

Muslim women

[Religion](#), [Islam](#)



How does 16 - 17th century Ottoman Period societies challenge the gender limitations usually associated with Islamic Societies? The life of women in the a Islamic society is faced with great and unequal odds, as their human rights are limited, due to Islamic beliefs and a patriarchy society. From their daily actions at home, to their physical appearance, women are portrayed as quiet, faceless women veiled from head to toe. While this image is just another stereotype, women in the Islamic society do face many obstacles and challenges of creating their own identity as they are frequently denied their rights. Living in a society dominated by men, life in some cases is difficult for women in the Islamic society. There is constant fight for a change as they balance their traditional roles with those of modern society. The life of the Muslim women not always has been a life of oppression. If we look back in history in the life of women in the pre-modern Islamic world, their life was very different than the life of a woman in the Islamic society today. For example, the life of the woman in the Ottoman Period was a life of few limitation. In the article by Suraiya Farooqhi, ' Subjects of the Sultan: Culture and Daily Life in the Ottoman Period'¹ it showed a different way of life of the women in the Islamic society. The life of the women in the Islamic society has not always been limited to a life without rights. In Ottoman Period, women had more freedom than now. According to court paper, letter and diary of the women in the Ottoman Period sometime did not marry, they were allowed to bring witness to court, ask for divorce, work and in some cases represent the family even though the husband was alive. They also have an active social life. The article mentions that the town ladies meet in the baths and talk about their daily life. They were the ladies of society who

gave each other visit at their home. One aspect of the Ottoman women that caught my attention was the idea of men and women working together in a textile factories. The women were an important part of the making the embroidery, kilims and carpets. The women were allowed to earn money and support their family. When it came to the education in the well-off family's education was must. In the Ottoman Period, women were allowed to be song writers and poets. Women had a voice in the circle of art. In the Article, there is an example of a famous Ottoman woman poet her name was Mihri Hatum. She was a poet from the Ottoman Period, her life challenge the idea of an oppressed women in an Islamic society. Mihri Hatum came from a family that enforce education, her father gave her the permission not to marry. She talked openly about her romances in her poems. For what I understand Mihri Hatum had no oppression in her life. In the Ottoman period, women were in charge of their own money and they were allowed to inherit money and property. The women with money in the Ottoman period had more opportunities. They could trade and invest, however, they were silent partner. They have opinion when it came to the constructions of building. For example, the sultan mother, wife and even daughter had an opinion of how the palace was decorated. In the area of marriage and divorce in the Ottoman period, it does challenge the role in the Islamic society. In some cases the man could break the arrange marriage. Men were allowed to marry no-Muslin woman and children of the marriage were recognized as muslin. Women were not allow to marry outside the religion. When it came to the divorce, a woman could ask for a divorce but she would have to pay an additional amount of money. If the divorce was ask by the husband, the wife

had the right to an amount of money that was already agreed at the time of marriage as alimony, however the alimony was for only three months. The 16th and 17th century, The Ottoman period challenge the idea of an oppressed women in an Islamic society. It also challenge the misconception of the role of women in the Islamic society. I always thought women were treated as property and oppressed, but the article prove the contrary. It showed a woman with sense of identity and power. The reading showed a side of the Islamic society where women have opinion and are treated with respect. The fact that women can be head of household, get a divorce, control her money and work with men, was eye opening. Like I mentioned before, when we think about the role of women in Islamic society the word oppression come to mind. The article by Suraiya Farooqhi, ' Subjects of the Sultan: Culture and Daily Life in the Ottoman Period', prove that life for a women in the pre Islamic world was different. 1. Farooqhi, Suraiya. Subjects of the Sultan: Culture and Daily Life in the Ottoman Period. London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2007, pp. 101-122.