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

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Chapter Two

Castration Anxiety in Hegemonic Ottoman Masculinity[18]

The ubiquitous trope of sexually differentiating "the West" from "the East" has been a long-lasting and reciprocal one. As Edward Said writes in *Orientalism*, in Orientalist representations, the West persistently associated the East with sex, and regarded it as an entity that "seems still to suggest not only fecundity but sexual promise (and threat), untiring sensuality, unlimited desire, deep generative energies" (1994: 188). The affinity between sexual and political dominance perpetually occurred in the colonial histories of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Western colonialism represented the political and socio-economic domination of the West as the domination of masculinity over femininity (Nandy 1993: 4). Although İrvin Cemil Schick contends that the East was not invariably feminised, gender and sexuality were nonetheless used to create contrasts that supported the self-definition of the West and its imperial agenda (1999: 4-5). Conversely, the Ottoman Empire applied similar sexual metaphors to define itself via a contrast with 'the other' – the West, in this context. In the works of Ottoman authors in the *Tanzimat* period (1839-1876) – also known as the reorganisation period – the relationship between the East and the West was used to resemble a metaphorical marriage or a sexual relationship between a man and a woman. The East and the West were personified as the male and female sides of the relationship, respectively, with the East having superiority over the West (Parla 2004b: 17).

[18] Parts of this chapter were published as "Modernity as an Ottoman Fetish: Representations of Ottoman Masculinity in *Kesik Bıyık*." *Masculinities (A Journal of Identity and Culture)*, (6) (2016): 79–101.

Nevertheless, the advancement of Western science and technology, the increasing spread of modernity and the loss of important territories due to the emergence of nationalism started to undermine the representations of the Empire's gender stereotyping and challenged Ottoman self-perception and self-identification. The identification of the Ottoman Empire with a masculine role in its metaphorical marriage with the West became problematic because of the changing power balance in world politics. The Ottoman Empire's political predicament and its decreasing imperial power necessitated the modernisation of the Empire and highlighted its need to keep pace with the West. The decision to modernise the Empire in order to preserve its masculine role and to compete with the West led to the rapid transformation of traditional representations into new socio-cultural settings. The issue of masculinity was discussed in conjunction with considerations regarding the extent to which Western modernity should permeate Ottoman traditions.

In his book *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity*, George L. Mosse links masculinity with modernity in Western culture:

> The ideal of masculinity was invoked on all sides as a symbol of personal and national regeneration, but also as basic to the self-definition of modern society. Manliness was supposed to safeguard the existing order against the perils of modernity, but it was also regarded as an indispensable attribute of those who wanted change. Indeed, the exhortation "to be a man" became commonplace, whether during the nineteenth century or the first half of the twentieth. (1998: 3)

Similarly, the transformation of Ottoman culture and tradition led the

Ottoman elite to look for new ways to envision an 'idealised' and 'hegemonised' masculinity that would supposedly protect "the existing order against the perils of modernity", as well as leading "those, who wanted change", to the 'right' path in the process of modernisation. As R. W. Connell remarks, "hegemony is likely to be established only if there is some correspondence between cultural ideal and institutional power, collective if not individual" (1996: 77). Based on Antonio Gramsci's notion of "hegemony", Connell states that hegemonic masculinity is a form of masculinity that is superior to other masculinities in terms of cultural hierarchy and power relations (1996: 77). In fact, hegemonic Ottoman masculinity was, to a great extent, constructed to affirm the Empire's cultural fabric and political power. It provided a blueprint for the indigenous-cultural identity in keeping with the Empire's masculine role. In this dissertation, the term "hegemonic masculinity" does not refer to a stable and unchanging masculinity; "hegemonic Ottoman masculinity" mainly refers to Turkish speaking Muslim men, whose sultan was the caliph of the Islamic world and who were aware of 'the danger of imprudent influence of the West', who took precedence over other men because they spoke the Empire's official language, and who outnumbered non-Muslim subjects.

Such masculinity was hegemonised in order to support the interests of the Ottoman Empire, particularly through literary representations. From the second half of the nineteenth century, various representations of masculinity began to be embodied in fiction. This embodiment resulted from – and also resulted *in* – anxieties involving society [my emphasis]. As Nurdan Gürbilek suggests in *Kör Ayna, Kayıp Şark: Edebiyat ve Endişe* (Blind Mirror, Lost Orient: Literature and Anxiety), similar to the Ottoman Empire's gender stereotyping, authorship was frequently associated with the male gender role by Ottoman authors whose narratives were deeply influenced by anxieties

caused by Westernisation, national culture and cultural identity. These anxieties also became intertwined with the fear of losing one's masculinity in the form of writing/narrating (2014: 9-10). This intertwining of socio-political and literary anxieties shows how the modern West, as a concept, shifted "from a geographical and temporal entity to a psychological category", as it is no longer confined to certain territories, but it takes place "in structures and in minds" (Nandy 1993: xi).

Castration anxiety can productively be applied to socio-political anxieties in Ottoman Turkish fiction. In his essay "Fetishism", Sigmund Freud writes, "the fetish is a substitute for the penis" (2001a: 152). When a little boy notices that his mother does not have a penis, he perceives it as a threat – he might also lose his penis. The possibility of the loss of his penis creates castration anxiety. In order to address this anxiety, the boy disavows his mother's lack of a penis. However, this disavowal causes a conflict – on the one hand, the boy continues to believe that his mother has a penis; on the other hand, he acknowledges that she does not have one. He tries to find a middle ground and invents a fetish object that substitutes for his mother's absent penis. In other words, castration anxiety is eradicated by fetishising a new object as a replacement for the mother's penis (Freud 2001a: 154).

With reference to Freud, Homi K. Bhabha interprets fetishism at the level of colonial discourse. He emphasises that "[f]etishism, as the disavowal of difference, is that repetitious scene around the problem of castration" (1994: 74). His reading of stereotypes with regard to fetishism is crucial for explaining castration anxiety in relation to colonial discourse in general and to late Ottoman politics in particular. Although the Ottoman Empire was not actually colonised by the West, Homi K. Bhabha's reading functions well as a way of demonstrating the shift in the Empire's approach to gender stereotyping and castration anxiety both in politics and in fiction. In this

regard, the question of whether one has a penis or not is similar to the question of what it means to 'be the other', and to having a different skin colour/race/culture, issues that constitute differences between cultures, and between the coloniser and the colonised. The recognition of the difference between the coloniser and the colonised might be seen as analogous to the sexual difference between the boy and the mother (1994: 74-75).

I argue that fetishism occurred in the form of modernisation in the late Ottoman context. The purpose of modernisation was to resurrect the Empire's weakened masculine role and to compensate for its political castration, which not only functioned as a disavowal of the difference between the Ottoman tradition and Western modernity, but also became the acknowledgement of the Empire's existing differences from the West and/or 'lack' of modernity. The Empire's simultaneous recognition and disavowal of its difference from the West challenged the imperial power and became representative of its castration anxiety. My contention, therefore, is that the dissolution of the implicitly masculine role of the Ottoman Empire, an empire that was becoming increasingly less potent, is represented via castration anxiety in fiction, an anxiety that is particularly reflected in *Kesik Bıyık* (*Trimmed Moustache*) and *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası* (The Wedding Night: A Eunuch's Lovemaking). By reading these narratives in relation to castration anxiety, I first aim to demonstrate the way in which the Empire's emulation of modernity generates a castration anxiety by the trimming of a moustache in *Kesik Bıyık*. Then, I read *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası* as a political allegory of the Ottoman Empire in the beginning of the twentieth century. This allegorical reading enables me to interpret the Empire's socio-cultural and historical frustration as sexual frustration due to a eunuch's castration. Ultimately, both readings depict the ways in which these anxieties about modernity produce different

masculinities juxtaposed with hegemonic Ottoman masculinity as exemplified by the style of moustache worn and the artificial penis. This chapter discusses the extent to which modernisation is inextricably connected with the loss of hegemonic Ottoman masculinity, and implicitly with castration anxiety.

Trimming Ottoman Masculinity: Ömer Seyfeddin's *Kesik Bıyık*

Kesik Bıyık was written by Ömer Seyfeddin (1884-1920) and published in the literary and political humour magazine *Diken* (the Thorn) in 1918. It narrates the story of a young man who has his moustache trimmed in an American-style in order to follow the latest fashion adopted by his friends. With regard to the modern manly look, George L. Mosse remarks that,

> just as modern masculinity reflected the ideals and hopes of society, so its enemies were the enemies of society. Here manliness fulfilled its task of strengthening normative society against those who supposedly wanted to destroy its fabric, and who through their looks and comportment made clear their evil intentions. (1998: 12)

As mentioned above, Ottoman modernisation was often debated in relation to discourses on masculinity, both metaphorically and literally. Idealised and hegemonised masculinity became a destination that one might reach via the 'right' path to modernity, the limits of which were, to a great extent, determined by Ottoman tradition. In Ömer Seyfeddin's corpus, from which I take *Kesik Bıyık* as an example, the connection between masculinity and Ottoman modernisation is already present. The American-style trimmed moustache, which exceeds the limits of the desired Ottoman modernity, might largely be indicative of opposition to hegemonic Ottoman masculinity

and the implicitly normative content of modernity, and might conversely represent "evil intentions", as Mosse states. However, I contend that the analogy moves beyond such opposition and representation. As I argue below, the act of moustache trimming can be read as an analogy for castration, which in itself can be seen as representing late Ottoman anxieties about modernity and as shown in literary production.

How did these anxieties regarding modernity and the form of narration affect the literary production of Ömer Seyfeddin, who often commented on and attached importance to the existing political and cultural circumstances of his period? Ömer Seyfeddin is often regarded as the founder of the short story genre, and he is one of the most important authors of Turkish national literature in the early twentieth century. In his brief life he witnessed significant wars such as the Turco-Italian War (1911-1912), the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and the First World War (1914-1918), all of which left their marks on his literary production (Alangu 1968: 14). As did his nineteenth-century literary precursors, Ömer Seyfeddin occasionally employed the marriage *topos* between the East and the West with a nationalist emphasis. For instance, his serial stories *Fon Sadrişţayn'ın Karısı* (*The Wife of Von Sadristein*) and *Fon Sadrişţayn'ın Oğlu* (*The Son of Von Sadristein*), first published during the First World War in 1917 and 1918, respectively, are based on this marriage *topos*. The short story *Fon Sadrişţayn'ın Karısı* praises German culture through the marriage of a Turkish man called Sadrettin to a German woman – after his first marriage to a Turkish woman, Sadrettin, who previously appeared physically weak, becomes sturdy thanks to his German wife. The follow-up narrative, *Fon Sadrişţayn'ın Oğlu*, continues the plot and takes place twenty-five years later. Sadrettin's decision to leave his Turkish wife and marry a German woman results in a 'mischievously' brought up son, who is born from this

transnational marriage and who steals his parents' money and runs away to America, which could perhaps reflect America's entry into the First World War in 1917.

In addition, *Primo Türk Çocuğu – Nasıl Doğdu* (*Primo the Turkish Boy – How He Was Born*), first published in 1911 during the Turco-Italian War, narrates the story of a young Turkish engineer, Kenan, who was infatuated with Western culture and who married an Italian woman, Grazia. However, in the narrative – which takes place during the Italian invasion – both Kenan and his half-Italian son, Primo, gradually become nationalists and develop an aggressive attitude towards the West. By presenting *Primo Türk Çocuğu* as an example, Halil Berktay underlines the inclination of nationalist authors to develop a discourse that represented "a deceived macho masculine culture" in opposition to the Western perception, which often feminised the East in its cultural productions (1999: 362-363). Here, the term "hypermasculinity", – an exaggerated form of masculinity – corresponds to the impulse of the nationalist authors, who struggled against the Western influence. Ashis Nandy uses the term hypermasculinity to explain "a reactionary stance" that "arises when agents of hegemonic masculinity feel threatened or undermined, thereby needing to inflate, exaggerate, or otherwise distort their traditional masculinity" (Agathangelou and Ling 2004: 519). In *Primo Türk Çocuğu*, Ömer Seyfeddin presents a representation of 'Turkishness' through hypermasculinity. These transnational marriages follow the same pattern, namely marriage between a Turkish man and a Western woman whose nationality depends on with whom the Ottoman Empire was struggling at the time. Hence, masculinity becomes a domain of contestation in which nationalism plays a key role in these narratives.

Nationalism, a significant element of Western modernity, wittingly or unwittingly led Ömer Seyfeddin to the internalisation of the West as a

necessary reification and this had consequences for indigenous discourses surrounding masculinity as well as the political and literary representations thereof. A. Ezgi Dikici suggests that, similar to his other nationalist contemporaries, Ömer Seyfeddin was confronted by the dilemma of Western modernity and Turkish national identity. This dilemma was depicted as "a sense of crisis" due to the feeling of being torn between contesting the economic and cultural hegemony of the West and the need to maintain a national identity (2008: 85). As Partha Chatterjee claims, nationalist thought "simultaneously rejects and accepts the dominance, both epistemic and moral, of an alien culture" (1993: 11). I suggest comparing this simultaneous rejection and acceptance of an alien culture to Sigmund Freud's concept of fetishism by reading Ömer Seyfeddin's *Kesik Bıyık*.

The narrative begins with a reference to Charles Darwin made by the protagonist:

> One has to believe in the words of the guy called "Darwin". Yes, human beings must have absolutely evolved from monkeys! Because whatever we see we immediately imitate it; the way we sit, stand up, drink, walk, stop, in short in short everything… (6)[19]

The protagonist gives an example of men who needlessly imitate what they see:

> There are many men who wear one-eyed glasses called a "monocle" without having a need for it. Because [the men in the] pictures they

[19] "Darwin" denilen herifin sözüne inanmalı. Evet, insanlar mutlaka maymundan türemişler! Çünkü işte neyi görsek hemen taklit ediyoruz; oturmayı, kalkmayı, içmeyi, yürümeyi, durmayı, hâsılı hâsılı her şeyi...

> see in the fashion albums at the tailor [shop] have one-eyed glasses. (6)[20]

After this brief criticism of those who imitate Western fashion, the protagonist refers to himself and remarks that he is also one of these imitators:

> Six seven years ago, I saw that everyone used to trim his moustache American-style. You naturally might guess that I also immediately had [my moustache] trimmed. Ah, yes I also had [it] trimmed. I also had my handlebar moustache trimmed just because of mimicry; indeed I looked like my ancestors in the way Darwin wanted. (6)[21]

This reference to the theory of human evolution implicitly alludes to Charles Darwin's theory of sexual difference and civilisation. In his two-volume study *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* – first published in 1871 – Darwin describes the relationship of civilisation, reproductive sex and sexual differences. In addition to "man's putative 'descent' from animal forms", Darwin suggests that human beings are superior to animals since they have morality, culture and civilisation. He values Western civilisation above other civilisations by arguing that it is based on sexual selection and reproduction. With regard to means of reproduction, he places specific emphasis on heteronormativity and stresses the differences between the sexes. Charles Darwin ascribes indistinct sexual differences to inferior races and savage societies such as the "American aborigines". This importance

[20] Ne kadar adamlar vardır ki hiç ihtiyaçları yokken "monokl" dediğimiz tek gözlükleri takarlar. Çünkü terzide seyrettikleri moda albümlerindeki resimler tek gözlüklüdür.
[21] Altı yedi sene evvel, gördüm ki herkes bıyıklarını Amerikanvari kesiyor. Benim de hemen kestirdiğimi tabii tahmin edersiniz. Ah, evet ben de kestirdim. Ben de palabıyıklarımı sırf taklitçilik gayretiyle kestirdim; hakikaten "Darwin"in istediği gibi ecdadıma benzedim.

given to sexual difference and reproduction ostracises Western homosexuality and regards it as primitive, a kind of non-Western savagery. It renders both the homosexual and the savage intertwined discursively in Charles Darwin's theory (Gandhi 2006: 47-49, 50).

With reference to Darwin's theory, I argue that *Kesik Bıyık* allegorically highlights the challenges posed to hegemonic Ottoman masculinity by its Western counterparts in the process of modernisation. The use of a manly sign – the moustache – initially underlines the sexual difference between male and female. The handlebar moustache – *palabıyık* in Turkish – is trimmed from the corners of the mouth downwards – above the mouth, it is allowed to grow in an unrestrained fashion. It represents hegemonic masculinity and Ottoman tradition in the narrative. The act of trimming, therefore, represents the Empire's modernisation attempts that led to the alteration of hegemonic masculinity and constituted sexual ambivalence. After trimming his moustache to make it appear in an American-style, the protagonist admits that he does not look the way he had expected. However, after he shaves off the handlebar moustache, he regresses in terms of human evolution and resembles a monkey. If one considers the discursive Darwinian relationship between the homosexual and the savage, the protagonist's monkey-like appearance transforms him into a savage, if not into a homosexual. The protagonist's act of shaving his moustache annihilates the sexual difference between male and female and, implicitly, his masculinity. Correspondingly, the trimmed moustache functions as a critique of Ottoman modernisation based on the emulation of the West that prevents the Empire from being part of Western 'civilisation', and misdirects it in a Darwinian sense.

The protagonist's parents react negatively to him because he trimmed his moustache. In their eyes, the American-style moustache is a symbol of

"excessive Westernisation". In this context, the West is not limited to Europe – the emulation of American fashion shows that Westernisation expands into and includes Americanness. When the protagonist's mother is told that he has trimmed his handlebar moustache and she enters his room, he tries to hide his upper lip with his hand as if he had a toothache. However, his mother starts crying and tells him:

> Ah traitor vile! You are not my son anymore! […] Do you think that I do not understand? […] freemasons cut their moustaches. This means you are a freemason too! May you get no benefit from the milk I gave you: Ah this means you are a freemason and we were not aware of it… (6)[22]

The protagonist's mother initially sees the trimmed moustache as being dreadful. She even threatens to disown her son. The protagonist's mother makes clear that having an American-style moustache is the equivalent of becoming a "freemason". The mother's accusation is not related directly to the protagonist's masculinity; instead, her anger is linked to the loss of the cultural heritage and/or the unity of the Empire. Hence, one might suggest that Ottoman masculinity is a central part of Ottoman culture – if one is lost, the other will be lost too.

The protagonist's father then arrives on the scene. The protagonist feels frightened and trembles with fear when he sees his father. He also tries to hide his moustache from him, but his father sees it. The protagonist feigns an excuse by saying "while lighting my cigarette I burned one side of my moustache… That is why I had it trimmed" [*cigaramı yakarken kazara*

[22] Ah hain alçak! Artık benim evladım değilsin! [...] Beni anlamaz mı sanıyorsun? [...] bıyıklarını farmasonlar keserlermiş. Demek sen de farmasonmuşsun! Verdiğim süt sana haram olsun: Ah demek sen de farmasonmuşsun da bizim haberimiz yokmuş...

bıyığımın bir tarafını tutuşturdum... Onun için kestirdim] (6). However, he cannot convince his father:

> You cannot fool me with this, […] it means that all those dandies on streets burned their moustaches with a match. […] Bringing the fez's tassel to the forefront, trimming the moustache all of it indicates something… Something, which is very vile... (6)[23]

The protagonist's father accuses the protagonist of being a dandy because he trimmed his moustache. According to the protagonist's father, when a man trims his moustache, he becomes a "dandy" and his masculinity becomes diminished. Such excessive attention to style, or stylisation, is considered similar to feminisation. The association of the dandy with the loss of masculinity is a central issue in the discussions of modernisation in the Ottoman Turkish novel. In these discussions, any Western influence is seen as an excessive influence; this excessive influence is frequently associated with the excessively Westernised, effeminate dandy, a figure that appeared frequently in the narratives of the time.[24] The effeminate dandy was not only seen as having a "borrowed personality" due to excessive Westernisation, but also reflected the anxiety felt by some about turning to "borrowed sexuality" (Gürbilek 2014: 11, 55-56). By contrast, the sexuality of excessively Westernised female characters was reinforced and they became hypersexual.

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[23] Sen bana dolma yutturamazsın, [...] demek ki sokakları dolduran züppelerin hepsinin bıyıkları kibritle mi yandı. [...] Fesinin püskülünü önüne getirmek, bıyıklarını kesmek hep bir şeye delalet edermiş... Öyle pis bir şeye ki...

[24] For a detailed discussion of the dandy in Ottoman Turkish literature, see Nurdan Gürbilek. "Dandies and Originals: Authenticity, Belatedness, and the Turkish Novel." *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 102.2-3 (2003): 599-628, and Şerif Mardin. "Super Westernization in Urban Life in the Ottoman Empire in the Last Quarter of the Nineteenth Century". *Turkey: Geographic and Social Perspectives*. Ed. Peter Benedict, Erol Tümertekin, and Fatma Mansur. Leiden: Brill, 1974. 403–446.

The hypersexualisation of these female characters led them to lose their chastity and virginity (Bilgin 2004: 106). Thus, it may be concluded that excessive Westernisation was considered the equivalent of having sex with a man – the West in these examples – that ultimately results in a loss in one way or other, either of chastity and/or virginity, or masculinity.

It is remarkable that when the father disowns the protagonist and throws him out of the house, he displaces the widely debated issue of female chastity to the loss of male chastity:

> Leave now! […] do not ever think of coming here again… Because even if your moustaches grow your chastity is not restored… (6)[25]

This displacement of female chastity with male chastity depicts the extent to which the excessively Westernised Ottoman man surrenders his virility and becomes as effeminate as a hypersexual female character. The juxtaposition of moustache and chastity depicts the loss of masculine characteristics that one experiences as a result of the influence of Western modernity. Accordingly, 'womanly' issues, such as the loss of chastity, are also ascribed to the protagonist. The loss of chastity due to the trimmed moustache became the yielding of Ottoman tradition to excessive Western influence. Elif Bilgin suggests that the private sphere and, consequently, the family became a "castle of chastity" that should be kept safe from excessive Westernisation (2004: 90). Therefore, the father, who was seen as the guardian of the family in early Ottoman Turkish novels (Parla 2004b: 19), banishes the protagonist from the house in order to wage war on the excessive influence of Western modernity and to protect the "castle of chastity".

[25] Hemen çık! [...] bir daha sakın buraya geleyim deme... Çünkü artık bıyıkların çıksa bile namusun yerine gelmez...

After being thrown out of the house, the protagonist decides to go to his friend's house in Topkapı. On the way, he encounters some of his friends. They salute him and react to the trimmed moustache in exactly the opposite way from that of his parents:

> Bonjour, bonjour! […] here now you look like a man… What was that handlebar moustache! Like a chief officer of the Janissaries who arose from the grave… (6)[26]

The Janissaries – *Yeni Çeri* in Turkish – were a powerful military force in the Ottoman Empire until the mid-seventeenth century. Later, their malpractices and military inadequacies against Western armies led to their execution by Mahmud II (r. 1808-1839) in 1826. These executions were called *Vak'a-i Hayriyye* (the Auspicious Event). A Western-style army replaced the Janissary corps in one of the most significant and pioneering attempts to modernise the Empire. The renowned poet and diplomat Yahya Kemal (Beyatlı) (1884-1958) discusses late Ottoman masculinities in relation to the execution of the Janissaries. He notes:

> […] following the Auspicious Event our old customs disappeared completely because of the aim to raise a dignified and well-mannered generation and in the end, under the Ottoman garment that is called İstanbulîn, just as that government wanted, a generation that was well-behaved, well-advised, kowtowing, lickspittle, lowly, silenced, deprived of all sorts of manly appearances, walks and movements was fostered. A foreigner, who would look at Ottoman generation in this

[26] Bonjur, bonjur! [...] işte şimdi adama benzedin... Neydi o palabıyıklar! Mezardan kalkmış bir yeniçeri ağası gibi...

> era, would not recognise the sons of the old quarrelsome, strong voiced and manly Ottomans. (1975: 97)[27]

I contend that the similarity between the protagonist's previous appearance and the Janissaries, as remarked upon by his friends, is a significant indicator that demonstrates how hegemonic Ottoman masculinity was altered by modernisation. As the handlebar moustache allegorically signifies Ottoman tradition, the trimming thereof causes the protagonist to cease being a man in the traditional sense. However, he becomes a 'modern' and 'real' man in the eyes of his Westernised peers. Each character adopts a different attitude towards the American-style moustache: it is either interpreted as the loss of hegemonic Ottoman masculinity, or it receives approval as the symbol of modernity.

When the protagonist takes the tram to Topkapı, he sees a religious hodja who looks at him. The protagonist becomes concerned that he will receive further criticism because of his moustache from the hodja. He makes ready to escape from the hodja's sight. Meanwhile, the hodja smiles:

- May God bless you my son. May you live long! […]
- For what sir? […]
- Seeing elegant youngsters like you being circumcised is the biggest pride for us! […]
- But how did you understand that I am circumcised sir?
- The hodja smiled:

[27] […] Vak'a-i Hayriyye'yi müteâkip efendi ve çelebi bir nesil yetiştirmek gayreti yüzünden eski sporlarımız tamâmıyle zâil olmuş ve nihâyet, İstanbulîn denilen Osmanlı kisvesi altında, o hükûmetin tam istediği gibi, uslu, akıllı, el pençe dîvan durur, mütebasbıs, başı aşağıda, sessiz, erkekliğin her türlü gösterişinden, yürüyüşünden ve hareket edişinden mahrum bir kâtip nesil yetişmişti. Bu devirde Osmanlı nesline bakan bir ecnebî, eski döğüşken, gür sesli ve erkek Osmanlıların oğullarını tanımazdı.

- You have your moustaches trimmed my son […]. Isn't it a sunnah? (6)[28]

This grotesque misunderstanding becomes highly explicit in the original parlance of the narrative, because the words circumcision and sunnah, a set of religious customs and practices introduced by the Prophet Muhammad, are the same word in Turkish: *sünnet*. Since the hodja is the cult leader, his position requires that he does not criticise undesirable acts directly; instead, he likens them to something pleasant. As readers, we are uncertain whether he criticises the protagonist implicitly or whether he appreciates the trimmed moustache because it is recommended for religious reasons.[29] The hodja's allusive use of the word *sünnet* maintains the tension between hegemonic Ottoman masculinity and 'modern' masculinities until the end of the story.

Both penises and moustaches are exclusively male. Furthermore, circumcision and moustache trimming both consist of "trimming" at a physical level, either of the foreskin or of the hair on the upper lip. However, the act of trimming the foreskin does not have the same connotation as does trimming the hair on the upper lip. In Ottoman Turkish culture, the loss of foreskin via circumcision is never seen as a loss. Instead, circumcision is a signifier of masculinity. It is considered a transition from childhood to manhood. Unlike the circumcision tradition in Jewish culture, which is generally performed early in the neonatal period, Muslim boys are

[28] - Eksik olmayınız oğlum. Varolunuz! [...]
- Niçin efendim? [...]
- Sizin gibi şık gençleri sünnetli görmek bizim için en büyük bir iftihardır! [...]
- Fakat sünnetli olduğumu nereden anladınız efendim?
Hoca güldü:
- İşte bıyıklarınızı kestirmişsiniz ya oğlum [...]. Bu sünnet-i şerif değil midir?

[29] See hadiths: Imam Malik, The Description of the Prophet, may Allah Bless Him and Grant Him Peace (Muwatta) 3 (http://ahadith.co.uk/chapter.php?cid=99); Sahih Muslim, Purification (Kitab Al-Taharah) 496 (http://ahadith.co.uk/chapter.php?cid=71&page=7&rows=10).

circumcised when they are aged between five and twelve. Thereafter, they are supposed to "become socially gendered beings" (Delaney 1994: 164). One of the stages of manhood is the growth of pubic hair and facial hair, which occurs at a later age than does circumcision. The growth of male hair proclaims the beginning of puberty and sexual maturity. In terms of sexual maturity, Dror Ze'evi divides male sexuality in the Ottoman Empire into two prominent periods: the period until puberty during which a young boy was an object of desire for older men, and the period when he grew in maturity and was attracted to women and younger men (2006: 93). In the period of maturity, facial hair not only differentiated men from women, but also from younger, beardless men (Najmabadi 2005: 142). Accordingly, facial hair – beards and/or moustaches – becomes a reinforcing sign of sexual maturity and adultness. In many Islamic traditions, the transformation of vellus hair into a moustache is particularly seen as indicative of virility (Bromberger 2008: 381).

The correlation of male hair with virility is explained by Wendy Cooper as "a simple equation: male hair equals virility, equals power, equals strength" (1971: 38). In his book *The Unconscious Significance of Hair* (1951), Charles Berg describes this association in reverse and suggests a symbolic relationship between hair cutting and shaving with castration.[30] In her analysis of the biblical story of Samson and Delilah, Mieke Bal also underlines the symbolic relationship between hair cutting and castration. Samson's loss of hair leads to the loss of his strength, as his strength in general and his masculinity in particular are reliant on his hair. The loss of

[30] For further discussions of hair and its symbolic use, see Gananath Obeyesekere. *Medusa's Hair: An Essay on Personal Symbols and Religious Experience*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981, P. Hershman. "Hair, Sex and Dirt." *Man* 9.2 (1974): 274–298, C. R. Hallpike. "Social Hair." *Man* 4.2 (1969): 256–64, E. R. Leach. "Magical Hair." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 88.2 (1958): 147–164.

his hair diminishes his masculinity. Samson's diminished masculinity generates "hair envy" and, by extension, penis envy in the story (1987: 55). Drawing on Bal's reading of the story of Samson and Delilah, I contend that the parents' negative reactions to the protagonist's trimmed moustache also transform castration anxiety into "hair envy" on behalf of the protagonist. Since he does not have an 'adequate' moustache according to his parents, he embraces the 'womanly' psychological conflict of "penis envy" in the guise of "hair envy".

In *Kesik Bıyık*, circumcision and the handlebar moustache are juxtaposed as constitutive elements of virility. This juxtaposition forms the basis for the interrogation of hegemonic Ottoman masculinity. Circumcision is one of the prerequisites for being a man. An uncircumcised man is one who does not conform to the physical perception of an Ottoman man. A circumcised penis becomes the symbol of power and transforms the penis into the phallus (Barutçu 2015: 134). The handlebar moustache – like circumcision – is also representative of hegemonic Ottoman masculinity, and consequently functions as the phallus in the narrative. The loss of the handlebar moustache – with the aim of having a 'modern' or 'civilised' look – diminishes the protagonist's virility, as it does in the story of Samson and Delilah. Given the association of circumcision with the trimming of the handlebar moustache, the American-style moustache moves the idea of circumcision beyond its reinforcing meaning in relation to hegemonic masculinity and turns it into castration anxiety. Furthermore, although circumcision is usually called *tahara* (purification) in Arabic (Bouhdiba 2000: 21), I argue that trimming the moustache in contrast to circumcision does not signify purification, but rather 'deterioration' of the protagonist in the narrative.

In addition, circumcision is also a necessary condition for one to marry. Abdelwahab Bouhdiba draws attention to the similarity between circumcision and wedding ceremonies:

> It is as if circumcision were only a mimicry of marriage and the sacrifice of the foreskin an anticipation of that of the hymen […]. It is as if circumcision were a preparation for deflowering and indeed is it not a question of preparing oneself for coitus, of sensitizing oneself to the genetic activity, of valorizing in a sense the phallus, which is thus in turn purified and placed in reserve? (2000: 27)

The trimming of the handlebar moustache in an American-style as a reflection of circumcision and of symbolic castration prevents the protagonist from practicing marriage in the sense of Bouhdiba. This inability might also be interpreted as a prevention of the metaphorical marriage between the Ottoman tradition and Western modernity, which reflects the Empire's 'dysfunctional' attempts at modernisation.

Kesik Bıyık enables an allegorical reading, a reading that relates Ottoman modernisation to the issue of masculinity. I have read this short story as a sexual allegory of late Ottoman anxieties caused by the Empire's socio-political predicament with regard to modernity. The narrative revolves around the protagonist, whose American-style, trimmed moustache receives different responses from the people around him. Using these responses, Ömer Seyfeddin presents various alternative masculinities without singling out a particular masculinity. He does not privilege or criticise one particular masculinity throughout the narrative. The refusal to take a side creates an ambivalent ending and suggests a tension between hegemonic Ottoman masculinity and 'modern' masculinities. This tension represents the changing

– and perhaps decreasing – masculine role of the Ottoman Empire in its metaphorical marriage with the West at the turn of the century. At the end of *Kesik Bıyık*, Ömer Seyfeddin leaves readers in suspense, which intensifies the Ottoman Empire's socio-political anxieties caused by Western modernity.

Making use of the well-established analogy between trimming and castration, I have read *Kesik Bıyık* in terms of fetishism and castration anxiety. I have argued that Ottoman modernisation, symbolised by an American-style, trimmed moustache, is fetishised in order to overcome the Ottoman Empire's socio-political anxieties, represented by castration anxiety. However, the trimmed moustache is not considered the equivalent of modernity, as it remains simply a fetish object – a substitute for modernity. Therefore, modernity becomes an Ottoman fetish, simultaneously acknowledging and disavowing the Empire's difference from the West. By placing Western modernity and Ottoman modernisation within the frame of masculinity, *Kesik Bıyık* illustrates the extent to which discourses on masculinity were interrupted and challenged by modernisation.

Liminal Masculinity in the Balkan Wars: *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası*

Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası, an erotic novella written by M.S and published in 1913, narrates the story of a rich eunuch – Anber Ağa – who is lustful, but at the same time sexually frustrated due to the lack of a penis. I contend that the choice of a eunuch, a sexually frustrated figure, as the protagonist of the novella allows for an allegorical interpretation of the narrative. It reflects the Ottoman Empire's frustrating socio-political situation that appeared due to the loss of its imperial power. That is to say, the eunuch's sexual frustration epitomises the Empire's socio-political frustration derived from the failure to keep pace particularly with Western European

states and modernity. In this section, therefore, I continue my discussion of the implications of modernisation on hegemonic Ottoman masculinity as part of castration anxiety. However, differently from *Kesik Bıyık*, I scrutinise the castration anxiety in a more explicit manner – with the help of the eunuch.

Eunuchs in the Ottoman Empire

Eunuchs were an integral part of the Ottoman palace and noble houses, and it is crucial to clarify how the eunuch system functioned and what meanings were attributed to eunuchs in the Ottoman Empire. Eunuchs are castrated male slaves; they are not an Ottoman invention.[31] Eunuchhood dates back at least to the Assyrian Empire and most probably goes even further back to the earliest civilisations in Mesopotamia (Hathaway 2011: 179). Numerous non-Islamic and Islamic societies such as the Byzantine Empire, several dynasties in China, the Mughal Empire, and the Ottoman Empire employed eunuchs. They were used both as military commanders and as palace functionaries. However, in the nineteenth century, the military slavery of eunuchs was abolished in the Ottoman Empire, but household slavery still existed both in the palace and in noble houses (Toledano 1984: 379).

A brief history of eunuchhood and the way in which it became a fashion in the Ottoman society is also described in the beginning of *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası* as follows:

> As is known by experts, in time of the Eastern Roman Empire at moments when the public morals became enormously corrupted, some men began to be castrated in order to preserve [their body]

[31] The word eunuch does not have a direct relation with "castrate" or "castration"; it actually derives from the Greek *eunoukhos* in the meaning of "bed chamber attendant" (Ayalon 1999:266). In the Ottoman Empire, eunuchs of the imperial palace – like the highest-ranking officers in the army – were called *ağa*. Eventually, the title ağa became synonymous with "eunuch" (Hathaway 2005: 27).

> always young and beautiful, and to maintain the fineness of their voice. And by this means sodomy ascended in the imperial palaces.
>
> During the time of his reign, Muawiyah, transformed the caliphate of Islam into a sultanate and descended it from father to son. This practice sowed discord among Muslims since then, [they] castrated some negro and Abyssinian children from Sudan and nearby in order to make the emirate look like a sultanate and to manifest [their] glory abroad, on the one hand, and to take revenge on black people, on the other hand. A lot of harm was caused by the castrations that occurred.
>
> Thereby, these castrated [boys] were employed, under the name of eunuchs, in the palaces of Ottoman sultans and in the noble houses, and the use of eunuch ağa became a fashion for centuries. (4-5)[32]

As palace functionaries, eunuchs were in charge of the maintenance of the sultan's private quarters, his wives and concubines, and other members of the imperial family (Hathaway 2005: 11). In general, East African black eunuchs were placed in the female harem, *Dârüssaâde* (the Abode of

[32] Erbabına malum olduğu üzere Şarkî Roma İmparatorluğu zamanında ahlak-ı umumiyyenin son derece bozulmuş bulunduğu avânda birtakım erkeklerin daima genç ve güzel bulundurmak ve seslerinin inceliği muhafaza edilmek için tatviş edilmesine başlanmış ve imparatorlar saraylarında livâtanın terakkisine bu suretle himmet edilmiş idi.

Hilafet-i İslamiyyeyi saltanata tahvil ve bunda veraset usulünü ihdâs ederek ilâ yevminâ hâzâ İslamlar arasında ilka-yı nifak etmiş olan Muaviye zaman-ı emaretinde bir taraftan emaretine saltanat süsü vermek ve her tarafa ihtişam irâ'e etmek ve diğer taraftan zencilere karşı ahz-ı sârda bulunmak için birtakım Sudan ve sâir cihetlerden getirttiği zenci ve Habeş çocuklarını tatvîş usulünü ihdâs etmiş ve bu yüzden nice nice mazarratlar meydan almıştı.

İşbu mutavveşler harem ağaları namı altında hükümdârân-ı izâm-ı Osmaniyye saraylarında ve bazı ekâbir ve eâzım konaklarında bulundurulmağa başlanmış ve bizde de asırlardan beri hadım ağası kullanılması moda olmuştur.

Felicity), while Hungarian and Caucasian white eunuchs were allowed in *Bâbüssaâde* (the Gate of Felicity), the third courtyard, where the sultan's private quarters were placed. Although the reason for such a division is not clear, Jane Hathaway suggests that the slave trade of Abyssinian eunuchs started right after the relocation of the female harem from *Saray-ı Atîk* (the Old Palace) to the Topkapı Palace where the sultan's residence was. This relocation provided appropriate conditions for the settlement of the newly brought black eunuchs. These conditions were not good due to the over population of the third courtyard (2005: 14-15).

In the late sixteenth century, the relocation of the female harem close to the sultan's residence resulted in the increasing influence of eminent harem women such as the sultan's mother and certain concubines in state affairs. The female harem had a central position because of the intervention of harem women in Ottoman politics. This intervention was also the result of the death of sultans at an early age and the accession of underage or mentally handicapped sultans in the seventeenth century (Hathaway 2011: 191; 2005: 110). Because the chief harem eunuch used to be the political ally of the sultan's mother, his position also became influential in the upbringing of the sultan (Hathaway 2011: 183). When the number of residents in the Topkapı Palace reached its peak during the reign of Murad III (r. 1574-1595), there were approximately 1,000 to 1,200 harem eunuchs of whom 600 to 800 were supervised by *Dârüssaâde Ağası* (the guardian of the Abode of Felicity), the chief harem eunuch who was appointed by the sultan (Hathaway 2005: 13). Earlier historians have argued that there is a strong relation between the moral and political decline of empires and the increasing influence of eunuchs (Ringrose 2007: 495). Likewise, it has often been argued that the increasing influence of the chief harem eunuch in conjunction with the domination of harem women in state affairs was one of the underlying

reasons for the Ottoman Empire's decline. The chief harem eunuch became "the personification of [the] 'decline'" of the Ottoman Empire (Hathaway 2005: 111).

The Balkan Wars in *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası*

As mentioned above, *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası* was published in 1913, in the period during which the Ottoman Empire was at war with the Balkan League (the Bulgarians, Greeks, Montenegrins, and Serbs). This war was instigated by nationalism. The struggle of the Empire against rising Balkan nationalism at the turn of the century inclined the Empire to take new directions both politically and culturally. The Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and the loss of Balkan territories were not merely a political defeat for the Ottoman Empire. Although the Empire had lost vast and significant territories previously, the government and bureaucrats still had enough confidence in the Empire's continuation. However, the Balkan Wars were overwhelmingly disastrous and led to a loss of confidence (Hanioğlu 2008: 173). Along these lines, Engin Kılıç states,

> the unforeseen, out-and-out disaster suffered by the Ottomans in the Balkan War, along with its tragic consequences, produced profound shock and trauma in the Ottoman Turkish public and intelligentsia. (2015: 5)

Indeed, the Balkan Wars became a turning point for the Ottoman Empire, as the Balkans "symbolising far more than territory, was at the very heart of what made the [E]mpire" (Boyar 2007: 1). Being defeated in the Balkan Wars was devastating for the Empire, and it caused frustrations, anxieties and fears regarding its future (Gawrych 1986: 307). Hence, aside from the

modernisation attempts, the devastating political failure and the significant territorial loss in the Balkan Wars led to a "narcissistic scar".

Nurdan Gürbilek uses the term "narcissistic scar" in a broad sense when discussing Ottoman modernisation, though not specifically in the context of the Balkan Wars. She argues that being defeated by European modernity has frequently been experienced as the feeling of insufficiency, which resulted in a narcissistic scar in the late Ottoman Empire (2014:13-14). In his *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud defines "narcissistic scar" as

> [l]oss of love and failure leave behind them a permanent injury to self-regard in the form of a narcissistic scar, which […] contributes more than anything to the 'sense of inferiority' which is so common in neurotics. (2001b: 20-21)

Likewise, the Ottoman Empire's socio-political failures constituted a narcissistic scar and a feeling of inferiority compared to European states. Here, the notion of narcissistic scar is also associated with the castration anxiety due to the idea of loss or failure. In the Ottoman case, the loss and failure are equal to the loss of territory and to political failures that are represented through the eunuch's condition of being castrated. Since the penis is "a narcissistic organ" in the Lacanian sense (Grosz 1990: 119), its castration generates "narcissistic fear". Narcissistic fear is a reflection of the fear of losing virility (Lacan 1997: 312). In this respect, the choice of a eunuch as the protagonist of the novella is relevant because it helps to explain the "narcissistic scar" and "narcissistic fear" by means of castration anxiety. The eunuch as the protagonist demonstrates how the loss of imperial power and the loss of virility were considered equal. Therefore, in this section I suggest the plausibility of reading *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının*

Muâşakası as a sexual allegory of the Ottoman Empire's political predicament during the Balkan Wars.

An Allegorical Reading of the Eunuch in *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası*

Figure 3: The cover page of *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası*

The novella revolves around two characteristics of the eunuch slave Anber Ağa: his wealth and his lack of a penis. In *The Black Eunuchs of the Ottoman Empire: Networks of Power in the Court of the Sultan*, George Junne provides actual historical contexts for two eunuchs named Anber Mehmed Ağa, both of whom had been Treasurer before they served as Chief Black Eunuch in 1713-1717 and 1813-1815 respectively (2016: 184, 203). Although there is no indication that the protagonist is based on a historical figure, the name Anber was not uncommon for eunuchs in the Ottoman Empire. The protagonist Anber Ağa, an attendant of a noble house, on the other hand, attains his wealth by embezzling forty-fifty thousand liras from his master. But he becomes even richer after the death of his master, who does not have any inheritor; Anber Ağa inherits all of his wealth. I contend that the wealth of Anber Ağa's master can be read as the Ottoman expansionist policy and the Empire's imperial domination that lasted more than six hundred years. In this regard, the absence of an heir is important. It is indicative of the Empire's inability to continuously preserve imperial domination in the age of modernity. This discontinuity is personified by the slave's succession as the heir of his master's wealth. In *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*, Orlando Patterson notes "[s]lavery is one of the most extreme forms of the relation of domination" (1982: 1). He emphasises eunuch slavery by stating, "[t]he absolute ruler […] requires the ultimate slave; and the ultimate slave is best represented in the anomalous person of the eunuch" (1982: 315). In the Ottoman Empire, the sultan used to have absolute power until the proclamation of the Second Constitution. However, the loss of imperial domination weakened the Empire's reputation. In addition to the loss of imperial power, the introduction of a constitutional monarchy altered the sultan's absolute position at the turn of the century. Based on this alteration, the eunuch Anber Ağa no longer represents the

sultan's absolute position, as Patterson suggests when discussing the dialectical relationship between the eunuch slave and the absolute ruler. Instead, he can be seen as standing for the twentieth-century Ottoman Empire, which was weak, but tried to overcome its weakened political condition through modernisation.

The Empire's willingness to overcome its weakened political condition is represented through Anber Ağa's willingness to marry a woman:

> Night and day Anber Ağa wanted to marry. Isn't he a man? Doesn't he also want to marry? Sometimes Anber Ağa used to speak about his will to marry here and there to some people, and although the ones who heard about it did not say anything directly to his face, still they used to laugh about him stealthily and, simply make fun of poor Anber Ağa. There were many people with whom Anber Ağa met in the neighbourhood where he lived.
>
> Because Anber Ağa was wealthy, people around him wanted to benefit from his money and food, and they did not leave this poor negro alone. (3)[33]

The mockery of people around him symbolises the way in which the Empire had been ridiculed by being called the "Sick Man of Europe" since the nineteenth century due to its financial decline and loss of territories. In this respect, Anber Ağa's being a eunuch might be regarded as a masculine "sickness", which I contend implicitly refers to the Empire's diminished and

[33] Anber Ağa gece gündüz evlenmek isterdi. Erkek değil mi ya? O da evlenmek istemez mi? Anber Ağa evlenmek hususundaki hevesini bazen şuna buna anlatır ve işitenler bunun yüzüne karşı bir şey demezler idiyse de fakat içlerinden gülerler ve adeta zavallı Anber Ağa ile eğlenirler idi. Anber Ağa'nın ikamet etmekte bulunduğu mahalde kendisiyle görüşenler çok idi.

Çünkü Anber Ağa sahib-i servet olduğundan etrafında bulunanlar bunun parasından ve ta'âmından istifade etmek isterler ve gece gündüz biçare zencinin peşini bırakmazlar idi.

degraded masculine role. Besides, since black masculinity is frequently presumed as "sexually well-endowed" (Slatton and Spates 2014: 3), his blackness increases the tension that arose from the loss of masculinity.

What is more important here is Anber Ağa's willingness to marry despite being a eunuch. It shows that the Empire still regarded itself as the male side in its metaphorical marriage with the West. Nevertheless, as Kathryn M. Ringrose indicates, eunuchs actually were beyond gender categories and "played liminal roles in society" (2007: 501). Ringrose elsewhere gives an example from Byzantium in which eunuchs formed a third gender; although they were accepted as men, they were an "acculturated kind of men" (2003: 4). In *Eunuchs, Caliphs and Sultans: A Study in Power Relationships*, David Ayalon also states, "a man would love a eunuch because he resembled in some way a woman; and a woman, by contrast, would love him because of his resemblance to a man" (1999: 317). In fact, as Ottoman modernisation attempts affected the discourses on sexuality, new definitions of masculinity and femininity emerged and created a paradigm shift in gender roles, including those of sexuality – since the nineteenth century.[34] The influence of European values and norms led to the emergence of a heteronormalised sexual discourse by Arab and Turkish elites (Ze'evi 2006: 96). The emergence of heteronormative gender categories during this period also led to the identification of eunuchs with the male gender.

Anber Ağa is described as a lustful man who used to curse the ones who castrated him, because his castration prevents him from satisfying his lust. In order to appease his lust

[34] See Joseph A. Massad. *Desiring Arabs*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007, Dror Ze'evi. *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500-1900*. Los Angels: University of California Press, 2006, Afsaneh Najmabadi. *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity*. London: University of California Press, 2005.

> [...] and hoping that there perhaps might occur an effect of remediation and as a result of the conversations and negotiations with an Italian called Gaitano Fossaro, who was famous for selling artificial implements and tools, with the mediation of this person, he ordered a "penis" from Italy and hurried to modify his desire for sensuality with this [organ].
>
> Hereby, the artificial tool was like the real one in quality and appearance, yet the castrated ones – of course – were deprived of [a pair of testicles], and thus it was not able to generate that pleasure [for them], it was directly informed that this [tool] increases euphoria of women by becoming erect when it was required and it fairly generated a refinement of pleasure by going in and out, even so it was impossible to think that it would generate the same kind of pleasure for a man.
>
> Thus, Anber Ağa, with the help of this tool, advanced his acquaintance and flirtation with a concubine with the name of "Zâtıgül" with whom he had started a love affair when his master was alive and prosperous. (6)[35]

Anber Ağa meets with Zâtıgül, one of the concubines of his master, when his

[35] […] belki de bir tesir-i şifa-bahşâsı husule gelir ümidiyle suni edevat ve âlât satmakta müştehir olan İtalyalı Gaitano Fossaro namında birisiyle vâki olan mükâlemât ve müzâkeratı neticesinde bu zatın delaletiyle İtalya'dan bir "zeker" getirtmiş ve bununla hevesât-ı nefsaniyyesini taʿdîle müsâraat etmiş idi.

İşbu suni alet tıpkı hakikisi mesabesinde ve o biçimde olup bittabi tatviş edilenlerin hassiyetini olmadığından gerçi o lezzeti hasıl ettirecek surette değil ise de arzu edildiği anda sertleştiği ve duhul ve hurucu adeta kemal-i lezzetle husule getirdiği için kadınların neşe-i şetaretini arttırmakta olduğu bilavasıta istihbar olunmuş ise de erkekte o lezzeti vücuda getireceği bittabi teslim edilemez.

İşte Anber Ağa bu alet delaletiyle efendisinin hayat ve ikbalinde muâşakasına ibtida ettiği "Zâtıgül" isminde bir cariye ile muârefe ve muâşakayı pek ziyade ileri götürmüş idi.

master is still alive. Regarding the social position of slaves, Patterson states, the slave is not socially acknowledged independently from his master, "he is sociable only through his master" (1982: 4). Anber Ağa establishes his social and sexual existence through his master as well. Furthermore, Patterson defines the slave as "a socially dead person" due to his marginalised position that comes from his natal alienation (1982: 38, 46). Indeed, slaves in general and eunuchs in particular were alienated and detached from their previous lives in the Ottoman Empire. Also in the narrative, Anber Ağa's natal alienation prevents him from having any connection with his previous life and origin. Moreover, his castration, the inability to procreate, also hampers him from having his lineage carried on. Thus, his castration represents the Empire's political decline and difficulties in keeping pace with Western European states in the early twentieth century.

By referring to Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's master-slave dialectic, Patterson claims that freedom starts with the negation of the slave's social death. The slave's social death stemming from his natal alienation is overcome through negation. The slave's freedom or his life forms a double negation. On the one hand, his enslavement is already a negation of life. On the other hand, "the reclamation of that life must therefore be the negation of this negation". Through his social death, the slave is already transformed once. For this reason, his reclamation of life is no longer the same life as the one he lost (1982: 98). In the novella, Anber Ağa's social death is cancelled by his master's death. Although Anber Ağa is socially reborn to a new life after this death, his sexual death, the castration, remains. Anber Ağa negates his castration by means of the artificial penis. However, it is not able to function as a real penis. Hence, his reclamation of his masculinity is not substantiated by what he already lost in a Hegelian sense.

Hegel emphasises that the slave becomes free through the "rediscovery of himself by himself", becoming aware of being-for-self, and "having a 'mind of his own'" (1977: 118-119). I suggest there is an association between Hegel's "being-for-self" and Lacan's "having the phallus". In *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Judith Butler writes,

> [t]he Symbolic order creates cultural intelligibility through the mutually exclusive positions of "having" the Phallus (the position of men) and "being" the Phallus (the paradoxical position of women). The interdependency of these positions recalls the Hegelian structure of failed reciprocity between master and slave, in particular, the unexpected dependency of the master on the slave in order to establish his own identity through reflection. [….] Every effort to establish identity within the terms of this binary disjunction of "being" and "having" returns to the inevitable "lack" and "loss" that ground their phantasmatic construction and mark the incommensurability of the Symbolic and the real. (2010: 60)

In Lacanian psychoanalysis, being the phallus amounts to lacking the phallus. Until Anber Ağa has an artificial penis, he used to lack the phallus, and accordingly, he was the phallus. By ordering an artificial penis, similar to the little boy, Anber Ağa simultaneously acknowledges and disavows his own lack. That is to say, having the artificial penis places Anber Ağa in the simultaneous position of "being the phallus" and "having the phallus". In this simultaneity, having an artificial penis not only signifies his lack of a penis, but also brings about the possibility of losing his artificial penis. Such a possibility implicitly evokes castration anxiety that is different from the

previous castration anxiety. Even though Anber Ağa now has a penis for his being-for-self, contrary to the Hegelian slave, who has a "mind of his own", his penis is not even his own. Thus, the artificiality of the penis emphasises the initial loss and Anber Ağa's failure to negate his sexual death completely.

The artificial penis allegorically stands for the Ottoman Empire's modernisation attempts to overcome European superiority. On the one hand, the castration already takes away Anber Ağa's masculinity; on the other hand, he tries to resurrect his masculinity by means of the artificial penis. Here, the phallus that equates male sexuality with power is significant. Anber Ağa's use of the artificial penis to regain his masculine power mirrors the Empire's emulation of European modernity to rescue the Empire from its decline and reclaim its imperial power. Anber Ağa's lustfulness can then be seen as signifying the Empire's determination to catch up with Western European states. However, the artificiality of the penis demonstrates the superficiality of the Empire's efforts to become modernised without thoroughly understanding modernity. Accordingly, the procuration of masculinity and imperial power by means of "artificial" mediums – the fake organ and the superficial modernisation programme – foreshadow their ultimate failures.

The novella depicts the Empire's degraded masculinity due to the superficial and incomplete understanding of modernity through Anber Ağa's self-indulgence and lechery as follows:

> […] Ms. "Zâtıgül" was fairly talented at playing piano and oud, and especially she was really good at playing *çiftetelli* with oud. […]
>
> According to the Ottoman time scale, at ten in the evening, after sitting and playing piano for an hour and entertaining Anber Ağa with pleasant music, Ms. Zâtıgül used to bring a *rakı* tray and put it in

> front of Ağa. And after drinking a few glasses together, the Arab used to undress and give the oud to his wife, and immediately after a few songs Ms. Zâtıgül used to start playing *çiftetelli* with the extraordinary skill she possessed.
>
> When the time comes to *çiftetelli*, as Anber Ağa became drunk in every sense, the moment Ms. [Zâtıgül] started playing *çiftetelli*, our friend Anber Ağa used to stand up and start belly dancing. (7-8)[36]

Çiftetelli (tsifteteli) is a kind of belly dance and used to be predominant in the Balkans. In *Dancing Fear and Desire: Race, Sexuality, and Imperial Politics in Middle Eastern Dance*, Stavros Stavrou Karayanni underlines that it has often been regarded as a feminine dance due to its "extravagance of impermissible feelings, a certain transgression, and an erotic playfulness". The sexually controversial moves of *çiftetelli* in Greek-Cypriot society indicate that the dance challenges the commonly accepted masculine postures (2004: 9-10). Along these lines, performing *çiftetelli* might be interpreted as a decrease of virility due to the Empire's political predicament in the Balkan Wars. I suggest interpreting Zâtıgül as an allegorical figure of the Balkan communities, and her piano and oud playing as the intercultural position of the Balkans, which was torn between Europe and the Ottoman Empire.

Ottoman modernisation came to naught for the Balkan communities, which were willing to establish their own nation states due to the increasing

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[36] […] "Zâtıgül" Hanım güzel piyano ve ud çalmakta ve hele ud ile çiftetelliyi pek güzel becermekte idi. […]

Akşamın alaturka onunda Zâtıgül Hanım piyanonun başına oturarak bir saat kadar latif havalarla Anber Ağa'yı eğlendirdikten sonra rakı tepsisini getirerek ağanın önüne koyar ve bir iki kadeh birlikte yuvarlamayı müteakip Arap soyunarak udu da hanımının eline verir ve bir iki terennüm akabinde Zâtıgül Hanım kendine mahsus maharet-i fevkalade ile çiftetelli çalmaya başlar idi.

Çiftetelliye sıra gelince Anber Ağa her manasıyla sarhoş olduğundan hanım çiftetelli çaldığı avânda bizim Anber Ağa dostumuz da kalkıp oynamaya ve göbek çalkalamaya başlar idi.

influence of nationalism that occurred since the nineteenth century. The way in which the Empire's modernisation programme fell short of fulfilling the expectations of its subjects particularly in the Balkans is represented through Zâtıgül's sexual dissatisfaction:

> As these [sexual] treatments, which came into existence with the artificial tool, were obviously not able to satisfy women properly, and Ms. Zâtıgül was about the age of thirty-five or thirty-six during which women of that age have strong sexual desires, poor Anber Ağa could not satisfy [her] deservedly and having a life with the negro seemed quite dark to the poor [woman].
>
> […] Because spending a life with a coal black, bone-dry negro was always dark, its day would not be different than its night, it would be fitting to name this way of living painful […] In the daytime, benefitting from Ağa's absence Ms. [Zâtıgül] used to take walks in the garden and to bewail her ruined youth. (8-9)[37]

On the occasion of these garden walks, Zâtıgül and the gardener's apprentice Ömer, a handsome and bulky twenty-two-year-old man, start having an affair. If one allegorically reads Zâtıgül as the Balkan communities, Ömer then represents the idea of nationalism. Her pregnancy, courtesy of Ömer, allegorically reflects then that the seed of nationalism was planted inside the

[37] Suni aletle husule gelen şu gibi muameleler benat-ı Havva'yı ol derece memnun edemeyecekleri tabii olduğundan ve Zâtıgül Hanım ise, sinnen otuz beş-otuz altı raddelerinde olup kadınlarca en ziyade sinni-i vukuf ve devr-i hevesât bu zaman idiğinden zavallı Anber Ağa'yı hakkıyla memnun edemiyor ve zenci ile geçirilen şu hayat biçareye pek muzlim geliyor idi.

[...] Simsiyah kupkuru bir zenci ile geçirilen hayatın gündüzü de gecesi gibi karanlık olacağından bu yaşayışa adeta elim bir hayat demek daha beca düşer [...] Hanım gündüzleri Ağa'nın gaybûbetinden bi'l-istifade bağa ve bahçeye çıkıp dolaşır ve yalnız kaldığı anda gençliğinin bu suretle mahvolmakta bulunduğuna ağlar idi.

Ottoman territory:

> - Oh dear Ağa! Although I knew that yours is artificial, although it gives the same pleasure I could not have imagined that it would have had an effect in this way. I have been feeling different for quite some time and I have started feeling something in my body, and since I have also seen that my belly is getting bigger unnaturally, I have wonderingly asked some neighbours and also explained the symptoms. All of them have declared in agreement that I am pregnant. I am very glad that I will give birth to your child, but I am also surprised!
> - I am glad to hear this, wife. This news made me very happy. I hope the baby is going to be male, intelligent and cunning.
> - I hope the same. (10)[38]

The narrative indicates that although the middle aged Zâtıgül had already passed and wasted her prime with Anber Ağa, the future successor is planted in her womb by Ömer. This unborn child can be connected to a new political entity, namely the nation-state.

In *Eunuchs and Sacred Boundaries in Islamic Society,* Shaun Marmon states that because eunuchs do not procreate and are not able to form a social continuity, they are often considered as competent, but not

[38] - Aman Ağa'cığım! Her ne kadar sizdekinin suni olduğunu bilir idiysem de aynı lezzeti iʿtâ etmekle beraber bu yolda tesir göstereceğine akıl erdiremez idim. Bir müddettir kendimde bir başkalık ve vücudumda da bir şeyler hissettiğim ve hele karnımın da hilâf-ı tabiat büyümekte olduğunu gördüğüm için pek merak ederek bazı komşu hanımlara sordum ve alâimini de anlattım. Cümlesi de gebe olduğumu müttefikan beyan ettiler. Sizden bir çocuk doğuracağım için dünyalar kadar memnun ve fakat bu hale de müteaccib oldum!
- Şok memnun oldu hanım! Benden bir şoşuk doğuracak olmanız beni mesrur etti. İnşallah bu şoşuk erkek ve pek zekî ve şeytan vir şey (bir şey manasında) olacak!
- Ben de öyle ümit ederim.

"complete". They are "almost childlike" and remain "perpetual children" sexually (1995: 67, 86-88). Pertev N. Boratav describes the negro eunuch as a character, "who is a stupid simpleton and nouveau riche […]" in Turkish folklore (1951: 83). Indeed, Anber Ağa answers to this description. The dialogue above makes his naive childlike attitude explicit, as he is not cognisant of the fact that the artificial penis cannot make a child. What Anber Ağa wishes for his child ironically depicts everything he does not have himself. I suggest interpreting his naiveté as the Empire's unawareness of the seriousness of rising Balkan nationalism. Engin Kılıç names this unawareness "imperial blindness" by arguing that the Empire's disdainful look towards the Balkan communities resulted in an unawareness of discerning the situation as well as the shift in power balance (2015: 50).

The Balkan communities aimed at marking off their territories under the influence of nationalism. Before the Balkan Wars, they already gained autonomy to a certain degree while recognising the Empire's legitimacy in the late nineteenth century. Like the Balkan communities, Zâtıgül wants to make a good life for Ömer and herself. From the day she declares that she is pregnant, she begins to obtain Anber Ağa's properties on the condition that the child would inherit all property. I argue that Zâtıgül's craving for Anber Ağa's wealth, as well as her affair with Ömer, strengthens the assertion that she allegorically represents the Balkan communities. Thus, Anber Ağa and Ömer epitomise the twentieth-century Ottoman Empire and the idea of nationalism respectively.

Another plotline intersects with the story of Anber Ağa, Zâtıgül and Ömer. It is given together with historical references to Istanbul sixty or seventy years before the story time. Pâkize, one of the prostitutes working in a brothel, is introduced with her daughter Envâre. Previously, Pâkize had forced her daughter to marry two old men in the past and after the death of

the husbands, the mother and the daughter had inherited their wealth and had become rich. At that time, Pâkize is planning to marry off Envâre to the third husband in order to obtain his money. Anber Ağa encounters Envâre:

> Anber Ağa […] also took the helm in order to follow Pâkize and Envâre. That night they went on an excursion there until three.
>
> […] Anber Ağa invited Envâre to his boat, and they made love in the boat.
>
> Thereby Anber Ağa's acquaintance with Envâre and Pâkize started on that day. (18)[39]

If one calculates the date sixty or seventy years before the novella – published in 1913 – the time coincides with the Crimean War (1853-1856) during which the Great Powers, namely Britain and France, took sides with the Ottoman Empire against Russia. I contend that Pâkize and her daughter Envâre might be considered as the symbols of the Great Powers that had their own interests in the Ottoman Empire. In similar fashion, Pakize and Envâre are only concerned about Anber Ağa's wealth.

Pâkize and Envâre, on the one hand, spend their time with Anber Ağa and enjoy themselves; on the other hand, they try not to make him understand that they are not virtuous, as they seem to be. When Anber Ağa shows his intent to make love with Envâre, for instance, she starts crying and says:

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[39] Anber Ağa [...] Pakize ile Envâre'yi takip edecek yolda dümeni de eline almış idi. O gece bunlar saat üçe kadar orada teferrücde bulundular.

[...] Anber Ağa bindiği sandalına Envâre'yi alarak biraz sandal dahilinde muâşaka icra etmiş idi.

İşte Anber Ağa'nın Envâre ve Pakize ile muârefe peyda etmesi bu günden başlamış idi.

> - What a trouble is being desolated in this world? […] Ağa your highness, how dare you make such an [indecent] proposal to a woman who is chaste and honourable and condemned to a bitter life with her poor mother? […] A woman who married with God's permission and her husband died a natural death is not different from an orphan. How dare you say these words to such a poor [woman]?
> - Forgive my fault my precious, my lass! I do not want to do anything without God's permission. I have some money and a house etc. If you want, I will marry you!
> - Okay but Ağa your highness, every woman, who is married to a man, wants her husband to carry out the order of God. But you are castrated, how can you act as a husband?
> - No my precious! I am a man as well! I have something imported from Europe […] how beautiful, how long [it is]. I cannot describe how much women receive sexual pleasure from it. It even can make a child! (24-26)[40]

Here, "to carry out the order of God" means "to perpetuate the human race" (Ze'evi 2006: 31). Similar to Zâtıgül, Envâre does not acknowledge Anber Ağa's masculinity reinforced by an artificial organ and explicitly alludes to his inability to procreate. Moreover, the narrative indicates that Zâtıgül is the one who preserves Anber Ağa's artificial penis. Her preservation of the

[40] - Meğer dünyada kimsesizlik ne bela imiş? […] Ağa hazretleri benim gibi iffet ve namusu ile ve bir biçare valide ile imrâr-ı hayata mahkum olan bir kadına bu yolda teklifte nasıl bulunuyorsunuz? […] Allah'ın emriyle vardığı erkeği ecel-i mev'ûduyle vefat etmiş olan bir kadın yetim ve öksüzden farksızdır. Böyle bir biçareye bu sözler nasıl söylenir?
- Kusurumu affediniz elmasım, arslanım! Ben Allah'ın emri haricinde iş yapmak istemez. Biraz para ve hane filanım var. İster iseniz sizi nikahla alacak!
- Öyle ama Ağa hazretleri kocaya varan bir kadın Allah'ın emrini yerine getirecek bir adam ister halbuki siz hadımsınız nasıl kocalık edebilirsiniz?
- Yok elmasım! Ben de erkek hem bende öyle bir şey var ki Frengistan'dan geldi […] ne güzel ne uzun kadınlar bundan o kadar keyif duyuyorlar ki tarif edemem. Şocuk bile yapıyor!

artificial penis, as the symbol of the phallus, shifts the power from Anber Ağa to Zâtıgül. It evokes how the power balance between the Ottoman Empire and the Balkan communities changed after the spread of nationalism since the nineteenth century.

When Envâre informs her mother that Anber Ağa is able to procreate through his artificial penis, Pâkize realises that there is something wrong with Zâtıgül's pregnancy. Likewise, Zâtıgül suspects Anber Ağa; she thinks that the one who is corrupted in terms of skin colour is also corrupted in terms of morality.[41] Ultimately, Zâtıgül and Pâkize come to understand that the other is hatching a plot to capture Anber Ağa's wealth. Both swarm around Anber Ağa, just as the Balkan communities and the Great Powers took advantage of the Empire's territories. Meanwhile, the fact that Ömer keeps insisting on being the legal father of the child might suggest the extent to which the idea of Balkan nationalism reached a serious level and caused an unavoidable conflict with the Empire.

In order to capture Anber Ağa's wealth, Zâtıgül asks İlhami Efendi, a respected man from the neighbourhood, for help. İlhami Efendi has pity for Zâtıgül who has to spend her life with such a "negro". He seems to represent Russia that provoked nationalism among the Balkan communities within the Ottoman territory, and he incites Zâtıgül against Anber Ağa:

[41] In the novella, there are several references to the blackness of Anber Ağa. Boratav claims that the race prejudice motif is a common motif in Turkish folk tales. With regard to the critique of racial prejudice towards black people, he refers to a saint's legend, Zengi Ata from the twelfth century. In this legend, a sultan's daughter Anber Ana was married to dark-skinned Hakim Süleyman Ata. However, she wished to have a husband with a whiter skin. When Hakim Süleyman Ata heard his wife's wish, he wished that God would give her a darker-skinned husband. Eventually, when he died, his wish came true and Anber Ana married a negro shepherd and his best disciple, Zengi Ata (1951: 84-85). I suggest that the eunuch's name "Anber" might have been chosen to make a reference to this legend. See also Mehmet Fuat Köprülü. *Early Mystics in Turkish Literature* Trans. Gary Leiser and Devin DeWeese. London: Routledge, 2006: 113-114.

> My daughter! I already do not like eunuchs. They sit with women for eight hours but they do not want to sit with men even for a minute. Not only that he made life miserable for a young and beautiful woman like you, his decision to marry to the daughter of a famous prostitute Pâkize has to be deplored. Daughter, for God's sake, I am [a] witness, there were also a few people together with me. This Arab gave everything – up to the shirt he used to wear – he used to own to you. Let him marry, he cannot make use of his property. I do not have anything to say if he has more than that. As matters stand, you have deserved all of his properties. There is a lot to say my daughter. Because of these eunuchs, lots of things happened in the palaces of sultans! In order to understand these past incidents, one has to read Ottoman history. Since our historians and chroniclers are the sycophants of their time, they did not properly write [what happened in the past]. One has to read the Ottoman history written by Europeans so s/he becomes informed about details. However, they also sometimes write [under the influence of] religious fanaticism, [hence,] while reading [these European historiographies] you have to compare [them with the native ones]! Their writings should not be accepted as utterly correct either. (32-33)[42]

[42] Kızım! Ben zaten bu harem ağalarını sevmem. Bunlar kadınlarla sekiz saat oturur da erkeklerle bir dakika bile oturmak istemezler. Sizin gibi genç ve güzel bir kadına dünyasını zindan etmekle kanaat etmeyip bir de meşhur umumhanecilerden Pakize'nin kızını nikahla almaya kalkmış olmasına doğrusu ne kadar teessüf edilse azdır. Kızım Allah için ben şahidim, benimle beraber birkaç kişi daha var idi. Bu Arap arkasındaki gömleğine kadar size verdi varsın izdivaç etsin malına mutasarrıf olamaz. Fazla bir şeysi var ise ona diyeceğim yok. Şimdiki halde hepsi bi'l-istihkak sizin malınızdır. Daha söyleyecek çok şeyler var kızım. Bu harem ağalarının yüzünden padişahlarımızın saraylarında neler olmuş neler! Tarih-i Osmanî'yi insan okumalı ki bunların hepsini anlasın. Bizim müverrihlerimiz ve hele vakanüvislerimiz umumiyetle bulundukları devrin dalkavukları olduklarından doğru yazmazlar. Avrupalıların yazdıkları Osmanlı tarihlerini insan okumalı ki insan bu dakâyıka muttali olsun. Fakat onlarda da bazen taassub-ı dini sevkiyle birçok şeyler yazdıklarından

As mentioned above, the Empire's unawareness of rising Balkan nationalism and the inadequacy of fulfilling the expectations of its subjects are represented through Anber Ağa's unawareness of his sexual incapability. Besides, İlhami Efendi states, "[w]e need a lot of time to reform ourselves!" [*Bizim daha adam olmaklığımıza pek çok vakit lazım!*] (33). This statement literally translates as "we need a lot of time to grow into a man" and that profoundly shows the extent to which Ottoman modernisation is part of the question of masculinity.

Anber Ağa and Envâre's wedding preparation can also be interpreted as the efforts to reconcile the Ottoman tradition with modernity. Nevertheless, when Anber Ağa is occupied with the wedding preparations, Zâtıgül takes advantage and captures his properties. This can be read as how the Balkan communities gained their own territories at the turn of the century when the Empire was engaged in its modernisation programme. After the wedding party, the newlywed couple Anber Ağa and Envâre go to their room:

> Envâre was congenitally beautiful and hot.
> Along with her blue eyes, black eyebrows and black curly hair added to her transparent white skin she was really charming.
> Her cream low-cut wedding dress especially increased her freshness, so much so that Anber Ağa dithered and started becoming excited as he looked at her.
> […]
> Anber Ağa's eyes […] were [staring at the point] between Envâre's two legs!

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okurken muhakeme etmeli! Bunların yazdıklarını da doğrusu bu imiş deyip sahih addeylememeli.

> […] Anber Ağa convinced Envâre to take off her dress.
> In the meantime Envâre – regardless of the consequences – asked her husband:
> - I heard that your organ is artificial but there has been nothing mentioned about its length yet. As you know the wedding night means the practice of this order. What if your organ is longer than necessary!
> - Don't worry about it, my precious! I am positive that it will satisfy you in every aspect. I used it many times.
> - Whatever, I don't understand, but let's see what is going to happen? (41-42)[43]

Anber Ağa takes off his clothes and goes to the bathroom. However, he does not come back for quite a while. We retrospectively learn that when Zâtıgül realised that he is about to marry to Envâre, she asked Ömer to bring a snake and put it in the box of Anber Ağa's artificial organ. Dror Ze'evi underlines the symbolic meaning of a snake as the male organ explaining dream interpretations in the Ottoman culture. The snake as a phallic symbol becomes reminiscent of "an enemy, and paradoxically may also represent a

[43] Envâre hadd-i zatında güzel ve kanı sıcak bir şey idi.
Kâfur renginde beyazlığına inzimam eden mavi gözleri siyah kaşları ve kıvırcık siyah saçları arasında hakikaten pek cazibevâr idi.
Hele sırtındaki krem renginde dekolte gelinlik libası bunun tarâvetini bir daha arttırmış olduğundan buna baktıkça Anber Ağa'nın da eli ayağı titremeye ve kendinden geçmeye başlamış idi.
[…]
Anber Ağa'nın gözü [...] Envâre'nin iki bacağının arasında idi!
[…] Anber Ağa Envare'yi soyunmağa irzâ etti.
Bu esnada Envâre – artık ne olursa olsun – zevci olan zata sordu:
- Sizin aletinizin suni olduğunu işittim fakat tûlu hakkında henüz bir söz cereyan etmedi. Zifaf da malumunuz ya bu emrin icrası demektir. Sakın lüzumundan fazla cesamette bir şey olmasın!
- O cihetleri merak etmeyiniz elmasım! Sizi her vechle memnun edeceğine eminim. Ben onu çok kullandım.
- Artık ne ise, böylesine de aklım ermiyor ise de bakalım ne olacak?

woman or a child" (2006: 109-110). The replacement of the artificial penis with a snake, to a certain extent, demonstrates how a woman enemy, Zâtıgül, betrays Anber Ağa not only by spurning his masculinity and having a baby by Ömer, but also by endangering his life. In the dark bathroom, Anber Ağa does not realise that it is not his organ, but a snake. Ultimately, he dies because of snakebite.

At the end, the narrative turns out badly for everyone apart from Zâtıgül and Ömer. Zâtıgül, as Anber Ağa's only successor, becomes rich after inheriting all his belongings. Zâtıgül and Ömer's happy ending and the birth of their daughter Dilaşub can be read as the independence of the Balkan communities and the establishment of their nation-states. Zâtıgül's cheating on Anber Ağa never receives any criticism in the entire narrative, because she used to be with a man who is not actually a "man". On the other side, Anber Ağa is punished due to his lack of masculinity and improper lust. His punishment might be interpreted as the probable end of the Ottoman Empire if it does not pull itself together. In similar fashion, because Pâkize and Envâre do not actually search for true love or sexual satisfaction, but only money, they are also punished by regret and death respectively. Pâkize greatly regrets encouraging her daughter to marry Anber Ağa. She starts to repent a hundred, maybe five hundred times a day. As well, Envâre catches cutaneous tuberculosis and spends all her money in order to get well. However, instead of getting better, her situation becomes worse every day. After six-months of treatment, she commits suicide.

In this section, I have discussed the extent to which the loss of imperial power is inevitably tied to the loss of masculinity in the late Ottoman Empire. Throughout my analysis, I have suggested reading the political actors of the time allegorically. In this respect, the eunuch's castration and lack of a penis are indicative of the Empire's political

predicament and inadequacy in fulfilling the expectation of its subjects particularly in the Balkans. Anber Ağa experiences the first violation in his masculinity after his castration. He then buys an artificial penis and becomes a "man". Because women around him do not acknowledge his masculinity, he loses his masculinity for the second time. The artificial penis disavows and acknowledges his lack of a penis simultaneously as does the little boy when he realises that his mother does not have a penis. Accordingly, his artificial penis represents Ottoman modernisation and becomes a fetish object throughout the narrative. In this regard, his struggle regaining his masculinity is similar to the Empire's struggle reclaiming its imperial power in world politics. *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası* demonstrates how Ottoman imperial power fails as the embodiment of masculinity, and how modernity seems as a fetish object compensating the task of modernity.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analysed two narratives: *Kesik Bıyık* and *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası*. Throughout my analyses, I have contended that the loss of Ottoman imperial power was closely linked to the loss of masculinity. I maintain that the Empire's inadequacy in keeping pace with modernity led to the occurrence of castration anxiety – as exemplified in the two narratives. On that point, *Kesik Bıyık* describes the tension between hegemonic Ottoman masculinity and 'modern' masculinities. It allegorically touches upon the change in hegemonic Ottoman masculinity by referring to the different cultural connotations of the handlebar and American-style moustaches. The handlebar moustache symbolises Ottoman tradition and hegemonic masculinity, whereas the American-style moustache demonstrates masculinities under the influence of modernity. In this respect, the trimming of the handlebar moustache into an American-style one stands for the

Empire's modernisation attempts that, to a great extent, lead to the loss of Ottoman tradition and hegemonic masculinity. Differently from *Kesik Bıyık*, *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası* depicts the castration anxiety in real terms by using a castrated male slave, the eunuch. Here, the eunuch's castration allegorically depicts the loss of imperial power particularly in the Balkans that led to the further decline of the Empire's masculine role in world politics. Despite the loss of its imperial power, both *Kesik Bıyık* and *Zifaf Gecesi: Bir Harem Ağasının Muâşakası* show the ways in which the Ottoman Empire still searched for new ways to resurrect its masculine role in the beginning of the twentieth century. Manly signs – the handlebar moustache and the penis respectively – are represented as constitutive elements of hegemonic Ottoman masculinity.

However, their losses appear like castration: either a symbolic castration, trimming a moustache or a literal one, a castration operation. On the one hand, the American-style moustache and the artificial penis turn into fetish objects that disavow the Empire's socio-political castration. Accordingly, the loss of imperial power, and the Empire's lack of modernity are disavowed by means of these fetish objects. On the other hand, these objects concurrently become the acknowledgment of the situation the Ottoman Empire was in. The emulation of an American-style moustache and the import of the artificial penis signify the Empire's symbolic castration and the loss of hegemonic Ottoman masculinity vis-à-vis modernisation, while manifesting the idea that different masculinities are also possible. Therefore, castration anxiety in hegemonic Ottoman masculinity makes both the acknowledgement and the disavowal of the Empire's socio-political anxieties against modernity manifest.