No man's land: gender and sexuality in erotic narratives of the Late Ottoman Empire

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Chapter One

'Masculine' Modernisation of the Ottoman Empire

Historiographies on the Ottoman Empire distinguish two important interrelated processes during the period from the proclamation of the Second Constitution in 1908 until the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923.[8] This period has been regarded as a continuation of the Empire's modernisation, the seeds of which go back to the *Tanzimat* (reorganisation) period between 1839 and 1876. At the same time, the proclamation of the Second Constitution and the eradication of the 'repressive regime' of Abdülhamid II (r.1876-1909) have frequently been accepted as important developments in the democratisation of the Turkish Republic. This focus on continuation explains, to some extent, the social changes that occurred in the Ottoman Empire, but this period also introduced significant differences compared to the periods before and after. As Michel Foucault remarks, the conventional understanding of history tends to evaluate the development of historical events as a "linear succession" focusing on the progression of civilisations. However, history consists of ruptures and thresholds, which constitute different series, the so-called "peculiar discontinuities" (1972: 3-4). Similarly, in *The Consequences of Modernity*, Anthony Giddens indicates that the modern period constitutes a discontinuity or set of discontinuities in history due to the transformative impact of modernity on society (1996: 4).

[8] See Erik J. Zürcher. *Turkey: A Modern History*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2017, Feroz Ahmad. *Turkey: The Quest for Identity*. Oxford: Oneworld Publication, 2003, Bernard Lewis. *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*. London: Oxford University Press, 1961.

The primary objective of the Ottoman modernisation was to benefit from Europe's advancing science and technology. The army adopted advancing science and technology because they were determined to overcome the losses they suffered earlier. During the reign of Mahmud II (r.1808-1839), small student groups had already been sent to Europe to pursue their education, particularly in military sciences (Hanioğlu 2008: 63). Changes brought about by modernisation were not limited to the army, but came also to government institutions, education, the press, social norms, gender relations, and identity politics. Ottoman modernisation modelled itself on Western Europe in many instances. Nevertheless, it was not a docile modernisation, but a compromise between tradition and modernity in varying degrees in different fields. As Nergis Ertürk writes,

> at every point in the process, which continued through the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876-1909), the combination of the "traditional" and the "new" can be seen to have produced many different hybrid cultural forms and practices. (2011: 6)

Transformations of institutions and new social norms created discontinuities and reformulated the relation between the state and society. After the proclamation of the Second Constitution, the impact of modernisation on Ottoman society manifested itself especially in the press, which was of capital importance because it involved a direct interaction with the Empire's subjects and everyday life as well as the emergence of popular erotic literature. Thus, prior to the analyses of twentieth-century Ottoman Turkish popular erotic narratives, this chapter discusses transformations in education and the press together with social and cultural changes that occurred in the Empire's capital, Istanbul. The chapter pays particular attention to a

historically and culturally specific experience of modernity, and serves as an introduction to the historical and cultural contexts of the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the century.

Ottoman Reforms in Education

Expansion of state education occurred as a global phenomenon and became an engine for social change all over the world in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Europe already shaped the social implications of this expansion as "*culture générale*" in France, "*Bildung*" in Germany and "liberal education" in the Anglo-American world at the turn of the century (Fortna 2002: 27, 46). The Ottoman Empire also made reforms in education to keep pace with the European Empires. These reforms were essential for the Empire to regain its strength and reputation by cultivating a modern public image (Deringil 1993: 13). In other words, the Ottoman Empire used education as a means of coping with military, diplomatic, and economic difficulties that shattered its existence (Fortna 2002: 47). These difficulties resulted in a "legitimation crisis" or "legitimation deficit" that occurs, according to Jürgen Habermas, when administrative institutions are unable to maintain a necessary level of mass loyalty (1973: 46-47). Habermas also points out that administrative institutions extended control over the school curriculum to manipulate cultural traditions that limited the political system and, in doing so, compensate for the legitimation crisis (1973: 71).

In *The State Nobility: Elite Schools in the Field of Power*, Pierre Bourdieu writes,

> It was necessary to bury the myth of the "schools as liberating force," guarantor of the triumph of "achievement" over "ascription," of what is conquered over what is received, of works over birth, of merit and

> talent over heredity and nepotism, in order to perceive the educational institution in the true light of its social uses, that is, as one of the foundations of domination and of the legitimation of domination. (1996: 5)

Indeed, the Ottoman Empire aimed to solve its legitimacy crisis and/or legitimise its domination in world politics by means of reforms in education. Selim Deringil notes that education was perceived as a "defensive weapon" and used to prevent the disintegration of the Empire (2009a: 118). Reforms first began with the establishment of military schools such as *Tıbhane-i Amire* (the Military School of Medicine) in 1827, *Muzika-i Hümayun Mektebi* (the Imperial Music School) in 1831, and *Mekteb-i Ulum-i Harbiye* (the School of Military Sciences) in 1834. In addition, *Tercüme Odası* (the Translation Office), founded in 1833, became a place where most statesmen started their careers and learnt how to read, write, and speak in a foreign language, mostly French (Zürcher 2017: 38).

In his book entitled *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, Niyazi Berkes argues that reforms in education led to a "bifurcation" between secular and religious world-views of the Empire's subjects. He writes,

> [...] in terms of education, that many individuals were going to develop a culturally split personality or a personality with a dual culture [.] The educated man would be a product, on the one hand, of a primary education that remained as the matrix which cast the mold of tradition upon the growing child and, on the other, of an educational system which recognized virtually none of the premises of that tradition. (1964: 109)

Modernity and tradition cannot be strictly defined. They are not rigid entities and may change with respect to the requirements of the period. On that note, Benjamin C. Fortna suggests rethinking doctrines such as “bifurcation” or “development of secularism”, since the late Ottoman schools were “complex and sometimes contradictory institutions of mixed pedagogical and epistemological parentage” (2000: 388-389). I agree with Fortna and contend that reforms in education were more complex than a simple “bifurcation” between secular and religious, as they hinged on multiple variables. In addition, Fortna elsewhere states that reforms in education were not a pure *adoption* of Western European institutions and methods, but they were an *adaptation* of certain parts of modernity [emphasis in the original] (2002: 9-10).

Selim Deringil makes a reference to Eric Hobsbawm’s and Terence Ranger’s influential collection of essays *The Invention of Tradition* when discussing the late Ottoman period (2009b: 19). Hobsbawm argues that traditions are not as “old” as they are assumed to be, and they are mostly invented to infuse certain social values and behavioural norms by repetition. Traditions are established in order to maintain continuity with the past. Accordingly, invented traditions appear in response to the new and constantly changing conditions of modernity by keeping some areas of daily life well established and constant (2000a: 1-2). Hobsbawm further indicates that rapid changes in society disrupt the social order and procreate new traditions that fill the niches when the old ones do not fit, or where the institutions maintaining such traditions lack the flexibility to adapt to the new conditions (2000a: 4-5). The invented practices were inclined to be vague “as to the nature of the values, rights and obligations of the group membership they inculcate: ‘patriotism’, ‘loyalty’, ‘duty’ […] and the like” (2000a: 10). Thus, invented traditions functioned to demonstrate prompt social changes, which

drove different social groups – either pre-existing or newly emerging – to create new forms of social cohesion and identity as well as social relations in the nineteenth century. Most of these forms of cohesion and identity developed outside the traditional elites and ruling classes, threatening their status and jeopardising the very existence of the state. Thus, the question of the unity of society acquired currency, and the state tried to find a way to construct a loyalty and to legitimise itself among its subjects. In this respect, education, for instance, became a significant way to transform people into citizens (Hobsbawm 2000b: 263-264).

Ottoman reforms in education facilitated the invention of traditions under the influence of modernity. Deringil contends that similar to the Russian, Austrian, French, British, German and Japanese Empires, the Ottoman Empire aimed to construct a citizenship for its subjects by means of education (1998: 93-94). Furthermore, he elsewhere indicates, the Empire's subjects were not expected to obey the state passively, but to have an active loyalty to it (2009b: 139). Accordingly, *Maarif-i Umumiyye Nizamnamesi* (the Education Act) was proclaimed in 1869 and implemented in the 1880s. The act aimed to preserve the territorial integrity of the Empire. It gave similar promises as *Gülhane Hatt-ı Şerifi* (the Noble Edict of the Rose Garden) in 1839 and *Hatt-ı Hümayun* (the Imperial Reform Edict) in 1856, both of which promised to secure the life, honour and property of its subjects as well as provide a common citizenship for all. Along similar lines, *Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi* outwardly emphasised the total equality for the entire population, *evlad-ı vatan* (children of the homeland) (Evered 2012: 1-2, 22).

Education for girls was previously allowed until the age of nine when it was considered that they reached puberty and had to be segregated from boys. Only the privileged young girls from upper-middle class families could be privately tutored at home. Thanks to *Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi*,

education at the level of primary school became compulsory between 6-10 for boys and 7-11 for girls. If there were two primary schools in a neighbourhood or village, one of them had to be designated for girls. If not, a new primary school would be established for girls and, until then, they continued their education in the same school as boys but had to sit separately. The regulation underlined the need for female teachers for the girls’ school. Accordingly, *Dârülmuallimât* (Female Teacher’s Training School) was established in 1870 in order to fulfil the need for female teachers for girls’ schools. Until these female teachers were trained, courses would be given by the old and well-mannered male teachers (Kurnaz 2011: 25-26, 53).

Reforms in education were expected to preserve the unity of the Empire and the sultan’s authority at the institutional level by creating a new ideology: Ottomanism (Evered 2012: 1-2). Nevertheless, Ottomanism was sustained in theory, but it was only applied in practice as an Islamist policy after Sultan Abdülhamid II ascended the throne and proclaimed the Constitution in 1876 (Evered 2012: 25).[9] Abdülhamid’s pan-Islamist policy became visible in education, which propagated dynastic and Islamic patriotism (Somel 2001: 167). The curriculum was reorganised and underscored the Ottoman values, together with Islam, to reassert morality (Fortna 2000: 375).

Deringil points out that the Hamidian reign was “both formative and disruptive, both creative and destructive”. It was formative due to the significant long-reaching social, economic, and cultural implications of education, military and industrial infrastructure. It was also disruptive, because Islam functioned as a mobilising discourse for society, and it led to the social and political exclusion of non-Muslims (1998: 11). Before the

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[9]See Kemal H. Karpat. *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

1870s, Islam was treated as the natural component of Ottoman culture and society. However, especially after the loss of European provinces and Christian population with the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878), Abdülhamid struggled against the disintegration of the Empire by emphasising the importance of religious and authoritarian values as the foundation of ideological integrity (Somel 2001: 2, 167). Shortly after the opening of the parliament, Abdülhamid declared a state of emergency using the defeat in the Russo-Turkish War as the excuse and 'temporarily' closed the parliament in 1878. However, this 'temporary' closure lasted thirty years until the proclamation of the Second Constitution in 1908. He took the title of Caliph, which had not been emphasised strongly until the 1880s, and used it to unify Muslims under his leadership. The Sultan-Caliph set the pace for political and religious loyalty, and served Islam as the only social element of political and religious identity (Somel 2001: 180). Thus, the Hamidian state shifted Ottomanism to pan-Islamism by trying to link the worldly authority of the Sultan with the ethereal power of the Caliph (Deringil 1998: 43).

In *Empire and Education Under the Ottomans: Politics, Reform and Resistance from the Tanzimat to the Young Turks*, Emine Ö. Evered analyses the Hamidian schooling by taking Foucault's "governmentality" into account (2012: 13). Foucault indicates that governing is a very specific activity and a distinct form of power. It is not synonymous with "reigning or "ruling" over a population (1978: 161). Governmentality is a form of control, which comprises both social institutions and the population. In this respect, governmentality develops particular "apparatuses" and chains of knowledge to regulate the population by deliberately designing mental and institutional structures such as schools, hospitals, asylums and prisons. Here, regulatory power does not radiate from a central point as sovereign power. Instead, it moves around through the extension of collectivity by shaping certain ways

of thinking and acting. Thus, governmentality should be understood as the result of a process, which procreates an administrative state through government institutions (Foucault 1978: 144). Likewise, the Ottoman government policy concerning education was more complex than simply governing the subjects through sovereign oppression. Disseminating moral and religious values to the students through education established a social regulation mechanism for the young subjects of the Empire without making the Sultan seen (Deringil 1998: 18).[10]

Nevertheless, reforms in education did not become ‘successful’ in the way the Empire expected. There was a vast gap between “the ideal expectations” and “the actual results” regarding the policies of the state (Fortna 2002: 3). The hybridisation of Islam and modernity in education did not generate an ideological consistency (Somel 2001: 168). Those who were educated under the Hamidian school system acted in a clearly positivist manner by becoming followers of European Enlightenment and distrusted Islamic norms and culture (Somel 2001: 187). Thus, the state remained unable to fulfil its own agenda; the creation of socially disciplined and politically loyal subjects became a failed policy. Nevertheless, Fortna states, the Hamidian reforms in education were still significant in their own right (2002: 245). These reforms generated awareness about the dynamics between the state and society among the educated subjects. The Empire’s subjects began to question their relation with the state and tried to reconsider the role of the state for society. Consequently, reforms in education had a wide range of implications at social and political levels.

[10] Besides, Abdülhamid imprisoned and ostracised his opponents and built the most efficient spy system in the history of the Ottoman Empire. He established espionage networks inside the Empire, and incited people to denounce each other’s activities. Tens of thousands of reports, the so-called journals, were piled up in his palace (Zürcher 2017: 75). Accordingly, the Empire was transformed into a “police state” through espionage and information gathering about its subjects (Deringil 1998: 7).

Foucault remarks that the formation of secret communities in Europe in the eighteenth century indicates the extent to which these societies became more politicised and aspired to political and social revolutions during the nineteenth century (1978: 265). Secret communities also developed in the Ottoman Empire, the first of its kind being the Young Ottomans, established in 1865; this placed Abdülhamid under the obligation of proclaiming the Constitution in 1876.[11] Nevertheless, it was the Young Turks, also known as *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (the Committee of Union and Progress), the constitutionalist successors of the Young Ottomans, who forced the Sultan to restore the 1876 Constitution and establish a new government based on a parliamentary system. After a weak effort to suppress this demand, Abdülhamid concluded that resistance was of no avail. On the 23rd of July 1908, he proclaimed the Constitution for the second time and ordered parliamentary elections in the Empire. A counter coup attempt by supporters of Abdülhamid on the 31st of March 1909 only facilitated the deposing of the Sultan who was replaced by his younger brother, Mehmed V (r.1909-1918). Thereafter, the Young Turks became the most significant power in the Ottoman Empire until its fall (Berkes 1964: 313).

In *Turkey Faces West: A Turkish View of Recent Changes and Their Origin*, Halide Edib (1884-1964), a novelist and nationalist, reminisced on the period after the proclamation of the Second Constitution,

> […] the era of reform from 1908 to our own day is a distinctly new period and different from the era of reform which covers the years between 1839 and 1876. (The period from 1876 to 1908, it must be remembered, covers Abdul-Hamid's reactionary absolutism.) The

[11] See Şerif Mardin. *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1962, M. Şükrü Hanioğlu. *The Young Turks in Opposition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

> Tanzimatist period, 1839-76, was a mighty attempt to reform and change the Ottoman Empire in its external and internal aspects – but always within the Ottoman frame and in an Ottoman sense. […] [T]he Young Turks of the Union and Progress group, who thought themselves the successors of the Tanzimatists in spirit and set out to complete what the Tanzimatists had started, were not only different in training and in temperament but were also facing a world in which romantic and high sounding literature and ideals had given way to realism, or materialism. In 1908 the world was already getting ready for the gigantic and materialistic upheaval of 1914 which was to mark a new era in human history. (1930: 98-99)

Nevertheless, the euphoria after the proclamation of the Second Constitution was short-lived. Political breakdowns kept on growing rapidly, starting with the Albanian uprising in 1910 and the Balkan Wars in 1912-1913, followed by the Arab revolt in 1916, and the Kurdish nationalist movement in 1918 (Somel 2001: 275). The Ottoman Empire was still in political, economic, cultural and moral crises. The Young Turks also resorted to education as a cohesive tool, creating their own "invented traditions". Erik J. Zürcher compiles the Young Turks' shared attitudes, consisting of

> nationalism, a positivist belief in the value of objective scientific truth, a great (and somewhat naive) faith in the power of education to spread this truth and elevate the people, implicit belief in the role of the central state as the prime mover in society and a certain activism, a belief in change, in progress, which contrasted sharply with the cautious conservatism prevailing in the Hamidian era. (2017: 131)

Three prominent ideologies, Westernism, Islamism, and Turkism, were proposed as possible solutions to rescue the Empire from its decline. Each of these ideologies politicised womanhood in different manners and offered different solutions to "the women's question", one of the most explicit subject matters of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In his work *Kadınlar* (Women, 1879), Şemseddin Sami (1850-1904), for instance, brought women's education into question. He regarded women's education as necessary for progress and civilisation. George W. Gawrych points out Şemseddin Sami's understanding of "equality-versus-difference" among genders (2010: 98). Indeed, Şemseddin Sami accepted women and men as distinct from each other, but he also demanded equality for both. Joan W. Scott writes, "[e]quality is not the elimination of difference, and difference does not preclude equality". Here, "equality-versus-difference" is used to designate social and political occurrences by establishing an apparent election of choosing equality (no special treatment should be given to either gender) or its presupposed difference (treatment of both genders should be regulated by the inherent needs and interests of each) (Scott 1988: 38).

Examples below demonstrate the extent to which Ottoman women were used in the reification of certain ideologies in the early twentieth century. Westernists, for instance, held religion responsible for downgrading Ottoman women (Kurnaz 2013: 35). Abdullah Cevdet (1869-1932), a member of the Young Turks, suggested treating Islam as a philosophy rather than a religion (Hanioğlu 2005: 41). While running the newspaper *İçtihad* (Opinion) in Geneva, he conducted a survey on the life of Muslims and the necessity of reforms. A Frenchman gave an answer as "close the Quran, open women" (*Fermer la Coran, ouvrir les femmes*). Abdullah Cevdet later turned this answer into the "both open the Quran and unveil women" motto (Berkes 1964: 385). In his book *Kadınlarımız* (Our Women, 1913), Celal Nuri (1881-

1938) indicated that the problem was not Islam itself, but misinterpreting its practices. He also tackled the issues of polygamy, divorce, marriage, and veiling (Schick 2011: 209). According to him, improving the lot of women was not only important for women, but it was also at the core of the “advancement of Turks” (Göle 1996: 39).

Islamists, on the contrary, felt uncomfortable with newly emerging discourses on women’s role in society after 1908. They believed that freedoms provided after the Second Constitution caused social and moral ‘breakdowns’ in the society. Islamists suggested reforming family law and women’s social position with respect to the true spirit of Islam (Kurnaz 2011: 125). Islamist thinker Said Halim Paşa (1863-1921) claimed that the restoration of the Constitution in 1908 demonstrated how this new style of governing and living was not well suited to the Empire’s realities, because it broke the social peace and endangered the Empire’s political presence (Şeyhun 2003: 158). He attacked European cultural domination and blamed education as the main source of the dissemination of European notions in Muslim communities, which made Muslim intellectuals feel alienated from their indigenous culture and society (Şeyhun 2003: 134). In his book *Buhran-ı İçtimaimiz* (Our Social Crisis, 1916), he discussed the way in which reforms in education caused social and cultural regression. According to Said Halim Paşa, one of the most significant reasons for society’s regression was that women wanted to unveil themselves (Göle 1996: 41). He criticised Westernists for their support of European civilisation and women’s emancipation. Said Halim Paşa wrote,

> […] none of the civilizations in the world starts with the liberation of women; on the contrary, it is an undisputable fact of history that all

> civilizations in which women attained complete freedom declined. (1916: 23)[12]

Islamists underlined the importance of religious values and Islamic ethics for the protection of women's morality. According to Fatma Aliye (1862-1936), Islam was not an obstacle for the improvement of women (Kurnaz 2013: 36). Islamists agreed with the necessity of religious education to raise well-mannered mothers, but they objected to European style education, such as learning French, how to play piano and singing (Göle 1996: 43).

Turkists, like Westernists, were in favour of women's emancipation and education for the development and modernisation of the state. They supported women's participation in social life not only for the economic growth and development of the state, but also for raising nationalist generations (Kurnaz 2011: 152). According to Turkists, the equality between the sexes could only be provided through juridical and social reforms. Consequently, members of the Turkist movement, such as Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924) and Halide Edib produced nationalist ideologies for women's emancipation, which were part of the changing structure and newly emerging discourses in the society. Gökalp supported the idea of granting women access to all educational institutions. He proposed to reconcile European civilisation with national values:

> Our new values will be economic, domestic, aesthetic, philosophic, moral, legal, and political values born out of the soul of the Ottomans. To create their own civilization, the Ottomans themselves have to

[12] […] hiçbir medeniyet-i beşeriyye, hiçbir vakitte hürriyet-i nisvâniye ile başlamadığı gibi, bilcümle medeniyetlerin de hürriyet-i mutlaka ve saltanat-ı nisvâniye ile mahv ve münkariz oldukları, şuûnat-ı müeyyide-i tarihiye cümlesindendir. I benefitted from Göle's translation. See Nilüfer Göle. *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling*. Ann Arbor: Univeristy of Michigan Press, 1996: 41.

> work out a new form of family life, new aesthetic standards, a new philosophy, a new morality, a new understanding of law, and a new political organization. Only through the knowledge of these national values will the national civilization of the Ottomans inspire the praise of the Europeans. (1959: 59)

On the one hand, he accused Westernists of imitating European family structure and consequently destroying indigenous values. On the other hand, he also attacked Islamists who rejected modern style families due to his fear that doing so would annihilate the traditional Ottoman family (1959: 252). Ziya Gökalp opposed the trivialisation of women due to the misinterpretation of Islam. According to him, the pre-Islamic past set a good example for the equality between men and women (Göle 1996: 45). Ziya Gökalp emphasised the central position of women in the family as the basis of state and society. During his exile in Malta he wrote to his daughter: “The new life will begin when women have the same education as men and are allowed to occupy leading positions in public life” (Heyd 1950: 95).

Halide Edib, who herself also received modern education at the American College for Girls in Istanbul, proposed the multiplication of foreign schools in the Empire. She gave credit to the Turkish men who supported women’s progress and emancipation in the public sphere such as in the areas of education, social and working life especially after 1908 (1930: 129-130). Furthermore, Halide Edib actively supported women’s emancipation together with her fellows. She made an effort to establish women’s associations such as *Taali-i Nisvan* (the Society for the Elevation of Women), which had a close link to international suffrage movements. She also organised conferences and gave many public speeches raising awareness among women about their education, womanhood, and their duties

concerning nationalism. Halide Edib also invoked Abdülhak Hamid (Tarhan)'s (1852-1937) statement in her work, "[t]he progress of a nation is measured by the status of its women" (1930: 85).

In *Türk Kadınlığın Tereddisi Yahud Karılaşmak* (*The Degeneration of Turkish Womanhood or Femme-isation*, n.d.), Salâhaddin Âsım (dates unknown) heavily criticised Islam because of its rules and practices such as polygamy, gender segregation, and veiling.[13] He used the term "femme-isation" to indicate the male perception of women as objects for sexual pleasure. He stated that Islam downgraded Ottoman women, and they became "nothing but 'femmes'". Salâhaddin Âsım claimed that such an attitude towards women would never contribute to national progress and it was not compatible with the national spirit and living style of the Turks. Besides, he touched upon issues such as masturbation and lesbianism together with the sexual assault of young boys both by men and women, and he considered these issues as the social "evils" of the time (Schick 2011: 210). According to him, veiling eradicated women's existence and personality from society. Moreover, he also attacked the strictly perceived duties of women as mothers and wives, which made them either "the slave and mate of her husband" or "the servant or feeder of her children like cows" (21-22).[14] Salâhaddin Âsım supported women's participation in social life in order to provide a genuine emancipation (Göle 1996: 38-39).

State-sanctioned discourses on gender roles and female sexuality intensified during the First World War and also in later years. Women were

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[13] Although the date of the book is unspecified, Schick remarks that the earliest book from the publishing house *Resimli Kitab Matbaası* is dated to 1912. Hence, Salahaddin Asım's work was most likely published after the proclamation of the Second Constitution (2011: 210).

[14] […] kadın erkeğin tamamen kölesi veya tâbiʿi baştan başa dişisi veya karısı, çocukların anası değil lalası veya bir inek gibi emziricisi, hülasa onun 'bir şeyi'dir... I benefitted from Göle's translation. See Nilüfer Göle. *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, (1996): 38.

deputed as mothers, educators, workers and even as fighters (Kandiyoti 1996: 9). Young girls were expected to become nationalist mothers and wives of the future. A new prototype of the ‘ideal’ woman emerged in children’s textbooks, which served as an example for the state’s official agenda on women’s education. The following example, a part of the girl’s school anthem, dates back to 1922:

> We [girls] are the hope of the homeland, the homeland lives with us,
> How would children ever live without a mother.
> Yes, today we are young and teeny-weeny girls;
> But tomorrow we nurse our children in our bosom.
> “Mothers who rock the cradle with their right hands
> [They] rock the universe with their left hands.”
> These children will grow up, read, write,
> Each of them will become a well-mannered and understanding person, […]
> Thanks to us, our homeland will become a heaven. (10-11)[15]

Political codes of indigenous and national identity were assigned to the female body. Women’s duties, such as being good mothers and providing good education for children, mingled womanhood with motherhood and

[15] Biz vatanın ümidiyiz, vatan bizimle yaşar,
Bu dünyada bir annesiz yaşar mı hiç çocuklar.
Evet, bugün biz küçüğüz mini mini kızlarız;
Fakat yarın koynumuzda yavrumuzu besleriz.
“Çocuğun beşiğini sağ eliyle sallayan
Valideler sol eliyle kainatı sallarlar.”
Bu yavrular büyüyecek, okuyacak, yazacak,
Terbiyeli, anlayışlı birer insan olacak,
[…]
Sayemizde vatanımız olacaktır bir cennet.

citizenship. Westernists tended to set European standards and supported women's emancipation to help foster a modern state. Islamists regarded women's education as essential for women to become better mothers and housewives, who would be attached to religious values, whereas Turkists sought ways to synthesise nationalism and modernity by means of women who were responsible for child rearing, and implicitly the future of the nation. That is to say, each group determined what the problems of women really were according to the beliefs they supported. The objective of women's emancipation or education was not to change the patriarchal structure of society. The women's question became a highly debated topic particularly among the male reformers, though there were a few exceptions such as Fatma Aliye and Halide Edib.

On that note, Deniz Kandiyoti draws attention to male reformers, who were occupied with women's emancipation on top of imperial politics. She remarks that this preoccupation with women's emancipation might be a sign of subordinated masculinity in the guise of pro-feminism (2003: 197). In similar fashion, Wilson Chacko Jacob underlines the way in which "the redefinition of femininity was constitutive of a new national manhood or bourgeois masculinity" (2011: 202). On the one hand, female sexuality and womanhood were diminished because of an emphasis on the mothering role of women. On the other hand, newly emerging discourses on gender and sexuality appeared in popular erotic literature at the time. The next section therefore discusses the extent to which the press came into prominence as a tool to disseminate political and sexual discourses in society after 1908.

Ottoman Press

Iberian Jews launched a printing press in the Ottoman Empire in the 1490s. Greek, Armenian, and Christian Arab presses were also established in

different parts of the Empire during the following two centuries. An Ottoman Muslim press was founded by İbrahim Müteferrika in Istanbul in 1727-1728. It began to be used actively only in the nineteenth century, however (Schick 2011: 197). The state-sanctioned newspaper *Takvim-i Vekayi* (the Chronicler of Events) was, for instance, established in 1831 to make propaganda for and mould public opinion in favour of the state (Demirel 2007: 28-29). The Young Ottomans also founded newspapers and periodicals, the first of its kind *Tasvir-i Efkar* (Illustration of Opinions), being established by İbrahim Şinasi (1826-1871) in 1862. It "became a forum for the expression of new literary as well as political ideas" (Mardin 1962: 254). Nevertheless, Ahmed Emin writes, when Abdülhamid ascended the throne in 1876, he was already aware that absolute power could not go along with a free press (1914: 53). Hence, he put certain restrictions on the press to prevent revolutionary publications and personal attacks against himself and his government.

Nevertheless, the proclamation of the Second Constitution brought a new dimension to the Ottoman press. Ahmed Emin describes the celebration after the proclamation as follows:

> The effect was amazing. The sleeping city became at once ablaze with excitement and enthusiasm. The streets, where people did not usually even feel free to walk fast, lest they attract the attention of spies, were filled with noisy crowds, listening joyfully to revolutionary speeches, or making demonstrations before public buildings, newspaper offices, and foreign embassies. Excepting towards the leading figures of the former government, a broad spirit of conciliation was displayed in every respect. […] Although the *Ikdam* had published about sixty and the *Sabah* forty thousand copies, the demand could not be met. […] In the following days, the enthusiasm kept increasing, gaining in extent

> and intensity, as the jubilant voices were echoed from every part of the empire, and from foreign countries. (1914: 87)

Figure 1 below shows the rapid increase in the approximate number of books and pamphlets published in Turkish between 1875 and 1928 in the Ottoman Empire and later in the Turkish Republic.

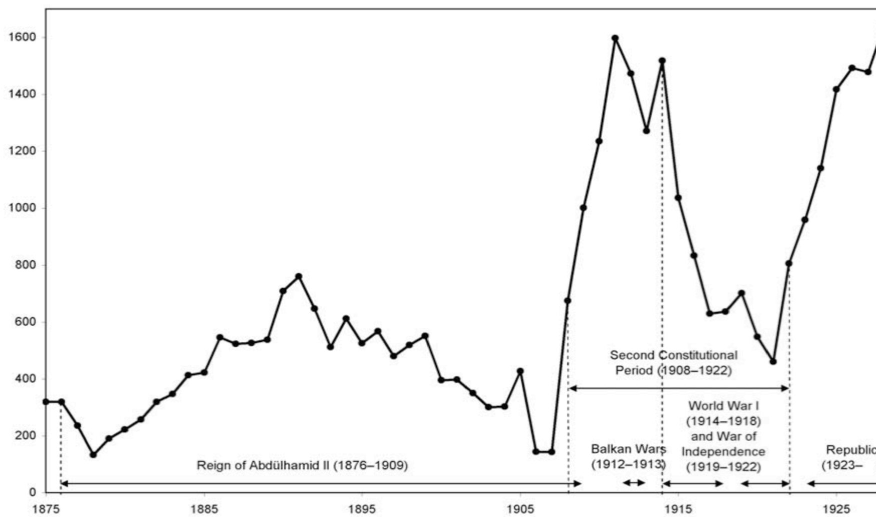

Figure 1: The estimated number of books and pamphlets in Turkish published in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic between 1875 and 1928. Schick indicates that figures are derived from Kudret Emiroğlu, and İlker Mustafa İşoğlu, eds. *Eski Harfli Basma Türkçe Eserler Bibliografyası* (Bibliography of Printed Turkish Books in Old Letters). Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Milli Kütüphane Başkanlığı, 2001. Some modifications are made based on Seyfettin Özege. *Eski Harflerle Basılmış Türkçe Eserler Kataloğu* (Catalogue of Turkish Books Printed in Old Letters). İstanbul: Fatih Yayınevi Matbaası, 1973 and Müjgan Cumbur, and Dursun Kaya, eds. *Türkiye Basmaları Toplu Kataloğu, 1729-1928* (Union Catalogue of Turkish Printed Books, 1729-1928). Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Milli Kütüphane Başkanlığı, 1990-2004. (2011: 198)

İrvin Cemil Schick draws attention to the dramatic decreases in the number of publications in the war years. In addition to wartime difficulties, he indicates the loss of important intellectual centres such as Salonica, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq as reasons for these decreases (2011: 199).

Nonetheless, the rapid increase in the number of publications helped to circulate new ideas in society. In this respect, Schick makes a reference to Benedict Anderson’s influential work *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* and argues that the explosion of the press revealed print capitalism and promoted nationalism together with new social norms in the late Ottoman Empire (2011: 201-202). What Anderson attributes to print capitalism is the growth of printing presses as commercial commodities, which propagated a set of ideas of belonging and induced individuals to look upon and associate themselves with others as members of a community in new ways (1991: 36). According to Anderson, print languages, and implicitly print capitalism, promoted the rise of national consciousness in three ways. Firstly, the press united different spoken languages by establishing a standard language for all peoples of a certain community. Correspondingly, print capitalism allowed for the exchanging of opinions and raised an awareness of differences among people of the same community and provided a sense of belonging to “the nationally imagined community”. Secondly, print capitalism fixed language, and consequently, in the long term, it created the impression that the idea of the nation dated much further back in time than it actually did (1991: 44). Following this point, I contend that print capitalism was a prime source of invented traditions. Thirdly, by standardising and fixing the language, print capitalism generated a print language, which in turn facilitated the rise or fall in status of different local dialects, according to their proximity to and their influence on the final form of the print language (1991: 45). Here, Anderson highlights the importance of two forms: the novel and the newspaper in Europe in the eighteenth century during which the transformation of the communities into nations can be best seen (1991: 24-25).

According to Schick, the press also performed Anderson's three functions and heralded the rise of Turkish national consciousness by means of the accelerated growth of printing in the late Ottoman Empire. Besides, print capitalism moved beyond the question of language, and led to specific cultural productions, which provided new opportunities to develop and expedite the circulation of the new ideologies and discourses on gender and sexuality inside the Empire (2011: 197-198). In a similar vein, Palmira Brummett indicates that the Ottoman press turned into a public forum, which referred both to the anxieties that occurred after 1908 and the conditions that created social change (2000a: 5). However, this unconstrained atmosphere in the Ottoman press did not last long. A change to article 20 of the press law of 1909 limited publications which were "contrary to common decency or in violation of public morality" in February 1913. Before the change in the law, this article concerned only newspapers and periodicals. However, after the change, it also included books and articles, as well as pictures (Schick 2011: 211).

Before 1908, editorial staff and publishers mostly consisted of well-educated Ottoman men who also published women's periodicals. There were a few exceptions such as *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* (Ladies' Own Gazette), published between 1895 and 1908, whose editorial staff mostly consisted of the wives and daughters of intellectuals and bureaucrats at the time. *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* targeted the education of Ottoman women by publishing articles written for and by women. Here, women did not deny their duties as wives or mothers, but they also questioned their position in society (Çakır 1994: 27-28). Nevertheless, women's periodicals before 1908 did not promise radical changes in terms of gender roles and relations (Kurnaz 2011: 92-93). Apart from the debates on how to be a good mother, wife and Muslim, topics were limited to health, hygiene, household chores

and religion, as well as biographies of famous Muslim and non-Muslim women from different countries.

Women began to have a more active role in politics and made their actions and desires heard through the press, especially in the big cities such as Istanbul, Izmir and Thessaloniki especially after 1908. They founded associations and became active agents of Ottoman modernisation. There was also a rapid increase in the number of women’s periodicals due to the growth of the press and reforms in education. These periodicals were mostly in favour of reforms, and stood behind the constitutional regime. Some of these periodicals were: *Kadın* (Woman, 1908-1910), *Mehâsin* (Beauties, 1908-1910), *Kadınlar Alemi* (Women’s World, 1913-1918), *Kadınlık Hayatı* (Womanhood Experience, 1915), *Kadınlık* (Womanhood, 1915-1916), *Genç Kadın* (Young Woman, 1918), *İnci* (Pearl, 1919-1923), *Hanım* (Lady, 1921). They aimed to educate women to be good housewives and modern members of the society. Moreover, issues concerning women’s rights and emancipation were discussed in these periodicals. Şefika Kurnaz argues that most of these periodicals did not last long due to economic crisis and lack of interest (2013: 264). Yet, their circulation was an important part of establishing an imagined community in the sense of Anderson.

In addition to women’s periodicals, satirical cartoons played a significant part in moulding gender roles in relation to politics after 1908. In this connection, Brummett argues that in Ottoman cartoons, women were represented in various roles such as mother, nation, citizen, and subversive (2000b: 38). In line with these representations, particular kinds of femininities were depicted: serene, beautiful, sexual, motherly, and fashionable. One of the most distinctive representations was the representation of the nation and its citizens through women’s honour, weakness, and the need to be protected but also to be brave. Thus, images of

women “sometimes maternal, sometimes sexually charged, became the quintessential symbols of the nation itself and its vulnerability” (Brummett 2000b: 39). For instance, Marianne, the symbolic heroine of the French Revolution, was appropriated in Ottoman cartoons.

Figure 2: Cartoon entitled “‘Marianne’ and the Dragon” published in *Kalem*, 11:1 on the 12th of November 1908. The caption reads, “Army – (*Hürriyet*’e) Don’t fear my dear. I am by your side. My sword is sharp”. (Figure taken from Brummett 2000a: 81)

One of these cartoons (see figure 2) represents a fragile and young girl, named *Hürriyet* (freedom), which is written on the girl’s bracelet in her right arm. According to Brummett, her fragility suggests “the newness and vulnerability of the Ottoman political order” (Brummett 2000a: 80). She is under the protection of a noble Ottoman soldier as a representative of the Ottoman army, who is keeping at bay the dragon with his sword. The soldier evokes St. George, “one of the most widely recognised hagiographical figures in the canon of the Church – the legend of his encounter with the dragon is common”, and also “Al Khidr, the mythic hero of Islam” (Riches 2000: 1). The dragon is associated with the forces of reaction – *irticaʿ* in Turkish – as is written on its head (2000b: 47). The term *irticaʿ* was used to indicate opposition to changes that occurred in mentalities and lifestyles in the twentieth-century Ottoman Empire (Sitembölükbaşı 2000: 458-459). On that note, Brummett writes,

> this figure [*Hürriyet*] is not sufficiently sexually evolved to represent Marianne; but […] this is a sexually charged figure and, further, that the Ottoman cartoonists used the Phrygian cap as a trope to suggest the French Revolution, very often in conjunction with a female figure. […] This cartoon at once associates the Ottoman Revolution with its French forebear, and suggests that the fruits of the Revolution may only be preserved through vigilance and force. The army here is a bastion for the defense of freedom; it is the nation’s sword, its manhood. The army will keep order and avert the anarchy associated with the French revolution. This particular image is a precursor to those depicting the Third Army’s *Hareket Ordusu* (Action Army), which “saved the nation” after the counterrevolution of April 1909. (2000a: 80)

Discussions on the question of women and representations of femininities in the press were associated with imperial politics. In this respect, the Ottoman press not only facilitated the dissemination and circulation of new ideas concerning women, but also materialised politics by means of womanhood and femininity. Thus, the next section scrutinises the extent to which social and political changes resonated in the way that sexuality was experienced in the Empire's capital, Istanbul, at the turn of the century.

Istanbul at the Turn of the Century

Istanbul was of prime importance because it was the capital of two great empires, the Byzantine Empire and the Ottoman Empire. It hosted different social, cultural, aesthetic, and economic influences for centuries (Çelik 1986: 10). In the foreword of *Constantinople To-Day*, a survey published in 1922, Caleb F. Gates states that Istanbul's population had been divided into communities, according to religion and language, ever since its invasion by the Ottomans in 1453. This division led each community to have a self-contained life of its own (1922: ix). Similarly, Dr. van Milligen describes Istanbul as "a city not of one nation but of many, and hardly more of one than of another!" (cited in Goodsell 1922: 13). Its multicultural structure and political importance turned Istanbul into a focal point of socio-cultural, economic, and demographic changes especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Treaty of *Balta Limanı* (the Anglo-Ottoman Commercial Treaty) in 1838 reduced the Empire's control over its economy; foreign entrepreneurs, who had difficulty with Western European regulations and taxes, found plying their trade in the Ottoman Empire more profitable. Hence, the modernisation of Istanbul gained speed especially after about 100.000 newcomers from Western Europe went there between the years 1839

and 1880 (Mansel 1996: 283-284). The influence of a capitalist economy and the increase in interstate commerce transformed Istanbul into an attractive centre for Ottomans as well as Europeans. The loss of territories in the Balkans and the Caucasus after the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878) resulted in immigration from these territories towards urban centres within the Empire, and many of these immigrants dwelled in Istanbul. The amalgamation of the rural population with the refugees from the wars started to change the social fabric and the demographic structure of the city and created a new urban poor who prompted fears and anxieties among the middle and upper class Istanbulites (Özbek 2010: 556).[16] Every segment of society such as the urban elite, simple citizens and newcomers had to reposition themselves within cities and their relation with the Empire due to socio-political and institutional transformations (Freitag et al. 2011: 1).

Istanbul’s socio-cultural and economic condition went from bad to worse at the beginning of the twentieth century. The Ottoman Empire was constantly “either at war or threatened with war” (Moore 1922: 172). In *Istanbul Households: Marriage, Family, and Fertility, 1880-1940*, Alan Duben and Cem Behar indicate that the city struggled with political, social and economic crises, and its inhabitants experienced a cultural crisis more than anywhere else in the Empire in this period. Wartime inflation destroyed the regular distribution of income and increased the gap between salaries and living expenses (1991: 201, 46). However, each community or each area of the city was not equally affected by these transformations. Istanbul became a city where great poverty and wealth intermingled. On the one hand, a great majority of the population became impoverished in the city. On the other

[16] For public discourses on the new urban poor see Nadir Özbek. “‘Beggars’ and ‘Vagrants’ in Ottoman State Policy and Public Discourse, 1876-1914.” *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 45, No. 5 (2009): 783-801.

hand, the change in economy and the rise of speculative enterprises created a new social class, the so-called *yeni zengin* (new rich) in Istanbul (Toprak 2016: 118).

The area called Pera, across the Golden Horn, had already hosted European embassies and their representatives and had appealed to indigenous and foreign non-Muslims since the sixteenth century. It ultimately became a residential area for Western Europeans and the modernising non-Muslim Ottomans in the nineteenth century (Yumul 2009: 57-58). The majority of the population in Pera and Galata was Christian, and they lived under the privileges of the capitulations in this period. The area became “a place of marginality of ‘otherness’ and foreignness” (Yumul 2009: 63). The diverse population and transformative structure of Pera paved the way for new administrative applications and social order in the area. The first modern style municipality, the Municipality of the Sixth District that consisted of Pera, Galata and Tophane neighbourhoods, was established here, as a pilot area for urbanisation (Çelik 1986: 45). Even the name “the Sixth District” was a reference to the *Sixième Arrondissement* of Paris as the model of urban wealth and modernity (Özbek 2010: 557). Pera also included the main artery of the city, the Grande Rue de Pera that was considered “the Champs Elysées of the Orient” (Çelik 1986: 133). The Grande Rue featured European-style buildings, banks, theatres, taverns, music halls, hotels, shops, and apartment buildings and reflected the changing values, fashions and social life (Özbek 2010: 556-557). These shops, cafés, and restaurants had foreign names such as *La Maison de Modes Françaises*, *Bon Marché*, *Maison Barker*, *Paris-Londres* all of which endeavoured to replicate the European-style urban life (Çelik 1986: 134). Pera and its neighbourhood began to be associated with “material comfort” due to the increase in new riches’ income. It became the symbol of modernist and high social status. Even those who used to live in

the old areas of the city were tempted by Pera’s European life-style (Karpat 1985: 101). However, the European life-style was limited to a small number of people in the city (Çelik 1986: 157).

Modernisation and urbanisation of the Empire’s capital, especially Pera, also brought about newly emerging discourses on gender and sexuality, especially since the late nineteenth century. Philip Mansel indicates “[w]hen a man goes to Pera, you know what he is going for” was a statement that explains the situation of prostitution in the area (1996: 287). In *“Wicked” Istanbul: The Regulation of Prostitution in the Early Turkish Republic*, Mark David Wyers indicates that although prostitution was not a new phenomenon, the records demonstrate that there was no general regulation of prostitution between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries in Istanbul. The neighbourhood surveillance and local dignitaries took responsibility for disciplining of prostitutes’ bodies within their quarters (2012: 51, 54-55). The enforcement of disciplinary practices against prostitution shifted from local surveillance to “the secular power of health authorities” in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Wyers 2012: 61). Müge Özbek remarks that government authorities were concerned about the area’s social order and security and decided to regulate prostitution due to an increase in venereal disease. The Council of State enacted an ordinance on venereal disease within the Sixth District Municipality in 1884. Medical examinations of prostitutes became mandatory with this ordinance. Moreover, the ordinance stipulated that each prostitute had to have a license with a photograph and display the results of weekly mandatory medical examinations (2010: 557). However, prostitution of foreign women remained unrestrained as they were under the guarantee of the capitulations (Toprak 2016: 119).

The ongoing wars in the early twentieth century exacerbated the economic crisis and led to an increase in poverty, starvation and destitution.

As men were sent to the army, women, who used to be mostly supported by their husbands and fathers, found themselves in a dire situation. These conditions overstrained family norms and the struggle to make a living forced Ottoman women to the streets (Toprak 2016: 120). According to Ahmed Rasim (1864-1932), this increase in prostitution was a consequence of the First World War, and he reports that shortly after the war prostitution became a custom:

> According to my belief, conditions gradually paved the way for a new [style of] prostitution at all hands in the city. The First World War mobilised prostitution. During this big chaos, as like every other principles and theories we borrowed from Europe, the theory of Emancipation loosened the family order, respect, commitment by terminating the steady base of Islamic social etiquette. As problems [like] destitution, poverty, morality, desolation intensely increased, this problem [the new style of prostitution] spread to all four sides. In a couple of years, it remained as a "custom". (1922: 335)[17]

Toprak contends that alcohol, gambling, women trafficking and even cocaine became widespread due to the political developments in the period from the proclamation of the Second Constitution until the foundation of the Turkish Republic. The occupation of Istanbul made it worse (2016: 117-118). Money spent by the Allied powers further reinforced Istanbul's nightlife. Apart from the Allied powers, Russian aristocracy and upper classes that immigrated

[17] İtikadımca Fuhş-ı Cedid'e şehrin her tarafından birer, ikişer girizgah hazırlandı. "Harb-ı Umumi" seferber haline koydu. Bu büyük herc ü merc esnasında idi ki Avrupa'dan telakki ettiğimiz her nazariye, her prensip gibi Emancipation nazariyesi de terbiyye-yi içtimaiye-i İslamiye kaide-i salimesini kapatarak aile rabıtaları, hürmetleri, takayyüdleri gevşedi. Zaruret, sefalet, ahlak, kimsesizlik dertleri şiddet-i peyda ettikçe bu dert, dört tarafa saldırdı. Birkaç sene içinde böyle bir "görenek" olup kaldı!..

after the October Revolution in 1917 brought a new dimension into the city. There were around 4.500 and 5.000 prostitutes in Istanbul. Among the foreign prostitutes, most were Greeks and Russians (Toprak 2016: 118-119).

Venereal diseases dramatically increased during the First World War. Considering the vast spread of venereal diseases, a new ordinance on venereal diseases, *Emrâz-ı Zühreviyenin Men’-i Sirayeti Hakkında Nizamname* (the Ordinance for the Prevention of the Spread of Venereal Diseases), was enacted by the state on the 18th of October 1915 (Toprak 2016: 133). This ordinance was not limited to the Sixth District like the ordinance of 1884, but it also included other areas of Istanbul as well as the provinces (Wyers 2012: 67). It referred to age limitations, medical examinations of prostitutes, criminal reports, and responsibilities of the brothel keepers (Özbek 2010: 566). Moreover, detailed legal definitions about prostitutes and brothels were made for the first time in Ottoman history. The legal definition of prostitute, for instance, was as follows: “[a] prostitute is a woman who offers herself for the pleasure of others and in this way has relations with numerous men, for the purpose of monetary profit”. Thus, the state officially recognised prostitution and the prostitute, especially as a female legal object, was taken under the supervision of the state (Wyers 2012: 67-68).

Zafer Toprak argues that the initial goal of the ordinance of 1915 was the provision of public hygiene and reducing the spread of venereal diseases (2016: 139). However, the late Ottoman discourses on hygiene and the medicalisation of prostitution went beyond precluding the spread of venereal diseases and establishing health control. It also brought about social control of bodies and sexual behaviours. Foucault argues that medicine gradually became a part of the administrative system and the machinery of power in the eighteenth century. The “medico-administrative” knowledge gathered in

regard to public health, living conditions and quarters began to be used to reshape those same elements in the nineteenth century (1980: 176). The Ottoman state aimed to control the spread of venereal diseases and prostitution by means of gathering brothels in certain areas. Such a confinement of prostitution to certain areas was designed to secure public morality. Similar to prisons and mental hospitals, the regulations and spatialisation of brothels confined prostitution into certain areas of the city determined by the state. Accordingly, the state aimed to rigidify and codify illicit sexualities of prostitutes (Wyers 2012: 60). For this reason, Toprak claims that the ordinance of 1915 was regulatory rather than prohibitory (2016: 139). In other words, the Empire did not aim to eradicate prostitution, but tried to discipline and regulate it instead.

The regulation of prostitution had two moral principles. Firstly, the regulation presumed that men had "biologically-determined sexual needs". Prostitution was considered a necessary "vice" that prevented any possible homosexual relations among men and provided a morally determined heteronormative sexuality in society (Wyers 2012: 22). Thus, the Ottoman Empire tackled the regulation of prostitution only in relation to female prostitution. Although male prostitution was punishable according to *kanûnnâme* (codified law), still there is no evidence that male prostitution was a significant issue at the time (Wyers 2012: 42). Secondly, the regulation aimed to spatially segregate prostitutes who were considered potentially "dangerous" from "virtuous" people, especially from "virtuous" women. Even though the male body was freely wandering without being subjected to any regulation in both areas, the spatialisation of prostitution confirmed and signified female bodies as ones sexually available and those that were not (Wyers 2012: 145). The state legitimised the "illegitimate" existence of

prostitution by determining the sexual and moral geographies of urban space that was heteronormative and in favour of men.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on three significant domains: education, the press, and urban change in the Empire’s capital, Istanbul, all of which were of utmost importance in order to contextualise the period in which twentieth-century Ottoman Turkish popular erotic literature was produced. The weakening position of the Empire in world politics, originating in the eighteenth century, came to a head so much so that social, political, and cultural crises were felt intensely in various degrees and in different fields in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Ottoman Empire aimed to overcome these crises by means of modernisation. In this respect, the ways in which modernity was combined with or was in conflict with Ottoman traditions became important in the process of modernisation. On the one hand, the Ottoman modernisation programme tried to maintain continuities with its existing traditions while trying to keep pace with European states and the requirements of the period. On the other hand, in cases where they failed to fulfil these requirements, new hybrid cultural forms of Ottoman tradition and European modernity developed.

The Ottoman Empire first aimed to mould an active loyalty and provide a unity among its subjects by means of Ottomanism. To that end, education was used as a discursive tool to create this unity. However, the existing political developments, losing wars and territories changed Ottomanism into Islamism during the reign of Abdülahmid II. The state’s relation with its subjects and the subjects’ relations with the state were reconsidered in this period. Especially after the proclamation of the Second Constitution in 1908, the Ottoman printing press accelerated the circulation

of new social and political discourses. The increase in number of publications transformed the press into a public forum. Three ideologies, Westernism, Islamism, and Turkism became prominent in discussions concerning the Empire's present as well as its future.

The press also facilitated the circulation of significant changes including those in gender and sexuality. Westernists, Islamists, and Turkists took different approaches to women's emancipation and education. Women's expected role in society was discussed with regard to politics. On that note, womanhood became a controversial topic – could women help modernise and save the Empire from its fall? Motherhood, to a great extent, precluded womanhood in these discussions. Nevertheless discussions concerning women mostly remained male-centred discussions. Here, the recreation and redefinition of womanhood had great importance for the reconstruction of Ottoman masculinity in relation to or under the influence of modernity.

The disseminating power of the press resulted in the emergence of new discourses on gender and sexuality especially after 1908. The urbanisation of Istanbul breathed new life into the way sexuality was experienced at the turn of the century. Newly emerging discourses on gender and sexuality were reshaped and regulated by the state due to the urban change in *fin de siècle* Istanbul. In particular, the spread of venereal diseases necessitated the regulation of prostitution. The so-called 'moral decline' because of the increase in prostitution accompanied the Empire's political decline in the early twentieth century. The intensification of social, political, and cultural crises resonated also in literature of the period. These crises were represented more specifically in Ottoman Turkish popular erotic literature that often addressed prostitution and/or featured prostitutes as characters at the time. Therefore, the remaining chapters are devoted to the analyses of twentieth-century Ottoman Turkish popular erotic literature with particular

regard to the formation of masculine subjectivities during the transition to modernity.