

Turkish bath tradition: The example of Gaziantep, Turkey

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ABSTRACT

Conservation of monumental and civil architectural heritage is an important element of cultural sustainability. Preserving these structures with their original characters and transferring them to future generations contributes to social memory formation and builds a bridge between the past and future generations. However, a sustainable and holistic conservation approach should cover not only tangible but also intangible heritage. Considering the tangible and intangible cultural heritage as a whole is also important to transfer the architectural heritage to future generations accurately. Local culture, customs and traditions also affect and change the formation of local architecture. Therefore, this research aims to examine the influence of local bath traditions on bath structures. The research specifically focuses on the relationship between local hammam traditions and Turkish bath architecture in the city of Gaziantep,

Turkey. To do this, first, Gaziantep bath culture is examined in detail and its unique character is identified. Then, field research was carried out to investigate historical bath structures on-site and to conduct spatial analyses. The findings of the research show that intangible cultural heritage is a significant factor in shaping tangible heritage. It is believed that the research will contribute to considering tangible and intangible cultural heritage with a holistic comprehension of conservation in the example of historical Gaziantep hammams.

Keywords

holistic conservation, bath (hammam) structures, Turkish bath culture, spatial transformation, culture and architecture, cultural sustainability, plan typologies of hammams, historical Gaziantep bath structures, Gaziantep, UNESCO

Introduction

In academia, although the concept of heritage was defined in the last century, it was first encountered at the end of the 18th century and has been expanded since then (Veco 2010, 321). Since the beginning of the 20th century, notable typology studies on heritage value have been conducted. In 1903, two typologies consisting of commemorative and current values by A. Riegl became the breaking point in the assessment of the heritage fact (Gibson and Pendlebury 2009, 7). In the following years, ideas were generated about cultural heritage values, and in the 1931 Restoration Regulation, the conservation of cultural heritage was accepted because of its historical memory and artistic value (ICOMOS 1931). In the meeting organised by UNESCO in 1968, cultural heritage was defined as movable and immovable assets (UNESCO 1968). The World Heritage Convention (1972) and the Burra Regulation (1979) pioneered new management strategies in the field of cultural heritage (Waterton, Smith and Campbell 2006, 340). Following these developments, in the 1990s, traditions, memories and lifestyles began to be discussed within the concept of heritage, and since the end of 2000s, attention has been drawn to the consideration of heritage within the cultural context (UNESCO 2003).

Nowadays, the concept of cultural heritage is examined as tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Intangible cultural heritage was first named *folklore* in the Bolivia Declaration in 1972. However, since the meaning of the word folklore varies in different countries, it caused problems (Oğuz 2013, 7–8). Therefore, the term ‘intangible cultural heritage’ has been used since the 2003 Convention for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage conference organised by UNESCO. Intangible cultural heritage has been officially used in Turkey since 2006 (Official Gazette 2006).

Intangible cultural heritage is defined as ‘*applications, representations, narratives, information, skills and related instruments and cultural sites that communities, groups, and individuals in some cases define as part of their cultural heritage*’ (UNESCO 2003). According to this definition, not only the visible part of the tangible heritage but also all the elements that keep it alive transfer it from generation to generation, and add identity to it along with its traditions and customs should be protected (Oğuz 2013, 11). This approach has revealed the concept of holistic protection, which aims to protect tangible structures along with the social values that create them.

It is not possible to protect and understand the tangible cultural heritage by abstracting it from the rituals, expression methods and practices that created it.

Therefore, considering the tangible and intangible cultural heritage together in conservation studies is crucial for the holistic protection of cultural heritage (Metin Basat 2013, 62). In shaping traditional architecture, tangible and intangible cultural heritage should be considered together. Only with this thought can a holistic approach be achieved in conservation (Karakul 2007, 151). Ignoring intangible cultural heritage while protecting tangible cultural heritage will unsoul the living spaces around it and the structures without the people who produce them. Conservation approaches will not go beyond transforming structures into longing spaces that can only be remembered (Ito 2009, 2–3). The processes that intangible cultural heritage has gone through over time are also important in holistic protection. The dynamic nature of society makes it difficult to transfer the cultures of the past generations to the next generations. However, examining these dynamics is critical in conservation processes (Oğuz 2009, 97).

This research points out that the local bath culture, along with the historical bath structures, has an important place in the architectural heritage of Gaziantep. Located in the south-eastern part of Anatolia, Gaziantep has been under the influence of Eastern and Western civilisations throughout history. Being located on the historical Silk Road has increased such intercultural relations and interactions. These made the city an attractive place to live for the people from different beliefs and ethnic backgrounds, which in turn brought cultural wealth and heritage. One of the most important components of this wealth is the hammams. Hammams are bathing buildings that have the characteristics of a public space in the Turkish architecture. In addition to being part of the architectural wealth of the city, Gaziantep hammams also reflect the traditions and customs of the local culture. The bathhouses in Gaziantep are beyond cleaning and purification structures. The hammam-oriented traditions and customs of the city, which will be discussed below, are quite diverse. This variety affects the architecture of the bath structures. As stated previously, it is not possible to understand the tangible (bath) structures separately from the (bath) culture that builds it. Therefore, the primary purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of local bath culture on bath architecture. The secondary aim is to analyse the transformation of tangible and intangible heritage. The analysis is based on examining the causal structure between bath culture and spatial organisation. The findings of the research will contribute to the creation of principles and interventions for the holistic conservation of historical bath structures alongside the

discussion of local culture in the context of space and the definition of original aspects.

Turkish bath tradition

Throughout human history, the act of cleaning and bathing has been a vital requirement. In the beginning, the cleansing that emerged with the cleansing of the body in open areas, water or riverside was also seen as a means of spiritual purification. Indeed, it was believed that the Ganges in India, the Nile in Egypt, the Euphrates in Assyria, the Yellow River in China and the Amazon in South America were sacred and provided spiritual purification as well as body cleansing (Anonymous 1992, 372). Indoor spaces have been built for the purpose of cleaning with the effect of increasing living spaces and climatic conditions and privacy. Over time, these simple building types have developed and have turned into bath structures. The remains of the bath, found in the palace ruins of the Assyrian King Adad Hirari (859–824 BC) in ancient Mesopotamia, are accepted as the first closed bath structures (Anonymous 1992, 174).

The origin of the word *hammam* comes from the root *hamm* (*hamem*), which means 'heating' and 'being warm' in the Arabic language. Its dictionary meaning is 'heating place' and is also used in the meaning of 'bathing place' (Eyice 1997, 402). Since ancient times, bath structures have been found in various civilisations. These bath structures demonstrate how architecture has formed with the influence of religious beliefs and cultures and has become a part of sociocultural traditions and health practices (Kuban 2007, 160). In Anatolia, examples of hammams are found in numerous settlements such as Ephesus, Miletus, Pergamon, Priene, Purge and Side from the Roman period. During the Roman period, bath structures were designed as places not only for bathing but also as for sports, competitions and meetings (Ülgen 1950, 174).

The most advanced examples of Turkish bath architecture are seen after the acceptance of Islam in the 10th century. The Turks built bath structures that, together with mosques and masjids, would allow them to perform the bathing and cleaning rituals stipulated by Islam. Although the baths in Byzantine settlements were initially renovated and used in Anatolia, the Seljuks developed their bath typologies over time (Kuban 2007, 160). In these constructions, new hammams, where people cleansed themselves with pouring water, were built following the Islamic rules of cleanliness (Önge 1988, 403).

In Ottoman bath architecture, the typologies of the

baths built during the Seljuk era were maintained. More bathhouses were built during the Ottoman Empire compared to previous Turkish civilisations. There are two reasons for this. First, bathhouses were good financial sources. Second, hammams serve the *külliye* ('Turk-Islam social complex') to which they belong (Eyice 1997, 414). *Külliye* is a social complex consisting of buildings such as schools, soup kitchens, fountains, baths, libraries, bazaars, inns and hospitals built around a mosque. In Anatolia, hammams are classified as general and private. Private hammams are usually small sections inside mansions and palaces. General hammams, on the other hand, are often a part of *külliyes* or architectural venues in neighbourhood and bazaar groups. These hammams are called *single* or *double*, depending on their separate or combined constructions for men and women.

Ottoman hammams have the most advanced typologies in terms of plan, usage and function. They all consist of three main spaces: *söğüklük* ('cold hall') that people use for dressing, undressing and resting, *ılıklık* ('warm hall') to accustom the body to heat or cold and *sıcaklık* ('hot hall') where the action of bathing is performed. Apart from these, there was also water reservoir, *taşlık* ('entrance'), *aralık* ('interspace') and *külhan* ('ash storage') sections. Although not common, some hammams also have other sections: *havlu kurutma* ('towel drying place'), *kahve ocağı* ('coffee stove'), *kadın locası* ('women's loggia'), *odun deposu* ('woodyard') and *avlu* ('courtyard') (Dağtekin 2007, 32).

Many hammams were built during the Ottoman Empire. In these hammams, the *sıcaklık* plan was the main determining factor. Based on the *sıcaklık* plan, Ottoman hammams consist of six typologies. These are (a) the type with cross-axial *sıcaklık* plan, with four *iwans* and four corner *halvets* ('private bath rooms'), (b) the type with a star-shaped *sıcaklık*, (c) the type with *halvet* cells arranged around a square-shaped *sıcaklık*, (d) the type with a multi-domed *sıcaklık*, (e) the type with a central dome, transversal *sıcaklık* and double *halvet* and (f) the type in which the *ılıklık*, *sıcaklık* and *halvet* are of equal width (Eyice 1997) (Figure 1).

The hammams were not only a place that people bathed in but also a public space for people. They have become places where especially women come together to socialise during the day, eat and have a good time. Men also have used hammams to have fun and socialise on certain days or nights of the week. These social gatherings have established a tradition in folk culture over time. These traditions have turned into ceremonies with their own rituals. The space arrangements these ceremonies

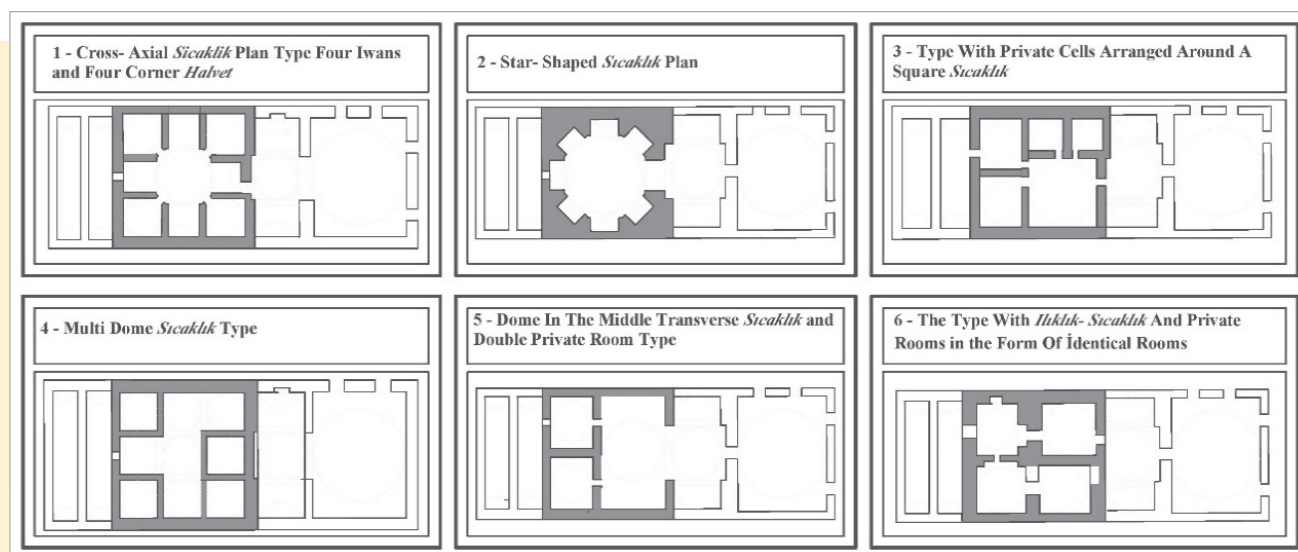


Figure 1
Traditional Ottoman hammam typologies.

require are reflected in the plan schemes and space formations of the bathhouses, which are clearly seen in Gaziantep bath architecture.

Gaziantep hammams

Numerous bath structures have been built in Gaziantep throughout history. The oldest known bath in the city is the Kale Bath, which was built in the 12th century. The famous traveller Evliya Çelebi mentions 14 bathhouses in Antep (former name of Gaziantep), which he visited in the middle of the 17th century, including the Pasha, Naipoğlu, Tabak, Sultan, Sheikh, Pazar, Hengama, Çukur, Müceddele, Keyvanbey, Piyale Pasha, Tuhaffiye, Kala and Beşbaş hammams (Kahraman 2011, 380). Nineteen bathhouses with their names and places can be found in Ottoman archive documents. Of these bathhouses, Eski, İki Kapılı, Keyvanbey, Sheikh Fethullah, Tabak, Göymen, Hüseyin Pasha, Lala Mustafa Pasha and Naip Hammams have survived to the present day. Although the Tışlakı, Akyol, Koca Nakıp, Mücelle, Piyale Paşa, Bağdat, Kadı and Tuffah Bey baths are included in the records, these structures could not survive due to physical destruction and urbanisation activities in the last century (Çam 1996, 33).

Spatial and functional analysis

Functional analysis

Of the nine bathhouses that have survived in Gaziantep

until today, five are neighbourhood hammams and four are bazaar hammams. While four of these hammams are located in the *külliye*, five of them were built independently (Table 1). The bazaar hammams were generally built close to the inns for visitors such as merchants and travellers coming to the city. Neighbourhood hammams, on the other hand, were built in residential areas for those living in the city. Among these hammams, Keyvanbey, Lala Mustafa Pasha, Hüseyin Pasha and Göymen Hammams are bazaar

Table 1

Historical Gaziantep hammam buildings and location types

Name of hammam	Construction period	Location feature	Hammam type	Scheme of the plan typology
Eski	14th century	[M]	[B]	[1]
Lala Mustafa Pasha	15th century	[Ç]	[K]	[2]
Göymen	16th century	[Ç]	[B]	[1]
Keyvanbey	16th century	[Ç]	[B]	[2]
Sheikh Fethullah	16th century	[M]	[K]	[1]
Tabak	16th century	[M]	[K]	[1]
Naip	17th century	[M]	[B]	[2]
Hüseyin Pasha	17th century	[Ç]	[K]	[2]
İki Kapılı	18th century	[M]	[B]	[1]

Feature: [Ç] bazaar hammam, [M] neighbourhood hammam

Type: [B] detached structure, [K] Inside **KÜLLİYE**

Plan typology: [1] cross-axial *sıcaklık* plan type With four **IWANS** and four corner *halvets* [2] star-shaped *sıcaklık* plan type

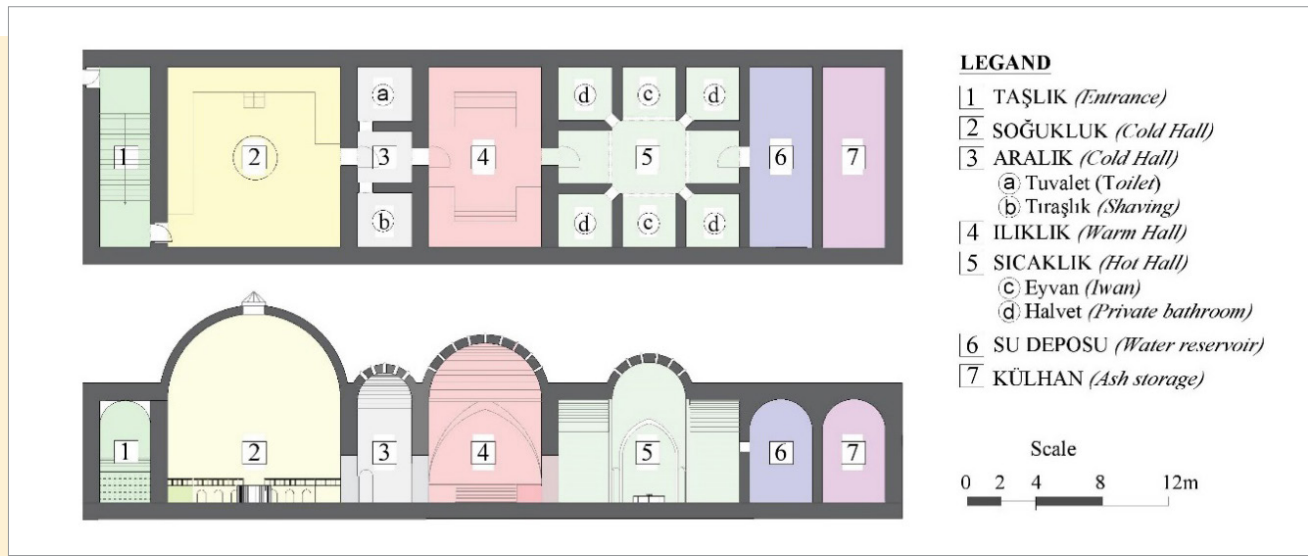


Figure 2
 Spatial formation of historical Gaziantep hammams.

hammams. Eski, Naip, Sheikh Fethullah, Tabak and İki Kapılı hammams are neighbourhood hammams.

The plan features of the Gaziantep bath structures were built in accordance with Ottoman bath typologies and schemes of the planning process. Two schemes of the planning process are commonly encountered in this region: (a) the type with cross-axial *sıcaklık* plan with four *iwans* and four corner *halvets* and (b) the type with a star-shaped *sıcaklık*.

Spatial analysis

The plan arrangement of the historical Gaziantep baths has been formed as *taşlık*, *soğukluk*, *aralık*, *ılıklik*, *sıcaklık*, water reservoir and *külhan* (Figure 2). The size and interior arrangement of these sections vary depending on the culture of the local people.

Taşlık

Taşlık is the first entrance section of the bath structures. The main entrance doors of the hammams are opened to these sections. The *taşlık* section of the Gaziantep hammams was built in the rectangle-shaped form in the Keyvanbey and Hüseyin Pasha Hammams and in the form of the staircase in the others. In the staircase-formed bathhouses, the entrance is usually 20–25 steps below the natural ground level. Only in the Naip Hammam are there fewer steps. Therefore, it can be described as semi-buried compared to others. In the *taşlık* section of all the hammams, the material of construction is stone and they are covered with vaults.

Soğukluk

The *soğukluk* section is the part of the bath structures located next to the *taşlık*. It is also called *soyunmalık* ('dressing room'). These are generally the largest domed sections of the bath structures. They can be planned as a single place or they can be enriched with *iwans*. Generally, benches (*seki*) for dressing are built along the walls. In the middle, there is a *şadırvan* (a circular, four-cornered or multi-cornered pool, usually located in mosque courtyards, with water flowing from the fountain in the middle and from the taps on the sides, open or covered with a dome) (Figure 3). Since the 16th century, the *sekis* have been raised from the bottom to create places for shoes. The *soğukluk* section is the most important socialising spaces in hammams. Here, people chat and rest before and after bathing (Önge 1988, 408; Kuban 2007, 160).

Aralık

The *aralık* section is the space designed to pass from the *soğukluk* section to the *ılıklik* section. Generally, toilets and *tıraşlık* ('shaving') are located here. In Anatolia, most of the 17th- and 18th-century hammams have an *aralık* section. These sections were made large or small in proportion to the size of the hammam. They are usually covered with domes or vaults. They are called *aralık* because they are the intermediate section that connects the two main places (Önge 1988, 408).

Apart from Eski Hammam, Keyvanbey, Sheikh Fethullah and Lala Mustafa Pasha hammams, the other five baths in Gaziantep have an *aralık* section as well. In Tabak Hammam



Figure 3
Hüseyin Pasha (left), İki kapılı (middle) and Naip (right) hammams' *soğukluk* pools
Photo: Meltem Ararat, 12 May 2017

and İki Kapılı Hammam, these sections were designed in a rectangular shape. However, Naip, Hüseyin Pasha and Pazar were designed in the form of a vestibule.

Ilıklık

Ilıklık is the transition section between the cold and hot sections of the hammam that allows the body to get used to the heat or the cold. In some hammams, some spaces were built to bathe for people who cannot stand the heat, for instance, Hüseyin Pasha, Naip and İki Kapılı. *Ilıklık* sections have been built considerably wide in size in Gaziantep hammams. They were generally built in a square plan and with two *iwans*. However, *ilıklık* was built with only a single *iwan* in Eski Hammam and with three *iwans* in the Sheikh Fethullah Hammam. The main place was designed as a square plan in these hammams as well. The square places of the *ilıklık* of Gaziantep hammams are covered with domes, and the *iwans* are covered with vaults. The *iwans* in the Hüseyin Pasha and Lala Mustafa Pasha are covered with a dome (Ararat 2018, 95).

Sıcaklık

The *sıcaklık* is the main section where people bathe. It is entered from the *ilıklık* section through a small door to reduce heat loss. The middle of it is the main place covered with a dome. The marble platform, known as *göbektaşı*, at a height of 30–40 cm from the ground, is situated under this dome. Around the *göbektaşı*, there are separate small rooms called *halvets* for private bathing (Önge 1988, 403–412). In general, bathing places are *iwans* (Figure 4). Marble *sekis* are available for the bathers to sit and bathe in the *iwan*. These *sekis* continue along the wall and are 15–20 cm high from the ground and 70–100 cm wide. On the *sekis*, there are *kurnas* ('water bowls') made of marble and stone. There is no water drain in the *kurnas* so as to keep the water (Ararat 2018, 16). *Halvets* also have *sekis* and *kurnas*. In Gaziantep hammams, *sıcaklık* sections are usually entered through the *iwan*. However, the *sıcaklık* section is entered directly only in Sheikh Fethullah Hammam and through the *halvet* in Pazar Hammam.

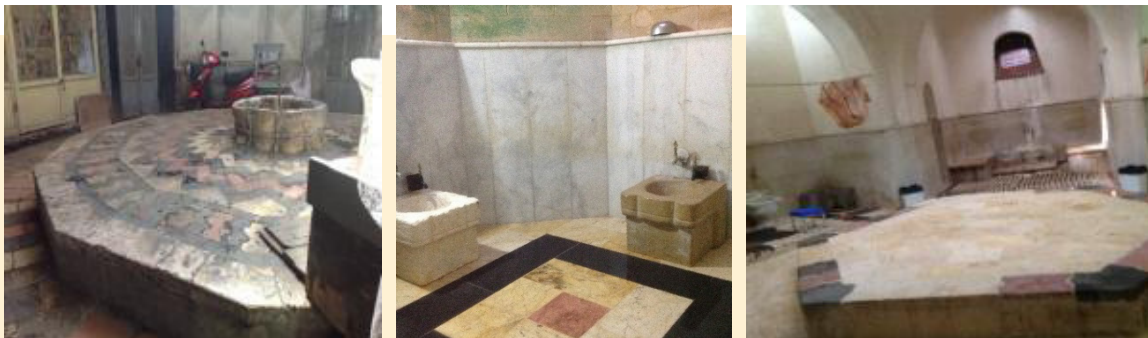


Figure 4
Göbektaşı (left), *halvet* (middle) and *iwan* examples (right)
Photo: Meltem Ararat, 21 November 2017



Figure 5
Kurna (left and middle) and *Gelin kurna*/Bride's *kurna* (ornate basin) (right)
 Photo: Meltem Ararat, 12 May 2017

Another remarkable feature in the warmth section of Gaziantep hammams is the more showy and ornate basins (Figure 5). These are specially made for the use of the bride and the *nevse* ('post-partum') in the bride's and *halvet* baths (Ararat 2018, 16).

Water reservoir and *külhan*

The water reservoir and the *külhan* section are usually located next to the *sıcaklık* section. This section is covered with a vault. The water reservoir section is placed along the *sıcaklık* wall. There is no connection between the water reservoir and the visitors in Gaziantep hammams. Following the *sıcaklık* section, a connection to the water reservoir is provided through a window that is located above eye level. This window is used when possible intervention in this section is required. With this window, the steam in the water tank is taken to *sıcaklık* section. The fire is lit from the *külhan* located at the end of the water tank, and the water is heated. This fire burns by throwing wood from the space extending from the *külhan* under the water tank. In the *külhan*, the ashes that emerge after combustion are removed (Ararat 2018, 20).

Gaziantep hammam culture

Gaziantep hammams are both a form of tangible historical heritage and intangible cultural heritage. This heritage, called Gaziantep bath culture, houses many traditions. Every bathhouse visit is carried out in a ceremonial atmosphere, since hammams are not only places of cleanliness for Gaziantep people but also an important socialising place. Especially in the past, hammam meetings played an important role in the introverted lives of women. In Gaziantep bath

culture, the ceremonies and their rituals vary greatly, including women's hammams, *nevse* hammams, bride's hammams, groom's hammams.

There is only one double-section hammam in Gaziantep that serves women and men in separate sections at the same time. Usually, hammams are reserved for the use of women during the day and men at night. This distinction has led to the differentiation of traditions in men's and women's hammams. Compared to men's, women hammam rituals are highly detailed. In the past, getting ready for hammam was an important tradition. Silk hammam rugs, silver thread, gold wire and the elaborate items in the fardel adorned with hand work were indispensable details of the hammam materials. Among these items are silk-woven *mezer* ('loincloth'); needle-laced, sequin-beaded head covers; silver or specially embellished hammam bowls (called *tas*); gold-wired and -embroidered *meşefe* ('bath towel'); ivory combs; silver *habbap* ('clogs'); dresses and gold wire-embroidered underwear (Köylüoğlu 2009, 115). Clay basins and comb bowls are among the items taken to the hammam (Figure 6).

Hammam fardels were sent to the bath one day in advance, and dressing rooms were reserved for wealthy families. These fardels were kept by a *tellak* ('male') or a *natır* ('female') who served and helped the men or women during bathing. Each family also had a bowl filled with clay to clean their hair and body. The clay could be bought from the clay sellers in front of the doors opening to the *ılıkılık* section. The days to go to the bathhouse would have been determined beforehand. Going to hammam on the 15th night of Ramadan is a common tradition for women (Evişen 2008b, 39). Among these traditions, the *kız hamamı* ('the girls' hammam'), *gelin hamamı* ('the bride's hammam') and the *nevse* hammam are distinguished from the others by their rituals.



Figure 6
Turkish bath items in the Pasha Hammam Museum
Photo: Meltem Ararat, 7 January 2021.

The girls' hammam

The girls' hammam is a fun bath tradition organised by the engaged girl (In Turkish origin, unmarried women are called "girls") by inviting her relatives and friends. The feature that makes this bath tradition, which is also found in different regions of Anatolia, different in Gaziantep is that the girl to be married is kept in the *aralık* between *ılıklik* and *soğukluk* after bathing. Meanwhile, all the guests gather in the *soğukluk* section. Here, a water bowl containing a mixture of roses, various scents and *harmala* seeds, which are believed to protect against the evil eye, and a mixture called *şamşırak* is poured down the bride's head by a happily married, respectable woman. A woman with a respectable family was because the local belief was that if the happily married woman pours the *şamşırak*, the newlyweds will be happy and respectable too.

Today, *şamşırak*, which continues to be sold in small glass bottles by herbalists in the historical city centre of Gaziantep, consists of pink sugar dye, cinnamon and sugar (Figure 7). After this ceremony, the young woman,

who is wrapped in a *meşefe*, is taken to a special place in the *soğukluk* section and is dressed. Afterwards, a meal is served to the guests in the *soğukluk* section (Köylüoğlu 2009, 116).

The bride's hammam

In Gaziantep, the bride's hammam is another tradition. This bath tradition is organised for the newly-wed woman by her husband's family after the wedding. Among the guests of this bath ceremony are the bride's friends and close female relatives, as well as her mother-in-law's close friends and relatives. The main purpose of the ceremony is to make the family relations and the marriage bond stronger. In this ceremony, first of all, everyone is wrapped in *meşefe* in their own room. Then, the newly-wed woman is taken from the *soğukluk* section to the *ılıklik* section, accompanied by hymns. Here, the bride bathes in a reserved ornate *kurna* (a marble water bowl in Turkish hammams). After bathing, the foods prepared



Figure 7
Şamşırak mixture (left) and *Şamşırak dökümü* (right)
Photo: Meltem Ararat, 7 January 2021

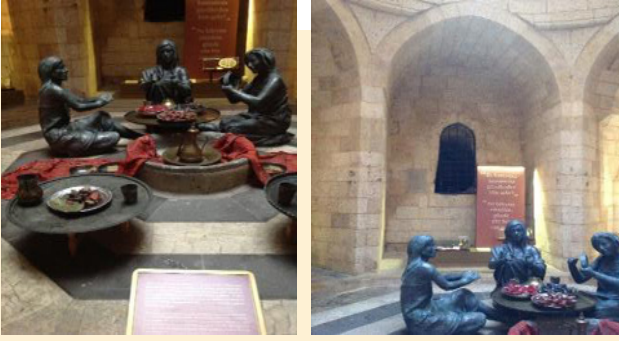


Figure 8
Food treats and entertainment at the Pasha Hammam Museum
Photo: Meltem Ararat, 7 January 2021

are offered to the guests in the *soğukluk* section (Figure 8). Then, entertainment begins (Evişen 2008b, 42). The ceremony finishes with bathing and cleaning again, with the stage called *ikinci su* ('second bathing process').

Nevse hammam

The *nevse* hammam is the bathing tradition to clean *nevse*, which means a woman who has just given birth in the local colloquial language. The *nevse* hammam is arranged on the 40th post-partum day. Therefore, it is also called *kırk hamamı* (40thhammam). The preparations begin a week before, and female relatives and close friends of both families are invited. One kilo of salt and sugar is bought, grounded and stored separately. Also, a mixture called *nevse emi*, consisting of ginger, cloves, cinnamon, pimento, black pepper, coriander, cocoa, nutmeg, fennel, anise, mahaleb, black sesame, cumin, flaxseed and hempseed, is prepared to apply on the *nevse* (Köylüoğlu 2009, 118). Depending on the income of the families, this

mixture is sometimes mixed with honey or molasses. All the guests make their preparations in their own rooms and go to the *sıcaklık* section of the hammam for bathing. The mother and baby also attend this ceremony. However, to protect the baby from extreme heat and cold, the baby is taken to the *sıcaklık* section after everyone has bathed. A woman close to the family helps the mother and baby during the bathing process. After the first bath of the *nevse*, *nevse emi* is applied to the mother's body. It is left on the body for about half an hour and then it is washed off. The baby's body is covered with ground salt. It is believed that the salt prevents the baby from smelling bad. In the meantime, a little sugar is applied to the baby's face; it is believed that the sugar will make the baby a sweet, smiling person. One or two lemon drops are poured to the baby's eyes to make the eyes bright. Thereafter, 40 *tas* (metal or copper bowl used to pour the water over the head and body) of water are poured over the baby's head – the 40 pours also correspond with the name *kırk hamamı*. These rituals are usually performed by older women who accompany the rituals with prayers (Evişen 2008b, 42–43). The baby is then held above the mother's head. A wolf's head bone is held over the baby's head and water is poured down the wolf's head (Figure 9). According to local belief, the water flowing from the wolf's head will protect the mother and baby from evil. Following this, the mother and baby are taken to a private room in the *soğukluk* section. After the baby is breastfed and put to sleep, the meal service begins. The ceremony finishes with the final bathing called *ikinci su* ('second bathing process') (Köylüoğlu 2009, 118).

Men's hammam

Men's bath traditions, including the groom and soldier



Figure 9
Nevse emi mixture (left) and the tradition of pouring water from the wolf's head (right)
Photo: Meltem Ararat, 7 January 2021

hammams, are less varied and detailed compared to women's. The groom's hammam, as in the bride's hammam, is a festive and entertaining tradition that male relatives and close friends of the groom are invited before the wedding. The soldier hammam is organised by the friends of a young man who will join the army. In both hammams, similar rituals are carried out.

The effects of Gaziantep bath culture on the use of space

The culture has always been the most important factor shaping the architectural space. Traditions and customs determine how to form the space. Similarly, the bath culture has been the biggest factor determining the form of the space in Gaziantep hammams.

In general, Gaziantep hammams were built buried under the natural ground level. There are two reasons. First is the influence of the local people's culture. In hammams, confidentiality and privacy are very important. When the structure is buried under the ground, privacy cannot be violated. While the Keyvanbey and Hüseyin Pasha Hammams, which are generally used by non-Muslims in Gaziantep, are on the ground level, those used by the Muslims are under the natural ground level. Another reason is to conserve heat (Eyice 1997, 414). Since heat loss is at a minimum in the underground structures, it is easier to heat the bathhouse and the water, and also to maintain the temperature. For these two reasons, the number of steps has been increased in the *taşlık* of Gaziantep hammams in order to go underground as much as possible.

Soğukluk sections have been built considerably large in Gaziantep hammam, since banquets, musical

entertainment, various folk dances and religious ceremonies, all of which are traditional bath rituals, are held in this section. Since it is the place where people come together, the *soğukluk* sections are designed as the largest sections of Gaziantep hammams.

One of the important parts of the *soğukluk* section in Gaziantep bath structures is the *loca*. The *locas* are the places covered with window walls with raised wooden benches from the ground and are used as changing rooms (Figure 10). The carpets that are sent a day before the ceremonies are laid on the *seki* (sitting places raised from the floor by wood or stone). Fardels are placed on the parts called *kerevets* (wooden bench) on the *sekis*. The size of each bather's place is determined by the size of their carpet. By making preparations in these *locas*, the bather goes through the *ılıklik* to the *sıcaklık* section to bathe. After the first bathing process, bathers return to *soğukluk* section to have a break. In the meantime, activities such as resting, chatting, eating and drinking are performed in the *soğukluk* section (Evişen 2008b, 39). Meals are usually brought from home. Sometimes, traditional food such as *yağlı köfte* or *çiğ köfte* are prepared in the men's hammam (Köylüoğlu 2009, 116).

The *soğukluk* section is the place where the bathing process begins and ends. The bather is brought to the *locas* in the *soğukluk* section by *natır* or *tellak*. When a woman bathes, *natır* lays the *meşefe* on the carpet and brings the woman's three-piece towel sets. The big *meşefe* is wrapped around the waist, the other big *meşefe* is wrapped around the shoulders and the smaller one is wrapped around the head. The *natır* pours the clean water, which she brings in the *tas*, to the bather's feet and the cleaning finishes. Then, the bather gets dressed, dries her hair, collects her belongings and leaves the hammam



Figure 10
Naip (left), Eski (middle), Tabak (right) hammams' *loca* sections
Photo: Meltem Ararat, 17 April 2018



Figure 11
Gulleytin sections in Pasha Hammam
Photo: Meltem Ararat, 7 January 2021

(Köylüoğlu 2009, 116). Similarly, in men's hammams, the men are brought to the dressing *loca* and then *tellak* pours the clean water on their feet (Evişen 2008a, 26).

In the girls' hammams in Gaziantep, *şamşırak* is poured in the *aralık* section. For this reason, local people arrange girls' hammams in the baths with an *aralık* section.

The *ılıkılık* is used to rest in women's baths to prevent the body from cooling down when eating, resting or socialising. The women continue bathing after chatting and resting by moving from the *sıcaklık* to the *ılıkılık* section from time to time. For this reason, *ılıkılık* sections were built larger compared to similar hammams in Anatolia.

Another part encountered in the *ılıkılık* sections of Gaziantep hammams is called *gulleytin* in the colloquial language. The main factor in the construction of this place is based on the religious ceremony performed by the Jewish people (Anonymous 1992). These places, which are entered from the *ılıkılık* section, are divided into two by a wall of 120–130 cm tall. With the help of steps in the entrance section, the water-filled section on the other side of the wall is reached (Figure 11).

In Judaism, contrary to the Muslim belief, it is believed that one will be purified not by running water, but by being immersed in the water in a pool or a bathtub. It is thought that removing sins is possible by being immersed in the water in these ritual baths, which are also called *mağtas* or *mikveh* in some regions (Dağtekin 2007, 62). Today, in Gaziantep, *gulleytin* can be found in Lala Mustafa Pasha and İki Kapılı Hammam. After bathing in the *sıcaklık* section, the Jewish bathers immerse in the cold water in the *gulleytin* and ask a rabbi (who is present there) whether they have been purified. First, they receive the answer that they have not. They immerse in the water for the second time and ask again. After the rabbi answer that they are now purified, they wrap themselves in a towel and rest in


the *soğukluk*. It is believed that they are purified from their sins with this ritual (Evişen 2008a, 23).

In Gaziantep bath culture, special *halvets* were reserved for the wealthy guests who come to hammam regularly. On the *sekis* in the *halvets* in the *sıcaklık*, the special water basins carved from marble were called *curun* instead of *kurna*. The clay, which has been sent one day in advance, is kept ready for these special guests (Köylüoğlu 2009, 115). The navel stone in the middle of *sıcaklık* functions as a sweating area. The *halvet* on the right of the entrance *iwan* is always reserved for the most respected guest. In this *halvet*, called *ağ curun*, hot water always runs. Except for special *halvets* in the *sıcaklık* section, everyone can choose an area where they can withstand the heat (Evişen 2008a, 23). In special *halvets*, this practice is done on *sekis*. In the women's hammam, the scrubber, called *kayme*, scrubs the bathers. After the scrubbing process, the *natır* pours water on the bather and implements processes of washing with clay, soap and bubbles. The women who have a break after the *ilk su* ('the first water') pass to the *ılıkılık* section, come back to the *sıcaklık* section when the *ikinci su* ('the second water') starts, and the process ends by bathing for the last time (Evişen 2008b, 39). In men's hammams, sweating, scrubbing, pouring water soaping and bubble washing are done in order. Generally, men who are scrubbed by the *tellak* do the final soaping process themselves in empty *halvet* rooms (Evişen 2008a, 26).

Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between bath culture and architectural form in Gaziantep. The local cultural values influence the form of these structures and create authentic characters. The

bath structures are generally similar to the Ottoman bath architecture. However, the rituals and ceremonies that local people have developed over the centuries shaped the form of the hammams. The most significant influences of these differences are seen in the *soğukluk* section of the bathhouses. Since a significant part of the traditions of the bath culture takes place in this section, the size is kept larger. On the other hand, the tradition of *şamşırak*, a ritual in the girl's hammam, performed in the *aralık* section of the hammam, changed the shape and the size of this section. People from different cultures and beliefs have lived in Gaziantep for ages, which has also shaped the structure of hammams. While the bathhouses used by the Muslims are located under the ground level, the bathhouses used by the non-Muslims are on the ground level. Special pools called *gulleysin* were built for the Jewish people living in Gaziantep.

However, with modernisation, washing habits have also changed. The frequency of use of Turkish baths has decreased, and with the bathrooms entering homes, some bathhouses and their rituals have been abandoned. The poorly planned repairs made to hammam structures damaged them. This abandonment and destruction has threatened the architectural structure of Gaziantep hammams. Together, these factors may cause the local bath culture to gradually disappear, along with hammam structures. The protection of these historical hammams in Gaziantep is crucial to protect architectural heritage. In addition, the holistic preservation of these structures and the transfer of their original characters to future generations are also related to their intangible cultural heritage. If tangible cultural heritages are considered together with intangible cultural heritages, full protection can be achieved. Although some traditions are not practised today, bath cultures such as the girl's hammam, bride's hammam and the *nevse* hammam continue to be practised in Gaziantep. Although some of these traditions are performed in modern architectural structures, the historical bathhouses that have been restored recently are becoming popular again. It is important to recognise the local culture and to maintain the continuity of this culture in order to renovate the structures properly and to conduct correct interventions to use them. After ensuring the awareness of this culture, it will be necessary to look at the spaces with components of the culture and evaluate them together. Only in this way can it be ensured that the culture is transferred to future generations with minimum loss. 

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