

THE BEGINNING OF FORMAL ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION IN TURKEY AND THE PIONEER TURKISH WOMEN IN ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The formal architectural education in Turkey was begun in late 19th century. Through the Ottoman's classical and traditional thought about the *architect*, only male students had the opportunity of having architectural education. Although at the beginning of the 20th century, there were some efforts about the girls' fine arts education, the female students could just have architectural education in the early Republican years. The modernization movements, which were put into practice in all fields by the Republic, had also affected the architectural arena. Related to the image of *modern society* and *modern Turkish women*, having architectural education was given as a right to women in 1930s. Thus, the pioneer Turkish women architects could have participated to the profession in 1934. But, the existence of the women in the architectural education and architectural arena was not adopted easily. In this paper, with a detailed research about the first women architects of Turkey, the existence of women either in the architectural education or schools were examined by searching the main changes in the education of architecture.

Keywords: Architectural Schools, Architectural Education, Pioneer Women Architects

INTRODUCTION

In the classical Ottoman world, it is impossible to talk about some modern concepts such as *engineering* and *architecture*. Also, it can be easily explained by not having any architectural schools for classical Ottoman *master builders* who had been only educated with mathematics lessons in madrasahs and by the traditional relationships due to the pre-modern world's pragmatics. In a similar way, due to Ottoman social pragmatics, it has also been mentioned that the building and constructing disciplines were accepted only as male professions in this period.

However, in the 19th century, which was described as Ottoman modernization period, especially in the late 19th century, some renewals were come up in the frame of Westernization images. Although there were some attempts both in women's social status and education in the architectural and fine arts arena, some of them could not put into practice because of long wars, epidemic diseases or state politics. And also the most important one was in the architectural education.

Until that time, the architectural education, which was giving in the military schools within the engineering education, was transformed into a specific professional education. Moreover, specific schools were established for the education of architecture and fine arts, and also for the first time civilian architectural education were put into agenda. Nevertheless, all of these developments were including only male students and finally it could be possible that to have architectural education in the early Republican years for the female students.

ARCHITECTURAL SCHOOLS

In the 18th century, two schools, named as *Mühendishane-i Berri-i Hümayun* and *Mühendishane-i Bahri-i Hümayun*, were established to answer the need of the Ottoman army's technicians. But, because of the military characters of these schools, only Muslim and male students could have had education. In these schools, the main aim was giving engineering education in addition to the military education, and the architectural education was given within the context of the engineering education (Çeçen, 1990).

But in the early 19th century, with the attempts of the delegates who were sent to work in Europe, although it was begun to talk about a specific architectural education, only temporary solutions could have been applied at the end of the century. In 1883, in *Mühendishane-i Berri-i Hümayun*, a civil engineering school named as *Hendese-i Mülkiye* was established and architectural education was begun to give in an informal way (Çeçen, 1990). However, its relation with *Mühendishane* due to the aim of not increasing the number of non-Muslim engineers in the country, it was brought together that the necessity of accepting only Muslim and male students (Figure 1).

The education period of the school was planned as seven years, for the first three years high school education and then for four years engineering education. The graduates of the school had usually worked at the construction projects of the roads and bridges all over the country (Çeçen, 1990).

On the other hand, the attempts about establishing a fine arts academy were finally realized in 1883 with *Nefise-i Şahane Mekteb-i Ali'si* (with its formal name). At the beginning, the school was giving education in four departments such as architecture, painting, sculpture and intaglio (Cezar, 1995; Figure 2). Thus, in



Figure 1. The First Graduates of Hendese-I Mülkiye in 1888 (Çeçen, 1990:35)



Figure 2. The First Students and Teachers of Sanayi-i Nefise Mektebi (Cezar, 1995:466)

Turkey an architectural school was instituted for the first time. To the school, which was begun to education in the building, constructed by Aléxandre Vallury, next to Archeological Museum, only male students were accepted (Demir, 1978). Because of Muslim students were generally preferring Hendese-i Mülkiye for the engineering and architectural education, for the first years mostly non-Muslim students were educated. This would be in relation that the classical Ottoman engineering education, which was based on military system, had accepted only Muslim students.

In the same years, some efforts could be seen about the girls' fine arts education and instituting private academies that not including architectural departments. But these attempts could have been put into practice in the first quarter of the 20th century, in 1914, by the establishment of *İnas Sanayi-i Nefise Mektebi* which had given education to only female students (Cezar, 1973). But this school was including only departments of painting and sculpture and also there were no any female students in the architectural education (Özgüven, 2002a).

In the same years, to answer the need of the technicians of the country, in 1911 newly established school named as *Kondüktör Mekteb-i Ali'si* had accepted only male students (Batırbaygil, 1998).

These three schools instituted in the Ottoman's last period in capital İstanbul, had the origins of İstanbul Technical University, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University and Yıldız Technical University which all has an important role in nowadays' architectural education.

By the Republic, modernization movements that were put into practice in all fields had also been influential in the education arena, especially in the architectural education and so the education programs of these schools were structured over again. The name of Hendese-i Mülkiye Mektebi was firstly changed to *Yüksek Mühendis Mektebi* and thus had gained an aspect of Faculty of Civil Engineering. In the school which had road-railway, water and construction departments, architectural education has been giving in the construction department in an informal way (Anonymous, 1961). According to this education system, after the common education for the first three years, students of engineering and architecture were separated into their own programs in the forth, fifth and sixth classes by drawing of lots. After a while, this system was found incorrect and in 1936 these process was decreased from three years to two years for the thought of giving more useful information to architectural students. Thus the students who had wanted to have architectural education were accepted by the exams (Anonymous, 1961). And also that date has indicated the acceptance of the first female student to Construction Department in the institution (Özgüven, 2002a).

On the other hand, in 1924 it was agreed to accept high school graduates to Sanayi-i Nefise Mektebi and the education period was determined as four years. Even if the male and female academies were merged together in 1925, it could not been possible till 1926 when both of the schools were moved to the buildings in Fındıklı (Cezar, 1973). In 1928 the school's name was changed to *Devlet Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi*, and in 1934 Department of Architecture to *Department of Master Architecture* and its education period was increased from four years to five years. Also in 1938 its graduates were begun to have the title of *MSc Architect* (Cezar, 1973).

Kondüktör Mekteb-i Ali'si which had the name of *İstanbul Technical School* in 1937 thus had the appearance of an institution of architecture and engineering (Anonymous, 2000). The first students of Department of Architecture, which was established in 1943 by Emin Onat, were transferred from Construction Department (Aktaş, 1973). And thus, after Sanayi-i Nefise Mektebi, the specific architectural education was firstly begun in Yıldız Technical University with its present name. After the four years education, graduates would have the title of *architect*. The first graduates of this school were the class of 1944-1945 (Aktaş, 1973). Mostly male students preferred this school to work at the construction of road and bridges in Anatolia due to its technical character (Özgüven, 2002a).

In the same years, by changing the name of Yüksek Mühendis Mektebi to *İstanbul Technical University*, four faculties were instituted such as Civil Engineering, Architecture, Machine Engineering and Electric-Electromechanic. Architectural education was determined as five years and its graduates would have the title of *MSc engineer architect* (Çeçen, 1990).

In addition, in 1954 *Technical School* was established in relation to İstanbul Technical University by the aim of growing engineers and architects. With the four years education, its graduates would have the title of *architect* (Anonymous, 1961).

WOMEN IN ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION

In the context of modernization movements and the image of *modern society* by the Republic, in relation with the architectural education that was structured over again, being an architect was given to the women as a right by the government. And so, the first results of the creation of the *modern Turkish women* were taken in the year of 1934. By taking into account that the first architectural school in Turkey was established in 1883, it was also seen that the first Turkish women architects were graduated in 1934 after 51 years of its establishment (Özgüven, 2002b).

The first women architects of Turkey were Leman Tomsu and Münevver Belen who were graduated from Devlet Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi in 1934. Şeküre Üçer Niltuna graduated in 1936 and Leyla Turgut graduated in 1939 from the same school were also the pioneer Turkish woman architects (Records of Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University Presidency Archives Management).

Although in the first years, quite a few female students had architectural education, by the establishment of two other architectural schools in 1940s it could also



771 Celile Berk



Fatma KARACIK



Güner GÖREN



Yıldız TOLUN

Figure 3. The First Women Engineer Architects Graduated from Yüksek Mühendis Mektebi in 1942 (Records of İstanbul Technical University Presidency Archives Management)

Figure 4. The First Women Engineer Architects Graduated from Yüksek Mühendis Mektebi in 1945 (Records of İstanbul Technical University Presidency Archives Management)



Figure 5. The Students of Architecture in 1938 (Tanyeli (eds.), 2000:67)

be seen clearly that the giving the importance to the architectural education in the whole country. Thus, by the acceptance of the female students to these three schools, a clear increase has become in the numbers of the women architects (Özgüven, 2002a).

The first engineer architects graduated from Yüksek Mühendis Mektebi were Celile Berk from the class of 1942 and Fatma Karacık class of 1944 (Figure 3). In the following years, in 1945 F. Güner Gören and Yıldız Tolun, in 1947 Melahat Filibe Topaloğlu and Zehra Alpsoy were graduated (Figure 4). And also, Feyzunnisa Men, Hande Çağlar Suher, Perran Doğancı, Nilüfer Ağat were the first women architects graduated from İstanbul Technical University Department of Architecture (Records of İstanbul Technical University Presidency Archives Management).

In this period, it was really mentioned that the pioneer women architects were graduated in eight years difference from the two schools, which were given architectural education even if one was in informal way. This difference of time had arisen from the origins of the schools that one was a military school and the other was a fine arts academy.

On the other hand, although with present name Yıldız Technical University Department of Architecture was established one year before İstanbul Technical University Department of Architecture, the first women architect graduated from this school was Bedia Ertürk from the class of 1952 (Records of Yıldız Technical University Presidency Archives Management).

H. Meral Kocaharzem Korkusuz and Güner Terzioğlu Ülmen were the first women architects graduated from Technical School in 1957 (Records of İstanbul Technical University Presidency Archives Management).

In 1950s, by the cancellation of the acceptance exams to these schools and by the changes in the social structure, the female students who had architectural education were increased in numbers. By taking into account the development either in the architectural arena and architectural education or in the social and political structure, the women architects who were graduated between the periods of 1934 to 1960 were described as the pioneer generation (Özgüven, 2002a).

In this context, 125 women architect had taken first steps to the profession from three architectural schools of the period. 62 of them were graduated from Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, 49 were from İstanbul Technical University and 3 from Yıldız Technical University (Figure 5). Nevertheless, this first generation of women architects was only % 8 of the all graduates and % 92 was male graduates (Özgüven, 2002a).

And the other point that had to be mentioned importantly was some of the women architects have recorded as male, some of the male architects as women in the archives of these institutions and in the chambers of the profession. But, with detailed researches and oral history studies, the real ones have been brought into light and the numeric values were counted with the correction of these false records.

CONCLUSION

The architectural education that had begun in the late 19th century in Ottoman Empire, due to the thought that the architecture and engineering were a male profession in this period, was including only male students for the first 50 years. However, women could have the chance for having architectural education by the arguments about the women's social status and women's education in 1920s with the newly Republic.

However, it was really hard to talk about the women's conscious orientation to the architectural education in this period. Moreover, it could not be mentioned that either society or the women who were graduated as architects have yet known the professional differences between the civil engineering and the architecture (Özgüven, 2002b).

And also, it was not in an easy way to have a place in the architectural education and in the architectural arena as a male profession, on the contrary always the title of *women* was ahead of the title *architect*. In a similar way, it was not mentioned that the existence of the women in the architectural schools were accepted easily either by the teachers or by the other male students. It was mentioned that in the following years women had met with similar attitudes in the professional life. These problems have shown that although being an architect was given to the women as a right, it was not accepted by the whole society in an easy way (Özgüven, 2002a).

Thus the right of being an architect was given to the women had brought some social and public problems about the women's sexual identities and responsibilities together that had played a big role in either their education or professional life (Özgüven, 2002b).

As a result, it has to be said that the problems that the pioneer women in the architectural education had generally faced about their sexual identities were determining their career path and been ahead of their professional titles during their educational and professional life.

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