

Intertwined Households and Networks in a Prince's Palace

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The rulers and elites of the Ottoman Empire, along with their official positions in the Imperial hierarchy, were also the masters of their households (kapu). Typically, a household was an organizational structure in which people – both free and slave – served their master's needs. Along with its primary function, a household always had a dynamic structure that formed itself based on networks of its dependents (kapu kulu). It was also possible for some of these dependents to be the master of their own households. Dependents could aim to optimize the advantages they could gain from being under a household by broadening their networks of loyalty and connections. Also, another option was to benefit from their already existing networks by attaching the people in the network to the master's household. For its size and importance, a prince's household (şehzade) might be a good case study to scrutinize the intertwined households and networks around a Prince's palace.

In this paper, I will investigate Şehzade Murad's [III] household in Manisa by looking into the dependents' personal networks and households. In this manner, I aim to bring the complex nature of Ottoman households forward to Ottoman historiography. Based on a relatively lesser-known register (Maliyeden Müdevver, 1324) that was written after the enthronement of Murad in order to list his princely household, I will follow the little side notes of the names to determine the familial or any network among the household dependents. In addition to MAD 1324, I will utilize multiple types of registers in the Ottoman Archives to enhance information about these complex networks.