

THE GILDED CAGE ON THE BOSPHORUS

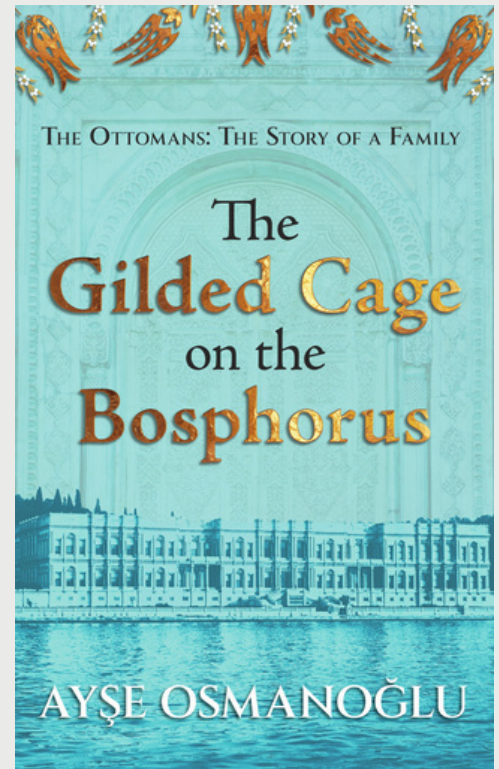
A compelling tale of family, duty, and resilience unfolds amidst the magnificence and splendour of Imperial Istanbul during the twilight years of the Ottoman Empire.

For over six centuries the history of the Turks and their vast and powerful Empire was intertwined with the Ottoman Dynasty.

1903–1905: As the new century dawns, Sultan Murad V and his family languish in enforced confinement behind the high walls and heavily-guarded gates of the Çırağan Palace, while anarchy and revolution threaten the established order and powerful enemies plot the fall of the once mighty Ottoman Empire.

The birth of a new prince brings renewed hope for the future. However, having endured living under house arrest for twenty-eight years, Murad knows that only his death can bring freedom for his beloved family. But the waters of the Bosphorus run deep: assassins lurk in shadows, intrigue abounds, and the scandal of an illicit affair in the family threatens to bring destruction of all that he holds dear.

The Gilded Cage on the Bosphorus is the first book in the Ottoman Dynasty Chronicles series, written as a personal homage to the author's family, intended to give a voice to those who lived through history.



For further information about *The Gilded Cage on the Bosphorus* or Ayşe Osmanoglu, and for all media enquiries, please contact the author using the details below:

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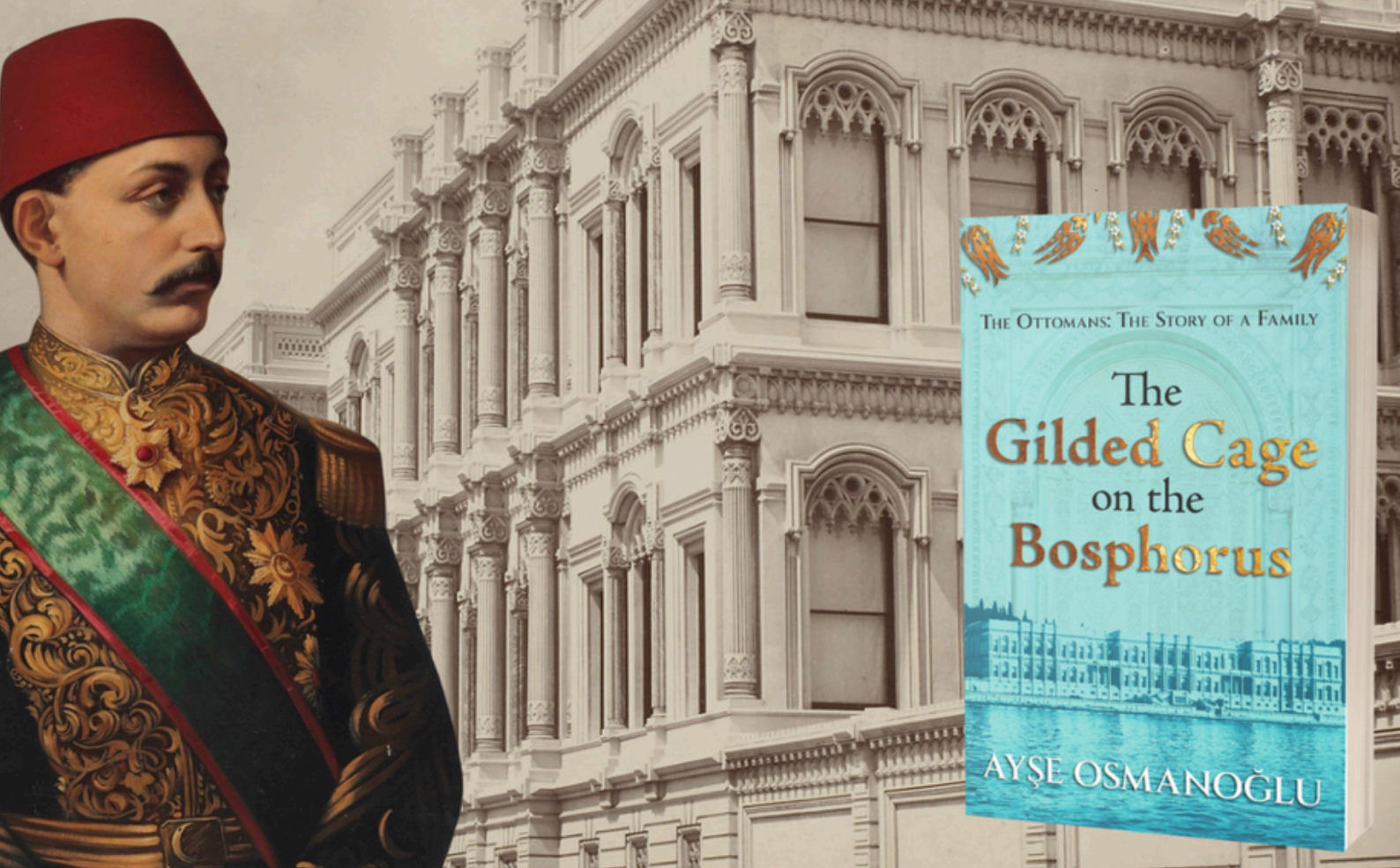
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Information Sheet

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Excerpt

The hammam at Çırağan was one of the jewels of the entire palace. Smoky grey veining of different shades ran through the glistening white marble that covered the floors, walls and ceilings. The rooms were flooded with natural light that streamed in through the large windows overlooking the Bosphorus and the lower terraces of the gardens of Yıldız, as well as from roof lanterns cut into the domes above each chamber. Yet more light filtered in through windows in the ceilings, each one shaped like an eight-pointed star. Set into the thick marble walls were ornate arched alcoves and recesses holding oil lamps and candles which flickered as they burned, creating dancing shadows behind them. Elaborate friezes with interlaced geometric patterns were carved into the architraves around each door and window, and every marble panel and niche was decorated with intricate floral motifs and symmetrical latticework. Tiered marble muqarnas projected out from beneath the ceilings, giving the impression that honeycomb was dripping down onto those below. The constant sound of water flowing from the bronze taps into the marble basins soothed the ear, ensuring a harmonious and relaxing atmosphere.

Safiru willingly submitted to the firm but skilful hands of the Mistress of the Baths. She sat on a wooden stool while warm water was poured over her head and body from silver bathing bowls engraved with prayers and floral designs.

The olive oil soap, scented with rosemary and laurel, was repeatedly lathered into her ivory-smooth skin with a silk bath glove until it ran off her onto the floor like foam on the surface of the sea. After being rinsed, Safiru felt a coarse palm-root mitt being rubbed vigorously over her skin, and her body began to tingle. It was as if she could feel her soul being purged while her body was purified. Once this was done, Safiru shut her eyes and surrendered herself to the pleasure of being washed and massaged again. Oblivious to the whispering voices of the princesses and the Imperial consorts, wives and Gözdes in the hammam, she drifted into an unexplored realm that lay somewhere between consciousness and sleep.



☪ **Marina Koulouris**
AUTHOR of WINTER PALE

“An emotive story about familial ties and political intrigue ... told in the imaginative narrative of a skilled novelist paired with the critical eye of a History academic.”

☪ **Alexandra Antipa**
AUTHOR of M IS FOR MOTHER

“This is, without any doubt, one of the best books I have ever read. The author has a natural talent for writing and it was a pleasure to travel back in time, reading about the complex life and challenges of the Ottoman Imperial Family.”



Biography

Ayşe Osmanoğlu was born and raised in England. She is a member of the Ottoman Imperial family, descended from Sultan Murad V through her grandfather and Sultan Mehmed V through her grandmother. After reading History and Politics at the University of Exeter, she obtained an M.A. in Turkish Studies from SOAS, University of London, where she specialised in Ottoman History. Ayşe lives between Türkiye, France and the United Kingdom with her husband and five children.

Her research and literary works concentrate on the late Ottoman period, exploring narratives embedded in her Imperial heritage.

The Gilded Cage on the Bosphorus is Ayşe's debut novel, and the first book in the Ottoman Dynasty Chronicles Series. Her second book, A Farewell To Imperial Istanbul, was published in May 2024 to commemorate the centenary of the exile of the Ottoman Imperial family.

✪ Kenize Mourad

JOURNALIST & INTERNATIONAL BEST-SELLING
AUTHOR of REGARDS FROM THE DEAD PRINCESS

"With intelligence and sensitivity, Ayşe recreates the dramatic story of our family."

✪ Katherine Mezzacappa

AUTHOR of THE MAIDEN OF FLORENCE

"A richly woven carpet of a book."

Press Release

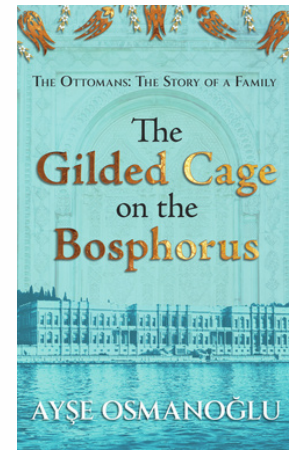
**Ayşe Osmanoğlu Launches Debut Historical Novel
THE GILDED CAGE ON THE BOSPHORUS
on 30th May 2020 in Sussex, UK**

For Immediate Press Release

Ayşe Osmanoğlu is delighted to announce the publication of *The Gilded Cage on the Bosphorus*.

A compelling tale of family, duty, and resilience, Ayşe Osmanoğlu's debut novel unfolds amidst the magnificence and splendour of Imperial Istanbul during the twilight years of the Ottoman Empire. It tells the intimate story of Sultan Murad V and his family, who languish in enforced confinement behind the high walls and heavily-guarded gates of the Çırağan Palace, while anarchy and revolution threaten the established order and powerful enemies plot the fall of the once mighty Ottoman Empire.

The novel reached the Number 1 Bestseller spot and Top New Release on Amazon.com in various categories including History of Turkey and the Ottoman Empire and Historical Middle Eastern Fiction, and has received numerous positive reviews.

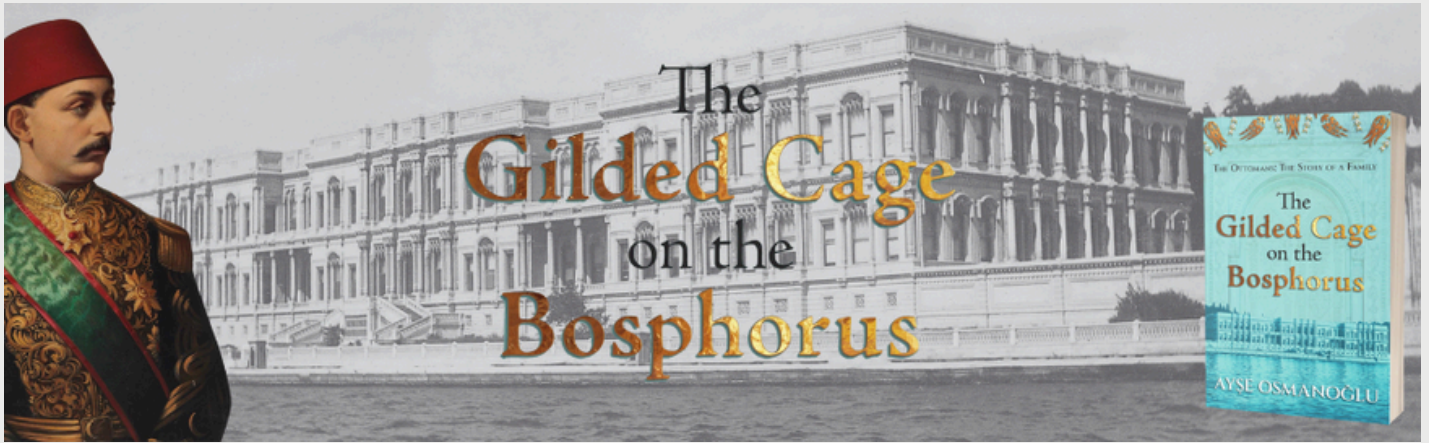


“A richly woven carpet of a book.” Katherine Mezzacappa,
Author of *The Maiden of Florence*

About the Author: Ayşe Osmanoğlu was born and raised in England and is a member of the Ottoman Imperial family. After reading History and Politics at the University of Exeter, she obtained an M.A. in Turkish Studies from SOAS, University of London, where she specialised in Ottoman History. Her research and literary works concentrate on the late Ottoman period, exploring narratives embedded in her Imperial heritage. *The Gilded Cage on the Bosphorus* is Ayşe's debut novel, and the first book in the Ottoman Dynasty Chronicles Series. Her second book, [A Farewell To Imperial Istanbul](#), was published in May 2024 to commemorate the centenary of the exile of the Ottoman Imperial family.

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Interview Questions

Where does the inspiration for your books come from?

The inspiration for my books originates from the many fascinating stories and precious recollections my grandparents shared with me. They were both born in Istanbul during the twilight years of the Ottoman Empire and lived through immense change and upheaval. As a child, I was captivated by all that they had witnessed and experienced, and this ignited my passion for preserving their forgotten world and honouring their memory through storytelling. Also, I feel that my books offer my children and future grandchildren a way to understand and appreciate their heritage.

Which of the locations mentioned in your book is your favourite place in Istanbul?

Istanbul has so many beautiful places that I do not think that I can pick just one, so I have chosen three. The Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque: because I always feel a sense of calm and serenity sweep over me when I visit, as it is such a spiritual and uniquely beautiful place. Topkapı Palace: because I love the classical style of Ottoman architecture and because this Palace is steeped in so much history – every piece of stone, every marble pillar and every hand painted tile has a story to tell and a secret to share. The Bosphorus: because the views from anywhere along its shores makes me feel like I am ‘home’.

Tell us about Sultan Murad V, one of the main protagonists of the book.

He was intelligent, well-educated and extremely charismatic. He was an enlightened liberal prince, a modern reformist, a talented composer, and a kind, gentle, sensitive man. He would have made an excellent constitutional ruler, and if he had remained on the throne I believe history could have been very different.

How do you feel when you visit the Çırağan Palace - the ‘Gilded Cage on the Bosphorus’?

I always feel very emotional. I think this is because it was the home of my branch of the family for so long and is where my grandfather and great-grandfather were born, so it is the place where I feel most connected to my roots.

If readers could take away one message or feeling after finishing your book, what would you want it to be?

I would love my readers to feel a deep sense of empathy with the characters and a connection with the human side of history that I have tried to portray in my book. I also hope to spark a curiosity and encourage my readers to delve deeper into Ottoman history, and perhaps inspire them to embark on their own journey to discover the beauty of Istanbul and to explore its rich history and culture for themselves.