



Gender, Place & Culture

A Journal of Feminist Geography

ISSN: 0966-369X (Print) 1360-0524 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/cgpc20

Ambivalent spaces/moving bodies: gender politics of mosque design in Turkey

Ayşenur Şenel & Bülent Batuman

To cite this article: Ayşenur Şenel & Bülent Batuman (11 Jun 2025): Ambivalent spaces/moving bodies: gender politics of mosque design in Turkey, Gender, Place & Culture, DOI: 10.1080/0966369X.2025.2513085

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2025.2513085>



Published online: 11 Jun 2025.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 117



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Ambivalent spaces/moving bodies: gender politics of mosque design in Turkey

Ayşenur Şenel^a and Bülent Batuman^b

^aDepartment of Architecture, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, USA; ^bDepartment of Urban Design and Landscape Architecture, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey

ABSTRACT

In recent years, women's participation in mosques has become a significant research topic and scholars have scrutinized the spatial aspects of gender segregation in these settings. This paper contributes to this growing body of literature by analyzing five recently constructed mosques in Turkey that have been publicly highlighted as 'women-friendly' and stood out for the involvement of women designers in their development. We depart from the idea that gender segregation is neither an essential attribute of the mosque, nor it is fixed: rather, it is spatially produced and open to contestation. While existing scholarship has predominantly focused on how female worshippers appropriate mosque spaces, this study addresses a less-explored dimension: the initial production of space and the role of architectural design in shaping, enabling, and contesting patriarchy. By examining the spatial design and physical characteristics of these mosques, we explore how architecture not only reflects but actively influences gendered experiences, affording or limiting the appropriation of space. Over the past two decades, under the governance of the Islamist Justice and Development Party (AKP) in Turkey, there has been a notable emphasis on encouraging women's participation in mosques. As a result, specific attention has been given to the design of women's sections in recently built mosques. However, we argue that, rather than the areas designed for women to worship, it is the ambivalent spaces of mix-use and circulation inside the mosques that opens room for the mobility of women as spatial agents.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 6 November 2023; Accepted 15 May 2025

KEYWORDS

Mosque; gender segregation; women's sections; ambivalent space; spatial agency; Turkey

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SDG 5: Gender equality

1. Introduction

It's not right to worship [for men and women] side by side, but I see no harm in passing side by side while walking [inside the mosque]. (Interviewee 1, female, architect)

Mosques have historically served as the center of social life in Muslim communities, functioning as both spiritual hubs and spaces for learning and interaction. As such,

CONTACT Bülent Batuman  bbatuman@gmail.com  Department of Urban Design and Landscape Architecture, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey

© 2025 Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

they play a vital role in shaping and guiding communities while also serving as the material representation of Islam in the public sphere. Mosques create social sites that foster a sense of community and identity through spatio-practical production.

Historically, men have been more active in public worship in Islam (Bartkowski and Read 2003; Reda 2004; Sullins 2006). This has resulted in the exclusion of women from positions of religious authority (Haddad, Smith, and Moore 2006; Hammer 2012; Bano and Kalmbach 2012) and has reinforced institutionalized gender segregation within mosques. In recent years, women's participation in mosques has become a significant research focus (Knott 2005; Morin and Guelke 2007; Bhimji 2012). Scholars have examined women's perspective as users, their demands for spatial equality, the discrimination they face, their agency in shaping spaces, and the spatial making of their religious subjectivities (Avishai 2008; Eskandari 2011; Ghafournia 2020; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2002; Nageeb 2007; Nyhagen 2019; Prickett 2015; Mohammed 2024). However, much of this literature primarily explores gender segregation from the perspective of users.

We argue that, while examining how women navigate and appropriate mosque spaces, it is essential to consider the role of architectural design in structuring gendered experiences. Spatial configurations define, challenge, or accommodate women's agency within mosques. In this sense, we extend the discussion from the lived experience of gendered spatial practices to the material production of mosque architecture as a means of structuring or contesting patriarchal authority. We argue that architecture, as a field of knowledge, presents critical lines of inquiry that contribute to the study of the gender politics of social space.

While it is not a universal practice, many mosques incorporate designated women's sections, which have been subject to scholarly scrutiny (Aryanti 2012; Eskandari 2011; Mohammed 2024). When provided, these areas are often physically separated from the main prayer hall -typically reserved for men- and are frequently located in basements or behind partitions, leading to objections from female worshippers (Baghby, Pearl, and Froehle 2001; Karim 2009; Mohammed 2024).

This paper contributes to debates on the gender politics of mosque space highlighting the significance of spatial design in shaping worship experiences, using the case of recently constructed mosques in Turkey. Over the past two decades, under the rule of the Islamist Justice and Development Party (AKP), there has been a concerted effort to encourage women's attendance at mosques, and the Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet*) has been instrumental in this endeavor. As a result, attention has been given to women's sections in the design of new mosques. This emphasis has also facilitated the involvement of female architects in mosque design, particularly in prominent projects sponsored by devout patrons or the state. The government's encouragement of female mosque attendance, in turn, prompted female worshippers to organize and articulate their spatial demands. However, as we will demonstrate, this is not a process without conflict. New mosques intended to promote women's inclusion have also become sites of contestation over gender segregation. Women involved in mosque design and construction have proposed spatial solutions accommodating user demands, yet they have encountered resistance from patriarchal authority during both the building phase and the later management of these mosques.

Given the role of architecture in shaping social interactions, mosque design provides valuable insights into the negotiation of gender politics within worship spaces. Thus, we analyze the initial designs and current uses of mosque spaces in terms of gender segregation, utilizing architectural diagrams to examine five recent mosques that have garnered attention for their treatment of women's sections. Through comparative analysis, we investigate architectural transformations over time, revealing how gendered divisions are both constructed and contested. While these mosques incorporate design elements aimed at enhancing the comfort of female worshippers, political tensions emerge from seemingly apolitical architectural decisions regarding secondary spaces within mosques. As the quote in the epigraph illustrates, these circulation and service spaces may appear trivial and straightforward -architecturally and spiritually less significant- yet they become politically contentious. We define such areas as *ambivalent spaces*: spaces not inherently assigned to a specific gender but continuously shaped, contested, and negotiated through social use. We argue that these ambivalent spaces expand women's capacity as spatial agents. Rather than assessing spatial agency by the quality of the occupied space, we consider the extent of movement it permits. This interplay between architectural intervention and spatial agency underscores how mosque design serves as both a site of gendered contestation and a framework for negotiating mobility.

Shifting the focus to the design and reconfiguration of space necessitates examining contributions from actors beyond users. To this end, we incorporate insights from interviews conducted with mosque designers and other stakeholders involved in the building process to uncover various perspectives on gender segregation and the negotiations surrounding it. Through our analysis of these five mosques, we also explore the backlash from patriarchy attempting to restore spatial configurations that limit women's mobility.

2. Gender, space and the mosque

We used warm materials [in the women's section] to make it feel more feminine.
(Interviewee 2, male, client)

Feminist critiques of gender and space in Islamic contexts have gained prominence since the 1990s, focusing on women's agency particularly in relation to religious authority (Mahmood 2005; Wadud 2006; Haddad, Smith, and Moore 2006; Morin and Guelke 2007; Elewa and Silvers 2010; Bano and Kalmbach 2012; Hammer 2012; Kalmbach 2012; Rinaldo 2013; Jouili 2015; Joly and Khursheed 2017). These critiques address women's exclusion from religious leadership, restrictive gendered interpretations of Islamic law, and the spatial marginalization of women in places of worship. Scholarship has highlighted Muslim women's objections to inadequate prayer areas, their demands for performing prayer together with men, and advocacy for women-led prayers (Eskandari 2011; Prickett 2015; Nyhagen 2019; Ghafournia 2020). Although there were historical precedents, women-only mosques have also been established within the context of recent debates (Samatar 2005; Cantone 2009; Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016; Fewkes 2019). In Turkey, gender-mixed prayer and

women-led mosques were not discussed; instead, the debates have centered on the use of the main prayer hall by both sexes (Yılmaz 2015; Kıpçak 2016).

Muslim women's relationship with patriarchy displays an ambivalent character, swinging between compliance and resistance (Nyhagen 2019). As Mahmood (2005) has argued, compliance with Islamic patriarchy opens room for female agency and empowerment. Agency extends beyond resisting dominance; it involves the capacity to act in ways that transform and redefine what was once subordination. By being in traditionally 'male spaces', even though they submit to patriarchal authority, women illustrate the potential for negotiation and change. Avishai (2008, 429) further underlines that agency does not even require 'empowerment, subversion, or rational strategizing'; what is crucial is the particular ways of performing religion. Following Mahmood's (2009) definition of agency as 'capacity for action', we conceptualize *spatial agency* in relation to capacity for movement -mobility- and explore how architecture enables or constrains it. While existing scholarship on Muslim women's agency often focuses on individual acts of participation within religious spaces (Mahmood 2009, Nyhagen 2019, Ghafournia 2020), this study highlights how architectural design itself serves as an active force in shaping women's spatial agency.

As feminist critiques of architecture have long emphasized, the built environment is not neutral; it both reflects and reinforces social hierarchies, including gendered divisions of space (Weisman 1992; Rendell 2000; Colomina and Bloomer 1992). In the case of mosques, spatial design choices function as tools that either reinforce or challenge gender segregation. Mosque layouts, circulation patterns, and the presence of ambivalent spaces create opportunities for women's engagement beyond fixed gendered boundaries, whether intentionally or through unintended spatial consequences. Moreover, the increasing use of mosques for activities beyond prayer expands possibilities of transgression of gender norms. Thus, it is necessary to focus on the spatial performances of Muslim women beyond prayer in the mosque, particularly as younger generations exhibit an increasing level of 'fluidity' in their spatial practices (Bhimji 2012). In the case of contemporary Turkish mosques, architectural designs have fostered this fluidity by promoting mobility and incorporating greater amounts of ambivalent space.

Here, it is worth noting that women's agency in mosques is not limited to their role as users. As architects and designers, women play a key role in negotiating spatial transformations. Moreover, they contribute to the construction process as professionals, supervisors, administrators and clients. However, agency does not reside solely in their hands; it is a continuous negotiation, both during construction and after completion (Massey 1994). As we have indicated, once built, architecture operates beyond the intent of its designers, shaping the way spaces are used, contested, and reinterpreted over time (Hill 2003).

Women's spatial presence in mosques is often linked to perceptions of their sexuality; with some believing that their presence may serve as distraction or cause of sexual temptation for men (Hammer 2012, 471). Furthermore, as Islam preaches bodily cleanliness, the imprecise nature of menstruation can create anxiety for women (Mernissi 1991, 74). This often leads women to refrain from attending the mosque. Moreover, when they use the mosque, the women also at times feel more comfortable

precisely because of its segregated spatiality (Lehmann 2012, 500). Yet, spatial segregation legitimizes the isolation of women and reinforces patriarchal power relations (Nas, 2022). Architectural elements such as walls, windows, doors, partition screens, stairs, and columns regulate access and visibility, creating hierarchical distinctions between users (Aryanti 2012). These partitions define who is part of the core congregation and who is positioned outside of it (Sunay and Türkdoğan 2019).

As Massey (1994, 2) has argued, the 'particular ways of thinking about space and place are tied up with, both directly and indirectly, particular social constructions of gender'. This is especially evident in cases of spaces of religious traditions (such as Islam as well as Orthodox Judaism) where gender segregation perpetuates patriarchal norms (Sullins 2006). Rendell (2000, 101) distinguishes between 'sexed' spaces, which are based on biological sex (e.g. restrooms), and 'gendered' spaces, where activities are socially assigned to a particular gender. In this regard, the mosque -particularly the main prayer hall- is gendered as a male-dominated space. Ambivalent spaces, on the other hand, are not inherently sexed but are continuously gendered (or re-gendered) through social use.

There is no singular interpretation of gender in Islam, and gender segregation is shaped more by contemporary political conditions than static religious principles (Mir-Hosseini 1999; Rock-Singer 2016; Shahrokni 2019). Gender relations within mosques are therefore influenced more by historical and cultural dynamics of public space than Islamic doctrine. In Muslim societies, public spaces have generally been associated with men and private spaces with women. However, recent scholarship has shown the inaccuracy of this simplistic binary, highlighting the multiplicity and complexity of publics and privates (Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2001).

Studies on public space generally focus on open spaces such as streets, squares and parks. However, it is equally important to examine interiors in relation to public life, particularly in Muslim societies, where gender relations often confine many public activities to indoor settings. Stephan Maneval, in his study on Jeddah discusses social visits among women as a form of 'weak' female public (Maneval 2019, 79–81). He cautions against equating outdoor spaces with strong publics under men's dominance, instead demonstrating that gendered publics are more complex than such binary distinctions suggest. This complexity necessitates a critical examination of 'visibility', a key aspect of gender segregation in mosques. In shared open spaces, social norms dictate that women remain visually inconspicuous despite being physically present. Citing his observations in a Lebanese village in the 1970s, Gilsenan (2008, 171–2) notes that 'men walk down the middle [of the street, while] women cling to the sides and walk fast' and neither 'gives any sign of seeing the other'. However, within the public interior of the mosque, merely pretending not to see is insufficient. Mobility of the female body challenges the spatial order of gendered mosque space.

We argue that political tensions within mosques do not arise from the designation of separate spaces for men and women, as long as spatial order is maintained. Instead, conflict emerges from the continuous negotiation and reconfiguration of these spaces through bodily movement. Gender segregation is not an intrinsic, fixed feature of mosques; rather, it is actively produced and contested through spatial practices (Morin and Guelke 2007; Aryanti 2012).

3. Methodology

In this paper, we analyze five mosques built over the last two decades: the Şakirin Mosque (2005–2009) and Çamlıca Mosque (2012–2019) in Istanbul, the Ahmet Hamdi Akseki Mosque (2008–2013) and the Alacaatlı Uluyol Mosque (2013–2016) in Ankara, and the Ramazanoğlu Mosque (2006–2012) in Adana. These mosques vary in terms of size, architectural iconography, clientele and design processes (Figure 1). The Ahmet Hamdi Akseki and Çamlıca Mosques represent government's ideological projects from two different conjectures: the former was built in the early years of the AKP's rule, while the latter was constructed after the party had consolidated its power. The Ramazanoğlu Mosque was built by the *Diyanet* and promoted as 'a mosque designed by women for women'. The Şakirin and Alacaatlı Uluyol Mosques were smaller examples (although the former received much media coverage) constructed by private benefactors and represent civil initiatives.



Figure 1. From top left: Çamlıca Mosque, Ahmet Hamdi Akseki Mosque, Ramazanoğlu Mosque, Alacaatlı Uluyol Mosque, Şakirin Mosque.

While the Ahmet Hamdi Akseki, Şakirin and Alacaatlı Uluyol Mosques experiment with modern architectural iconography, the Çamlıca and Ramazanoğlu Mosques are neo-Ottoman examples strictly following classical Ottoman precedents. Despite these differences, all these mosques share one key feature: women architects were involved in their design, either individually or as part of a team, and 'women-friendliness' played a role in their public image. That is, gender politics was integral to their conception and construction. This group of mosques illustrates the significance of gender politics of mosque architecture in contemporary Turkey, where mosques have been an important subject of political controversy under the AKP.

Fieldwork for this study was conducted between February 2020 and August 2021. It involved visiting the selected mosques and interviewing various individuals involved in their design and construction. As we have underlined above, architectural knowledge has a lot to contribute in studying gender politics of mosques. Thus, our primary method was to conduct architectural analyses, focusing on gender segregation. We examined the plans and sections of the mosques in terms of spatial organization, movement patterns, and interactions within particular spaces. To capture both the intended and actual use of the mosques, we documented their spatial conditions through photography and sketches. By comparing initial plans with current conditions, we produced diagrams to track the gendered use of the space and its transformation over time.

The second method used in this study was conducting interviews. A total of 13 in-depth, semi-structured interviews were held with individuals involved in the design, construction, and management of these mosques. The sample was intentionally diverse, reflecting a range of professional backgrounds and perspectives on mosque architecture and gender roles. Of the eight architects and designers approached, seven were women, and one declined to participate. The final interview group included seven women (five designers, a project coordinator, and a local religious leader) and six men (two designers, one client, one site engineer, and two *Diyanet* officials). All interviewees were anonymized, and numerical labels were used in place of names to maintain confidentiality due to the sensitive nature of the topic.

To ensure diverse representation, interviewees were selected based on their active roles in the design, planning, or management of the mosques. This purposive sampling approach aimed to capture insights from individuals directly involved in shaping these spaces, rather than relying on secondary sources. Interview questions varied depending on the participant's role (e.g. architect, designer, official, or religious leader), but all interviews addressed key themes such as involvement in the mosque project, design requests and modifications, considerations for men's and women's spaces, and post-construction adaptations. The semi-structured format of the interviews allowed participants to elaborate freely on their views, facilitating the discovery of unexpected perspectives and preventing the reinforcement of preconceived narratives. Moreover, at least two interviewees were interviewed per mosque to minimize bias.

Although this study primarily focused on designers and decision-makers, an unanticipated encounter with a female local religious leader provided an additional perspective to the research. She expressed opposition to the increased visibility and spatial integration of men and women in mosques, a viewpoint that contrasts with

feminist demands for equal access and visibility in religious spaces. Her inclusion underscored the importance of capturing diverse perspectives and situating the research within its broader social and cultural framework.

4. Islam, women and the mosque in Turkey

The competition brief required... a design reflecting Ottoman-Turkish architectural style. So, we aimed to unify our historical architectural style with contemporary technologies. (Interviewee 3, female, designer)

The radical secularism of the Turkish nation-state led to two key outcomes regarding mosques, making Turkey an exceptional case among Muslim-majority countries. First, mosque architecture was not embraced as a symbol of the new nation, resulting in a lack of monumental mosques until after the end of the single-party regime of nation building (Batuman 2016, 2018a). Second, there was a clear separation between social and religious domains in the public sphere, which restricted mosque use exclusively to religious performances (Özaloğlu and Gürel 2011; Batuman 2018b). Established in 1924, the *Diyamet* acted as a mediator between the government and the public in religious matters and oversaw the management of mosques (Parlak 2020).

During the early Republican period, the *Diyamet* effectively controlled religious activities. However, after World War II, the transition to a multi-party system allowed for negotiations between religious demands and right-wing parties seeking populist support. The construction of Turkey's first monumental mosque began in 1957 but was not completed until the 1980s. It was followed by similar examples in major cities. Despite the rise of the mosque as an architectural signifier, its use as social space remained strictly restricted until an Islamist party came to power (see Batuman 2018b, Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion).

The Islamist AKP assumed power in 2002, ushering in a period of intense political struggle between the government and the secularist establishment. Especially the monumental, state-sponsored mosques were perceived by both the government and the opposition as ideological symbols. In several cases, women architects were deliberately employed to mitigate secularist opposition. As illustrated by the quote from Interviewee 3 above, they were often ideologically aligned with such projects. However, the gender politics of mosque architecture under the AKP extended beyond the involvement of women architects. The party sought to promote the mosque as a social space, and encouraging women's participation was consistent with this goal (Batuman 2018b, 2023). Consequently, under the AKP, the *Diyamet* adopted a more inclusive stance toward female mosque users. In response to growing demands, the number of female religious officers was increased (Kıpçak 2016).

The struggle against Islamic patriarchy and spatial segregation within mosques had gained traction in Turkey in the 1990s, paralleling the rise of Islamist grassroots movements that ultimately facilitated the AKP's rise to power (White 2002; Yılmaz 2015; Arat 2016). In response to criticisms about inadequate and poorly maintained women's prayer spaces (Alyanak 2019), the Istanbul Mufti Office (the local branch of *Diyamet*) launched an initiative to assess the city's mosques for their

'women-friendliness'. This effort evolved into the 'Beautification of Women's Sections in Mosques Project', spearheaded in 2011 by Deputy Mufti Kadriye Avcı Erdemli. The project aimed to provide clean, modern, aesthetically pleasing, accessible, and functional spaces for women, ideally integrated within the main prayer hall (Erdemli 2013).

These top-down measures did not bring about radical changes, and the project's impact faded over time (Sunay and Türkdoğan 2019). Yet, they opened up room for women to take their own initiatives. While women's experiences in mosques cannot be homogenized, a significant number perceive gender segregation as restrictive, oppressive, and even contradictory to Islam (Öz 2021). In response to unfavorable conditions in mosques, women began forming their own communities and advocacy campaigns.

One notable grassroots effort was the 'Women in Mosques' campaign, launched in Istanbul in 2017. This initiative aimed to improve women's sections in mosques, address social challenges faced by female worshippers, and promote a more inclusive mosque culture (Sunay 2018). The women involved in the campaign aspired to pray 'under the same dome as men' and, in some cases, intentionally entered men's sections, viewing spatial access as an aspect of power dynamics. By using photography, campaign members provided new perspectives on mosque spaces from women's points of view, aiming to raise awareness and spark dialogue. They also mapped mosque layouts through a gendered lens, analyzing how patriarchy operated within these spaces and documenting their findings through visual evidence (Nas, 2022).

The mosques we will analyze below were built in this context where mosque architecture was highly politicized. The government saw mosques as tools of Islamization, while Muslim women sought agency within these spaces. Before delving into our analysis, we will first introduce the five mosques under examination.

5. Case study: 'women-friendly mosques'

If you detach the women's section from the main hall, they wouldn't feel the excitement caused by the reciting of prayers. Additionally, since the elevated [women's] section is closer to the dome and overlooks the hall, I believe it positively privileges the women. (Interviewee 4, female, designer)

Amidst the political tension between the Islamist government and the secularist establishment, the early years of the new millennium in Turkey saw a shift in mosque architecture, displaying greater diversity. With an Islamist government in power, pious benefactors felt more comfortable sponsoring new mosques with varying iconographies. The most sensational of these was a small mosque built in the historical Karacaahmet Cemetery on the Anatolian side of Istanbul. Designed as a shell structure in the form of a dome resting on four corners with transparent facades, the mosque was initially conceived by Hüsrev Tayla, an experienced male architect. However, Zeynep Fadilloğlu, the granddaughter of the benefactor family, stepped in and took over the interior design (Batuman 2018a, 274–5). To the dismay of the original architect, she presented herself as the mosque's designer, falsely claiming it was the first

mosque designed by a woman (Fadilloğlu 2011). Her postmodern design met with harsh criticism from male-dominated professional circles. Nevertheless, the Şakirin Mosque became the first instance where the gender identity of the designer and attention to female worshippers' comfort were publicly debated.

The Ahmet Hamdi Akseki Mosque (2008–2013) was another project initiated during the early years of the AKP government. Built within the *Diyanet* campus, both its location and modernist outlook reflected the power balance between the government and state bureaucracy, as the AKP later favored the mimicry of classical Ottoman mosques and build them as landmarks in public spaces (Özaloğlu 2017; Batuman 2023). Designed by Salim Alp, another senior male architect, the project was marred by conflicts between the designer and *Diyanet* officials over stylistic preferences, ultimately leading to Alp's removal from the project (Batuman 2018a, 279–83). Following his departure, two women architects, Sonay İlbay (interior designer) and Merih Aykaç (project coordinator), took the lead. The colossal mosque was fiercely critiqued by secularist media and the inclusion of female professionals helped mitigate these critiques. When completed, the project was publicly attributed to the women architects, omitting Alp's initial role.

Under the AKP, *Diyanet* also expanded mosque construction across various cities. Although mosque building had long been common -and as we have indicated above, the period following WWII witnessed the construction of countless mosques of varying size- the secular public viewed the monumental mosques constructed under the AKP as symbols of Islamism. In response, *Diyanet* leveraged gender politics to legitimize these projects. One such example was the Ramazanoğlu Mosque in Adana, designed by a team of four women architects and promoted in the media as a mosque 'designed by women for women'. The term 'women-friendly mosque' emerged in this context, referring to lactation rooms, a supermarket, and the separate entrances for men and women (Yazman 2011). Thus, *Diyanet's* notion of 'women-friendliness' reflected a conservative framework that defined women primarily through motherhood and familial responsibilities.

The Çamlica Mosque, conceived as a personal project by then-Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, was built on Çamlica Hill in Istanbul between 2012 and 2019. The project followed a controversial architectural competition and faced criticism even from Islamic intellectuals for its scale and lack of originality (Cündioğlu 2012, 3–12; Eygi 2012). The Chamber of Architects and prominent professionals boycotted the project (Batuman 2018b, 32–36). Nevertheless, the outcome was a colossal Ottoman replica designed by two young women architects. Their gender and piousness were initially emphasized to justify their selection, but once construction began, they were sidelined by the government (Batuman 2016, 336–39). Today, Çamlica Mosque is one of the largest in the world.

The final case, the Alacaatlı Uluyol Mosque, is a modest example built in suburban Ankara between 2013 and 2016. Designed by young architect Esra Mozza, the project remained outside political controversies and the designer found room to navigate professionally due to her familial ties with the client. This neighborhood mosque, as analyzed below, provides an intriguing example of how ambivalent spaces can enhance women's spatial agency.

6. Ambivalent spaces/mobile bodies

I designed a separate area [for the women] with a separate entrance by the library. They are using it comfortably, as if it is their home. (Interviewee 1, female, architect)

In her study of Iran, Shahrokni (2019, 5) identifies a shift in regimes of gender segregation, from one characterized by prohibition to one based on provision. In this model, women in Iran, who were previously excluded from public spaces, were offered women-only 'places' inside or outside public venues. Although Turkish mosques were never closed to women, a similar shift toward an inclusive regime of gender segregation based on provision occurred under the AKP. This regime was based on the two key demands from female worshippers: better-equipped ablution spaces and women's sections 'under the dome'. Although the latter demand could have been controversial and hard to fulfil, architectural conventions allowed for a solution. Since especially the larger mosques in Turkey follow Ottoman classical examples with a central dome, they offer a spacious, unified prayer hall. Women worshippers' demand for the right to this privileged space with visual access to the mihrab was accommodated by using mezzanine floors as women's sections. As exemplified with the earlier quote from Interviewee 4, the conscious deployment of the mezzanine as a privileged space for women was emphasized several times throughout the interviews.

Control of bodies requires fixing their location and making it legible, so that 'efficiency, docility and hierarchy can be simultaneously achieved' (Rabinow 1982, 357). Women's sections on elevated mezzanines initially appeared to provide a fixed and legible spatial ordering. However, complications arose due to the inherent tensions between Islamic ritual requirements and modern architectural conventions. In Islamic practice, ablution is not merely a prerequisite for prayer but an integral part of the ritual, traditionally performed in the mosque courtyard—a transitional space between the street and the prayer hall. Modern architecture, however, relegates wet spaces—including ablution areas—to secondary service spaces, often hidden from sight. Consequently, the circulation paths between ablution spaces and prayer halls have lengthened, particularly for women using mezzanine floors (Figure 2). This has created 'grey zones' that blur the boundaries between secular and spiritual spaces while also complicating gendered spatial order. That is, although mezzanine women's sections seemingly put them 'in (a) place' as woman (Shahrokani 2019, 112), the required circulation routes inadvertently increase female mobility within the mosque, disrupting rigid spatial hierarchies.

This dynamic was further shaped by a new approach to gender segregation that emphasized provision rather than restriction. The design and placement of women's sections became part of a broader effort to enhance the mosque's social functionality, encouraging usage beyond prayer times. Many new mosques now include spaces for Quran lessons, libraries, tea rooms, meeting rooms, etc. These areas, which are ambivalent in terms of gender (that is, they are not 'sexed'), require extended circulation routes, further increasing the prevalence of ambivalent spaces. While these additions have created opportunities for female participation, they have also reshaped traditional spatial hierarchies. In some cases, they reinforce

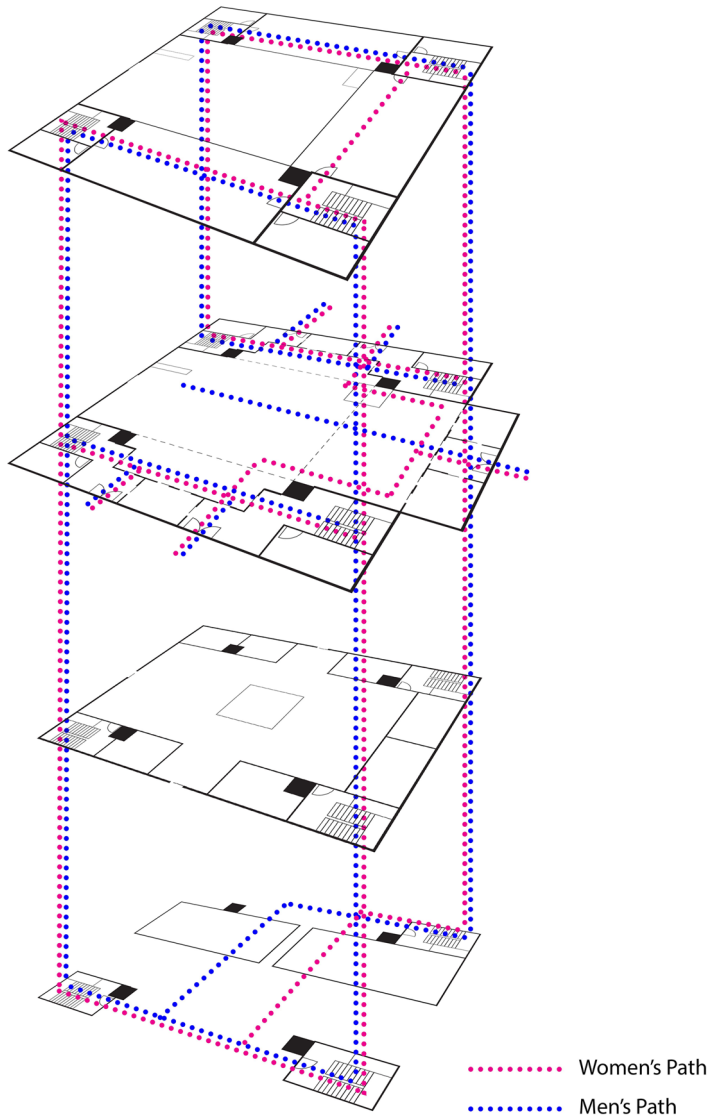


Figure 2. Circulation paths of sexes in the Ahmet Hamdi Akseki Mosque.

segregation, but in others, they enable greater fluidity in movement. Below we analyze the five mosques to explore how these ambivalences manifest in spatial practices.

6.1. Women's sections

Women's sections play a crucial role in shaping women's sense of place within mosques and, by extension, their presence in Muslim publics (Mohammed 2024). In mezzanine women's sections, women can observe the imam and the mihrab while experiencing the mosque atmosphere without being visible to the male congregation. As one interviewee has put it, most women prefer a separate area: 'Isn't it better to have a

privileged place rather than being together with men? Men and women should not pray together' (Interviewee 5, female, local religious leader).

In most cases, the mezzanine is not exactly under the main dome but rather beneath the supporting semi-domes surrounding it, a structural feature dating back to the Hagia Sophia. This design is evident in Ahmet Hamdi Akseki, Çamlıca and Ramazanoğlu Mosques. However, in Şakirin and Alacaatlı Uluyol Mosques, the mezzanine extends directly beneath the central dome into the three-dimensional space of the main hall. Commenting on the women's section in Şakirin Mosque, Islamic intellectual Yıldız Ramazanoğlu defined it as an architectural expression of democracy, providing women equal space under the main dome with visual access to the mihrab and the imam (Ramazanoğlu 2015, 201).

Since visibility is a key issue in gender segregation, the design of mezzanine railings presents a challenge. *Diyanet* officials advocate for higher screens as a visual barrier between men and women. Women architects, in contrast, have argued for lower, transparent railings to maintain sightlines to the mihrab. In Şakirin and Alacaatlı Uluyol Mosques, designers minimized railings using metal meshes. The most interesting example in this regard is the Ahmet Hamdi Akseki Mosque, where the negotiations between the designer and *Diyanet* (which was the client) resulted in an original railing design comprising strips of glass panes and perforated marble (Interviewee 6, female, designer) (Figure 3). This design allows women to choose their level of visibility: those who prefer an unobstructed view of the mihrab stand behind the glass, while those prioritizing privacy pray behind the marble railing.

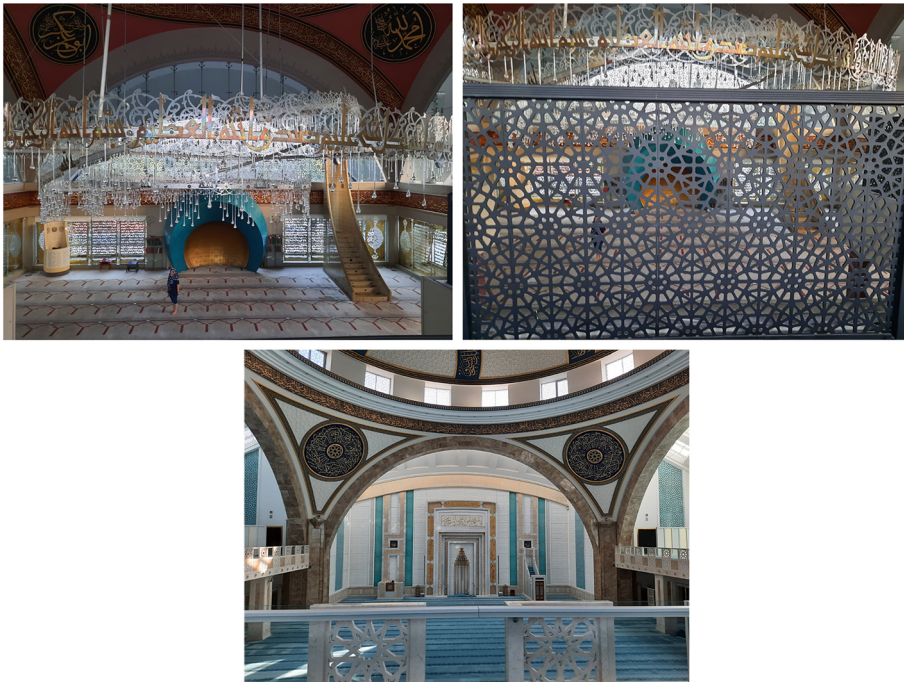


Figure 3. The design of women's sections' railings in Şakirin Mosque (top) and Ahmet Hamdi Akseki Mosque (bottom).

In the Ahmet Hamdi Akseki Mosque, the mezzanine's side wings accommodate men during Friday prayers, while the north wing facing the mihrab remains designated as women's section. Although the space allocated to women is considerably smaller, its permanence affirms their sense of belonging. This is best illustrated with women organizing in groups to attend Friday prayers, a practice traditionally uncommon in Turkey.

The placement of women's sections on mezzanine floors raises the question of whether men and women should share entrances. Some architects approach this as an issue of secularism, promoting equal access to shared spaces, while *Diyanet* adheres to traditional Islamic norms, advocating for gender-segregated entryways:

Circulation areas, parking lot, elevators; men and women are together in these spaces. I let the common spaces be used together; no one is preventing anyone.

(Interviewee 7, male, designer)

The mufti suggested that men and women enter through separate entrances. The mosque was almost finished, and I thought there was no need for such a thing... Although there could have been separate entrances [for men and women], I did not want this.

(Interviewee 1, female, designer)

The directives we prepare regulate women's entrances [to the mosque]. We receive the architectural blueprints and inspect the project. If the men and women are proposed to use the same entrance, we ask for revisions; we ask the designers to create separate entrances for women. We tell them, 'It would be more appropriate if you do it this way, revise and resubmit your project'. Most of the time our suggestions are followed.

(Interviewee 8, male, *Diyanet* official)

6.2. Ablution areas and extended circulation

As we have indicated, female worshippers have consistently highlighted the standards of the ablution areas as a priority: 'They want the ablution spaces and the restrooms to be comfortable since they need to take off their garments. I have received comments on the ablution spaces more than the mosque itself' (Interviewee 9, female, architect). The modern conception of hygiene has redefined both perceptions of cleanliness and architectural conventions regarding sanitary spaces. This had a direct effect on the organization of mosque space. The performance of ablution, once an integral stage of the prayer ritual, is now treated as a sanitary requirement, spatially detached from the prayer process.

Today ablution spaces are most of the time treated as wet spaces that need to be hidden from sight. Indeed, in four of the analyzed mosques, ablution areas are located in basements. Worshippers in Şakirin and Ramazanoğlu Mosques exit the buildings after ablution, ascend stairs, and re-enter the mosque at the main hall level (Figure 4). In Ahmet Hamdi Akseki and Çamlıca Mosques, elevators transport worshippers to the main floor and mezzanines. These extended circulation paths create non-gendered ambivalent spaces, triggering anxiety especially for the part of conservative users. Suratkon et al. (2017), in their study on Malaysia, found that women

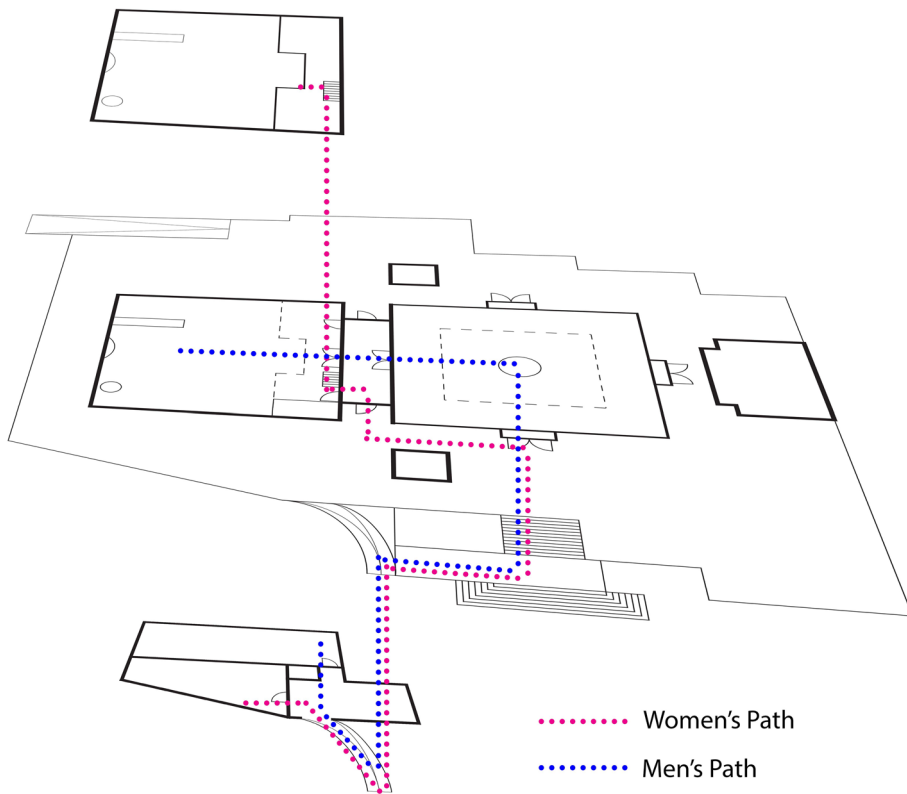


Figure 4. Circulation paths of sexes in the Şakirin Mosque.

preferred ablution areas to be directly connected to the women's prayer area to avoid being visible to men while moving through the space. These concerns are echoed by some mosque users in this study: 'Shared circulation spaces are an inconvenience. You might not be fully composed after the ablution. Men are stronger than women; while in a rush they can mistakenly bump into women' (Interviewee 5, female, local religious leader).

As we have quoted from Interviewees 1 and 7, architects tend to adopt a more liberal stance on shared circulation spaces. In the examples we have analyzed, men and women inevitably share access routes between ablution spaces and prayer areas. Moreover, in certain cases such as the Ahmet Hamdi Akseki Mosque, U-shaped mezzanines are flexibly used, which results in gender-neutral vertical circulation. The design of Ramazanoğlu Mosque further challenges conventional gender divisions: its U-shaped mezzanine is accessed *via* symmetrical staircases positioned in the main hall rather than near the entrance, making the main prayer hall ambivalent in gendered terms (Figure 5). The architects did not propose separation between the men's and women's sections on the mezzanine floor; they designed this area primarily for women but included the option of temporary division for mixed use (Interviewee 9, female, designer).

The treatment of the ablution spaces in Alacaatlı Uuyol Mosque radically departs from the other four cases (Figure 6). Here not only the ablution spaces are not in



Figure 5. The functions and space usage based on gender in the Çamlıca Mosque.

the basement, but they are designed as a separate annex, which defines a unisex courtyard that the worshippers need to cross.

The courtyard enclosed with porticos has been a characteristic feature of Ottoman mosques, acting as a buffer zone between the chaos of the marketplace and the mosque. The traditional courtyard also included ablution fountains where men performed the ritual of cleansing. Contemporary Turkish mosques following neo-Ottoman iconography, such as Ramazanoğlu and Çamlıca Mosques, often include courtyards and ornamental ablution fountains, though these are rarely used. In Alacaatlı Uluyol Mosque, however, the courtyard functions as a semi-spiritual zone between ablution

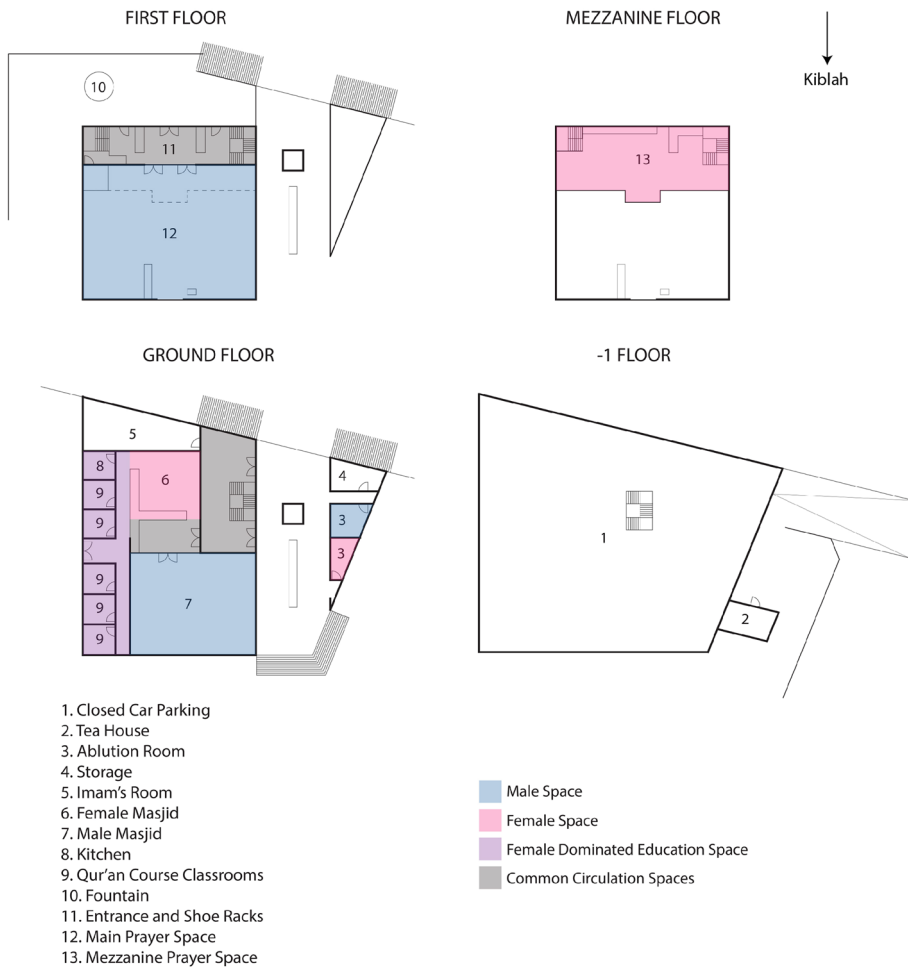


Figure 6. The functions and space usage based on gender in the Alacaatlı Uluyol Mosque.

and prayer for both men and women. Şakirin Mosque, while featuring a courtyard resembling classical examples, reinterprets the traditional ablution fountain as a water sculpture, where water flows over a reflective stainless-steel sphere (Figure 1).

6.3. Ambivalent spaces of expanded programs

With *Diyanet's* campaign to transform mosques into social spaces of interaction, new mosque designs have incorporated additional functions. Spaces for formal (classrooms, conference halls) and informal (meeting rooms for women's gatherings) religious instruction have become common features. These are often accompanied by areas for non-religious activities, some of which (such as karate lessons for children) take place within the prayer hall itself. While introducing non-religious activities into mosques broadens their role as community hubs, it also necessitates adherence to moral and behavioral guidelines rooted in conservative Islamic values. At the same time, this increased multifunctionality reduces the perceived sanctity of the space due to the presence of non-religious activities.

All the mosques we have analyzed accommodate such activities, whether through designated spaces or flexible usage. Even smaller mosques such as Alacaatlı Uluyol and Şakirin Mosques, include libraries, tea houses, kitchens and office spaces. In the Ramazanoğlu Mosque, there are classrooms and a conference hall, along with a supermarket and a health center situated beneath the mosque. In larger examples, such as Ahmet Hamdi Akseki and Çamlıca Mosques, the functional programs are even more complex, with entire floors dedicated to diverse functions.

Clearly, a tension exists between the mosque's sacred function and the profane activities it houses. To what extent should visitors to the *Diyaret* bookstore inside Ahmet Hamdi Akseki Mosque or the Museum of Islamic Civilizations inside Çamlıca Mosque 'behave'? Is the health center in the Ramazanoğlu Mosque fundamentally different from similar institutions elsewhere in the city? Should gender interactions between worshippers and visitors -or even among visitors themselves- be regulated differently than those between male and female worshippers? This ambivalence becomes more pronounced as one moves closer to religious activities and their designated spaces within the mosque.

One of the most striking examples of this ambivalence arises from the touristic character of mosques. The impact of tourism on gender dynamics in mosques has been largely overlooked. While prayer spaces and ablution areas require gender segregation due to religious and privacy concerns, tourists, as spatial agents, are almost free from these divisions, though they are still expected to observe rules of modesty, such as women wearing headscarves. In historic mosques in Istanbul, spatial organization accommodates these differences, but Çamlıca Mosque presents a unique case as a newly designed structure with tourism in mind.

As part of its goal to serve as an ideological landmark in Istanbul's skyline, Çamlıca Mosque caters to tourists as much as to Muslim worshippers. Beyond providing a space for prayer, the mosque welcomes visitors who wander freely. Women sit, chat, and take photographs in the main prayer hall, while men on the mezzanine floor observe the view from above. Consequently, the mosque's touristic function blurs gender boundaries, allowing both men and women to enter spaces traditionally designated for the opposite sex (Figure 7).

Two staircases lead to the mezzanine from the prayer hall (Figure 7). One is located in the female section, the other one is in the men's prayer hall. This spatial arrangement creates ambiguity regarding the mezzanine's designated users. The lack of signage further reinforces this uncertainty, possibly a deliberate choice to facilitate tourism. All spaces function as circulation areas, encouraging visitor movement. Thus, the continuous movement of bodies neutralizes the gendered character of space and maximizes access for women.

Tourism-driven fluidity in gendered spaces has led to another unusual practice within Çamlıca Mosque (Figure 8). On the ground floor, a small women's section is enclosed with high perforated screens and marked with a sign prohibiting male entry. While such arrangements are not new, there is also a designated men's section -closer to the mihrab- enclosed with lower perforated screens and marked by a sign prohibiting female entry. This formal designation of a men's prayer space implies that the main prayer hall is no longer exclusively male but rather a mixed-gender area. Thus, all visitors, regardless of gender, are welcome to explore the mosque, with the exception

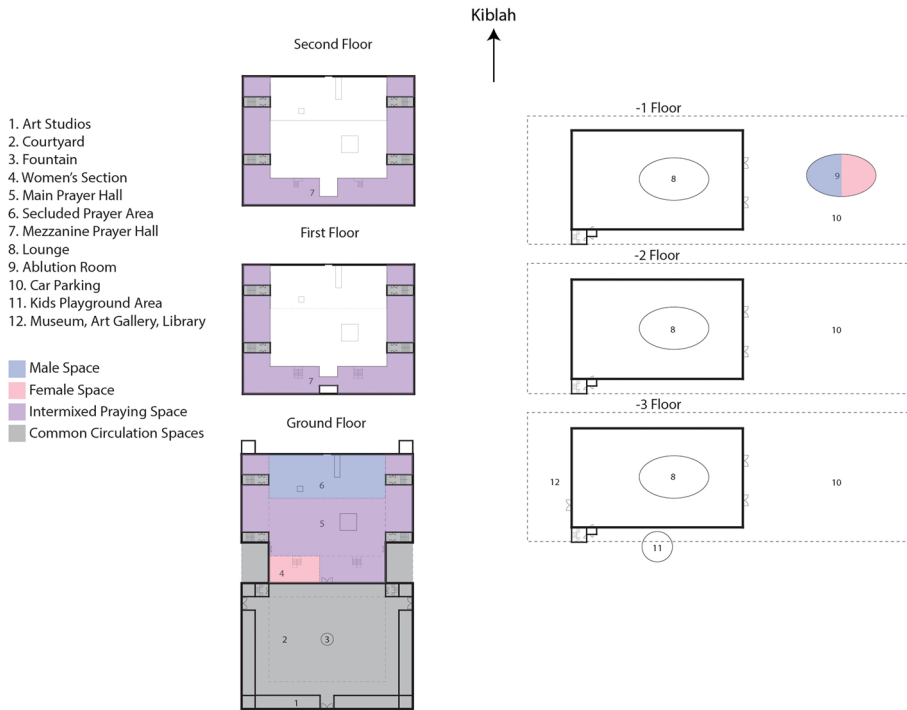


Figure 7. The functions and space usage based on gender in the Çamlıca Mosque.



Figure 8. The areas designated as women's and men's prayer areas inside the main hall in Çamlıca Mosque.

of these two segregated areas. As Interviewee 2 puts it, a men's section was necessary 'to create an awe-inspiring prayer environment without the distraction of tourists'.

While tourism presents an extreme case, similar ambivalence exists in the temporality of prayer. Between prayer times, the gendered rigidity of the main hall loosens. Women, who are restricted from these spaces during prayer, wish to experience them as visitors. Conversely, it is not uncommon to see staff asking women to leave the halls.

7. Fixing ambivalence: patriarchy strikes back

Interestingly, while *Diyanet* was campaigning to encourage female participation in mosques, the AKP government was simultaneously shifting away from its earlier liberal stance on women’s rights, parallel to its consolidation of power. Kandiyoti (2013) describes this shift as a ‘masculinist restoration project’, aligning with the global anti-gender movement (Butler 2024; Graff and Korolczuk 2022) and its particular manifestations in the Muslim world (Kandiyoti, al-Ali, and Spellman 2019). As a result,

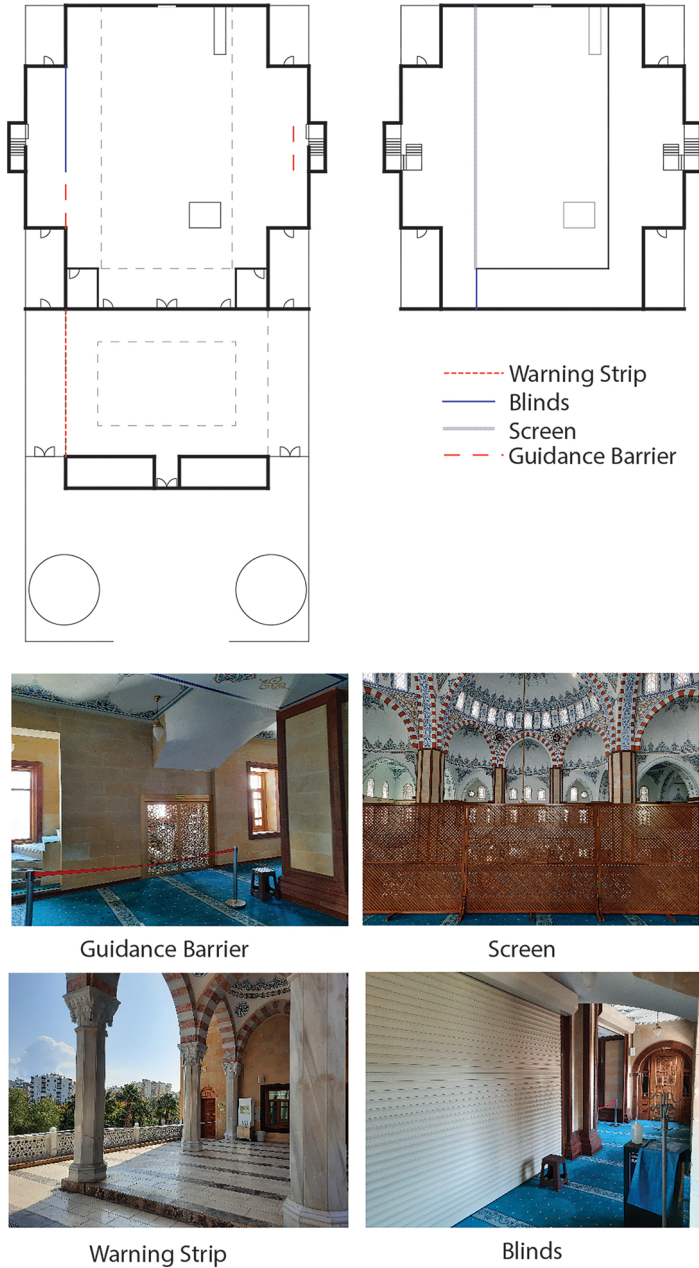


Figure 9. Measures for gender segregation in the Ramazanoğlu Mosque.

women's organized struggle for equity in mosques has faced patriarchal backlash. In many cases, spatial flexibility that initially enhanced the spatial agency of female mosque-goers was later restructured to reinforce gender segregation.

For instance, in Ramazanoğlu Mosque, staircases in the mid-section of the main prayer hall were later concealed behind blinds to prevent inter-gender encounters (Figure 9). While the original design featured a single entrance, a separate door was later designated as the women's entrance. Additionally, a guidance barrier was placed on the main floor, directing women toward the staircase while restricting their access to the main entrance and prayer hall. The blinds on the ground floor now create a small praying area for women who cannot ascend the stairs, but this space lacks visual access to the rest of the mosque, resembling a storage area rather than an integral worship space.

Originally, the mezzanine of this mosque had a fluid layout with no fixed separation between men's and women's areas. However, subsequent modifications re-introduced gender divisions. The mezzanine is now split by blinds, and the women's section is enclosed with high perforated screens. Rather than preventing men from gazing at women, the design effectively hides women from view, restricting their ability to see the mihrab.

Efforts to reinstate gender segregation extend beyond the mosque interior. In Ramazanoğlu Mosque's courtyard, warning strips now direct men and women toward separate worship spaces. A similar modification was made in Şakirin Mosque, where women, upon exiting the basement ablution area, encounter signage directing them away from the courtyard. This intervention contradicts the designer's original vision of the courtyard as a spiritual garden for contemplation. Instead, the mosque administration has prioritized regulating circulation to 'guide' women to their designated prayer areas through the closest route. Although the exact timing of these alterations remains unclear, their presence suggests an evolving negotiation of gendered space within mosques.

8. Conclusion

This study has aimed to contribute to the debates on how gender relations are spatially produced within religious settings. By examining mosques, we demonstrate that even in spaces governed by faith-based rules and norms, gender segregation is neither absolute nor immune to contestation. Muslim women are often depicted as passive or victimized, particularly in Western narratives; however, it is essential to recognize their agency. Through active participation in mosques, women challenge prevailing gender inequalities and the patriarchal structures that define these spaces.

As we have shown, regimes of gender segregation are defined by contemporary politics as much as religious rules. In the case of Turkey, women's demands for greater equity in religious domain initially aligned with the Islamist government's efforts to promote mosque attendance. The government sought to encourage women's participation by improving ablution facilities and women's sections, and introducing expanded social programs within mosques. However, these initiatives inadvertently created ambivalent spaces further disrupted traditional gendered organization. By increasing women's mobility and reinforcing their spatial agency, these changes provoked a patriarchal backlash aimed at reducing ambivalences and restricting women's movement within the mosque.

In considering the spatial political of gender segregation, it is also crucial to acknowledge the role of cultural contingencies. Architecture plays a key role in this process in two senses. First, architectural conventions influence the spatial organization of gender segregation. In our case, two specific aspects have been particularly relevant: (1) the Ottoman mosque typology, which prioritizes a central dome and is unified three-dimensional space, provided design formulas based on the use of mezzanine floors for women's sections; and (2) modern design conventions regarding ablution facilities, which have pushed these spaces out of sight. These architectural conventions have informed the politics of gender segregation in Turkish mosques, highlighting the significance of architectural culture in both the reinforcement and contestation of gendered spatial divisions. Second, architecture as a field of knowledge -employed as part of our research methodology- offers valuable tools for examining the social and political dimensions of space. By analyzing the physical layout, its production, and its appropriation, we reveal how architectural knowledge can be leveraged to expose and challenge gender segregation. As demonstrated by the 'Women in Mosques' campaign, not only architects but also mosque users can utilize architectural knowledge to contest spatial injustices.

The most important finding of our study concerns the spatiality of the contestation over gender segregation within mosques. Rather than being defined solely by designated areas for each gender, the spatial agency of individuals is determined by their capacity for movement. In this respect, ambivalent spaces -created as mosques expand their functions to serve as social hubs- emerge as key sites of contestation. Consequently, patriarchal backlash does not necessarily seek to confine women to smaller or inferior spaces but instead aims to limit their mobility, effectively fixing them in place.

Acknowledgements

We thank the editors and anonymous reviewers for their valuable feedback and comments on the manuscript.

Additional information

Declaration of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process: The authors have used [ChatGPT] to improve the language and readability of the manuscript. After using this tool, the authors reviewed and edited the content, and they take full responsibility for the content of the article.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributors

Ayşenur Şenel is a PhD candidate in Architecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her research explores the agency of marginalized groups in spatial production within the Ottoman Empire (late 16th–early 17th centuries), focusing on center–periphery dynamics and the intersections of gender, class, ethnicity, and imperial power. Her work investigates

architectural processes shaped by negotiation, collaboration, and conflict among multiple actors. She also minors in the Center for the Study of Global Gender Equity.

Bülent Batuman is associate professor of architecture at Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey with joint appointment at the Department of Urban Design and Landscape Architecture and the Department of Architecture. His recent work focuses on the relationship between Islamism and the built environment. He is the author of *New Islamist Architecture and Urbanism: Negotiating Nation and Islam through Built Environment in Turkey* (Routledge, 2018), editor of *Cities and Islamisms: On the Politics and Production of the Built Environment* (Routledge, 2021), and co-editor of *The Urban Refugee: Space, Agency, and the New Urban Condition* (Intellect, 2024).

References

- Alyanak, Oguz. 2019. "When Women Demand Prayer Space." *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 15 (1): 125–134. <https://doi.org/10.1215/15525864-7273885>.
- Arat, Yeşim. 2016. "Islamist Women and Feminist Concerns in Contemporary Turkey: Prospects for Women's Rights and Solidarity." *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 37 (3): 125–150. <https://doi.org/10.5250/fronjwomestud.37.3.0125>.
- Aryanti, Tutin. 2012. "Women's Prayer Space: Body and Boundary." *The International Journal of the Constructed Environment* 2 (3): 177–190. <https://doi.org/10.18848/2154-8587/CGP/v02i03/37343>.
- Avishai, Orit. 2008. "Doing Religion" in a Secular World: Women in Conservative Religions and the Question of Agency." *Gender & Society* 22 (4): 409–433. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243208321019>.
- Baghby, Ihsan, Paul M. Pearl, and Bryan T. Froehle. 2001. *The Mosque in America: A National Portrait*. Washington, DC: Council on American-Islamic Relations.
- Bano, Masooda, and Hilary Kalmbach, eds. 2012. *Women, Leadership and Mosques: Changes in Contemporary Islamic Authority*. Leiden: Brill.
- Bartkowski, John P., and Jen'nan Ghazal Read. 2003. "Veiled Submission: Gender, Power, and Identity among Evangelical and Muslim Women in the United States." *Qualitative Sociology* 26 (1): 71–92. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1021456004419>.
- Batuman, Bülent. 2016. "Architectural Mimicry and the Politics of Mosque Building: Negotiating Islam and Nation in Turkey." *The Journal of Architecture* 21 (3): 321–347. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2016.1179660>.
- Batuman, Bülent. 2018a. "Appropriating the Masculine Sacred: Islamism, Gender, and Mosque Architecture in Contemporary Turkey." In *The Routledge Companion to Modernity, Space and Gender*, edited by A. Staub, 270–287. New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781315180472>.
- Batuman, Bülent. 2018b. *New Islamist Architecture and Urbanism: Negotiating Nation and Islam through Built Environment in Turkey*. Abingdon & Oxon: Routledge.
- Batuman, Bülent. 2023. "Claiming the Neo-Ottoman Mosque: Islamism, Gender, Architecture." In *Neo-Ottoman Imaginaries in Contemporary Turkey*, edited by Catharina Raudvere, Petek Onur, 155–173. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bhimji, Fazila. 2012. *British Asian Muslim Women, Multiple Spatialities and Cosmopolitanism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Butler, Judith. 2024. *Who's Afraid of Gender?*. First edition. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Cantone, Cleo. 2009. "The Shifting Space of Senegalese Mosques." In *New Perspectives on Islam in Senegal: Conversion, Migration, Wealth, Power*, edited by Mamadou Diouf and Mara Leichtman, 51–70. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Colomina, Beatriz, and Jennifer Bloomer. 1992. *Sexuality & Space*. New York, N.Y: Princeton Architectural Press.
- Cüндiođlu, Dücane. 2012. *Mimarlık ve Felsefe*. Istanbul: Kapı Yayınları.
- Elewa, Ahmed, and Laury Silvers. 2010. "I Am One of the People": A Survey and Analysis of Legal Arguments on Woman-Led Prayer in Islam." *Journal of Law and Religion* 26 (1): 141–171. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S074808140000093X>.

- Erdemli, Kadriye. A. 2013. "Cami Mimarisinde Kadınların Yeri Ve İstanbul Müftülüğü Camilerin Kadınlar Bölümünü Güzelleştirme Projesi." In *1. Ulusal Cami Mimarisi Sempozyumu Gelenekten Geleceğe Cami Mimarisinde Çağdaş Tasarım ve Teknolojileri*, edited by Hale Tokay, Mevlüde Kaptı, Burcu B. Cantimur, Selcen Coşkun, 113–128. İstanbul: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları.
- Eskandari, Maryam. 2011. "Women Places and Spaces in Contemporary American Mosque." PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology. <https://dspace.mit.edu/handle/1721.1/65546>.
- Eygi, Mehmet Ş. 2012. "Çamlıca Camii Güzel Olacak mı?" *Milli Gazete*. Accessed August, 13, 2016. www.milligazete.com.tr/camlica_camii_guzel_olacak_mi/mehmed_sevket_eygi/kose_yazisi/12466.
- Fadilloğlu, Zeynep. 2011. "Şakirin Camii Tasarım ve Uygulama Süreci." In *İstanbul'da Karacaahmet Tarihi Mirası İçinde Şakirin Camii*, edited by Önder Küçükerman, 131–158. İstanbul: Semiha Şakir Vakfı.
- Fewkes, Jacqueline H. 2019. *Locating Maldivian Women's Mosques in Global Discourses*. London: Jupiter Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ghafournia, Nafiseh. 2020. "Negotiating Gendered Religious Space: Australian Muslim Women and the Mosque." *Religions* 11 (12): 686. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11120686>.
- Gilsenan, Michael. 2008. *Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris.
- Graff, Agnieszka, and Elżbieta Korolczuk. 2022. *Anti-Gender Politics in the Populist Moment*. Abingdon, Oxon: Taylor & Francis.
- Haddad, Yvonne Y., Jane I. Smith, and Kathleen M. Moore. 2006. *Muslim Women in America: The Challenge of Islamic Identity Today*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hammer, Juliane. 2012. *American Muslim Women, Religious Authority and Activism: More than a Prayer*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Hill, Jonathan. 2003. *Actions of Architecture: Architects and Creative Users*. London: Routledge.
- Joly, Daniele, and Wadia Khursheed. 2017. *Muslim Women and Power: Political and Civic Engagement in Western European Societies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jouili, Jeanette S. 2015. *Pious Practice and Secular Constraints: Women in the Islamic Revival in Europe*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Kalmbach, Hilary. 2012. "Introduction: Islamic Authority and the Study of Female Religious Leaders." In *Women, Leadership, and Mosques: Changes in Contemporary Islamic Authority*, edited by Masooda Bano and Hilary Kalmbach, 1–30. Leiden: Brill.
- Kandiyoti, Deniz, Nadje al-Ali, and Kathryn Spellman, eds. 2019. *Gender, Governance and Islam*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Kandiyoti, Deniz. 2013. "Fear and Fury: Women and Post-Revolutionary Violence." *Opendemocracy* January 10. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/fear-and-fury-women-and-post-revolutionary-violence/>.
- Karim, Jamillah. 2009. *American Muslim Women: Negotiating Race, Class, and Gender within the Ummah*. New York: New York University Press.
- Kıpçak, Nur H. 2016. "İdeolojiler Mekanı Olarak Camilerde Toplumsal Cinsiyet Örüntüleri." Master's thesis, İstanbul University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/tezDetay.jsp?id=3KIZI68WHI2jtzzVBRPdlg&no=bzeDTObgAHdPnOp61gLoIQ>.
- Knott, Kim. 2005. *The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis*. Sheffield, UK: Equinox.
- Lehmann, U. Christina. 2012. "Women's Rights to Mosque Space: Access and Participation in Cape Town Mosques." In *Women, Leadership, and Mosques: Changes in Contemporary Islamic Authority*, edited by Masooda Bano and Hilary Kalmbach, 481–506. Leiden: Brill.
- Mahmood, Saba. 2005. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Mahmood, Saba. 2009. "Agency, Performativity, and the Feminist Subject." In *Pieties and Gender*, edited by Lene Sjørup, Hilda Rømer Christensen, 11–45. Leiden: Brill.
- Maneval, Stefan. 2019. *New Islamic Urbanism: The Architecture of Public and Private Space in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia*. London: UCL Press.
- Massey, Doreen. 1994. *Space, Place and Gender*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

- Mazumdar, Shampa, and Anjoy Mazumdar. 2002. "In Mosques and Shrines: Women's Agency in Public Sacred Space." *Journal of Ritual Studies* 16 (2): 165–179. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44364151>.
- Mazumdar, Shampa, and Sanjoy Mazumdar. 2001. "Rethinking Public and Private Space: Religion and Women in Muslim Society." *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 18 (4): 302–324. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43031047>.
- Mernissi, Fatima. 1991. *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam*. Translated by Mary Jo Lakeland. New York: Perseus Books.
- Mir-Hosseini, Ziba. 1999. *Islam and Gender: The Religious Debate in Contemporary Iran*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Mohammed, Hassnaa. 2024. "From Women's Sections: Place Affordances and Women's Sense of Place in American Mosques." *Gender, Place & Culture* 31 (8): 1095–1117. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2022.2150606>.
- Morin, Karen M., and Jeanne K. Guelke, eds. 2007. *Women, Religion, and Space: Global Perspectives on Gender and Faith*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Nageeb, Salma A. 2007. "Appropriating the Mosque: Women's Religious Groups in Khartoum." *Africa Spectrum* 42 (1): 5–27. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40175165>.
- Nas, Alparslan. 2022. "Women in Mosques": Mapping the Gendered Religious Space through Online Activism." *Feminist Media Studies* 22 (5): 1163–1178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2021.1878547>.
- Nyhaven, Line, and Beatrice Halsaa. 2016. *Religion, Gender and Citizenship: Women of Faith, Gender Equality and Feminism*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nyhaven, Line. 2019. "Mosques as Gendered Spaces: The Complexity of Women's Compliance with, and Resistance to, Dominant Gender Norms, and the Importance of Male Allies." *Religions* 10 (5): 321. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10050321>.
- Öz, İrem. 2021. "Spaces of Identity: The Role of Marxloh Mosque in Shaping Turkish-German Women's Performativity and Sense of Belonging." PhD diss., the Pennsylvania State University. <https://etda.libraries.psu.edu/catalog/18375ifo5007>.
- Özaloğlu, Serpil, and Meltem Ö. Gürel. 2011. "Designing Mosques for Secular Congregations: Transformations of the Mosque as a Social Space in Turkey." *Journal of Architectural Planning Research* 28 (4): 336–358. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43030951>.
- Özaloğlu, Serpil. 2017. "An Attempt to Transform Popular Religious Images into Contemporary Mosque Architecture: Ahmet Hamdi Akseki Mosque." *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 34 (2): 114–132. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44987222>.
- Parlak, Deniz. 2020. *Laiikleşme Sürecinde Camiler: Geç Osmanlı'dan Erken Cumhuriyet'e*. İstanbul: İletişim.
- Prickett, Pamel J. 2015. "Negotiating Gendered Religious Space: The Particularities of Patriarchy in an African American Mosque." *Gender & Society* 29 (1): 51–72. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08912432145469>.
- Rabinow, Paul. 1982. "Ordonnance, Discipline, Regulation: Some Reflections on Urbanism." *Humanities in Society* 5 (3/4): 267–278.
- Ramazanoğlu, Yıldız. 2015. "Hüsrev Tayla." In *Türk Mimarisinde İz Brakanlar*, edited by Şahin Torun, Vol. 2, 201–208. Ankara: Ministry of Environment and Urbanization.
- Reda, Nevin. 2004. "Women in the Mosque: Historical Perspectives on Segregation." *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 21 (2): 77–97. <https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v21i2.504>.
- Rendell, Jane. 2000. "Introduction: Gender, Space." In *Gender Space Architecture*, edited by Iain Borden, Barbara Penner, and Jane Rendell, 101–111. New York & London: Routledge.
- Rinaldo, Rachel. 2013. *Mobilizing Piety: Islam and Feminism in Indonesia*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rock-Singer, Aaron. 2016. "The Salafi Mystique: The Rise of Gender Segregation in 1970s Egypt." *Islamic Law and Society* 23 (3): 279–305. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685195-00233p03>.
- Samatar, Abdi. I. 2005. "The Women's Mosque in Gabiley." In *Geographies of Muslim Women: Gender Religion and Space*, edited by Ghazi-Walid Falah and Caroline Nagel, 226–248. Philadelphia: Guilford Press.
- Shahrokni, Nazanin. 2019. *Women in Place: The Politics of Gender Segregation in Iran*. Oakland: University of California Press.

- Sullins, D. Paul. 2006. "Gender and Religion: Deconstructing Universality, Constructing Complexity." *American Journal of Sociology* 112 (3): 838–880. <https://doi.org/10.1086/507852>.
- Sunay, Simla, and Özlem Türkdöğän. 2019. "Camilerin Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Mekân Odaklı İncelenmesi: İstanbul Örneği." *MADjournal* 1 (1): 76–108. [chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnib-pcapijpcglclefindmkaj/https://mekandaadalet.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/MADjournal_2019.pdf](https://mekandaadalet.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/MADjournal_2019.pdf).
- Sunay, Simla. 2018. "Kadınlar Camilerde Kampanyası Öncüleriyle Söyleşi." *Mimarizm*. Accessed July, 17, 2022. https://www.mimarizm.com/haberler/soylesi/kadinlar-camilerde-kampanyasi-onculeriyle-soylesi_129351.
- Suratkon, A., N. N. Abd Salam, M. H. Rahmat, A. S. Mohd Arhan, I. Abd Wahab, S. A. Ghaffar, et. Al. 2017. "Woman Friendly Mosque, Features and Facilities: A Case Study on Masjid Sultan Ibrahim, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia." *IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering* 291 (1): 012019. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1757-899X/291/1/012019>.
- Wadud, Amina. 2006. *Inside the Gender Jihad: Women's Reform in Islam*. Oxford: Oneworld Publication.
- Weisman, Leslie Kanes. 1992. *Discrimination by Design: A Feminist Critique of the Man-Made Environment*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- White, Jenny. 2002. *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernacular Politics*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Yazman, Derya. 2011. "Caminin mimarları kadın olunca...." *Arkitera*. Accessed July 07, 2022. <https://www.arkitera.com/haber/caminin-mimarlari-kadin-olunca/>.
- Yılmaz, Zehra. 2015. *Dişil Dindarlık: İslamcı Kadın Hareketinin Dönüşümü*. İstanbul: İletişim.