brackets characteristic of the period. Despite this relative simplicity, the façade composition maintains a strong plastic quality through its projections, recesses, and relationship with the waterfront.[52]

48 Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları: Anadolu Yakası*, 165.
49 Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları: Anadolu Yakası*, 166.
50 Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları: Anadolu Yakası*, 166.
51 Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları: Anadolu Yakası*, 166.
52 Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları: Anadolu Yakası*, 166.

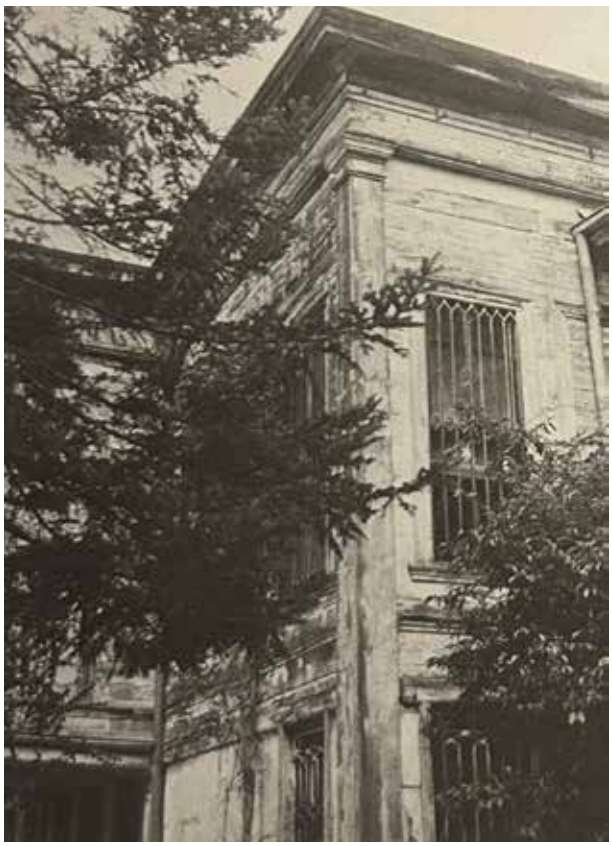




Figure 84. Photographs of Köçeoğlu Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 159.

Şerifler Yalısı

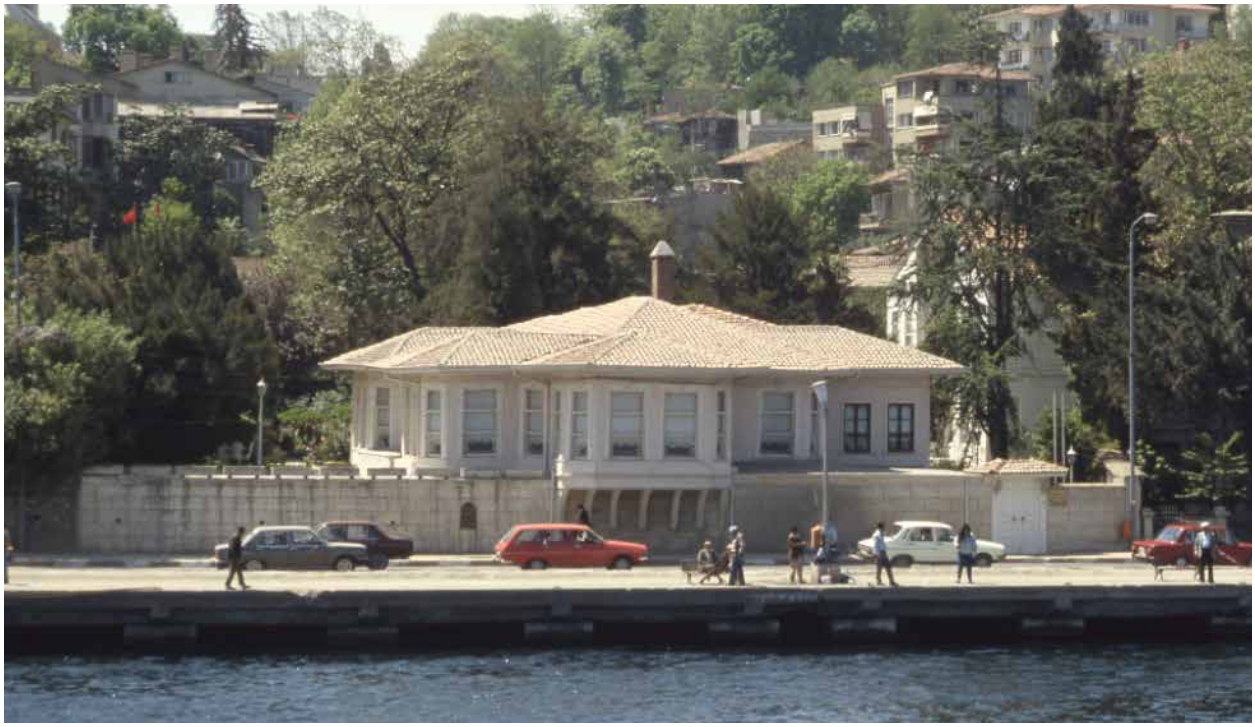


Figure 85. Photograph of Şerifler Yalısı. Source: SALT Research.

Şerifler Yalısı, located in Emirgan on the European shore of the Bosphorus, represents one of the most significant surviving examples of eighteenth-century Bosphorus waterfront architecture. The existing selamlık pavilion is generally dated to around 1782–1785 and is understood to have originally formed part of a larger complex consisting of both harem and selamlık sections. While the harem section was demolished during the twentieth century, the surviving selamlık structure preserves important aspects of the spatial and architectural characteristics associated with eighteenth-century Bosphorus residential architecture.[53] The complex underwent several later interventions, particularly during the nineteenth century, including additions, repairs, and alterations to both the façades and interior elements.

Erdenen points out that the site organisation reveals a complex relationship between the

53 Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4: Yeniköy, Ortaköy* (İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı, 1994), 698.

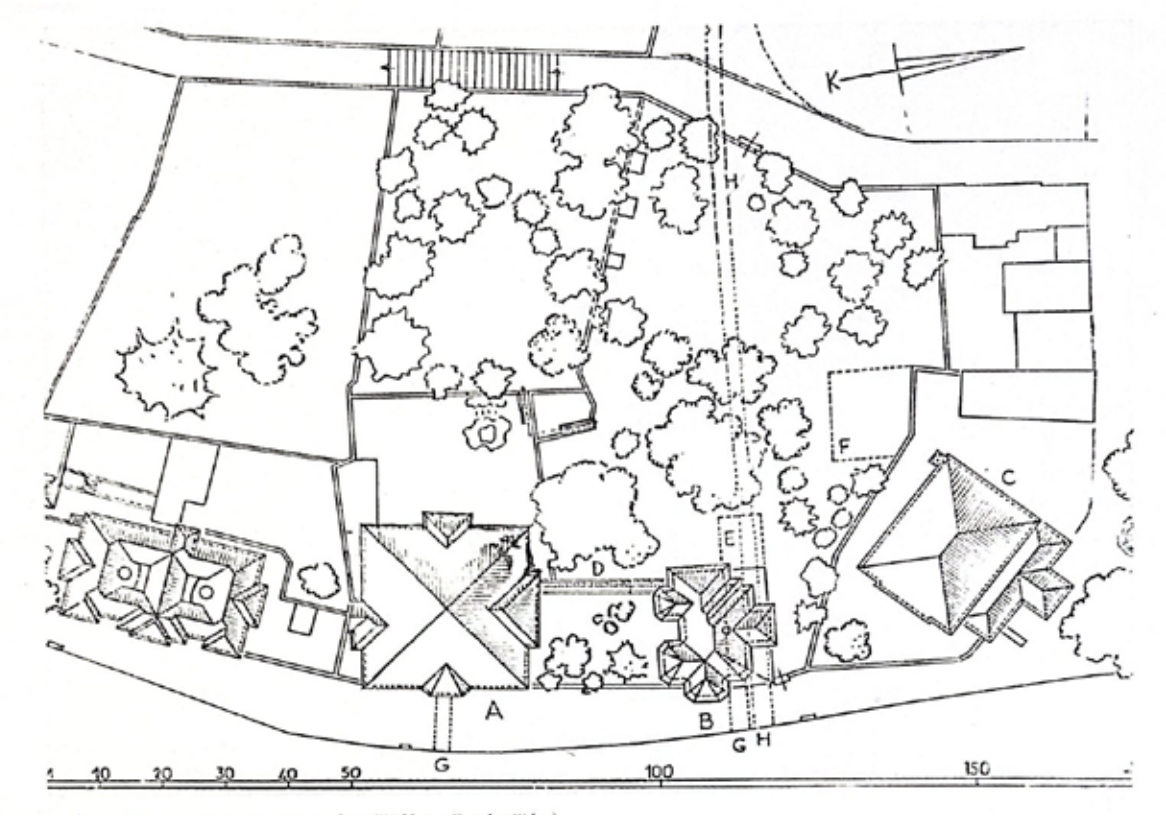


Figure 86. Site plan of Şerifler Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4,* 702.

shoreline, garden, and upper terraces. The original complex extended across a large waterfront property connected through elevated and covered galleries between the harem and selamlık sections. Although the original complex contained both haremlik and selamlık sections, the loss of the haremlik limits the extent to which their complete internal organisation and spatial relationship can be reconstructed from the surviving documentation. The site plan indicates a layered.organisation composed of the waterfront pavilion, gardens extending toward the landward side, additional service structures, and connections to the nearby Hamid-i Evvel Mosque.[54] The selamlık pavilion was positioned on an elevated garden platform approximately three metres above the shoreline, while vaulted openings beneath the coastal road established connections with the kayıkhane and the covered section of the Emirgan stream. The terrain and garden organisation therefore produced a gradual transition between the waterfront and the elevated residential platform.

The plan organisation is structured around a strong axial arrangement extending from the entrance toward the sea-facing projections. Despite this axial composition, the plan is not entirely symmetrical. A long rectangular sofa forms the principal spatial spine of the structure, beginning from the entrance portico and extending toward the sea-facing divanhane. At the centre of this axis lies a large domed and fountained central hall organised in a cruciform configuration. The central sofa expands into three projecting seating bays oriented toward different directions, producing a composition shaped through successive projections rather than through a rigid geometric enclosure. The plan therefore combines axial organisation with a fragmented and articulated perimeter condition.

The relationship between the sofa and

54 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 698.

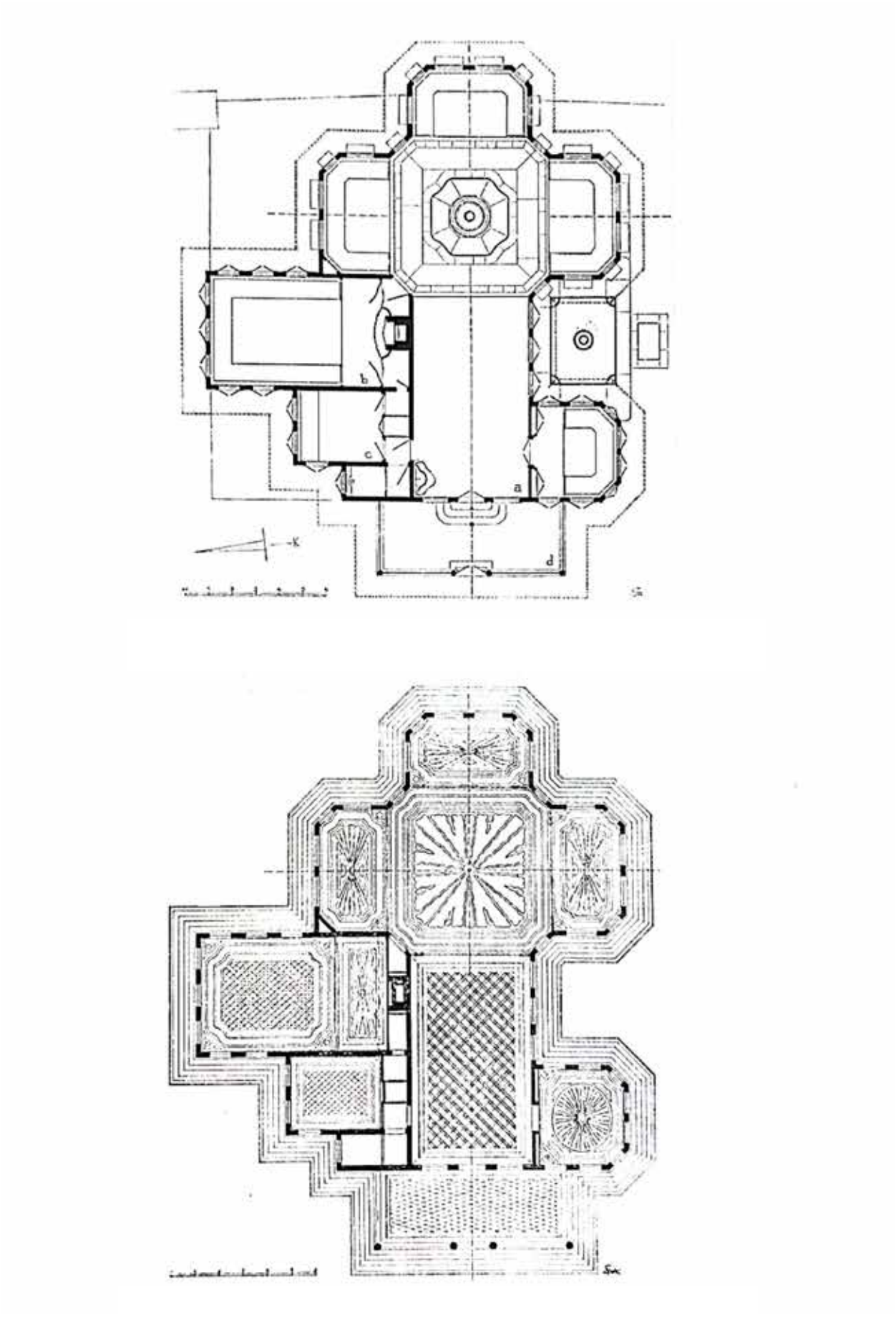


Figure 87. Floor plan and ceiling plan of Şerifler Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4,* 705.

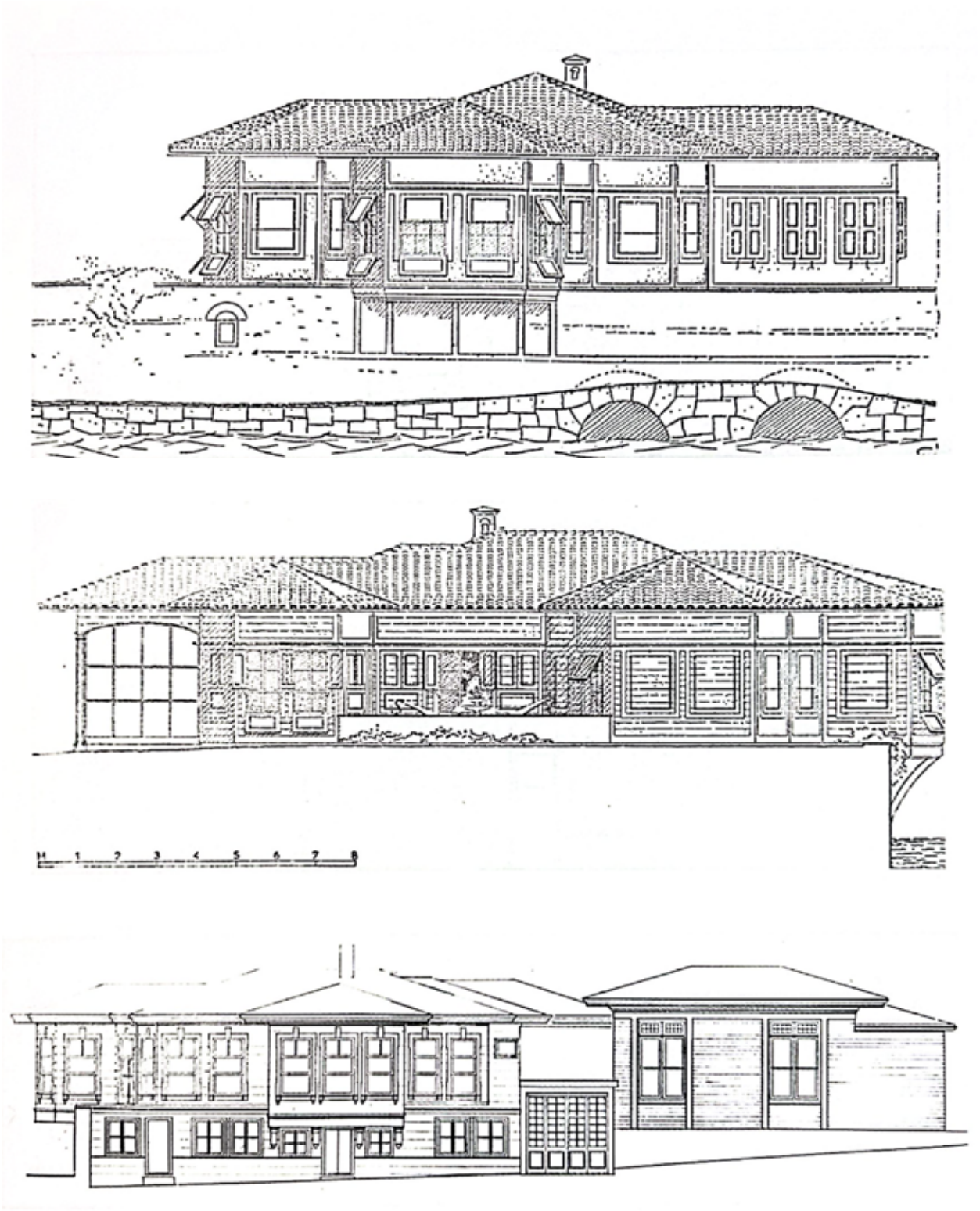


Figure 88. East, south, and entrance façades of Şerifler Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4, 703.*

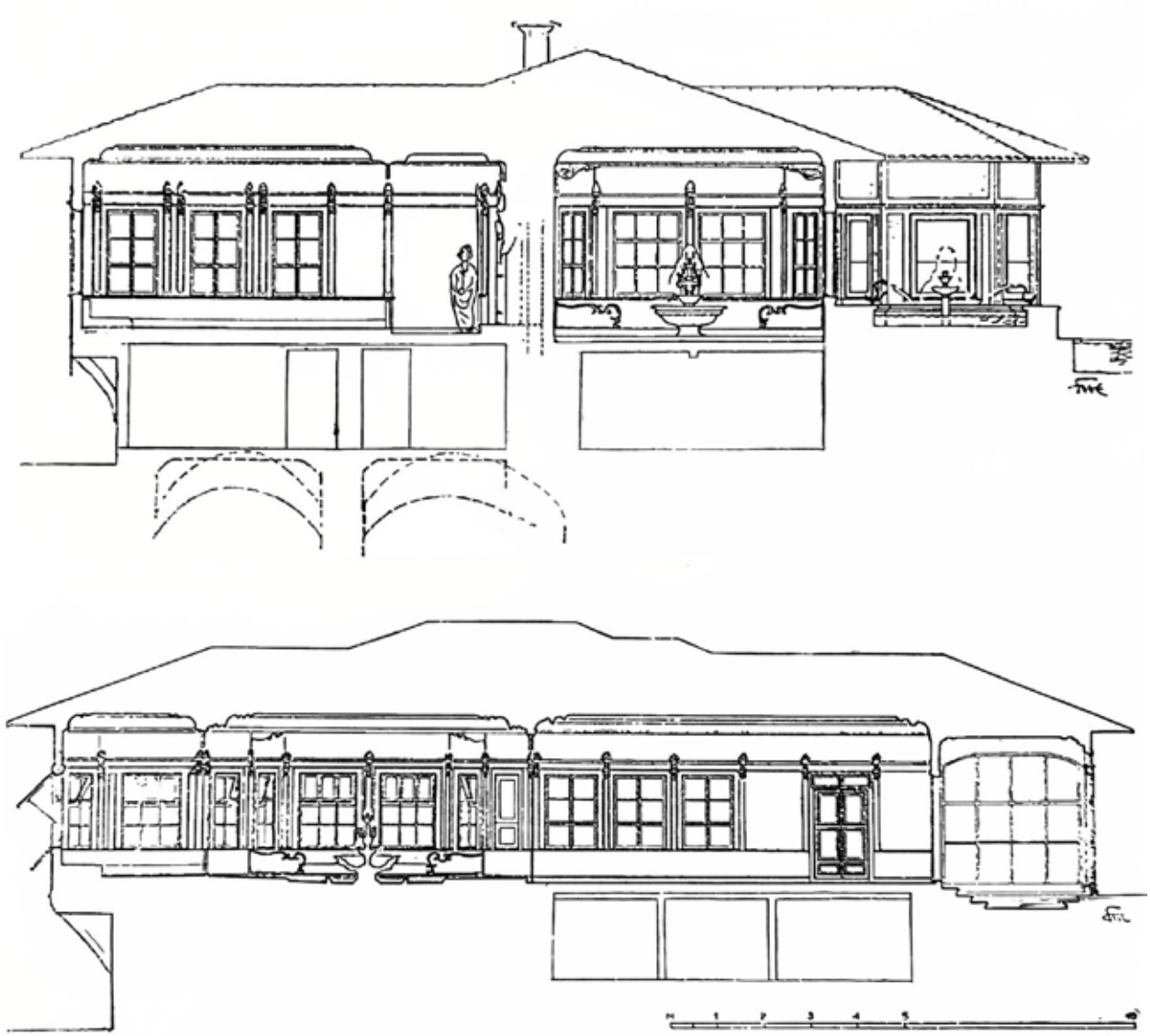


Figure 89. Sections of Şerifler Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4,* 704.

the projecting bays constitutes one of the defining spatial characteristics of the structure. The central hall is organised around a marble fountain and pool composition positioned beneath an elaborately decorated ceiling, says Erdenen.[55] The projecting eyvans surrounding the sofa enlarge the visual and spatial relationship between the interior and the Bosphorus while simultaneously allowing light to penetrate deeply into the central hall. The cruciform organisation of the sofa establishes a spatial centre from which secondary rooms and service spaces are accessed. The surviving plans indicate that smaller service rooms and auxiliary spaces were positioned asymmetrically around the main axis, reinforcing the partially irregular character of the plan. The circulation sequence emphasises a gradual transition from entrance to divanhane and finally toward the sea-oriented projections. Entry occurs through a covered portico leading directly into the longitudinal sofa. From this axis, movement expands into the fountained central hall and toward the sea-facing divanhane positioned at the termination of the main axis. The divanhane itself opens

55 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 698.

toward the Bosphorus through a sequence of large openings and projecting bays, reinforcing the visual continuity between interior space and the waterfront landscape. The organisation of circulation therefore prioritises longitudinal movement toward the sea while simultaneously generating secondary lateral expansions through the projecting seating areas.

The façades are shaped through a rhythmic arrangement of projections, wide openings, and articulated window systems. The sea-facing elevations reveal large windows positioned in continuous horizontal sequences, particularly within the divanhane and projecting bays. According to Eldem, the original windows were considerably larger before later repairs and nineteenth-century modifications altered portions of the façade composition.[56]**28** The projecting bays are emphasised through cantilevered extensions and broad roof overhangs, while the elevations maintain a relatively restrained exterior expression compared to the richness of the interiors. The relationship between the projections and the shoreline is particularly evident in the sea façade, where the structure extends outward above the waterfront retaining wall.[57]

The interior organisation and decorative programme constitute one of the most significant aspects of the structure. The central hall contains a marble fountain composition surrounded by a pool and seating areas, while the ceilings are organised through geometrically divided compositions enriched with painted and gilded ornamentation. The ceiling plans reveal highly articulated decorative geometries composed of central medallions, radiating motifs, and framed ceiling compartments. Both the central sofa and the side rooms employ differentiated ceiling compositions, reinforcing the hierarchical organisation of the interior spaces. Particular emphasis was placed on the ocaklı oda, described in the source as the best-preserved interior space of the structure. This room preserved much of its original decorative programme, including painted wooden panels, gilded ornamentation, carved cupboard covers, and integrated fireplace compositions. The room was organised through a longitudinal configuration with windows on three sides and a fireplace positioned on the fourth wall.[58] Hidden passages integrated within the cupboards connected the room to adjacent service spaces, demonstrating the integration of functional circulation systems within ornamental interior surfaces. The decorative programme of the interiors therefore combined architectural articulation, furniture integration, and ornamental surface treatment into a unified spatial composition characteristic of eighteenth-century Bosphorus architecture.



Figure 90. Pool of Şerifler Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4,* 699.

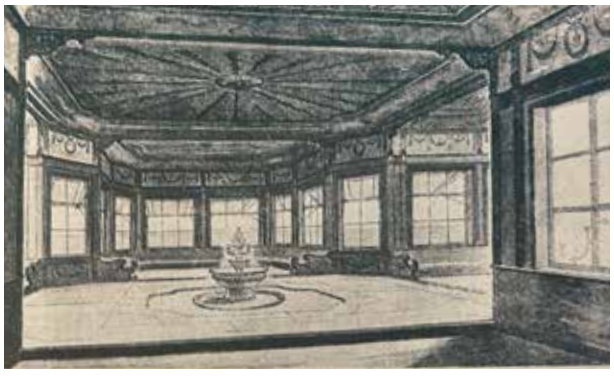


Figure 91. Sofa of Şerifler Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4, 700.*

56 Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Köşkler ve Kasırlar: A Survey of Turkish Kiosks and Pavilion*s, vol. 2 (Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1974), 280.
57 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 700.
58 Eldem, *Köşkler ve Kasırlar*, 277.

Yılanlı Yalı



Figure 92. View of Yılanlı Yalı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 1,* 157.

Yılanlı Yalı was located on the rocky shoreline of Bebek and consisted of separate haremlik and selamlık sections, arranged across the sloping terrain rather than as a single compact waterfront block. The complex extended inland through gardens rising toward the hills behind the Bosphorus. Historical representations and the reconstructed site plans show a composition distributed across different levels, with the residential volumes positioned above the shoreline and connected to a larger garden landscape. The yalı was associated with Reisülküttab Mustafa Efendi and was later inherited by Raşit Efendi, under whose ownership the property was maintained and developed.[59]



Figure 93. Yılanlı Yalı in 1836–1837. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4,* 749.

59 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 754.

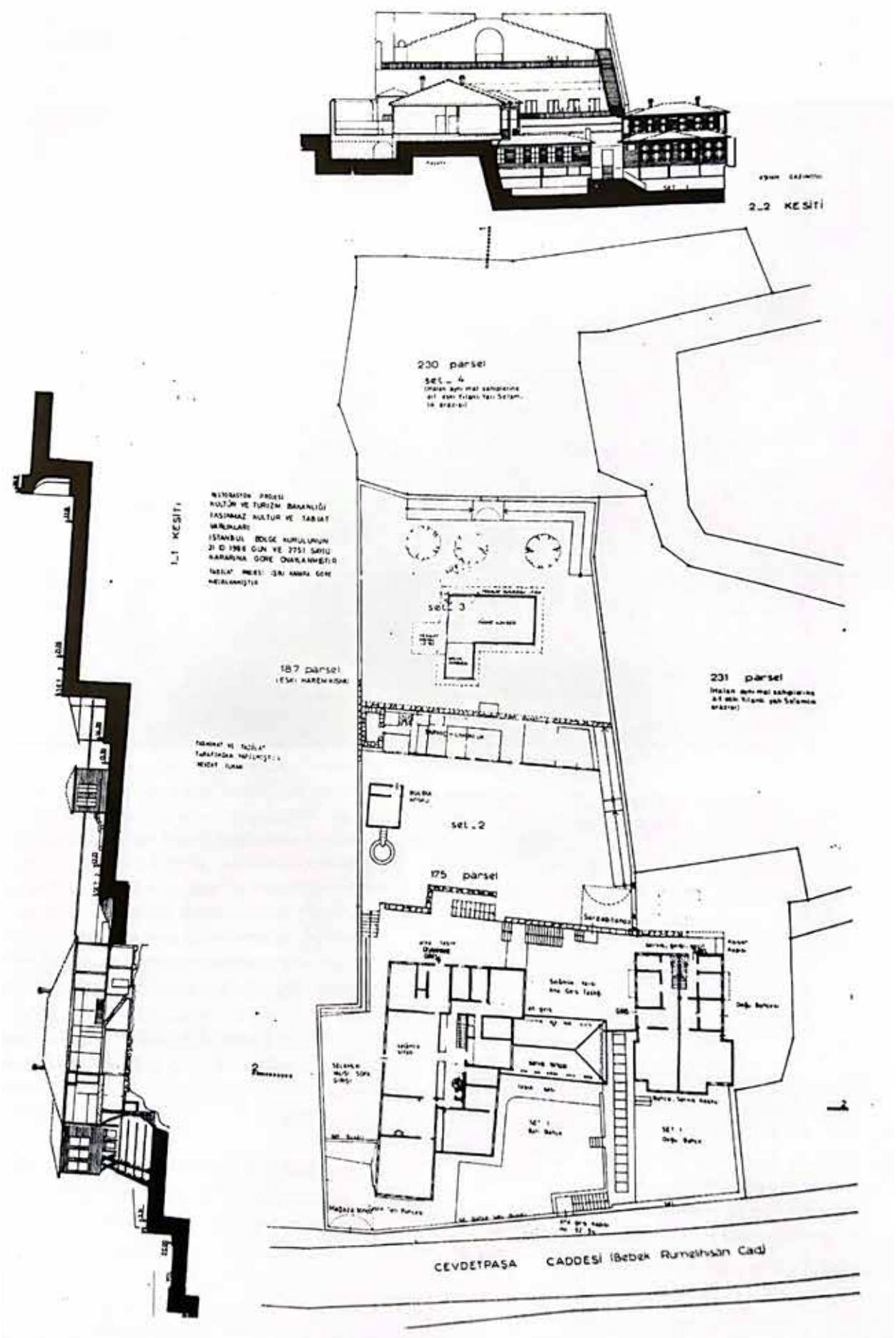


Figure 94. Yılanlı Yalı site plan and sections. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 758.

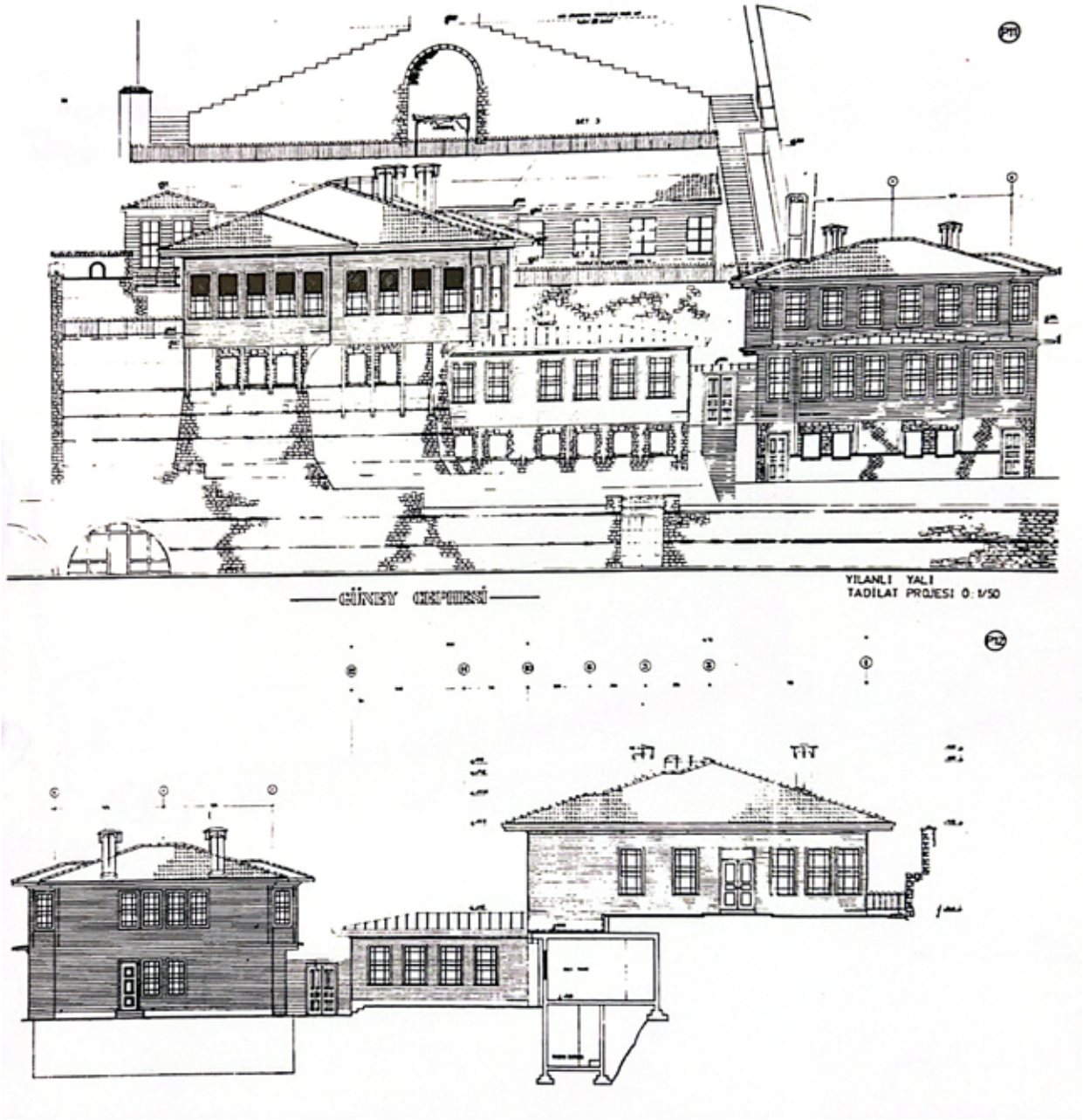


Figure 95. Yılanlı Yalı south elevations. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4,* 759.

The organization of the yalı reflects the division between the haremlik and selamlık as distinct domestic components. The haremlik was the larger section, containing more than forty rooms together with sitting rooms and large sofas. On the upper floor, one of the principal spaces was the Sakal-ı Şerif room, used for prayers during Ramadan.[60] The surviving plans show rooms arranged around larger circulation and gathering spaces, while projecting volumes extend toward the exterior. Rather than following a completely regular geometrical composition, the plan develops through interconnected rooms and circulation spaces that respond to the irregular configuration of the site.

The selamlık formed a separate part of the complex and was organized around a large sofa with rooms positioned around it. According to the historical description,

60 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 756.

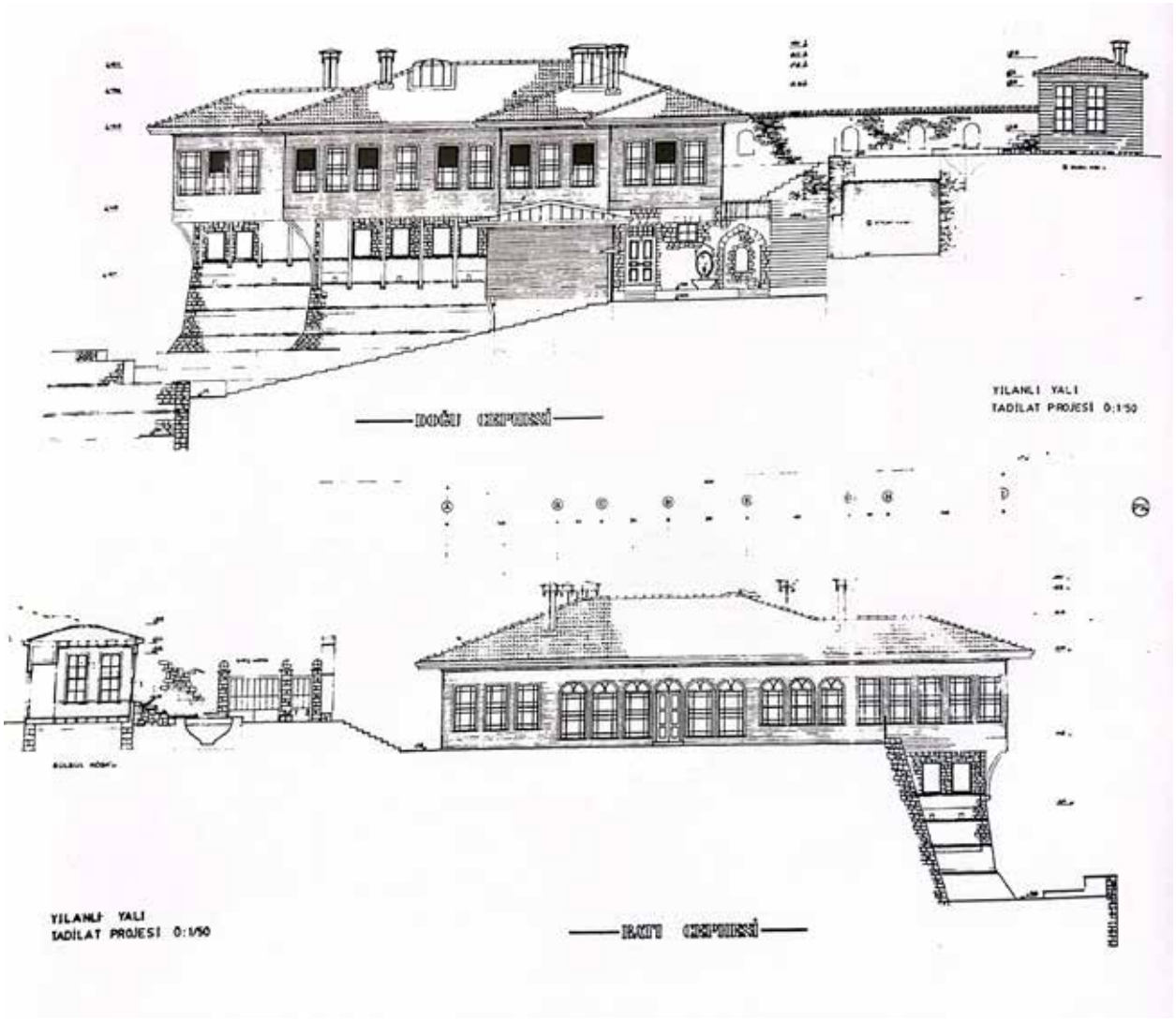


Figure 96. Yılanlı Yalı east and west elevations. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4,* 760.

"the sofa opened toward rooms with views over the Bosphorus and contained a pool and fountain, while the surrounding rooms included built-in seating and decorated interiors. A stone hall near the entrance provided another important reception space. This room was covered by a masonry dome and contained a central pool surrounded by a marble band, creating a comparatively monumental interior within the otherwise predominantly timber residence."[61]The relationship between the building and its site was strongly shaped by the steep topography of Bebek. Unlike yalıs positioned directly on a flat strip at water level, the residential volumes of Yılanlı Yalı occupied elevated terraces above the shore. Timber upper floors projected beyond the masonry retaining structures below and were supported in places by timber braces.

The difference between the heavier lower structures and the lighter projecting upper volumes allowed the building to extend over the irregular terrain. Historical photographs show this construction particularly clearly, with timber rooms projecting above stone retaining walls toward the Bosphorus.

The complex was surrounded by extensive gardens extending uphill from the waterfront. These included planted gardens, orchards,

61 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 753.

vineyards, pools, fountains and other landscape elements distributed across the sloping grounds.[62] The garden therefore formed a substantial intermediary zone between the waterfront residence and the hillside behind it, rather than functioning simply as a small enclosed garden attached to the house. The site plan similarly shows the principal residential structures occupying only part of a much larger property extending inland from the coastal road. On the landward side, the complex was bounded by Cevdetpaşa Caddesi (Bebek–Rumelihisarı road), establishing a clear relationship between the property and land-based circulation. However, the available documentation does not provide sufficient information to reconstruct the original access sequence of the complex, particularly the relationship between maritime and land-based entrances. Architecturally, the yalı was predominantly constructed in timber, with projecting upper floors, broad roof eaves and repetitive window openings defining its exterior appearance.

The elevations show a composition made up of several adjoining volumes rather than a single symmetrical façade. Differences in projection, height and roof form correspond to the internal arrangement and to the changing levels of the site. The waterfront-facing elevations were characterized by extensive rows of windows, reinforcing the visual relationship between the principal rooms and the Bosphorus.

"The building underwent significant alterations over time. The haremlik was substantially modified during an intervention around 1910, when additional wings were introduced and elements of its earlier architectural character were altered. The selamlık retained more of its earlier configuration and decorative character. In 1964, a fire destroyed the haremlik section, leaving the selamlık as the principal surviving component of the former complex."[63]



Figure 97. Yılanlı Yalı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 1,* 157.

62 Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları: Rumeli Yakası (Vehbi Koç Vakfı, 1993)*, 158.
63 Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları: Rumeli Yakası*, 158.

Kıbrıslı Yalısı



Figure 98. View of Kıbrıslı Yalısı from the Bosphorus. *Source:* Google Maps Street View, Istanbul, accessed July 2026.

Kıbrıslı Mansion, also known as the Kıbrıslı Mehmed Paşa Mansion or Kara Vezir Mansion, is located in Kandilli on the Anatolian shore of the Bosphorus and was constructed during the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

The first owner of the mansion was İzzet Mehmed Paşa, one of the grand viziers of Sultan Abdülhamid I. Following the death of Silahdar Mehmed Paşa, who was known as Kara Vezir, İzzet Mehmed Paşa was appointed to the grand vizierate for a second time, which led to the mansion also becoming known as the Kara Vezir Mansion. Another grand vizier bearing the same name, İzzet Mehmed Paşa of the reign of Sultan Selim III, later became associated with the property. For a certain period, the mansion was also inhabited by Kapıcıbaşı Mehmed Ataullah Bey, the grandson of İzzet Paşa. In 1840, the mansion passed into the ownership of Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa, a statesman and bureaucrat who briefly served as grand vizier. Possessing a

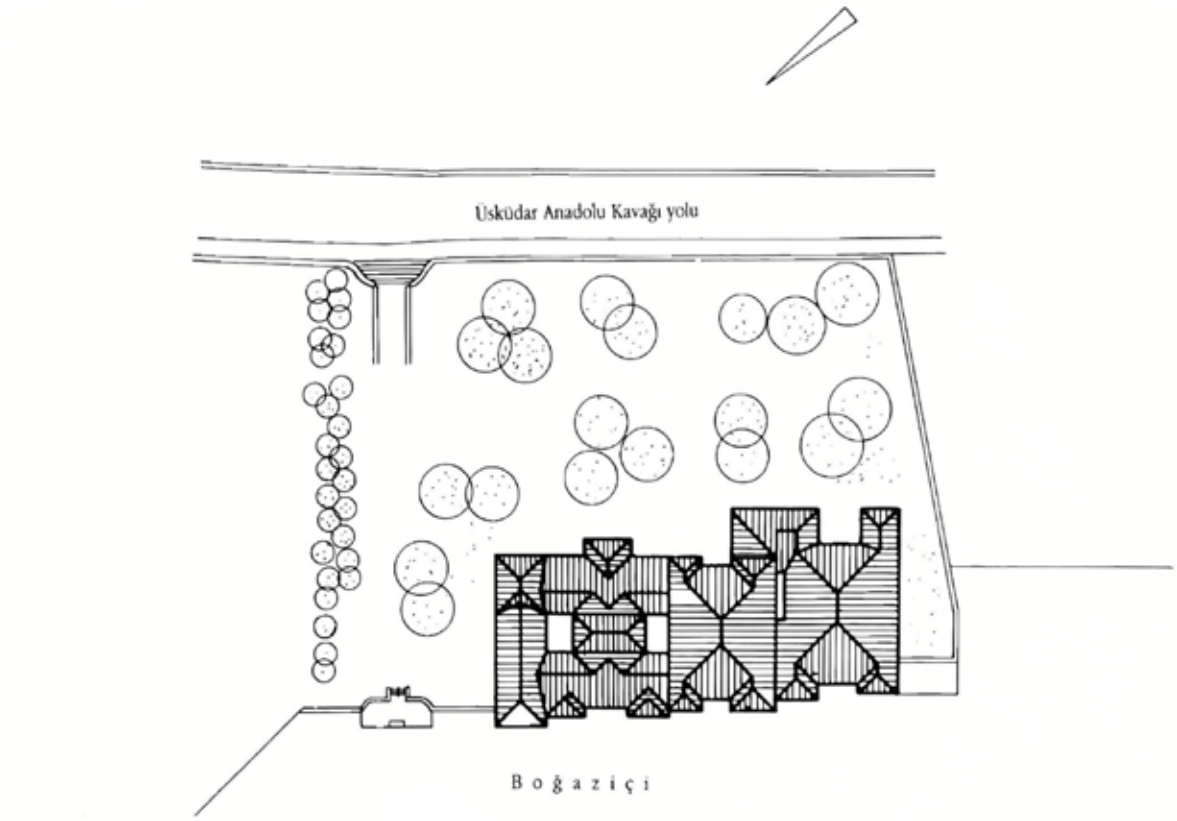


Figure 99. Site plan of Kıbrıslı Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 202.

shoreline length of approximately sixty-four metres, it is considered one of the widest waterfront mansions along the Bosphorus. In its present condition, the mansion consists of three separate sections under different ownerships.[64]

The mansion has undergone several repairs and alterations throughout its history, and certain sections have been demolished, causing the structure to move partially away from its original condition. The two-storey building located on the garden side facing the road, which dated to the late eighteenth century, was demolished in 1926 due to the construction of the road. A Bosphorus drawing executed in charcoal by the painter F. Prault during the reign of Sultan Selim III depicts the central section of the mansion as higher, with lower side sections extending on both sides. It is understood that additional constructions were added to the northern side of the mansion during the early nineteenth century. According to Refia Hanım, one of the last owners of the mansion, the building was restored by an Italian architect whose name she could not recall, during which many Turkish decorative elements within the mansion were destroyed. The mansion originally contained three large baths, none of which have survived to the present day. Its boathouse has also been demolished. Research conducted by Dr. Tuchelt identified the former presence of numerous additional structures and spaces surrounding the mansion, including a boathouse, sea bath, pool, stable, kitchen, carriage house, cistern, bath, revolving cupboard, vegetable garden, laundry area, harem garden, harem pier, selamlık pier, and bostan.[65]

The site plan demonstrates the strong linear relationship established between

64 Göncüoğlu, Selçuklu, and Yavaş, *Hisarlar ve Mahalleleri*, 137.
65 Göncüoğlu, Selçuklu, and Yavaş, *Hisarlar ve Mahalleleri*, 139.

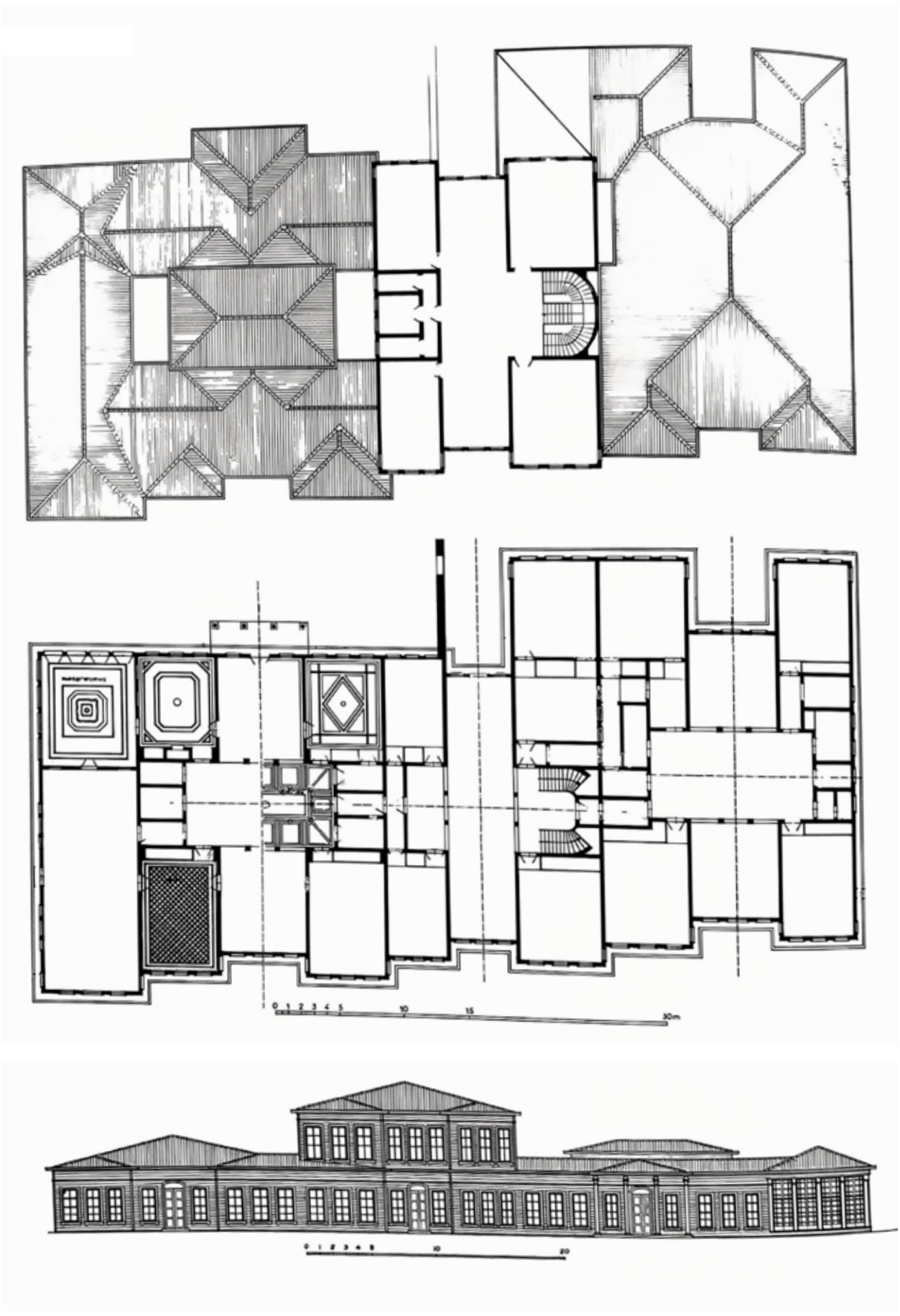


Figure 100. Roof plan, floor plan and elevation of Kıbrıslı Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2,* 120.

the mansion and the Bosphorus shoreline. Positioned parallel to the waterfront, the building extends horizontally along the coast while the extensive garden opens toward the land side. According to Erdenen, the irregular geometry of the shoreline directly shapes the architectural composition, causing the structure to gradually recede and advance along the water rather than forming a continuous linear block.[66] This configuration generates the fragmented and rhythmic façade character visible from the Bosphorus, while the horizontally articulated mass establishes a strong relationship with both the sea and the sloping green landscape behind the mansion. The sea-oriented projections further reinforce this relationship by maximising views and openness toward the waterfront.

Whereas Eldem estimated that from the mansion's late eighteenth-century condition, only the ceilings have survived. Nevertheless, the principal outlines of the original plan remain legible.[67] The mansion is organised through three interconnected sofa spaces corresponding to the selamlık, mabeyn, and harem sections, forming a composition that can be interpreted as three interconnected residential units joined within a single architectural mass. According to Sedad Hakkı Eldem, this configuration represents the final and most developed form of the three-sofa type achieved during the nineteenth century.

Erdenen points out, the spatial organisation is structured around central sofa spaces functioning as the principal distributive elements of the building. In each section, rooms are arranged around the sofa, while circulation is established longitudinally along the axis parallel to the shoreline. The relationship between the sea and the garden becomes particularly legible within these sofa spaces and eyvans, which establish direct visual and spatial continuity across the building from the land side toward the Bosphorus. The largest sofa, positioned on the garden side, follows the central sofa type and contains two large eyvans overlooking both the sea and the garden, separated by columns. The central section is organised according to the inner sofa type with two façades, while additional side sofas were inserted between the columns on both sides. Since an upper floor exists only above this section, the monumental double staircase positioned within the central sofa also establishes the principal vertical circulation axis of the mansion and reinforces the hierarchical importance of the central block within the overall composition. The third sofa repeats the configuration of the first one on a smaller scale. Although the plan externally appears as a four-eyvan scheme, these spaces are internally subdivided through columns and ceiling articulations.

The selamlık section is among the best-preserved parts of the mansion. Apart from the sofa spaces, the building contains sixteen rooms on the ground floor and six rooms on the upper floor, amounting to a total of twenty-one rooms. The sofas measure approximately twenty-four metres in length, while the domed selamlık sofa reaches a height of seven metres and functions as the principal entrance space to the selamlık section. On the ground floor, the large hall facing the Hisar side measures approximately seventeen and a half metres. Adjacent to this hall is the conservatory section, separated through low windows and a doorway, although these windows were closed during later repairs.[68]

The first section additionally contains a summer divanhane terminating in a large conservatory with a pool. Within the conservatory, a fountain pool dating from the eighteenth century and decorated with vine and grape leaf motifs has been preserved

66 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2*, 204.
67 Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları: Anadolu Yakası* , 121.
68 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2*, 201.

and is believed to have been brought from another location. The selamlık hall and the summer divanhane are considered nineteenth-century additions. Around 1900, the mansion underwent another restoration that significantly altered its original architectural character. During this intervention, the windows were enlarged and grouped together, while the conservatory and the large divanhane were added on the garden side. It is also thought that the upper floor above the central section was added during this period.[69]

The articulation of the façade directly reflects the organisation of the plan. The eyvans consistently remain recessed behind the rooms, while the projections maximise both views and ventilation toward the sea. The movement of these projections, described as rizalits, reinforces the rhythmic character of the waterfront façade. The mansion has an average width of approximately twenty-seven metres, and despite the presence of recessed and projecting sections, the repetitive window organisation and continuous roofline maintain the strong horizontality of the composition. The differentiated roof forms corresponding to the three principal sections further reinforce the fragmented volumetric articulation of the mansion as perceived from the Bosphorus. The façade also reveals the hierarchical emphasis of the central section through the addition of an upper level rising above the surrounding masses, further accentuating the importance of the central sofa space within the composition.

The estate surrounding the mansion was also extensive. During the period of Kıbrıslı Mustafa Paşa, the property covered approximately 40,000 square metres. Around 25,000 square metres of this land later remained within the beach area, while the present garden, together with the later additions on the right side, measures approximately 12,000 square metres. The slopes behind the mansion and the area where the casino building is located also originally belonged to the property. [70]

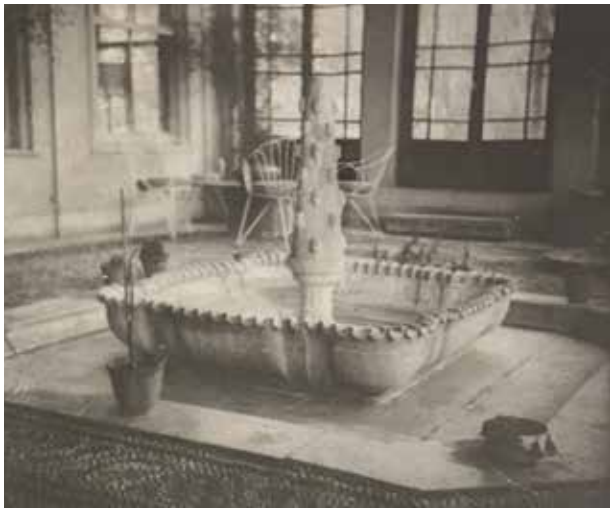


Figure 101. Green house and its pool. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2,* 121.

69 Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları: Anadolu Yakası*, 83.

70 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2*, 203.

Kont Ostrorog Yalısı



Figure 102. View of Kont Ostrorog Yalısı from the Bosphorus. *Source: Google Maps Street View, Istanbul, accessed January 2026.*

Kont Ostrorog Mansion was built at the beginning of the 19th century and is located on the Anatolian coast of the Bosphorus, in Kandilli. The architect of the mansion is unknown. There is varying information regarding the history of the building and its ownership. According to information compiled by Erdenen, the mansion is associated with several different ownership narratives. Ms. Belkıs, who was the owner of the neighbouring mansion, stated that the property initially belonged to Rıza Paşa and was later purchased by Count Ostrorog. Another account indicates that Count Ostrorog merged the Ahmet Aşkî Mansion with another structure to form the present building. In an interview conducted in September 1975, Jean Ostrorog noted that the mansion was between 125 and 150 years old, and that his father had purchased it 71 years earlier from an Englishman named De Savmares. Records of the Eski Eserleri Koruma Encümeni state that the mansion was purchased in 1904 from Ziya Paşa by the Ostrorog family.

In a statement dated 26 January 1978, Jean Ostrorog's wife indicated that the mansion was approximately 190 years old. She further explained that when Jean Ostrorog purchased the property, he also acquired the neighbouring mansion and demolished it, thereby creating the garden located between the mansion and the Abut Efendi Mansion. At that time, the northern side of the mansion functioned as the selamlık, while the southern side served as the haremlik.

According to the record of Sicill-i Osmani (vol. 3), the waterfront mansion and pavilion of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Server Paşa (1821–1860), were located on this site. An examination of the Bostancıbaşı Registers indicates that the owners of the fourth waterfront mansion starting from Küçüksu were, in 1781, the family of Halil Paşa; in 1860, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Server Paşa and his wife Ayşe Hanım; and in 1900, Belkıs Hanım. In 1930, Count Ostrorog purchased the plot of the neighbouring mansion and incorporated it into his own garden.[71]

71 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2*, 212–13.

According to Orhan Erdenen, Behçet Ünsal describes the façade as giving, when viewed from the seaside, the impression of two separate mansions merged together. This observation is, in a way, accurate, as the mansion is composed of two distinct sections: the haremlik, known as the “Big Mansion,” and the selamlık, known as the “Small Mansion.” The two sections display clearly different architectural characters.

While the Big Mansion possesses the features of a traditional Turkish house, with a symmetrical interior layout and a symmetrical façade, the Small Mansion, constructed after the Big Mansion, has a more distinct expression that appears almost modern. The Small Mansion includes a terrace and a piscine at the basement level, and the boat landing and service entrance visible from the seaside differ significantly from those of the Big Mansion. Unfortunately, it is not possible to observe both sections together within the same plan. [72]This differentiation is also legible in the façade articulation, where projections and recesses directly reflect the underlying timber structural system.

The mansion is constructed with a timber frame structural system resting on a masonry base at the waterfront level. The stone substructure provides protection against humidity and direct contact with the sea, while the upper floors are entirely timber. Structural loads are carried by timber posts and beams with non-load-bearing infill walls. The main staircase is integrated into a structurally reinforced zone and contributes to the overall stability of the building. The projections visible on the façades are formed through timber cantilever beams and directly express the underlying structural system. Despite the differentiation between the Big and Small Mansions, the same structural logic is applied throughout the building.



Figure 103. Ceiling reliefs with corner junction detail. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 215.



Figure 104. Main stair of the grand taşlık and woven wooden balustrades, 1973. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 215.



Figure 105. Stair balustrade of harem, DGSA, 1965. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 214.

72 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2*, 215.

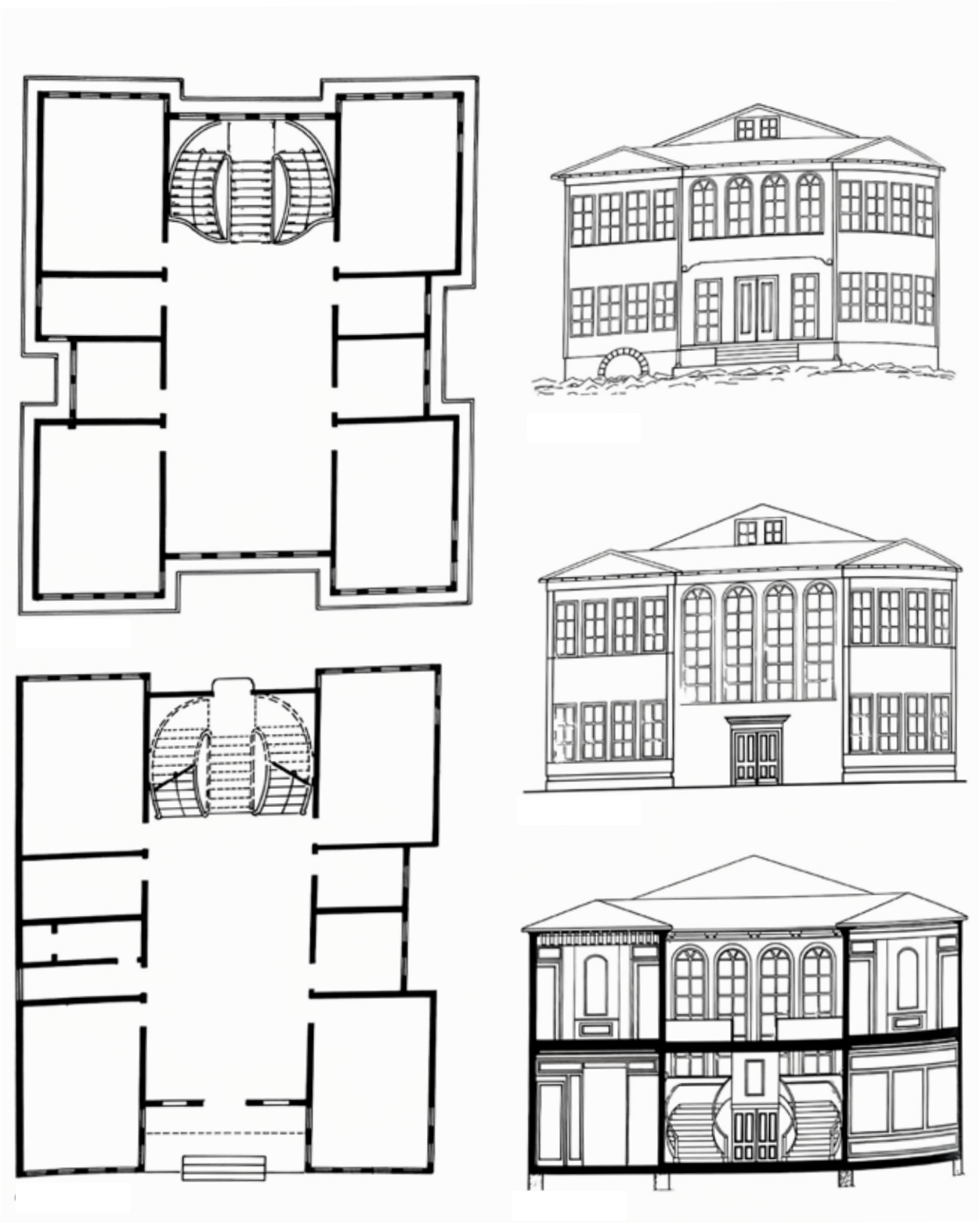


Figure 106. Kont Ostrorog Yalısı, floor plans, elevations and section. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 216.

The Big Mansion consists of two floors organised according to a central sofa plan. On each level, the central hall is surrounded by rooms positioned at the corners, all of which open directly onto the central hall, establishing the hall as the primary distributive space.

The main entrance of the mansion is located on the garden side and is visually and spatially connected to the dock on the seaside through the central hall, creating a clear longitudinal relationship between land and sea. The walls facing the Bosphorus are recessed, creating the impression of drawing the sea into the interior space and strengthening this visual connection. Vertical circulation is provided by a main staircase located on the garden side, ensuring clear separation between horizontal and vertical movement while maintaining the centrality of the hall.

Above these levels, the attic floor is reserved for service related functions, while the first and second floors accommodate the main rooms of the mansion.

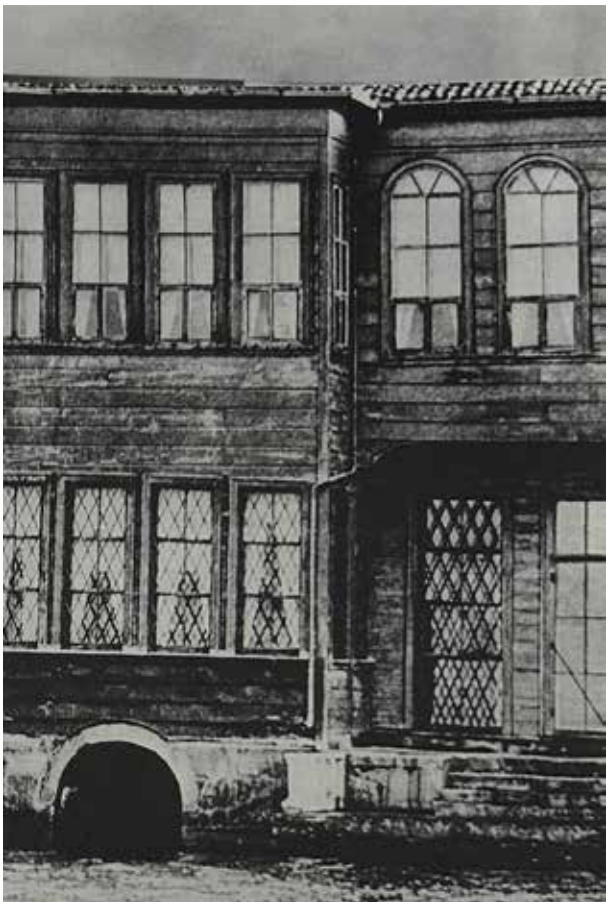


Figure 107. Seaward façade of Kont Ostrorog Yalısı, showing the entrance to the pier and boat-landing steps; iron grilles on the ground-floor windows, 1970. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 213.



Figure 108. Kont Leon Ostroróg Yalısı, Kandilli, Üsküdar, Istanbul; photograph by Ali Öz. Source: SALT Research.

The interior spaces display a high level of surface articulation and ornamental detail. Walls and ceilings are richly decorated with painted motifs, including floral patterns, geometric compositions, and figurative scenes. Several rooms feature painted panels framed by mouldings, while others include continuous decorative schemes extending across ceilings and upper wall surfaces. Ceiling forms vary between flat and domed configurations, with some domes articulated through radial divisions and central medallions.

Windows are large and vertically proportioned, arranged in regular sequences along the façades. They are framed with wooden elements and integrated into the interior decoration through moulded surrounds. In rooms facing the Bosphorus, a continuous sedir is positioned along the window wall, following the rhythm of the openings. The number and size of the windows allow extensive visual connection with the exterior. Wooden elements are prominent throughout the interior, including doors, window frames, wall panelling, and built-in furnishings. Staircases are articulated as interior elements with curved geometries and decorative detailing visible in their balustrades and landings.

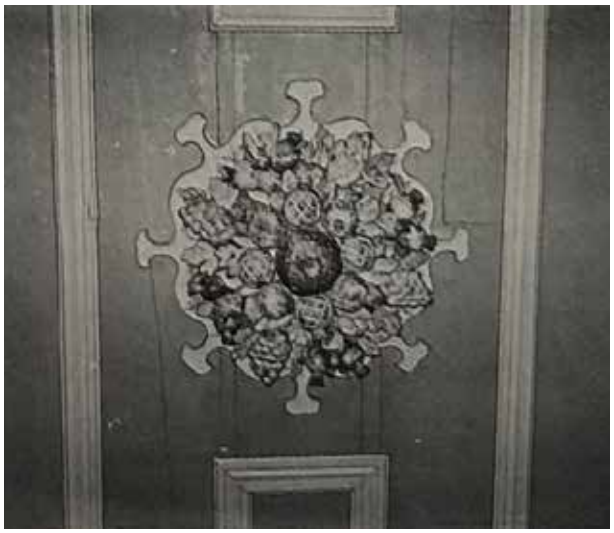


Figure 109. Ceiling medallion composed of fruit reliefs. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 2,* 215.

Hasip Paşa Yalısı



Figure 110. View of Hasip Paşa Yalısı. Source: SALT Research.

Located approximately 200 meters north of the Beylerbeyi pier, Hasip Paşa Yalısı was commissioned by Mehmed Hasib Paşa during the reign of Mahmud II. Although its precise construction date remains uncertain, the building is generally associated with the early nineteenth century and was reportedly reconstructed around 1825 following an earlier fire. Sedad Hakkı Eldem, however, identifies characteristics in the harem façade that suggest an earlier architectural origin, possibly dating to the late eighteenth or very early nineteenth century.[73] The complex originally consisted of separate harem and selamlık buildings together with a mabeyn pavilion, service structures, gardens, and a waterfront bath.

The harem, which constituted the principal surviving historic section of the complex until its destruction by fire in 1973, was organized on two floors around a monumental oval central sofa. Measuring approximately 17.5 × 12.5 meters, the sofa formed the spatial core of the house, with eyvans positioned along its longitudinal axis and staircases along the transverse axis parallel to the Bosphorus.[74] The arrangement produced a variation of the orta sofalı house type in which the central space extended visually and spatially between the garden and the water. Around its four corners, groups of three or four rooms were organized as relatively autonomous residential suites, each provided with an internal hall and associated service spaces. Rather than functioning simply as a circulation space, the unusually large sofa therefore acted as the principal element connecting otherwise semi-independent domestic units. The plans further reinforce this spatial hierarchy: the monumental sofa dominates the centre of the composition, while the individual room groups and secondary circulation are arranged around its perimeter. Its importance is also expressed vertically, as the section distinguishes the central space from the surrounding rooms through its curved upper profile and tall openings. The sofa therefore operated not only as the principal distributive element of the plan, but as an architecturally emphasized central space within the

73 Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2: Anadolu Yakası*, 205.

74 Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2: Anadolu Yakası*, 209.

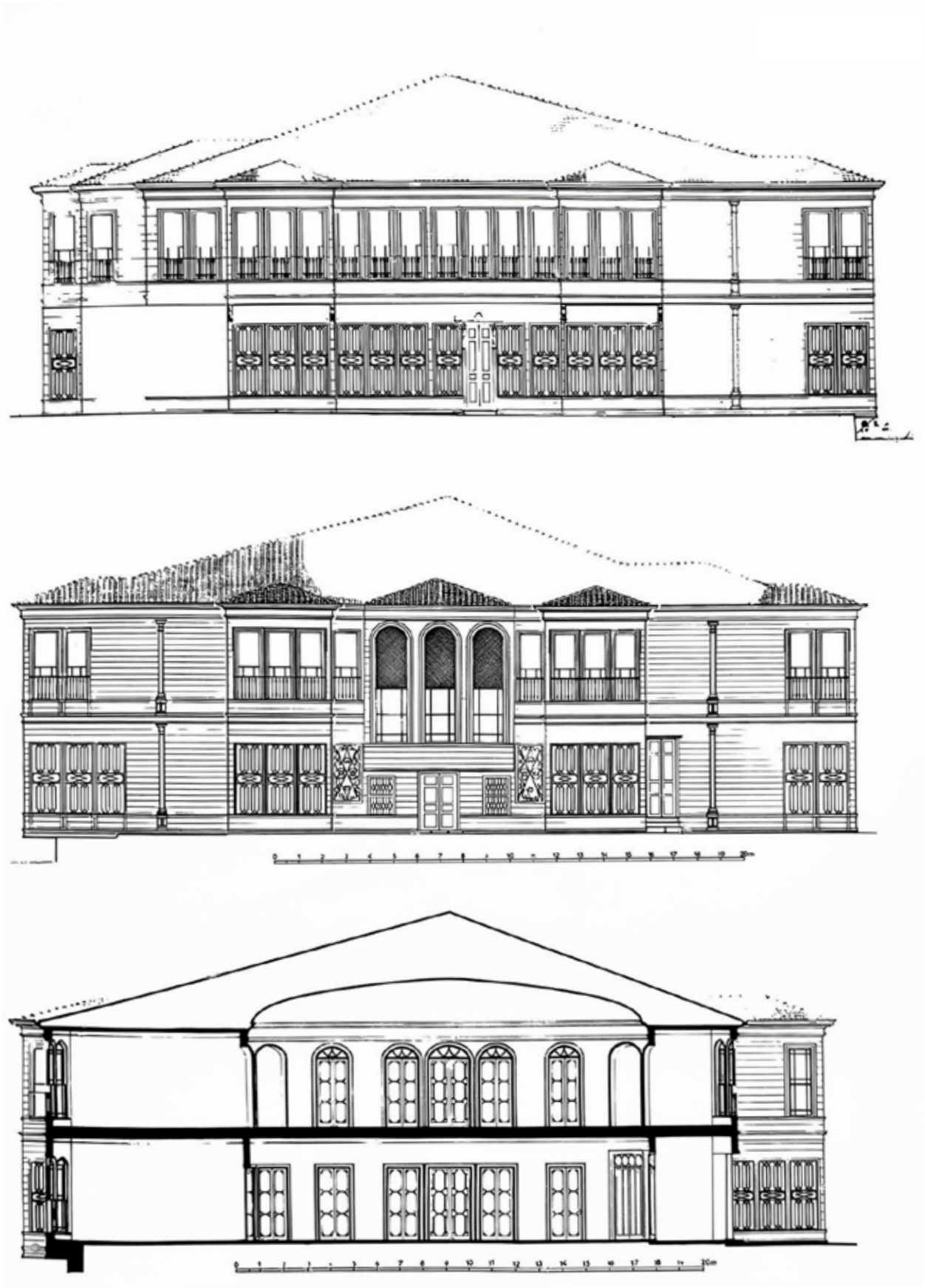


Figure 111. Elevations and cross section of Hasip Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 202.

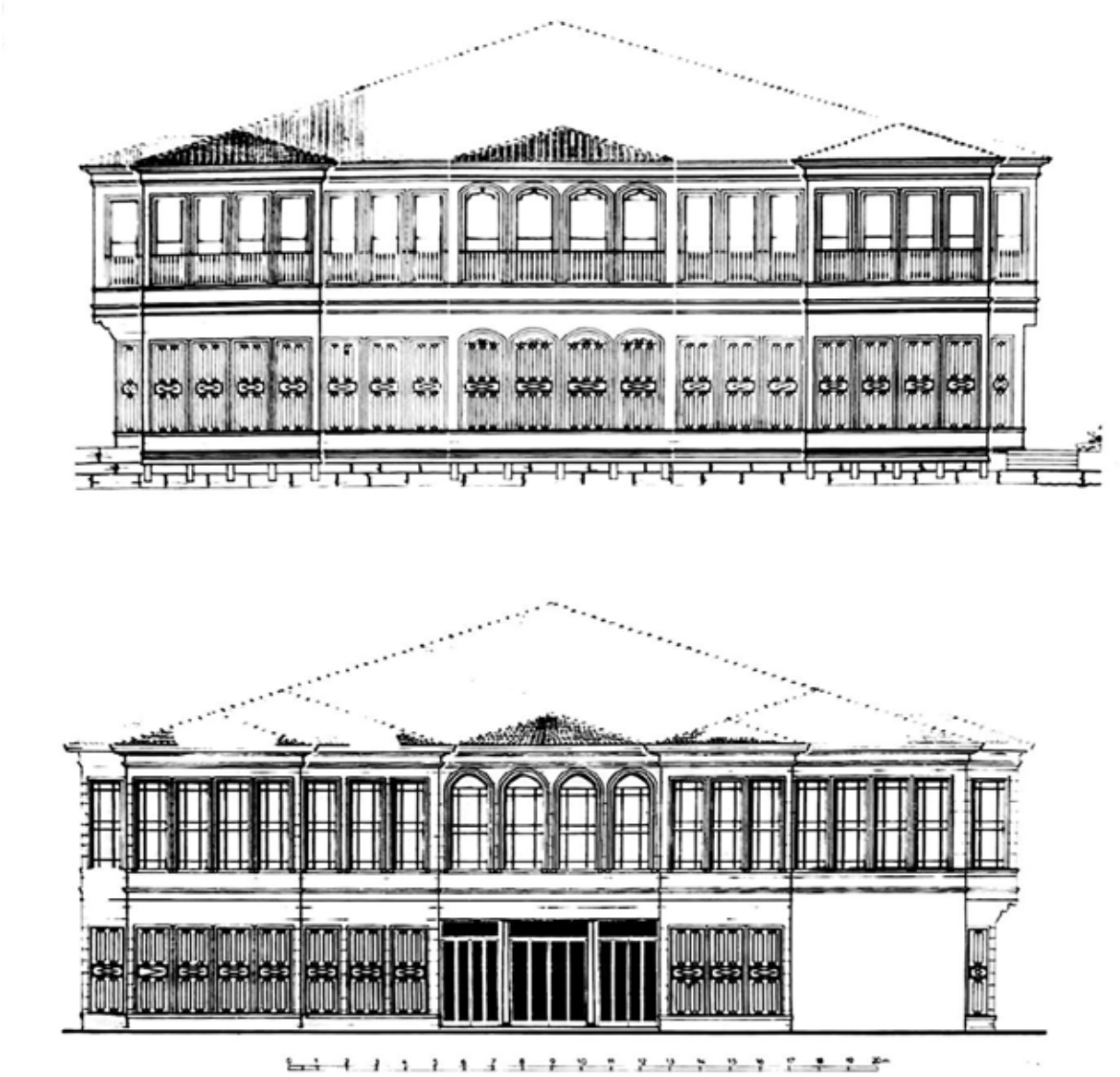


Figure 112. Elevations of Hasip Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 203.

residence.

This internal organization was directly expressed in the exterior form. On both the eastern garden façade and western waterfront façade, the curvature of the oval sofa generated a projecting central section, while the rooms positioned at the four corners produced additional angular projections. The elevations further demonstrate this correspondence between internal organization and external composition. The central portion of the building is emphasized through tall arched openings and a differentiated façade treatment corresponding to the position of the oval sofa, making the spatial centre of the plan legible in the exterior expression of the residence. The upper floor is characterized by a more continuous sequence of closely spaced openings, while the lower level appears comparatively enclosed, giving greater visual emphasis to the principal residential floor. Together with the projecting corner volumes, this produces a façade in which the centralized organisation of the plan is translated into a strongly articulated yet broadly symmetrical composition. On the Bosphorus side, the building extended beyond the quay line on timber brackets,

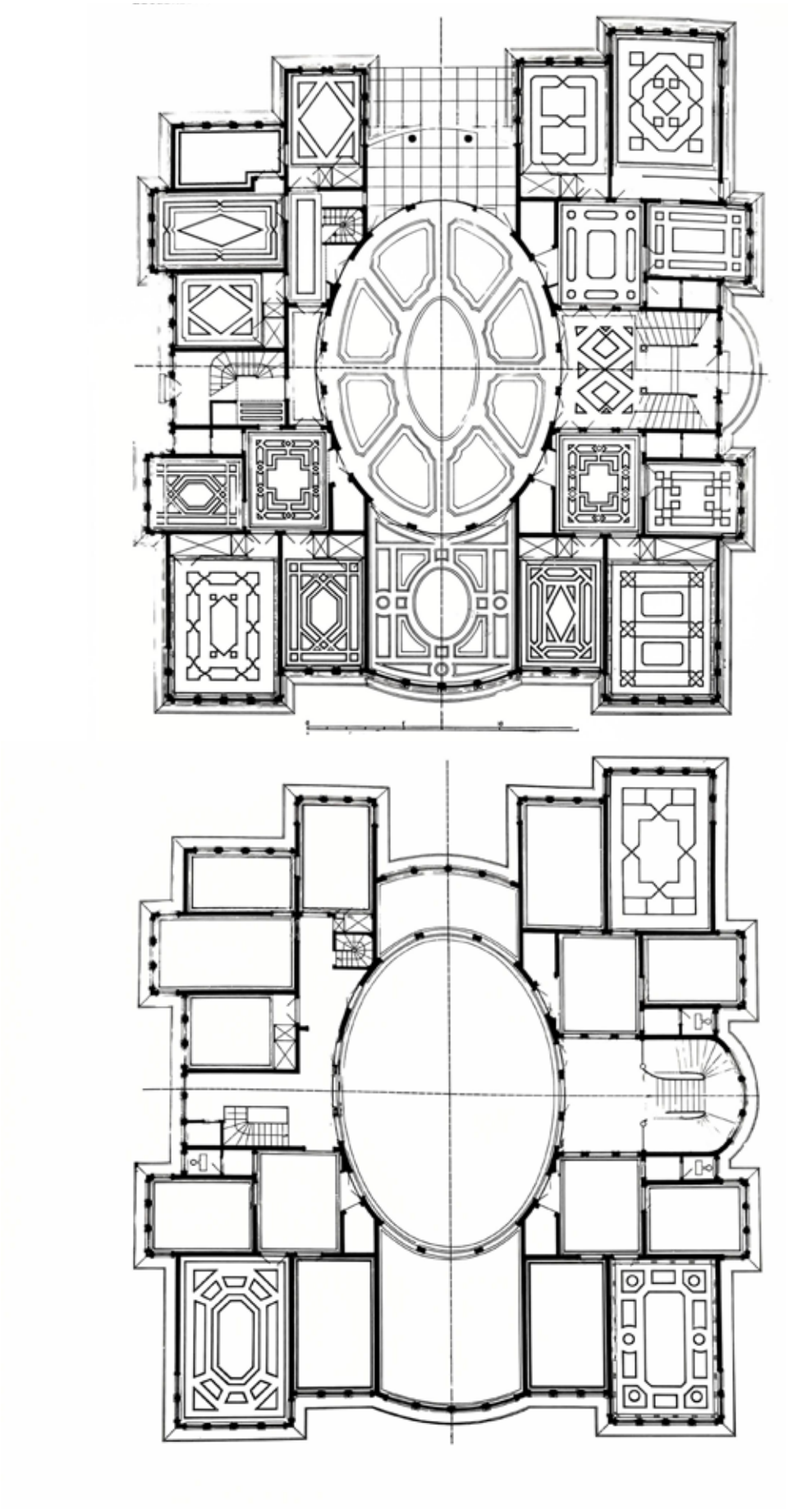


Figure 113. Upper and ground floor plans and ceiling decorations of Hasip Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, B*oğaziçi Yalıları 2*, 200–201.

strengthening its physical relationship with the water. Continuous rows of windows across both floors further emphasized the waterfront façade, while the absence of a sea entrance distinguished its relationship to the Bosphorus from yalıs organized around direct maritime access. Instead, the principal entrance was located on the eastern garden side and opened through an entrance eyvan directly into the central sofa.

The original selamlık, destroyed by fire in the early twentieth century, followed a markedly different spatial configuration. Archival documentation records it as a single-storey, lebiderya structure with an approximately 44-meter-long waterfront façade and an H-shaped plan.[75] A large central sofa occupied its main axis, while groups of rooms extended progressively toward the Bosphorus on either side. Together, the harem and selamlık therefore demonstrate two distinct interpretations of the relationship between centralized domestic organization and the waterfront: the harem concentrated its spaces around an enclosed oval core connecting the garden and Bosphorus, while the selamlık developed laterally along the shoreline.

75 Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 2: Anadolu Yakası*, 209.

Sandalciyan Yalısı



Figure 114. Sandalciyan Yalısı in 1973. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 3,* 436.



Figure 115. Sandalciyan Yalısı in 1993. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 3,* 436.

Sandalciyan (Uzunhasan) Yalısı was constructed during the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz (1861–1876) for the palace jeweller Sandalcıyan and is located on Büyükdere Piyasa Caddesi.[76] The yalı represents a late nineteenth-century Bosphorus residence whose architectural expression relied heavily on the articulation of its sea façade and the ornamental treatment of its exterior surfaces.

The structure was organised as a narrow waterfront residence with a vertically emphasised façade facing the Bosphorus. The sea façade was composed symmetrically around a central axis marked by a projecting cumba extending through the upper floors. This projection established the principal visual focus of the composition and strengthened the vertical character of the elevation. The entrance was positioned centrally on the ground floor, while vertically aligned window openings and a second-floor balcony reinforced the axial organisation of the façade. Historical documentation confirms that this entrance originally provided access directly through the Bosphorus-facing façade, establishing a direct relationship between the principal entrance and the waterfront. [77] The façade composition was characterised by dense ornamental articulation concentrated around the windows, balcony parapets, cornices, and the cumba. Historical photographs and restitution studies indicate that the upper-floor windows incorporated wooden lace-

76 Vedat Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar ve Korunmuşluk Analizleri" (master's thesis, Maltepe Üniversitesi, 2020), 125.

77 Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 126–29.

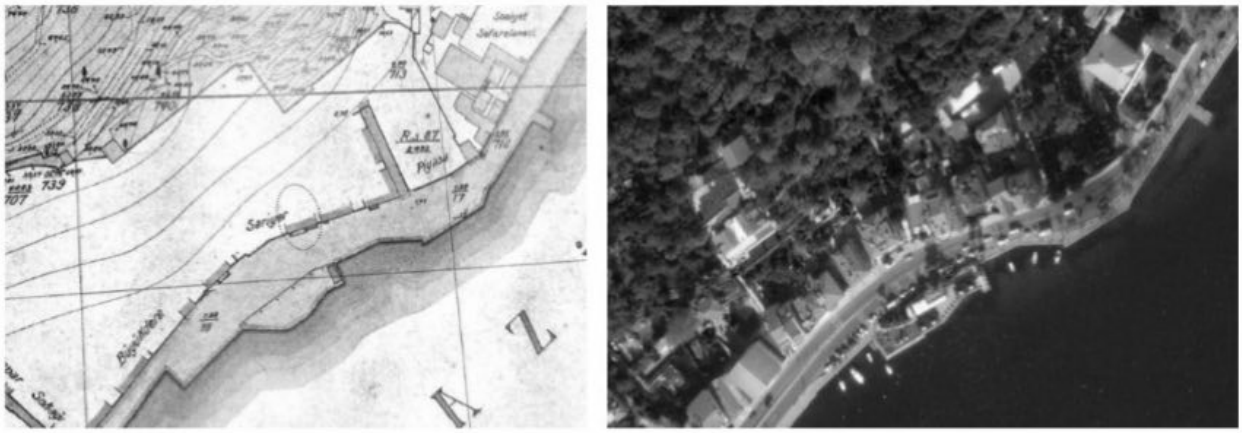


Figure 116. Site plan and Google Maps view of Sandalciyan Yalısı. Source: Vedat Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 126.

like Neo-Baroque valances, while floral and curvilinear relief compositions framed the window pediments and sill zones. Decorative panels positioned beneath the cumba windows and the balcony parapets further enhanced the layered plasticity of the façade surface. The triangular pediment above the central projection reinforced the axial emphasis of the composition and contributed to the monumentality of the sea façade.

Although the building has been associated with both Neo-Baroque and Art Nouveau influences, the façade vocabulary appears predominantly Neo-Baroque through its curved vegetal motifs, relief compositions, ornamental cartouches, and emphasis on movement across the façade surface. Özgül notes that although the building has been associated with both Neo-Baroque and Art Nouveau, the Art Nouveau elements appear to have been later additions, while the original façade was predominantly Neo-Baroque in character.[78] Compared to the highly articulated sea façade, the side and rear façades were considerably simpler and reflected more restrained domestic functions, according to Özgül.

The available restitution drawings suggest that the original interior organisation followed a sofa-based plan scheme distributed across multiple floors. The ground floor contained a large entrance hall connected to secondary service spaces, while the upper floors were organised around a central sofa functioning as the principal circulation and distribution space. Rooms were positioned on both the sea and garden sides, and the narrow projecting cumba enlarged the principal waterfront room while strengthening the visual relationship between the interior and the Bosphorus. The plans demonstrate the persistence of the sofa as the organising element across the principal residential floors: rather than being replaced by a corridor-based distribution system, rooms continued to open around a central shared circulation space.

Documentation of the interior before later alterations provides further evidence of the representational character of these spaces. The entrance hall was finished in marble and contained an approximately 4.5-metre-long gilded crystal mirror with a carved wooden frame. The principal halls were furnished with large floral-patterned carpets and upholstered seating, while a French-style console and gilded mirror were recorded within the service area. The residence was also reported to contain paintings by Ayvazovski, although these were subsequently lost following the 1963 roof fire

78 Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 126.

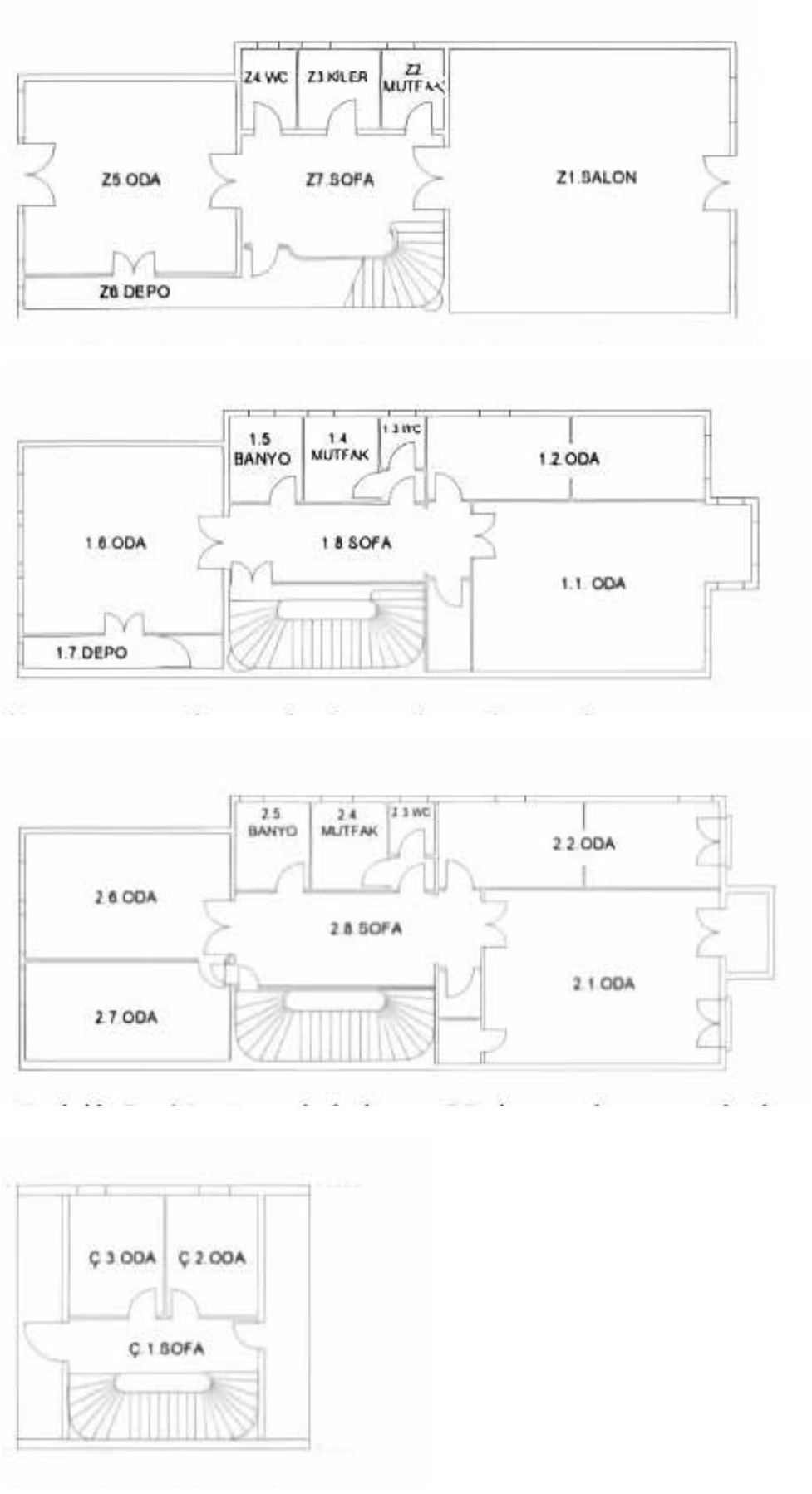


Figure 117. Floor plans of Sandalciyan Yalısı. Source: Vedat Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 129.

and later thefts.[79]

The staircase formed an important component of the spatial organisation and originally extended parallel to the side façade. Later alterations associated with the subdivision of the residence into apartments changed this configuration, rotating the circulation system so that the staircase became parallel to the sea façade. The restitution drawings therefore preserve an earlier circulation arrangement that differs from the later configuration of the building.[80] The upper floors contained paired rooms arranged symmetrically around the central sofa, while smaller enclosed spaces were positioned beneath the pitched roof structure. The roof itself consisted of a relatively low-pitched pyramidal form that completed the compact vertical silhouette of the yalı.

Although the plans allow the sofa-based organisation, room distribution, circulation, and reception spaces to be examined, the available documentation does not establish a clear spatial division between haremlik and selamlık. This aspect can therefore not be assessed with sufficient reliability and is excluded from the comparative assessment of domestic organisation.

Historical shoreline photographs indicate that the yalı originally formed part of a dense sequence of waterfront residences extending continuously along the Büyükdere coast. The site material further shows the residence occupying the narrow coastal strip between the Bosphorus and the rising land behind it, reinforcing the compact relationship between the building and the shoreline. Within this urban condition, Sandalcıyan Yalısı reflects the increasing tendency toward monumentality, vertical emphasis, and ornamental richness in late nineteenth-century Bosphorus waterfront architecture.

79 Özgül, “19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar,” 129.
80 Özgül, “19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar,” 130.

Esma Sultan Yalısı



Figure 118. View of Esma Sultan Yalısı from the Bosphorus. Source: Vedat Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 170.

Esma Sultan Yalısı, located in Ortaköy, was constructed between 1873 and 1875 for Esma Sultan, daughter of Sultan Abdülaziz.[81] The yalı occupies a prominent position along the Bosphorus shoreline and is distinguished by its compact massing, symmetrical façade organization, and vertically emphasized composition. The structure presents a compact and monumental architectural form directly facing the sea.

The relationship between the building and the shoreline is established through its direct orientation toward the Bosphorus and its rigid axial composition. Access was possible from both the Bosphorus and the landward side, with the sea entrance opening onto a marble-paved entrance hall, indicating the continued importance of water-based access despite the building's more compact and monumental





Figure 119. Site of Esma Sultan Yalısı. Source: Vedat Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 160.

81 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 823–24.

organization. The yalı is defined by masonry exterior walls and is organized through a symmetrical arrangement structured around a projecting central section facing the sea. The sea façade is articulated through vertically aligned window openings and a central projection crowned by a triangular pediment, while the western entrance façade is distinguished by a columned portico carried by Doric columns.[82] The overall massing creates a compact and vertically organized waterfront composition reinforced by the regular rhythm of the openings and the controlled geometry of the façades.

Özgül points out that the structure was constructed with masonry exterior walls and a timber bağdadi interior system. The building originally possessed a hipped roof, timber windows with shutters, and ornamental entrance compositions integrated into the symmetrical façade organization.[83] While the exterior surfaces emphasize solidity and monumentality, the interior organization is structured through lighter sofa-based spatial arrangements.

The original plan organization consisted of two inner sofas connected through circulation spaces and stair halls positioned within the structure. Rooms were distributed around these sofas, establishing the sofa spaces as the principal distributive elements of the building. Two principal staircase systems organized vertical circulation: one was positioned near the center of the plan, while the other was associated with one of the inner sofas. Rooms facing the sea were connected to the central parts of the building through these inner sofas, while rooms along the western façade were similarly accessed through the sofa system.[84] The arrangement of the openings allowed light to penetrate the interior from multiple directions while simultaneously strengthening the relationship between the interior spaces and the Bosphorus.

Unlike the earlier yalıs examined in this study, the available plans and descriptions do not identify a distinct haremlik–selamlık division within Esma Sultan Yalısı. The surviving documentation instead describes the domestic organization primarily through its two inner sofas, rooms, and staircase systems. Therefore, a separate haremlik and selamlık organization cannot be established from the available sources.

The façade articulation reflects the axial organization of the plan. The projecting central section emphasizes the principal spatial axis of the structure, while the symmetrical arrangement of the openings reinforces the rigid geometry of the composition. Rectangular and arched window openings are positioned in regular sequences across the façades, while ornamentation remains relatively restrained compared to the monumentality of the overall massing. Decorative emphasis is concentrated around the triangular pediment, the portico composition, and the proportional relationship between the projecting and recessed façade surfaces.

According to Özgül, the interior spaces contained decorative plaster reliefs above doors and windows, ornamented ceilings, decorated stair compositions, and embellished ceiling surfaces. Particularly significant was the upper-floor stair hall ceiling, organized in a boat-vaulted form surrounding a central skylight.[85] Decorative articulation within the interior relied on plaster ornamentation, framed ceiling compositions, and elaborately treated transitional spaces connecting the sofas and rooms.

Archival photographs and restitution

82 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 824–25.

83 Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 161–62.

84 Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 161–62.

85 Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 162–63.

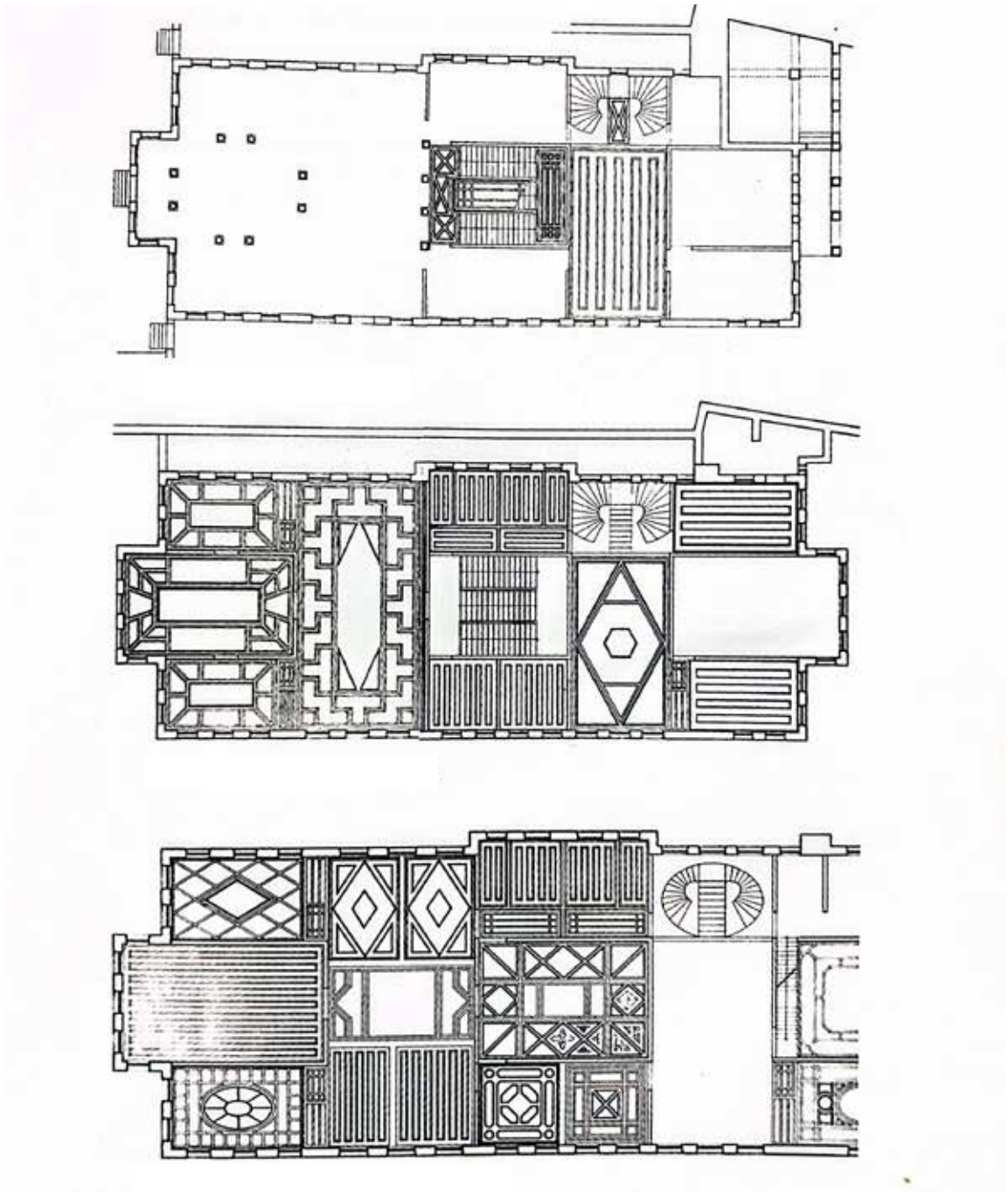


Figure 120. Floor plans of Esma Sultan Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4,* 840.

drawings indicate that the architectural character of the yalı relied on the relationship between its monumental masonry exterior and its sofa-based interior organization. While the façades present a rigid and symmetrical composition toward the shoreline, the interior remains structured through interconnected sofa spaces and circulation systems. In comparison with the earlier yalıs examined in this study, Esma Sultan Yalısı therefore presents a considerably more compact and formally unified residential composition. At the same time, the available documentation no longer describes domestic organization through clearly identifiable haremlik and selamlık components, instead emphasizing interconnected sofas, rooms, and centralized circulation.[86]

86 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 824–28.

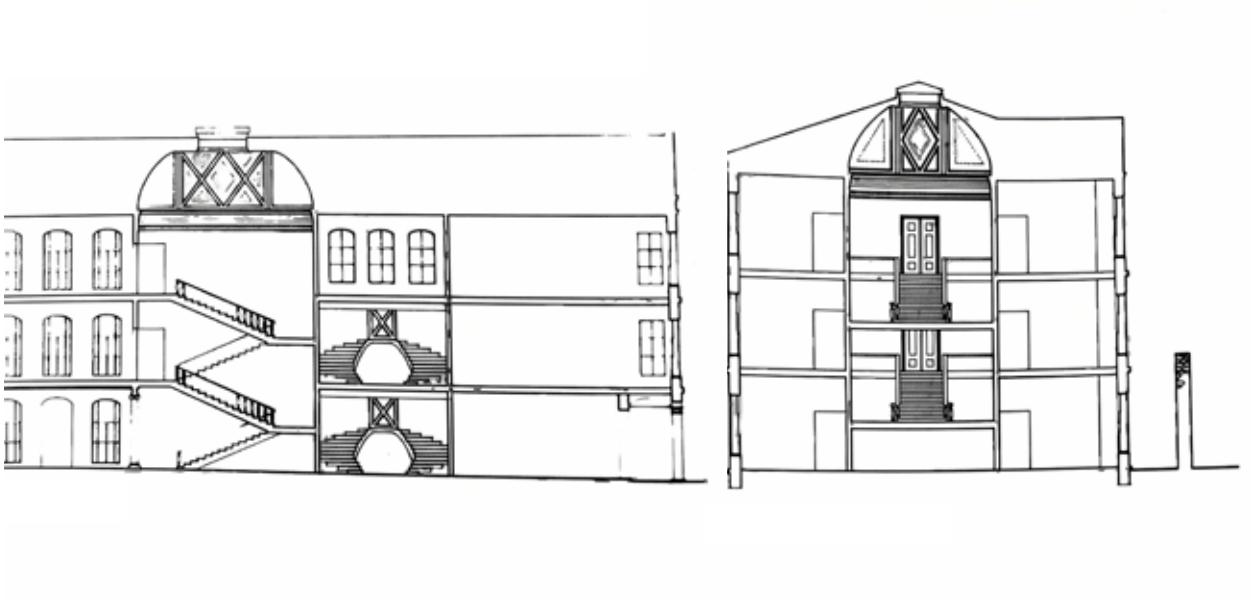


Figure 121. Sections of Esma Sultan Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4,* 830.



Figure 122. Elevations of Esma Sultan Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4,* 829.

Sait Halim Paşa Yalısı



Figure 123. View of Sait Halim Paşa Yalısı from the Bosphorus. Source: Caner Cangül, Kültür Envanteri.

Located on the European shore of the Bosphorus in Yeniköy, Sait Halim Paşa Yalısı was constructed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and is attributed to the architect Petraki Adamantini. The present building replaced an earlier waterfront residence on the site and was built for Sait Halim Paşa and his brother Hıdiv Abbas Halim Paşa.[87] With a waterfront façade extending approximately 41 meters, the two-story timber structure forms a substantial residential complex between the Bosphorus and the large garden extending behind it.[88]

The yalı maintains a direct physical relationship with the Bosphorus through its position immediately behind the quay. The waterfront façade is approached directly from the water, while the two lion sculptures positioned along the quay mark the maritime entrance and give the building its alternative name, Arslanlı Yalı. The waterside entrance provides direct access to the selamlık, while the harem can also be entered independently from the southern side of the building.[89] Together with the entrances from the garden, these access points create several possible approaches to the residence rather than concentrating circulation through a single entrance.

The organization of the plan is strongly defined by the division between haremlik and selamlık. Rather than being accommodated in physically detached structures, the two sections occupy the same building, with the harem positioned toward the north and the selamlık toward the south. Each section has an independent entrance, maintaining a degree of separation within the unified volume.[90] At the same time, the plan indicates internal connections between the two sections, allowing the residence to operate as a continuous building despite this functional

87 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 618.
88 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 622.
89 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 618.
90 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 619.

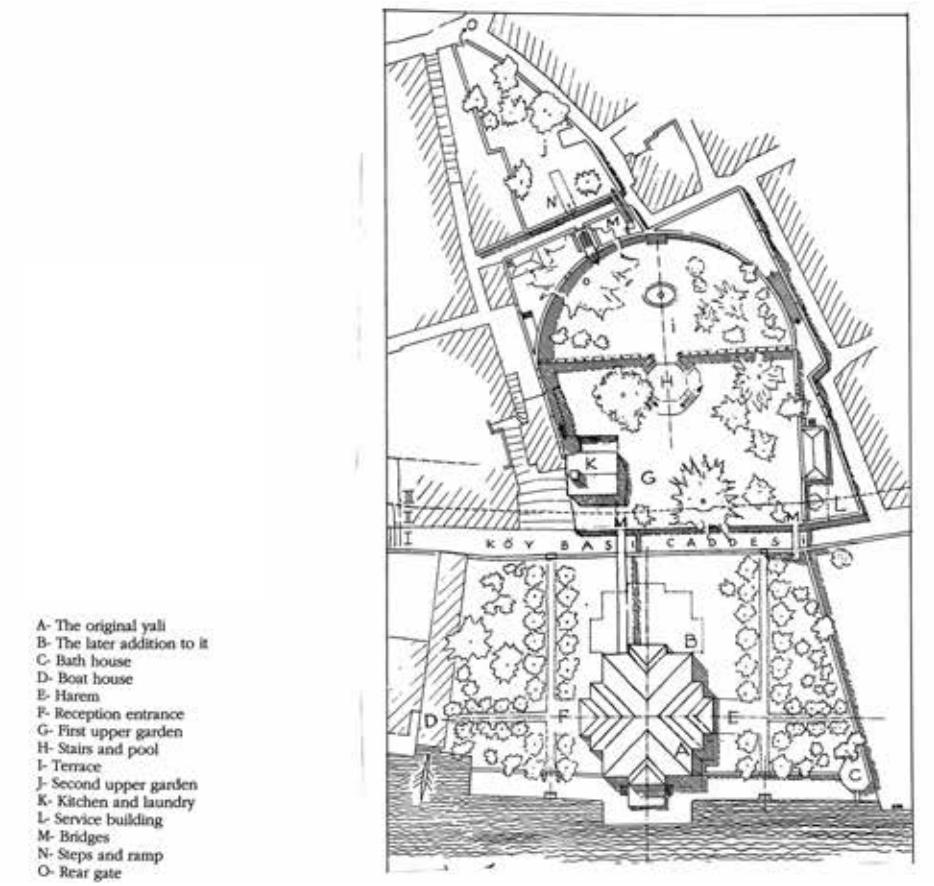


Figure 124. Site plan of Sait Halim Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 1*, 263.

division.

The plan is organized around large central halls, with rooms distributed around and alongside these spaces. In the selamlık, the waterfront entrance leads into a large entrance hall, from which the principal staircase connects the two floors. The upper level continues this arrangement through a sequence of interconnected halls and rooms. The scale of the central spaces and their relationship with the surrounding rooms establish a clear hierarchy between circulation and the more enclosed spaces positioned along the façades.

The internal organization also reveals differences in the functions assigned to the two sections of the house. The selamlık contains the principal reception and dining spaces, whereas the harem incorporates spaces associated more directly with domestic life, including bedrooms and a hammam.[91] The reception areas are considerably larger than many of the surrounding rooms, while their position within the circulation system allows them to be connected to other representative spaces of the house.

The external composition is comparatively restrained and regular. The two-story waterfront elevation is organized through repeated vertically proportioned windows, while projecting sections interrupt the otherwise continuous façade and give greater depth to its composition. The central portion remains relatively balanced, and the horizontal alignment of the openings reinforces the overall order of the elevation. The hipped roof further contributes to the horizontal character of the building, while the projecting volumes distinguish particular rooms without disrupting the general

91 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 620.

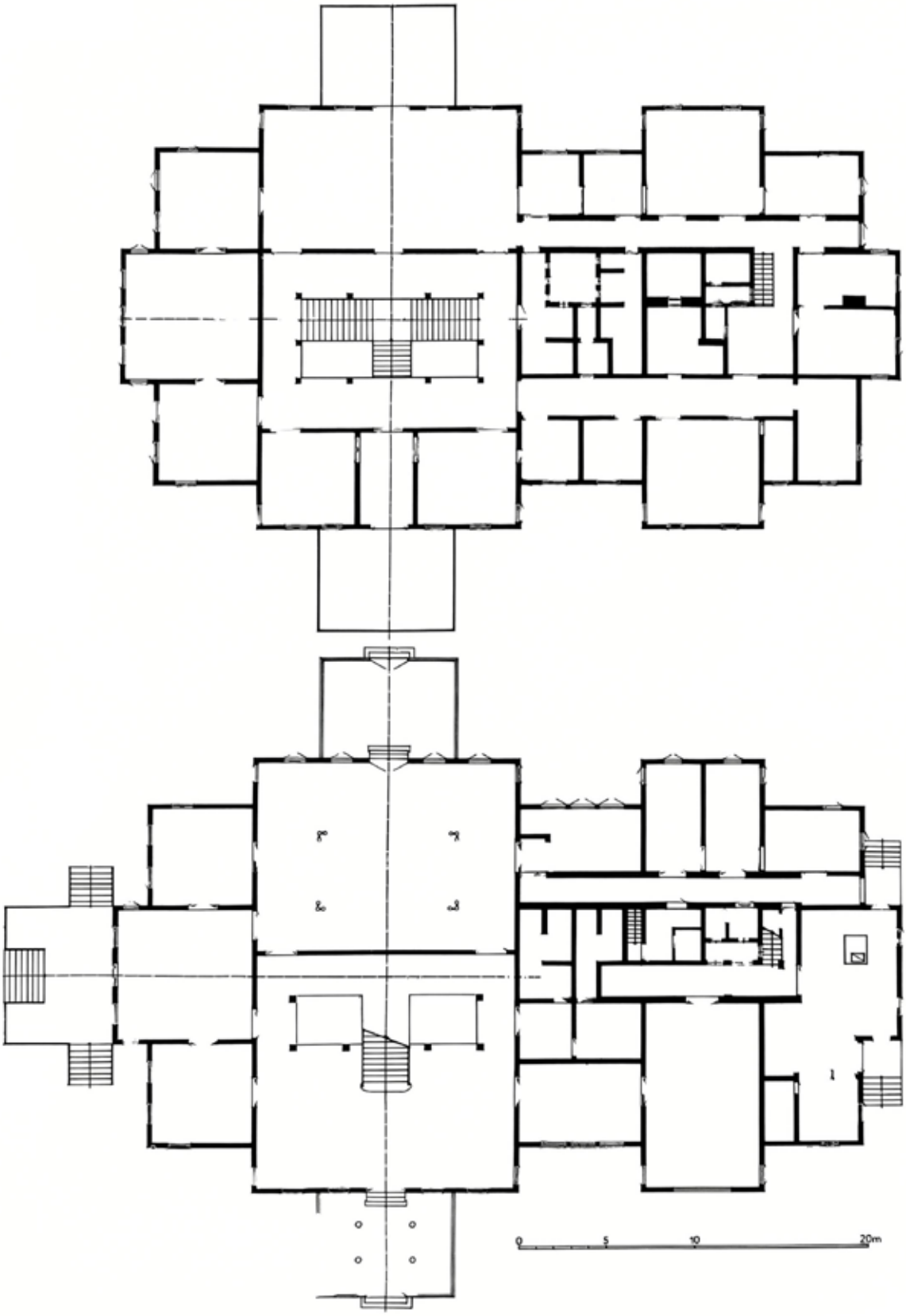


Figure 125. First- and ground-floor plans of Sait Halim Paşa Yalısı. Source: Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Boğaziçi Yalıları 1*, 262.

continuity of the façade.

This restrained external appearance contrasts with the treatment of the principal interiors. Eren describes the interior decoration as considerably richer, characterized by arabesque elements and extensive ornamental treatment. The photographs of the principal reception rooms show elaborate ceilings, chandeliers, decorative wall surfaces, mirrors and slender columns. In the dining room in particular, the ornament extends across both the ceiling and upper wall surfaces, producing a much denser visual composition than that of the exterior façades.

The garden forms an integral part of the overall spatial organization of the residence. Extending inland behind the yalı, it surrounds the building with planted areas and circulation paths while providing access toward both the harem and selamlık. The building therefore occupies the boundary between two distinct open spaces: the Bosphorus and quay on one side and the extensive garden on the other. Its projecting volumes, multiple entrances and internal circulation respond to both sides of this setting rather than treating the waterfront façade as the building's only principal orientation.



Figure 126. Interior views of Sait Halim Paşa Yalısı. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 4*, 622.

Fuat Paşa Yalısı



Figure 127. View of Fuat Paşa Yalısı from the Bosphorus. Source: Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 3*, 451.

Located in Büyükdere, Fuat Paşa Yalısı was constructed towards the end of nineteenth century. The building is associated with Keçecizade Fuat Paşa, one of the grand viziers of Sultan Abdülaziz. Originally used as a residence, the building was later converted into a hotel and pension during the Republican period. It was demolished in 1987 and reconstructed in reinforced concrete in 1991, followed by further interventions during the 2000s that substantially altered both its exterior and internal organization.[92]

The original configuration of the yalı demonstrates a particularly direct relationship with the Bosphorus. Before the construction of the coastal road, the building stood immediately along the waterfront, with its sea façade opening onto a private quay. Two entrances at ground-floor level connected the residence directly to this quay, leading into a large taşlık and subsequently to the central sofa.[93] This sequence established a direct spatial connection between water access and the principal circulation spaces of the house. The later construction of the coastal road fundamentally altered this relationship, separating the building from the water. The documented earlier configuration is therefore particularly significant in demonstrating how maritime arrival could be incorporated directly into the internal circulation sequence of a Bosphorus residence, rather than functioning merely as an external point of access.

The building was accessible from Çayırbaşı Caddesi on its landward side. The road façade contained a central vaulted passage leading into an open courtyard, from which the different wings of the residence could be reached. The yalı therefore operated

92 Orhan Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 3: Sarıyer, Yeniköy* (İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı, 1994), 450–51.
93 Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 109.

between two distinct systems of arrival: a formal connection from the land through the courtyard and a direct maritime entrance from the Bosphorus. Özgül's restitution documentation further shows that the courtyard provided access toward the eastern, western, and waterfront wings, reinforcing its role as the principal distributor between the landward entrance and the different parts of the complex.[94]

The plan was organized around an elongated courtyard enclosed by building volumes on its sea, road, eastern, and western sides. On the waterfront, the principal residential wing retained a central-sofa arrangement across the upper floors, with rooms positioned around the sofa. The ground floor similarly contained the large taşlık facing the quay, followed by the central sofa further inland. The restitution plans identify the upper floors of this waterfront wing specifically as an orta sofalı arrangement, with the sofa forming the central distribution space between rooms on either side. Rather than functioning as a single compact waterfront block, the yalı therefore developed as a larger composition of interconnected volumes organized around the courtyard. Rooms continued along the western wing, while the eastern wing contained additional residential and service spaces. The different wings were not spatially identical: Özgül identifies rooms continuing through the western block, whereas the eastern block incorporated storage or service-related spaces at ground level together with rooms above.[95] The available documentation does not identify a clear haremlik–selamlık division within the complex; therefore, this aspect of the original domestic organisation cannot be determined from the surviving plans.

The distinction between the waterfront and landward portions of the complex was also reflected in their functions. While the sea-facing wing contained the principal residential spaces, the ground floor of the road-facing wing incorporated shops, with rooms located on the floors above.[96] This combination suggests that the yalı was integrated not only with the domestic and maritime environment of the Bosphorus but also with the commercial life of Büyükdere along the landward street. The courtyard acted as a bridge between these different functions and circulation systems. The complex consequently combined residential, service, circulation, and commercial functions within differentiated wings rather than concentrating all domestic functions within a single waterfront volume.

The architectural expression of Fuat Paşa Yalısı appears comparatively restrained in its documented earlier condition. Erdenen identifies Neo-Gothic and Art Nouveau influences in the building; however, historical photographs indicate that ornament was concentrated in specific elements rather than determining the composition of the façades as a whole. On the sea façade, regularly arranged timber sash windows established the principal rhythm, while two balconies on the first floor introduced greater articulation. Decorative curved elements appeared around the balcony openings and balustrades, and these details may account for some of the stylistic influences identified by Erdenen.[97] The upper floor, by contrast, was considerably simpler, consisting predominantly of regularly spaced windows without extensive ornamentation. Özgül's comparison of the historical photographs similarly indicates that the decorative treatment was concentrated principally around the first-floor balconies, while the second-floor façade remained comparatively

94 Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 113–14.
95 Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 116.
96 Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 117.
97 Erdenen, *Boğaziçi Sahilhaneleri 3*, 450–51.

plain.[98]

The road façade followed a similarly restrained composition but was made less regular by a projecting bay on the first floor. Rather than occupying the centre of the façade, this projection was positioned asymmetrically and articulated by a curved eave. Decorative vegetal motifs were also present above some of the window frames. The contrast between the relatively regular waterfront elevation and the more articulated street elevation demonstrates that the two façades responded differently to their respective contexts while remaining part of the same architectural composition.

The later history of Fuat Paşa Yalısı significantly transformed these characteristics. The reconstruction of 1991 and subsequent alterations changed the windows, balconies, roofline, internal levels and courtyard configuration. A basement was introduced, the formerly open courtyard was reduced and covered, and the lateral wings were rebuilt and connected more extensively with the principal volumes. Özgül records that the formerly open courtyard was enclosed with a steel-and-glass roof and that the floor levels of the road-facing entrance and courtyard no longer correspond to their original configuration. The original quay was also replaced by an enclosed extension associated with the restaurant, further weakening the direct relationship between the waterfront façade and the Bosphorus.[99]

98 Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 124.
99 Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 119.

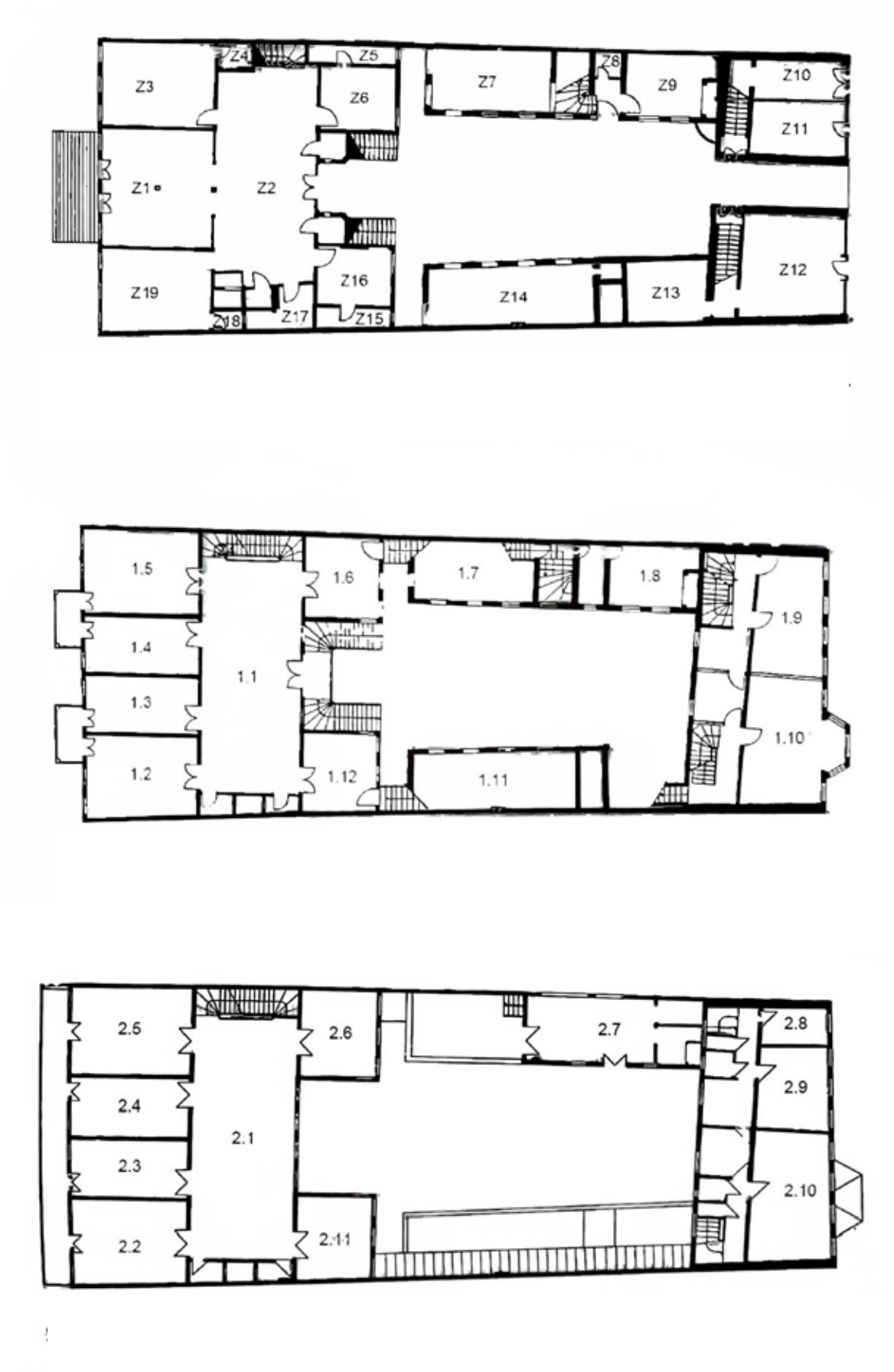


Figure 128. Ground, first, and second floor plans of Fuat Paşa Yalısı. Source: Vedat Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 113.

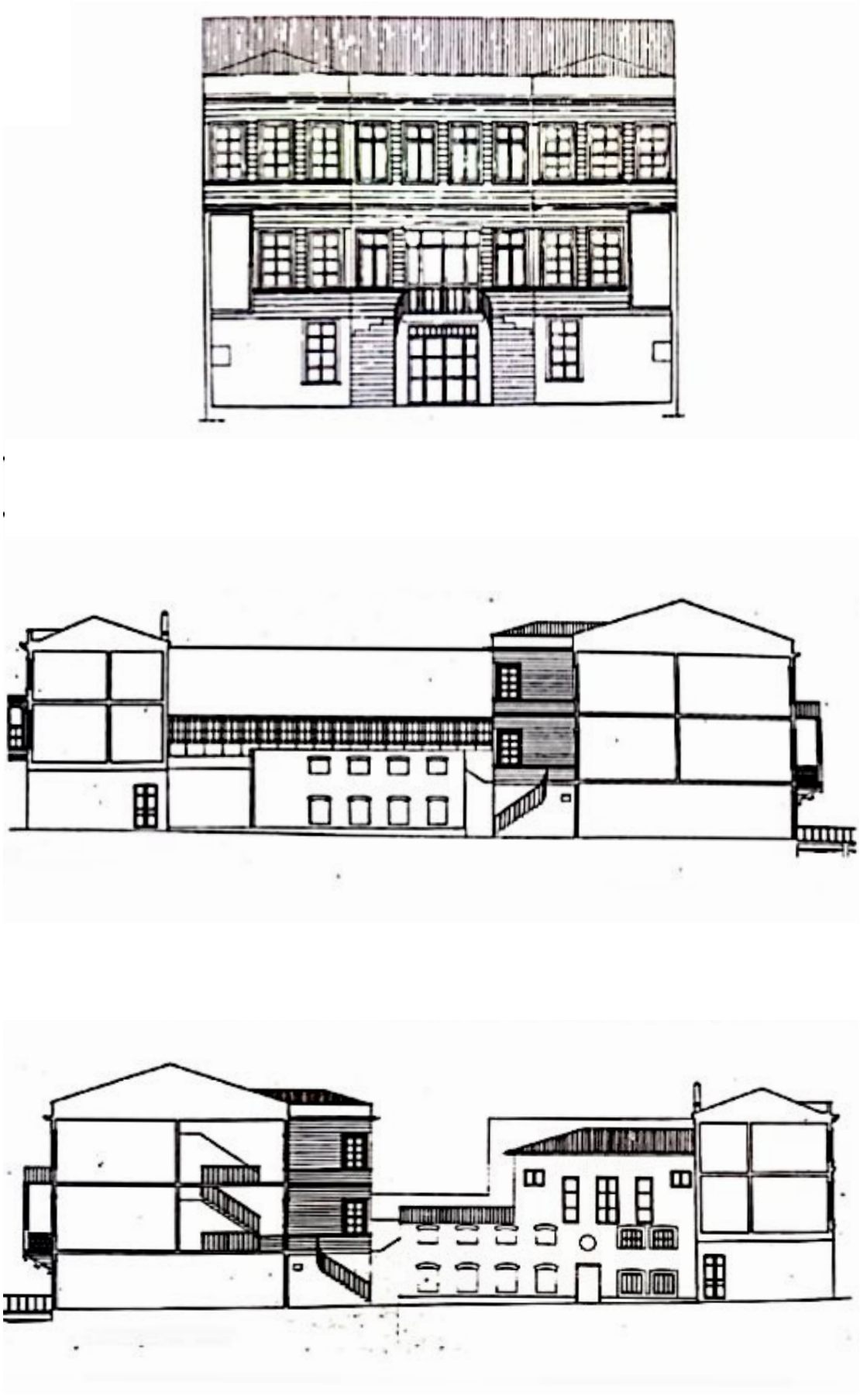


Figure 129. Elevation and sections of Fuat Paşa Yalısı. Source: Vedat Özgül, "19. Yüzyıl Boğaziçi Rumeli Yakası Yalılarında Mimari Üsluplar," 124.

8. Comparative Analysis

This chapter brings together the findings of the individual case studies through a systematic comparative analysis based on the criteria established in the methodology. Rather than examining the yalıs as isolated examples, the same analytical framework is applied across the selected cases in order to identify broader patterns of transformation, persistence, and variation. The comparison is structured around five interconnected aspects: shoreline relationship and access, domestic organisation, circulation and spaces of reception and representation, architectural expression, and the continuity of the sofa. These categories allow the architectural consequences of broader changes in mobility, domestic and social life, and cultural representation to be examined comparatively, while also identifying spatial principles that persisted across the chronology. The aim is not to establish a rigid evolutionary sequence, but to determine how different components of the yalı responded to changing conditions and whether these transformations occurred uniformly or through different forms and degrees of adaptation.

8.1 Shoreline Relationship and Access

This comparison examines how the relationship between the yalı and the Bosphorus changed through different systems of access and arrival. The selected cases are compared according to their direct relationship with the water and the presence of maritime and land-based access. Rather than assuming a linear shift from sea-based to land-based access, the comparison investigates how the two modes of arrival coexisted, changed in importance, or were reorganised across the chronology.

The comparative analysis demonstrates that the relationship between the yalı and the Bosphorus remained a persistent spatial characteristic despite changes in accessibility. Most of the case studies maintain a direct waterfront position, while only a limited number present alternative conditions, such as being positioned on the water, elevated above the shoreline, or projecting beyond the quay. This continuity indicates that proximity to the Bosphorus remained fundamental to the yalı as a residential type rather than gradually losing its spatial significance.

What changes more clearly across the cases is the organisation of access. Earlier examples show a stronger dependence on arrival from the Bosphorus, reflecting a period in which maritime movement constituted the principal means of circulation along the shoreline. With the development of continuous land routes along the Bosphorus during the nineteenth century, land access became increasingly established alongside access from the water. The later yalıs therefore did not simply turn away from the Bosphorus; instead, they became connected to two systems of movement simultaneously. The comparison consequently suggests a transformation from a predominantly water-oriented mode of access toward a dual relationship with both the Bosphorus and the expanding land-based urban network. The persistence of the waterfront position alongside this change is significant: rather than replacing the yalı's original relationship with the water, new patterns of circulation were incorporated into an already established spatial condition.

CASE STUDY	SHORELINE POSITION	SEA ACCESS	LAND ACCESS
Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı	On water		
Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı	Direct waterfront		
Saffet Paşa Yalısı	Direct waterfront		
Sadullah Paşa Yalısı	Direct waterfront		
Köçeoğlu Yalısı	Direct waterfront		
Şerifler Yalısı	Waterfront pavilion		
Yılanlı Yalı	Elevated above shore		
Kıbrıslı Yalısı	Direct waterfront		
Kont Ostrorog Yalısı	Direct waterfront		
Hasip Paşa Yalısı	Projects beyond quay		
Sandalciyan Yalısı	Direct waterfront		
Esma Sultan Yalısı	Direct waterfront		
Sait Halim Paşa Yalısı	Direct waterfront		
Fuat Paşa Yalısı	Direct waterfront		

Not documented Absent Present

Table 1. Shoreline relationship and access

8.2 Domestic Organisation

This comparison examines how the internal organisation of the yalı changed through the relationship between the haremlik and selamlık. The selected cases are compared according to the degree of physical separation or integration between these components and the spatial elements through which they were connected. Rather than treating the haremlik–selamlık division as a fixed organisational model, the comparison investigates how this relationship was spatially articulated across the case studies, from distinct residential components to connected and more integrated configurations.

The comparison reveals a gradual transformation in the spatial relationship between the haremlik and selamlık rather than their immediate disappearance as organising principles. In several cases, the two functions remain expressed as distinct residential components, maintaining a clear physical separation within the overall composition. Other examples introduce intermediate arrangements in which differentiated sections are retained but connected through spatial elements such as corridors or the mabeyn. These configurations suggest that separation increasingly operated within a more interconnected domestic structure.

In other cases, this distinction becomes less explicitly expressed through the architectural composition. The haremlik and selamlık could be incorporated within the same building, while in some examples the available organisation no longer indicates distinct components corresponding to the two divisions. The comparison therefore suggests a shift from separation expressed through physically differentiated architectural units toward increasingly connected and integrated forms of domestic organisation. This transformation did not occur uniformly or as a strict chronological sequence; different degrees of separation and connection coexist among the case studies. Nevertheless, the changing spatial mediation between the two domains indicates that the organisation of the yalı became progressively less dependent on the physical division of the residence into autonomous haremlik and selamlık components.

CASE STUDY	HAREMLİK/SELAMLIK RELATIONSHIP	SPATIAL MEDIATION
Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı		Only selamlık survives, complete relationship cannot be established.
Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı		Distinct haremlik and selamlık components.
Saffet Paşa Yalısı		Connecting corridor.
Sadullah Paşa Yalısı		Connection documented, original division partially known.
Köçeoğlu Yalısı		Connected residential components.
Şerifler Yalısı		Components connected, haremlik no longer survives.
Yılanlı Yalı		Distinct haremlik and selamlık components.
Kıbrıslı Yalısı		Haremlik and selamlık connected through mabeyn.
Kont Ostrorog Yalısı		Two differentiated residential sections within connected composition.
Hasip Paşa Yalısı		Haremlik and selamlık connected through mabeyn.
Sandalciyan Yalısı		Available organisation does not indicate distinct haremlik-selamlık components.
Esma Sultan Yalısı		Available organisation does not indicate distinct haremlik-selamlık components.
Sait Halim Paşa Yalısı		Haremlik and selamlık incorporated within the same building.
Fuat Paşa Yalısı		Original haremlik and selamlık cannot be established.

Not documented | Connected | Integrated | Separated but connected | Physically separated

Table 2. Domestic organisation

8.3 Architectural Expression

This comparison examines how the architectural expression of the yalı changed across the selected case studies. The buildings are compared through three interrelated characteristics: the organisation of the architectural composition, the degree of ornamentation, and the expression of monumentality. These criteria allow changes in the external character of the yalı to be evaluated comparatively, from relatively irregular and restrained compositions to more formally organised, decorative, and monumental expressions. Rather than associating these characteristics with a single stylistic category, the comparison investigates how their relative presence changed across the chronology and how they collectively contributed to the evolving representational character of the yalı.

The comparison indicates a general transformation toward more formally organised and representational architectural expression. While the earlier examples tend to display more irregular compositions and relatively restrained levels of ornament and monumentality, symmetry becomes increasingly prominent across the case studies. Ornamentation and monumentality also become more pronounced in several of the later examples, although these characteristics do not develop at the same rate or appear with the same intensity in every case.

The comparison therefore does not suggest a uniform progression in which symmetry, ornament and monumentality increase simultaneously. Instead, different combinations occur across the case studies: highly symmetrical compositions may remain comparatively restrained in ornament, while stronger monumentality does not necessarily correspond to the highest degree of decorative elaboration. What emerges more consistently is an increasing emphasis on the yalı as a formally composed and visually representative building. Architectural transformation can therefore be understood not simply as the adoption of new stylistic features, but as a broader change in the way the residence expressed order, visibility and representation through its external architectural character.

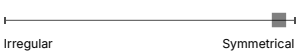
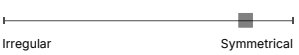
CASE STUDY	COMPOSITION	ORNAMENT	MONUMENTALITY
Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı			
Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı			
Saffet Paşa Yalısı			
Sadullah Paşa Yalısı			
Köçeoğlu Yalısı			
Şerifler Yalısı			
Yılanlı Yalı			
Kıbrıslı Yalısı			
Kont Ostrorog Yalısı			
Hasip Paşa Yalısı			
Sandalciyan Yalısı			
Esma Sultan Yalısı			
Sait Halim Paşa Yalısı			
Fuat Paşa Yalısı			

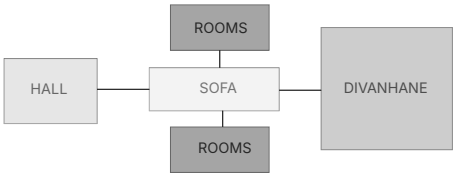
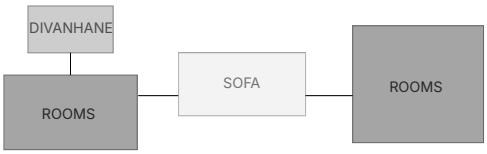
Table 3. Architectural expression

8.4 Spatial Organisation and Circulation

This comparison examines the relationship between spatial organisation and circulation within the selected yalıs, focusing particularly on the role of the sofa. The diagrams abstract the plans into their principal spatial components in order to compare how rooms were organised in relation to the sofa and how movement was structured between them. Where additional spaces such as halls, divanhanes, or courtyards participate in this organisation, these are also included. Rather than considering the presence of the sofa alone, the comparison investigates whether it continued to function as the principal element connecting and organising the surrounding spaces, and how this role changed across the case studies.

The comparison demonstrates a strong continuity of the sofa across the case studies, despite broader transformations in the organisation of the yalı. In many examples, rooms continue to be arranged in direct relation to the sofa, maintaining its role as an important organising element within the residence. Its persistence across buildings with otherwise different compositions indicates that changes in architectural expression and domestic organisation did not result in the abandonment of this established spatial principle.

At the same time, the diagrams reveal greater variation in the way circulation is structured around the sofa. In some cases, the sofa operates directly as the principal distributive space through which the surrounding rooms are reached, while other configurations introduce additional elements such as halls, divanhanes, or courtyards into the circulation sequence. The later cases therefore do not demonstrate a straightforward replacement of the sofa by corridor-based circulation. Instead, established and new spatial elements coexist in different configurations. The continuity of the sofa alongside this diversification of circulation suggests that the transformation of the yalı occurred through the adaptation and recombination of existing spatial principles rather than their complete replacement.

CASE STUDY	SPATIAL ORGANISATION AND CIRCULATION
Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Yalısı	
Zarif Mustafa Paşa Yalısı	
Saffet Paşa Yalısı	
Sadullah Paşa Yalısı	
Köçeoğlu Yalısı	
Şerifler Yalısı	
Yılanlı Yalı	

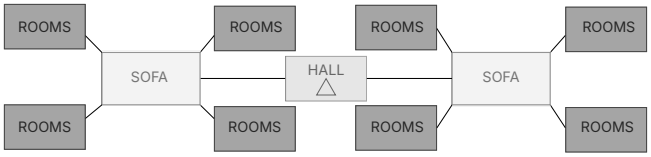
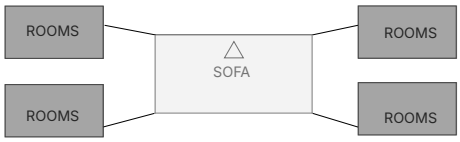
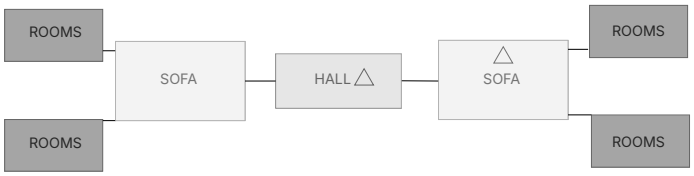
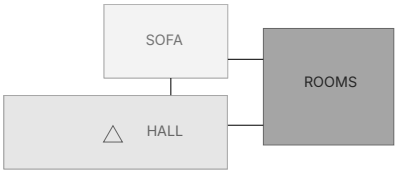
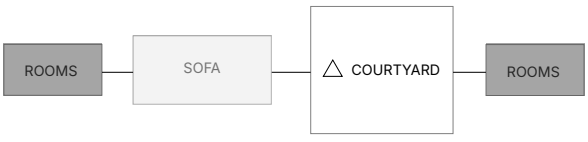
CASE STUDY	SPATIAL ORGANISATION AND CIRCULATION
Kıbrıslı Yalısı	
Kont Ostrorog Yalısı	
Hasip Paşa Yalısı	
Sandalciyan Yalısı	
Esma Sultan Yalısı	
Sait Halim Paşa Yalısı	
Fuat Paşa Yalısı	

Table 4. Spatial organisation and circulation

9. Conclusion

The Bosphorus yalı developed as a residential typology closely connected to the particular environmental, spatial, and social conditions of the Bosphorus. Its relationship with the water, its organisation of domestic life, and its architectural form were shaped not only by the physical characteristics of the shoreline but also by the practices of Ottoman elite residential culture. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, these conditions were progressively transformed by changes in mobility, urban development, domestic and social life, and cultural representation associated with Ottoman modernization. The central question of this study has therefore been how a residential typology so closely connected to a particular landscape and way of inhabiting the city responded when the conditions surrounding it began to change.

The comparative analysis of the fourteen selected yalıs demonstrates that this transformation cannot be described as a single or uniform architectural evolution. When the same case studies are examined systematically through shoreline relationship and access, domestic organisation, architectural expression, and spatial organisation and circulation, different components of the typology can be seen to transform at different rates and in different ways. Rather than progressing collectively from one clearly defined architectural condition toward another, the yalı underwent a series of uneven and interconnected adaptations in which transformation and continuity operated simultaneously.

The changing relationship between the residence and the shoreline provides one of the clearest examples of this process. Earlier yalıs demonstrate the fundamental role of maritime access within a residential landscape in which the Bosphorus functioned as an important system of circulation. Across the chronology, however, land-based access becomes increasingly significant and is incorporated more explicitly into the organisation of the residence. This development does not amount to the simple replacement of sea access by land access. Several cases demonstrate the coexistence of both systems, while others respond differently according to their particular shoreline and topographical conditions. The transformation is therefore better understood as an increasing differentiation of arrival and access, reflecting the changing position of the yalı between maritime and land-based systems of movement.

A similarly uneven transformation can be observed in domestic organisation. The distinction between haremlik and selamlık remains an important component of the residential structure, but the architectural means through which this distinction is produced change considerably. Earlier examples can contain physically separate or strongly differentiated domestic components, while later residences increasingly incorporate these domains within more connected or architecturally integrated compositions. This does not necessarily indicate the disappearance of the social distinction itself. Instead, it demonstrates that changing domestic and social practices could be accommodated through the reorganisation of an established spatial system. The transformation of the haremlik–selamlık relationship therefore occurred through changing degrees and mechanisms of separation, connection, and integration rather than through a single transition from separation to disappearance.

Architectural expression reveals another dimension of this transformation. Across the chronology, a general tendency toward more formally organised and representational compositions can be observed, with

symmetry becoming increasingly prominent and ornamentation and monumentality becoming more pronounced in several later examples. These characteristics, however, do not develop simultaneously or with the same intensity in every residence. Highly symmetrical compositions can remain comparatively restrained in ornament, while stronger monumentality does not necessarily correspond to greater decorative elaboration. Architectural transformation should therefore not be understood simply as the adoption of a new stylistic vocabulary, but as a broader change in the ways the yalı expressed order, visibility, and representation through its external architectural character.

Spatial organisation and circulation demonstrate particularly clearly how transformation could occur alongside continuity. The sofa remains an important organising element across much of the chronology, with rooms continuing to be arranged in direct relation to it in many of the selected residences. Its persistence, however, does not imply an unchanged system of circulation. Different configurations incorporate halls, divanhanes, courtyards, and other distributive elements alongside the sofa, producing increasingly varied relationships between rooms and movement. The later cases therefore do not demonstrate a straightforward replacement of sofa-based organisation by corridor-based circulation. Instead, established and new spatial elements coexist and are recombined in different ways. The persistence of the sofa is consequently significant not as evidence of architectural stasis, but as an example of how an established spatial principle could accommodate changing domestic and architectural requirements.

Taken together, these findings also suggest a different way of positioning the transformation of the yalı in relation to the existing scholarship. The present study does not seek to replace the architectural histories and typological observations established by scholars such as Sedad Hakkı Eldem and Doğan Kuban, whose work provides an essential foundation for understanding the Bosphorus residence. Rather, it reorganises this architectural evidence through a comparative framework derived from the broader transformations affecting mobility, domestic and social life, cultural representation, and the organisation of the Bosphorus. By applying the same analytical criteria systematically across the same group of fourteen case studies, relationships become visible that are less apparent when individual architectural characteristics are considered separately or through different representative examples.

Most significantly, this comparison demonstrates that the different characteristics of the yalı did not transform simultaneously or according to the same trajectory. Increasing land-based circulation could coexist with maritime access. Greater architectural integration could occur while the functional distinction between haremlik and selamlık remained relevant. More formally organised, monumental, and ornamented architectural expressions could coexist with sofa-based spatial organisation, while circulation itself could become more varied without eliminating the sofa as an organising element. The transformation of one architectural characteristic therefore did not necessarily imply an equivalent transformation of the others. The yalı should consequently not be understood as moving as a complete architectural system from an earlier “traditional” condition toward a later “modern” or “Western” one.

This unevenness is significant for understanding the relationship between architectural change and Ottoman modernization. Modernization becomes visible in the yalı not only through stylistic influence or changes to the façade, but at several interconnected architectural levels: in the way the residence was approached, in the organisation and connection of

domestic domains, in the structuring of internal space and movement, and in the increasing role of architecture as a means of representation. At the same time, these changes operated through spatial principles that could remain remarkably persistent. The architectural response to modernization was therefore neither simple resistance nor wholesale replacement, but a process in which established structures were repeatedly reconfigured in response to changing conditions.

The comparative analysis also demonstrates why these tendencies should not be interpreted as a rigid evolutionary sequence. The fourteen yalıs differ not only chronologically but also in their topographical and shoreline conditions, scale, patronage, subsequent alterations, survival, and availability of historical documentation. Individual buildings therefore do not always conform to the broader tendencies identified by the comparison. These exceptions are not contradictions to the analysis; rather, they demonstrate that the transformation of the typology depended upon the interaction between broader historical processes and the specific circumstances of each residence. The Bosphorus itself remained an active condition in this process, producing different architectural responses according to shoreline morphology, terrain, modes of access, and the relationship between water and land.

The contribution of this study therefore lies less in proposing a new formal chronology of the Bosphorus yalı than in repositioning its architectural transformation within the broader processes that produced it. The systematic comparison demonstrates that shoreline access, domestic organisation, architectural expression, and spatial organisation and circulation are most revealing when understood not as independent architectural characteristics, but as different dimensions through which changing conditions of inhabitation were negotiated. What may appear at the level of the façade as stylistic transformation can coexist with substantial spatial continuity, while changes that are less visually apparent—such as the reorganisation of access, domestic relationships, or circulation—may reveal equally significant responses to modernization.

The evolution of the Bosphorus yalı during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries can therefore be understood as a process of selective and uneven adaptation rather than uniform replacement. Its strong relationship with the Bosphorus did not prevent it from responding to the increasing importance of land-based circulation; established domestic structures did not prevent new relationships between different domains of the residence; and the incorporation of new architectural vocabularies did not require the abandonment of fundamental spatial principles. The yalı remained recognisable across these transformations not because it remained unchanged, but because its typological structure possessed the capacity to absorb change selectively. Its history is therefore one of continuity through transformation: an architectural type repeatedly reorganised in response to changing urban, social, and cultural conditions while maintaining a persistent relationship with the spatial logic of the Bosphorus and with the domestic principles from which it developed.

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