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

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Chapter Three

Adolescence in/of the Ottoman Empire

Anahtar Deliğinde (Through the Keyhole) and *Kaymak Tabağı* (The Plate of Cream) begin with the reminiscences of the first sexual encounter of the male and female protagonists respectively. In *Anahtar Deliğinde*, Ali compares his physical intimacy with a prostitute, a so-called Mademoiselle, to his wrestling with the gendarmerie sergeant Osman's daughter in Çabakçur, when she stole his moustache oil from his pocket and threw it down her cleavage to stop him taking it back. The way Ali describes his physical intimacies both with the sergeant's daughter and Mademoiselle remains 'innocent'. He does not speak of anything explicitly sexual; his sexual involvement is only implied in the guise of "wrestling". On the other hand, the protagonist Kaymak Tabağı informs us that she has a certain familiarity with penises owing to playing with boys in the garden during which she saw their tiny penises and thought they were okra. Her play with the boys in the garden went beyond simple children's play. Nevertheless, she is not fully aware what a penis looks like, as seeing a penis of a mature man surprises her later in the narrative. Besides the fact that these were their first encounters, what is striking in these narratives is the childlike perception of these encounters rather than adult depictions.

Both *Anahtar Deliğinde* and *Kaymak Tabağı* revolve around the sexual developments of the protagonists in the transition from childhood to adulthood. Although there are numerous definitions and various limitations of childhood and/or adolescence depending on its legal definition, culture and period, getting acquainted with sex and one's own sexuality is an event that

accompanies the passage into adulthood. This chapter begins with contextualising childhood and adolescence in late Ottoman society. Because I read *Anahtar Deliğinde* and *Kaymak Tabağı* as examples of the *Bildungsroman*, the following section briefly explains the genre *Bildungsroman* also including issues like the impact of gender on its definition. By embedding the issue of gender into the discussion, this chapter explores the differences that occur in the narrating of sexual developments of the male and female protagonists in the Ottoman Turkish *Bildungsroman*. It further scrutinises how their developments can be understood related to late Ottoman society in terms of their gender difference.

Contextualising Childhood and Adolescence in Late Ottoman Society

The title of the workshop *Little Pitchers Have Big Ears: Social and Cultural History of Children and Youth During the First World War*, organised by Nazan Maksudyan in Istanbul in 2014, refers to a very well known Turkish proverb, "*çocuktan al haberi*", which literally means [one] receive[s] news from the child.[44] It signifies how children might reveal something that is concealed by adults. In her book *Orphans and Destitute Children in the Late Ottoman Empire*, Maksudyan writes a history of Ottoman children by regarding them as "social actors" and suggests investigating their own lived experiences. Therefore, Maksudyan receives 'news' about Ottoman childhood from children themselves. This investigation, she indicates, is also significant because it expands the studies on urbanisation, industrialisation, nationalism and state formation in the late Ottoman period (2014: 3, 8).

Scholarly works on the history of childhood have undergone radical

[44] Nazan Maksudyan. *Little Pitchers Have Big Ears: Social and Cultural History of Children and Youth During the First World War*, 27-28 May 2014, Istanbul, sponsored by Istanbul Kemerburgaz University, organised by Nazan Maksudyan. Retrieved from https://soundcloud.com/ottoman-history-podcast/little-pitchers-have-big-ears

changes – from the French historian Philippe Ariès' pioneering book *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien régime* (Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life) to Maksudyan's attempt to write the history of Ottoman childhood based on children's own experiences. Ariès suggests that the concept of childhood appeared between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe. With reference to medieval iconography, he postulates:

> In medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist; this is not to suggest that children were neglected, forsaken or despised. The idea of childhood is not to be confused with affection for children: it corresponds to an awareness of the particular nature of childhood, that particular nature which distinguishes the child from the adult, even the young adult. In medieval society this awareness was lacking. (1962: 128)

However, Ariès has been widely criticised because he exclusively considers the past through the lens of the present. In her book *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900*, Linda A. Pollock states one of the most challenging criticisms raised against Philippe Ariès' work:

> Many historians have subscribed to the mistaken belief that, if a past society did not possess the contemporary Western concept of childhood, then that society had no such concept. This is a totally indefensible viewpoint – why should past societies have regarded children in the same way as Western society today? Moreover, even if children were regarded differently in the past, this does not mean they were therefore not regarded as children. (1983:263)

Pollock reveals the historically contingent social construction of childhood that is not intrinsic to the modern period, but one that has varied greatly in different periods and cultures. Therefore, there is not a single or universal childhood, but various childhoods. Even though I agree with Pollock that childhood as a variable social construction depends on different eras and cultures, my contention is that to define it without regarding the current understanding of childhood is not possible. Historical definitions of childhood as well as other socio-historical constructions are very much determined by the present perception. However, this does not change Ariès' essentialist approach to the history of childhood.

Regarding the variety of childhoods, Nazan Çiçek draws attention to non-Western societies in general and to Ottoman society in particular. She indicates that although non-Western societies have authentic perceptions concerning childhoods that find their meanings within the contexts of their own historical and cultural references, these societies have been influenced by modern discourses on childhood as a result of forging closer ties with the Western world (2016a: 51). As discussed in the previous chapters, modernisation attempting to keep pace with the West altered various socio-cultural and political features of the society, and childhood had its share in these attempts in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Ottoman Empire. The modern perception of childhood necessitated repositioning the child's relation with family, education and government institutions, and the revision of traditional attitudes towards the child in the late Ottoman Empire. Maksudyan draws attention to studies on Ottoman and Turkish childhoods that are based on Ariès' theory, which associates the concept of childhood with "modernity" (2014: 7).[45] However, differently from Ariès' methodology

[45] See Cüneyd Okay. *Meşrutiyet Dönemi Çocuk Edebiyatı*. İstanbul: Medyatek Yayınları, 2002, Cüneyd Okay. *Eski Harfli Çocuk Dergileri*. İstanbul: Kitabevi, 1999, Cüneyd Okay

applied in such studies, Çiçek suggests that the repositioning and revision of Ottoman childhood did not lead to a complete rejection of existing practices regarding children, or a brand-new perception of childhood that was centred around its modern Western perception. On the contrary, it resulted in the emergence of hybrid forms of childhood with regard to distinctive needs of the state and society (Çiçek 2016a: 52).

Allison James and Alan Prout speak of the way in which the twentieth century was reputed to be the so-called "century of the child", in the sense that children attracted a great deal of attention and a lot of importance was given to legal, medical and educational institutions as part of "the interests of the child" (1997: 1). These "interests", in return, brought about the social, political, judicial and medical institutionalisation of childhood. Children were kept away from violence, sex, hard labour and politics. By the late nineteenth century, children's involvement in the labour market was strictly regulated and education gained increasing importance in the West (Çiçek 2016b: 23). Benjamin C. Fortna informs us that child labour was previously the norm in the pre-modern Ottoman Empire (2016: ix). However, children's education, health, protection and entertainment also turned out to be matters of concern for the intelligentsia and were institutionalised at the beginning of the twentieth century (Çiçek 2016b: 28). Children began to be recognised and legitimised both by the state and the society, and they progressively became regular members of the society (Fortna 2016: x).

Children's formal education was an important part of the idea of progress during the Enlightenment. The works of John Locke (1632-1704)

Osmanlı Çocuk Hayatında Yenileşmeler, 1850-1900. İstanbul: Kırkambar Yayınları, 1998, Bekir Onur. *Çocuk, Tarih ve Toplum*. İstanbul: İmge Kitabevi Yayınları, 2007, Bekir Onur. *Türkiye'de Çocukluğun Tarihi*. İstanbul: İmge Kitabevi Yayınları, 2005, Bekir Onur, ed. *Toplumsal Tarihte Çocuk: Sempozyum, 23–24 Nisan 1993*. İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1994.

and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) became crucial in forming perceptions of childhood during and after this period. In his work *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693), Locke objects to the long-established Christian doctrine of original sin and proclaims that infants are not corrupted at birth. Instead, he considers children as *tabula rasa* and indicates that the environment in which children grow up determines their development and that they can be improved through education (Brockliss 2016: 2). In addition, Rousseau attributes purity and innocence to children because of their special nature. He contends that what corrupts children is society and searches for ways to rescue society from corruption (Jenks 1996: 123-124). In *Émile ou De l'éducation* (Emile, or On Education, 1762) Rousseau indicates that children are born good; he attempts to attract attention to the needs of children, who are entitled to special treatment and care (Jenks 1996: 73). As well, William Wordsworth (1770-1850) and other Romantics promote the idea that children are innately innocent. Various authors, psychologists and educational theorists take the perceptions of childhood in the Enlightenment period a step further and suggest that children are entitled to happiness and should be allowed to linger in childhood as long as possible (Brockliss 2016: 3). The Enlightenment's idea of progress and the importance given to education turned the child into a subject, and more significantly "a promise of the future good". The child became the indication of a civilisation (Jenks 1996: 67).

Çiçek contends that childhood in the late Ottoman Empire was not perceived the same way it was in the West; it was seen as a duty-laden preparation phase for adulthood (2016a: 54). Children were expected to grow up as soon as possible. This expectation contradicts the Western romantic perception of childhood, which was regarded as the golden age of human life, a period that should be extended as long as possible. Ottoman intellectuals

and the political elite were pragmatically selective in describing the main parameters of childhood in order to ensure the Ottoman Empire's continuation (Çiçek 2016a: 55).[46] The improvement of children was considered equal to the improvement of society. Because children were seen as "the trustees of the future of the Empire", modernising policies prioritised formal education for children (Duben and Behar 1991: 226, 229-30). Formal education was not a popular phenomenon until the emergence of the state school; child rearing was, to a great extent, a responsibility of family. However, the state school together with other socio-political changes began to gradually dominate attitudes towards children in the late Ottoman society (Fortna 2016: viii-ix). In this period, Ottoman childhood took shape within an adult discourse. As Maksudyan writes, "[a]ll accounts of childhood are structured by the impossibility of fully separating children from adult desires and control" (2014: 3).[47] By serving the Empire's interests, the educational reforms, to a great extent, targeted the 'saving' of society by means of children. Late Ottoman childhood remained therefore strongly attached to adulthood.

Regarding childhood in *fin de siècle* Europe, John Neubauer writes,

> [w]e are accustomed to think of nineteenth-century childhood in terms of the authoritarian family and school structures of Victorian

[46] The attention given to children was not limited to the late Ottoman period; it continued in the early Republican period targeting the transformation of children into "proto-citizens whom it hoped to mould into loyal and productive servants" (Fortna 2016: x).

[47] Maksudyan refers to scholars who draw on the works of Michel Foucault and stress the worsening conditions of children due to the institutionalisation of childhood in the modern period. See Norbert Finzsch, and Robert Jütte, eds. *Institutions of Confinement: Hospitals, Asylums, and Prisons in Western Europe and North America, 1500-1950*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, Erving Goffman. *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. New York: Anchor Books, 1961, David J. Rothman. *The Discovery of The Asylum: Social Order And Disorder in The New Republic*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971, Jacques Donzelot. *The Policing of Families*. Trans. Robert Hurley. 1st ed. New York: Pantheon Books, 1979.

> England, Prussian Germany, Puritan New England, and imperial France, which extended themselves into the twentieth century and led to the generational and Oedipal conflicts dramatized by Freud, Kafka, and the expressionists. (1992: 11)

The importance attached to education together with long-reaching social and institutional changes in health, science and technology, and family structures were not limited to the institutionalisation of childhood, but also led to the occurrence, even invention, of "adolescence" around 1900 in Europe. The term adolescence refers to a period of transition from the onset of puberty to adult maturity. The interlocking discourses on adolescence in psychoanalysis, pedagogy, sociology, and in literature attested to the fact that a new category in human life had been established by the end of the nineteenth century (Neubauer 1992: 4-6). The focus on adolescence in literature presented "its crisis of identity" whose diagnosticians "were Dostoyevski, Nietzsche, and Freud, its centers *fin-de-siècle* Vienna, as well as Dresden, Berlin, Munich, and Paris" (Neubauer 1992: 9-10).

I suggest that adolescence constitutes a dynamic period, as it is a transition from childhood to adulthood, both of which are more static in comparison. In this sense, adolescence is comparable to the late Ottoman period, a period that was also transitional with regard to the Empire's modernisation on several fronts. Rapid social and institutional changes that stemmed from modernisation and constituted fluidity in society were often echoed in Ottoman Turkish literature through the protagonists' adolescent years. I suggest that the years in question are quite significant in the late Ottoman context, since children were expected to become beneficial for the Empire in these years. Both *Anahtar Deliğinde* and *Kaymak Tabağı* narrate passages into adulthood inherently in the form of the *Bildungsroman*. Hence,

the next section concisely discusses the genre of the *Bildungsroman*.

Whose and Which *Bildungsroman*?

In *Truth and Method*, Hans-Georg Gadamer considers *Bildung* as one of the most significant ideas of the eighteenth century (2006: 8). Indeed, the concept *Bildung* had been a lasting feature of the Enlightenment by virtue of a rapport between aesthetic, moral, rational, and scientific education (Martini 1991: 5). It means "self-formation", "education", or "cultivation", and it extends back a long time in German. The *Bildungsroman* – the novel of "education", "development" or "formation" – is also related to the Enlightenment, as is *Bildung*. The Enlightenment's idea of progress also manifested itself in the *Bildungsroman*. The term *Bildungsroman* became popular with Wilhelm Dilthey's (1833-1911) use of it in his *Das Leben Schleiermachers* (The Life of Schleiermacher, 1870) and *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung* (Poetry and Experience, 1906). Although Dilthey is the one who made the term widely popular, he is not the one who invented it. Karl Morgenstern (1770-1852) initially spoke of the *Bildungroman* in a lecture *Über den Geist und Zusammenhang einer Reihe philosophischer Romane* (On the Spirit and Connection of a Series of Philosophical Novels, 1810), which was followed by two other lectures: *Über das Wesen des Bildungsromans* (On the Nature of the Bildungsroman, 1819) and *Zur Geschichte des Bildgunsromans* (On the History of the Bildgunsroman, 1820) (Martini 1991: 1-3).

Tobias Boes draws attention to Morgenstern's use of the term *Bildungsroman*, which is at variance with Dilthey's (2009: 648). Dilthey regards the *Bildungsroman* as a specifically German accomplishment that was a result of the peculiar political conditions in Germany as well as opposition to the French and English novels of social realism (Boes 2009:

647). In *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*, his historical and national delineation of the *Bildungsroman* emphasises “the individualism of a culture whose sphere of interest was limited to private life” (1997: 335). Dilthey’s approach to the *Bildungsroman* brought about its long-established tradition of “inwardness” and “personality” to the detriment of social entanglements and interpersonal relations. On the contrary, Morgenstern’s approach to the *Bildungsroman* is more comprehensively based on its universality as a subgenre of the modern novel. Hence, differently from Dilthey, Morgenstern asserts that the *Bildungsroman* does not gaze inward, at the development of the protagonist; instead, it gazes outward, into the real world. Therefore, it advances its reader’s development (Boes 2009: 648). In other words, Morgenstern connects the concept *Bildung* to the protagonist’s development and education as well as to the reader’s development. By doing so, he includes the reader’s reception that is lacking in Dilthey’s definition (Hardin 1991: xiii-xiv).

There is no consensus on the definition of the *Bildungsroman*. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s (1749-1832) well-known work *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship, 1795-1796) is regarded as an early example of the genre. Jeffrey L. Sammons contends that the emergence of the German *Bildungsroman* coincided with the late eighteenth century, and it became an instant success in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Later, it re-emerged in the twentieth century thanks to the modernist neo-Romantic revival (1991: 32). Here, Sammons argues that Dilthey’s use of the term does not signify a European literary genre; instead it particularly refers to a German tradition (1991: 28). Drawing on Dilthey’s use, he himself also underlines the ‘Germanness’ of the *Bildungsroman*, which has “something to do with *Bildung*”. Although Sammons accepts that each example of the *Bildungsroman* might not have a direct relation with the

German novel, he suggests considering the historical and ideological limits of the *Bildungsroman* with regard to *Bildung* (1991: 41-42). Therefore, to a great extent, his argument remains essentialist.

Jerome Hamilton Buckley's *Seasons of Youth: The Bildungsroman from Dickens to Golding* focuses on the definition and development of the *Bildungsroman*. By applying the term in its broadest sense, Buckley defines the *Bildungsroman* as "the novel of youth or apprenticeship" (1974: 13). He enumerates a list of characteristics of the *Bildungsroman*: childhood, the conflict of generations, provinciality, the larger society, self-education, alienation, ordeal by love, the search for a vocation and a working philosophy (1974: 18). Such an essentialist approach to the *Bildungsroman* attracted criticism from various scholars and from different perspectives. For instance, with reference to Fredric Jameson, who regards literary genres as "experimental constructs" (1981: 145), Boes argues that Buckley does not pay very much attention to the way in which modernist experimentation might implicate the *Bildungsroman* as a problem or else relates to its form (2006: 232).

Prior to his discussion of the *Bildungsroman*, in his essay "The *Bildungsroman* and Its Significance in the History of Realism (Toward a Historical Typology of the Novel)", Mikhail Bakhtin classifies the subcategories of the novel with regard to the formulation of the protagonist and historical time. He speaks of three subcategories: the travel novel, the novel of ordeal and the biographical novel. He claims that differently from these subcategories, which depict the ready-made protagonist whose changing life forms the novel – though the protagonist remains unchanged – the *Bildungsroman* portrays "the image of *man in the process of becoming* in the novel" [emphasis in the original] (1986: 19). Here, historical-national time enters into the protagonist's environment, and it fundamentally changes

his destiny and life (Bakhtin 1986: 21). Bakhtin indicates, in the *Bildungsroman*, "man's individual emergence is inseparably linked to historical emergence" (1986: 23). The changing world is not peripheral, but the protagonist

> emerges *along with the world* and he reflects the historical emergence of the world itself. He is no longer within an epoch, but on the border between two epochs, at the transition point from one to the other. This transition is accomplished in him and through him. [emphasis in the original] (1986: 23)

In *The Way of the World*, Franco Moretti considers the *Bildungsroman* as a natural result of the political, social, economic changes in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe. He draws attention to a symbolic shift in the conception of the protagonist that occurred in European literature. Accordingly, he moves beyond the definition of the *Bildungsroman* and aims at exploring the ideology behind this symbolic shift in modern European literature. By giving Achilles, Hector and Ulysses as examples, he claims that the protagonist used to be a mature man, an adult. Together with Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, Moretti writes that youth becomes "the most meaningful part of life" at the end of the eighteenth century (1987: 3). Instead of regarding the *Bildungsroman* as a mere German genre, he discusses the *Bildungsroman* in relation to modernity and the production system. With reference to Karl Mannheim, who defines being young as "not yet being an adult" in stable communities or in traditional societies, Moretti highlights the importance of youth, who become the indication of a new era and represent the changes in society due to capitalism,

social mobility and interiority (1987: 4). At the turn of the eighteenth century, he claims that

> […] Europe plunges into modernity, but without possessing a *culture* of modernity. If youth, therefore, achieves its symbolic centrality, and the 'great narrative' of the *Bildungsroman* comes into being, this is because Europe has to attach a meaning, not so much to youth, as to *modernity*. [emphasis in the original] (1987: 5)

Moretti considers the *Bildungsroman* as the "symbolic form" of modernity and youth as "modernity's 'essence'" that signifies the dynamism and instability of modernity (1987: 5). He regards the *Bildungsroman* as a literary tool that reflects the conflict between the ideal of self-determination and the demands of socialisation (1987: 15). In doing so, he applies to various works from European literature such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, Jane Austen's (1775-1817) *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), Stendhal's (1783-1842) *Le Rouge et le Noir* (The Red and the Black, 1830) and *La Chartreuse de Parme* (The Charterhouse of Parma, 1839), Alexander Pushkin's (1799-1837) *Eugene Onegin* (1825-1832), Honoré de Balzac's (1799-1850) *Illusions perdues* (Lost Illusions, 1837-1843), George Eliot's (1819-1880) *Daniel Deronda* (1876) and Charles Dicken's (1812-1870) *David Copperfield* (1850).

Jed Esty's *Unseasonable Youth: Modernism, Colonialism, and the Fiction of Development* advances Moretti's argument by inserting nationhood into the discussions of the *Bildungsroman*. By looking at modernist examples by Joseph Conrad (1857-1924), Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), and James Joyce (1882-1941), he demonstrates "the disruption of developmental time in reciprocal allegories of self-making and nation-building". (2012: 2). He

investigates the conflicts concerned with the development of discourses of self, nation, and empire in the modernist *Bildungsroman* (2012: 3). Esty first evokes the symbolic role of nationhood that puts modern societies into their final forms just like adulthood, which is more often than not considered as the final form of the modern subject (Esty 2012: 4). Instead of tackling transformations of childhood and adolescence into adulthood – as indications of nationhood –, he explores narratives of "frozen" and "arrested" developments of the protagonists in modernist British literature.

The *Bildungsroman* has been mostly considered a "masculine" genre. Scholars such as Karl Morgenstern and Jerome Hamilton Buckley regard the *Bildungsroman* as the story of the development of a young male protagonist.[48] Karl Morgenstern is interested in the pedagogical and practical value of Friedrich Maximilian von Klinger's (1752-1831) novels that are in line with the Enlightenment's moral and social pragmatism. He considers Klinger's works equal to the works of Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813), Goethe and Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805) with regard to "masculine strength of character" (Martini 1991: 9). His value judgment concerning "masculine strength" highlights the issue of gender upon genre. Buckley also limits his definition of the *Bildungsroman* to male development. On the other hand, the editors of the collection of essays *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development* criticise Buckley's definition of the *Bildungsroman* for its male-centredness. In contrast to his definition of the male protagonist's expected adventure, which begins with leaving "the repressive atmosphere of home […] to make his way independently in the city […]" (Buckley 1974: 17), Elizabeth Abel et al. argue that the female protagonist is usually not able to have an independent life in the city by

[48] Also see Michael Minden. *The German Bildungsroman: Incest and Inheritance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, Susanne Howe. *Wilhelm Meister and his English Kinsmen: Apprentices to Life*. New York: AMS Press, 1966.

leaving her house in nineteenth-century fiction. Regarding pre-Oedipal relationships, they suggest, the female protagonist follows a "more conflicted, less direct" way in the course of development in comparison with the development of the male protagonist (1983: 8, 10-11).

Similarly, Marianne Hirsch draws attention to a dichotomy that confines the female protagonist inside and moves the male protagonist outside in nineteenth-century fiction. She informs us that compared to the conventional plot of the *Bildungsroman*, the inner developments follow a discontinuous and circular path and end with going back to origins. In this respect, repetitive patterns become predominant rather than progressive patterns in female development (1983: 26). Mary Anne Ferguson agrees with Hirsch and indicates that "[t]he pattern for the female novel of development has been largely circular, rather than spiral: women in fiction remain at home" (1983: 228).

Also, in her book *Unbecoming Women: British Women Writers and the Novel of Development*, Susan Fraiman explores novels written by and about women in England between 1778 and 1860. She discusses the way in which the male *Bildungsroman* is different from the female "novel of development". Compared to her male counterpart, Fraiman argues, the development of the female protagonist is not linear, and she is allowed a far smaller range of experience (1993: 6). Thus, rather than focusing on the *Bildungsroman*, which is defined by and about men, she suggests the idea of considering "plural formations" in fiction of female development (1993: 12-13). Fraiman concludes that the juxtaposition of "female" and "*Bildungsroman*" assimilates gender to the genre and makes "it more difficult for the first interrogate the second" (1993: 143).

Susan J. Rosowski also draws attention to the masculine definitions of the *Bildungsroman* and suggests the term "novel of awakening", which

shares certain characteristics with the *Bildungsroman* in terms of learning the essence, meaning and pattern of the world. However, she underlines the notion that the female protagonist "must learn these lessons as a woman". In female development, conflict is, to a great extent, internal; it is between inside and outside, between the imaginative self of personal value and the conventional self of social value (1983:49-50). Rosowski names female development narratives as "the novels of awakening", an awakening to restriction and conflict (1983: 64).

Rita Felski mentions "the novel of awakening" in a different context. She refers to a change that occurred in the representation of the female protagonist, who is condemned to "the journey from the parental to the marital home and whose destiny remains permanently linked to that of her male companion" in the nineteenth-century narrative of education or apprenticeship (1989: 125). Felski argues that twentieth-century female self-discovery narratives do not depict marriage as the goal of female development as did the nineteenth-century novels. Instead, these narratives mostly begin with the female protagonist's separation from her partner and criticise "old" perspectives on women suggested by heterosexual romance that used to present female passivity, reliance, and inferiority (1989: 128-129). The process of psychological transformation becomes the focal point of the feminist self-discovery narrative in two ways. They underscore either the female protagonist's active self-realisation or her inward transformation of consciousness. These two, however, are not mutually exclusive (1989: 133, 128). Felski calls narratives that depict the active construction of female identity in relation to the society the feminist *Bildungsroman*. Such narratives demonstrate women's movement towards urban and public spaces from where they used to be excluded. The female protagonist goes out of the house and moves out into society. Here, her self-discovery is represented as a

"process of confrontation and dialogue with a social environment" (1989: 126-127, 135). The second sort of narratives, "the novel of awakening" is based on inward and personal experiences, rather than social and public acts. These narratives represent self-discovery as a process of awakening (1989: 143).

Drawing on the discussions and definitions above, I contend that both *Anahtar Deliğinde* and *Kaymak Tabağı* can be read as examples of the *Bildungsroman*. However, my reading of these narratives aims neither to suggest that there is one strict definition of the *Bildungsroman* nor is it designed to make precise divisions and/or generalisations within the genre based on the gender of the protagonists. I read these narratives as examples of the *Bildungsroman*, because they represent the protagonists' adolescent years, years that are quite transitional compared to other stages in one's life. Regarding this transitional feature, adolescence can be compared to the late Ottoman period in two interrelated ways. First, the representations of passages into adulthood in the form of the *Bildungsroman* accord with the objectives of the given period. Because children and youth were perceived as "the future of the Empire", the sexual developments of the protagonists in the transition from childhood to adulthood hint at what sorts of men and women they were expected to become in late Ottoman society. Second, adolescence becomes an allegory for the late Ottoman period, a period of transition during which rapid social and institutional changes occurred in the Empire because of its modernisation. My contention therefore is that *Anahtar Deliğinde* and *Kaymak Tabağı* as examples of the Ottoman Turkish *Bildungsroman* present the notion of adolescence in and of the late Ottoman Empire at both the individual and collective levels.

Mirroring the Self: Halfway Through Becoming 'Man Enough'

Anahtar Deliğinde, written by A. Ali Bey and published in 1914, tells the story of a young male protagonist Ali, who is also the character-bound narrator. Since the author and the protagonist share the same name, İrvin Cemil Schick regards the narrative as "a supposedly autobiographical novella", which "relates to the social realities of the day" (2011: 213). Based on the assumption that the author and the protagonist are the same person, this section explores the ways in which the author A. Ali Bey retrospectively represents his sexual development after his arrival in Istanbul, where he has spread his wings, in the form of the *Bildungsroman*.

Figure 4: The cover page of *Anahtar Deliğinde*.

Anahtar Deliğinde begins with Ali's graduation from *rüşdiye* (advanced primary school) at the age of nineteen and a half. He is very enthusiastic about graduating and receiving his diploma because he hopes to further his education in Istanbul where he has never been to, but he has many times listened to its stories, all of which made him infatuated with the Empire's capital. After using several means of transport, Ali arrives in Istanbul and becomes stupefied "when seeing enormous buildings, hundreds of trains, ferries, chic gentlemen, elegant ladies" [*kocaman binaları, yüzlerce şimendiferi, vapurları, şık beyleri, zarif hanımları görünce*] (5). He makes many *faux pas* throughout the narrative and repeatedly violates social etiquette in public transportation, restaurants, and cinemas. With reference to his *faux pas*, Schick indicates that the narrative was written "to poke fun at a country bumpkin who had come to Istanbul and proceeded to make a fool of himself in every conceivable way" (2011: 213).[49] Indeed, Ali is frequently being laughed at, and it becomes a leitmotif throughout the narrative.

Before arriving at his uncle's mansion, where he is supposed to stay during his further education, Ali spends a couple of days around the Galata and Beyoğlu neighbourhoods, the population of which predominantly consisted of Europeanised Ottomans and non-Muslims. Shortly after his arrival, while wandering in Galata, Ali hears a sound similar to the plash of a fountain. He shifts his attention to the sound and sees a "fountain" sculpted in the shape of a female body. When Ali comes closer to drink water from the lips of the "fountain", it slaps him and begins to talk to him. He thereby realises that it is not a fountain, but an actual woman. When comparing Ali's

[49] Schick discusses the extent to which places give meaning to sexuality, and how sexuality, in return, defines and makes sense of a place, particularly of Istanbul in the late Ottoman Empire. See İrvin Cemil Schick. "İstanbul'u Şehvetle Hayal Etmek." *Şehri Hayal Etmek: Sanattan Hayata İstanbul Temsilleri*. İstanbul, 2014, İrvin Cemil Schick. "Nationalism Meets the Sex Trade: İstanbul's District of Beyoğlu/Pera During the Early Twentieth Century." *Crossing Borders: 'Unusual' Negotiations over the Secular, Public, and Private*. Amherst, 2009.

first contact with someone – a woman – in Istanbul to the infant's contact with the mother, this scene implicitly evokes Jacques Lacan's concept of the mirror stage and offers a psychoanalytic reading for the rest of the narrative. According to Lacanian psychoanalysis, the infant does not think of itself as a separate being, but as a being unified with everything else around it before the mirror stage. However, when the infant sees itself in a mirror during its development from six to eighteen months, it sees itself as a coherent being and perceives its own reflection in the mirror. This is the point of the mirror stage, a stage in which the infant stops identifying itself with the breast of the mother and develops a sense of the self – a specular identity. Nevertheless, the infant primarily identifies itself with its reflection in the mirror – with the "specular I", not with its own self. Lacan calls this imaginary identification "*méconnaissance*" (misrecognition). Because there is a gap between the self and the reflection of the self, the identification of the self with its reflection leads to the infant's alienation (van Pelt 2000: 24-25). "[T]he specular *I* turns into the social *I*" within the symbolic order in which the infant meets the symbolic father or the Name of the Father (Lacan 2006a: 79). The symbolic father prohibits incest with the mother and signifies the domain of culture: Law, language, and social norms. My contention therefore is that the 'fountain-looking' woman's slap becomes Ali's emblematic separation from the mother and foreshadows the existence of a father in *Anahtar Deliğinde*.

A woman, the so-called "Mademoiselle", who is presumably a non-Muslim, promptly offers compensation for this separation for Ali. She approaches him and suggests wandering together in Beyoğlu. Ali thinks of her suggestion:

> [Becoming] friends with a woman, then walking the streets with her is not the thing I have ever done in my life… But on second thought it

> does not sound bad though! Mine is coyness after this. Such a friendship is not something that can always be found. (21)[50]

Mademoiselle laughs at Ali's tactless acts from the moment they meet. However, compared to those who have previously laughed at his lack of social skills in Istanbul's everyday life, her laughter does not irritate Ali. In addition, Mademoiselle compliments him: "hey boy, you [are] very beautiful..!!" [*vire çocuk! Sen çok güzel..!!*] (21). Here, the imputed features, "boy" and "beautiful" refer to his sexual immaturity. These features could perhaps evoke pederastic love for young boys in pre-modern Islamic cultures and would transform him into an object of desire by men, because Ali is not mature enough to be called 'man' or 'handsome'. Yet, differently from the pre-modern period, Ali becomes the object of desire for a woman that shows the extent to which heterosexuality became the prevailing sexual inclination in the late Ottoman Empire as is discussed in Chapter Four. Besides, there is a reference to the proclamation of the Second Constitution when Mademoiselle asks Ali to take her to the restaurant in Tokatlıyan Hotel where he has just eaten. Ali thinks: "That is right though! Now liberty has been proclaimed. There is also equality. I am full [and] she is hungry. No way." [*Doğru ya! Şimdi hürriyet ilan olundu. Müsâvat da var. Ben tok o aç. Olur mu bu.*] (22). This thought not only pertains to the liberty and equality among the Empire's subjects, but also to the changing everyday practices such as socialisation with the opposite sex in late Ottoman society.

Ali decides to spend the night in Mademoiselle's "house", which later turns out to be a brothel. While getting into the carriage on their way to the brothel, Ali somehow stumbles onto Mademoiselle's lap. She catches him

[50] Bir kadınla arkadaş, sonra da onunla sokak sokak gezmek, ömrümde yaptığım şey olsa bari… Lakin şöyle bir düşününce fena gibi değil ya! Artık benimkisi de naz. Böyle arkadaşlık her zaman bulunur şey değil…

and pulls him towards her breast to prevent him from falling. Ali does not want to leave her lap, because a feeling of warmth comes over him and loosens his body as if he were sitting on the top of a tandoori. This might be read as an Oedipal metaphor, which recalls the subconscious wish to regress into the mother's womb. I suggest that Mademoiselle plays a liminal role in his psychosexual development. On the one hand, she substitutes his figurative mother and, to a certain extent, mothers Ali. On the other hand, she recruits him to shift his choice of sexual object from the mother to her. When they arrive in Galata, she holds Ali by his arm and helps him from the carriage like a "circumcised boy". As indicated in Chapter Two, circumcision is regarded as the first step to becoming a sexually mature man. Comparing Ali to a "circumcised boy" emphasises his sexual immaturity. Yet, it also indicates the process of becoming a sexually mature man. In addition, his going to the brothel is also significant, because having the first sexual intercourse is generally seen as part of "becoming a man', and brothels are frequently used to serve this purpose in Turkish context.

Before spending a night at the brothel, Ali makes false assumptions owing to his childlike naiveté. For instance, in the brothel he sees "[m]any fancy-looking women, and most of them were also bare-armed and bare-legged" [*Birçok süslü, ve ekserisi de kolu baldırı meydanda kadınlar*] (31). He falsely assumes these prostitutes to be Mademoiselle's mother and siblings. After the night spent in the brothel, Ali turns into a 'learned' man. However, it is unclear whether he has sexual intercourse with Mademoiselle or not that night. The only hint given is that even though she tries to convince him to stay the next morning, he does not stay there "[a]ny longer after learning so many things" [*Artık bu kadar şeyler öğrendikten sonra*] (34). Such an experience serves as the first step in his transition from childlike immaturity to masculinity. Following this first night, he returns to the same

place using the same means of transport, but "[w]ithout making any *faux pas* this time" [*Bu sefer hiçbir falso yapmadan*] (34). His gradual and linear development is represented in a similar circularity throughout the narrative.

Ali's adventures with women continue after his night in the brothel. He sees a blonde longhaired woman in the hotel where he spends his second night. After seeing her, he cannot sleep and begins to walk back and forth in the corridor. Ali suddenly hears a very fine and very gentle laughter from her room. He becomes concerned about being laughed at by her:

> What if she laughed at my situation by watching [me] from a hole. I cannot stand this.. I looked they do not have such a hole to peep at me though… At that moment something, a craftiness came to my mind....... Looking through the keyhole to see what my neighbour is doing… Seeing and also understanding why she is laughing… Understanding and also laughing if there is anything to laugh at… (43)[51]

Although it is not the first time that someone laughs at Ali, in this instance, being laughed at as a leitmotif is underscored more because he expresses curiosity about it. Anna Hickey-Moody and Timothy Laurie write,

> [l]aughing can become a social technique for asserting and consolidating a feeling of superiority between those who laugh and against those taken to be objects of laughter. (2017: 217)

[51] Sakın bir delikten seyredip de benim bu halime gülmüş olmasın. İşte buna dayanamazdım.. Baktım öyle beni gözetleyecek bir delikleri yok ama... O anda aklıma bir şey, bir kurnazlık geldi....... Kapısının anahtar deliğinden bakıp komşumun ne yaptığını görmek... Görüp de niçin güldüğünü anlamak... Anlayıp da gülünecek bir şey ise ben de gülmek...

Ali is uneasy about being the object of laughter: he does not want to be laughed *at* by his neighbour, but he wants to laugh *with* her instead [my emphasis]. He bends in front of the door and leans his eye against the yellow-ironed hole to see what she laughs at, whether she laughs at him or not. His look through the keyhole, in turn, objectifies his neighbour, and accordingly, he disposes of himself as the probable object of laughter-*ness* [my emphasis].

Laura Mulvey's theory of the male gaze is useful here as a way to explore Ali's objectification in a detailed manner. In her famous essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema", Mulvey discusses the ways in which traditional Hollywood films represent the patriarchal order by objectifying women with the heterosexual pleasure and desire of men in mind. She argues that in most films women are the image and men are the "bearer of the look" (1989: 19). In other words, men are the ones who look and women are there to be looked at. With reference to Sigmund Freud, Mulvey mentions two kinds of pleasure in looking: scopophilic and narcissistic pleasures. The term scopophilia defines looking as a sense of pleasure gratified by "taking other people as objects, subjecting them to a controlling and curious gaze" (1989: 16). She informs us that Freud relates this pleasure to the voyeuristic actions of children and their inclination to look at the private and forbidden such as the existence or lack of the penis as well as the primal scene. The second pleasure in looking takes a narcissistic form and shifts the pleasure of the look to others by identification of the ego with the image on the screen (1989: 16-18).

I suggest that Ali's objectification of his neighbour looking through the keyhole accords with Mulvey's theory of the male gaze. He transforms his being the object of laughter-*ness* [my emphasis] into his neighbour's "*to be looked at-ness*" [emphasis in the original] (Mulvey 1989: 19). Ali focalises the couple inside the room:

> Look! He walked crouched down like a cat that prepares itself to hunt a bird [and] spread his arms in order not to miss [her]! He bent his head towards one side in the shape of a beggar.. He was walking up to my beloved neighbour, who slowly went to and fell into the bedstead by lying on her back for fear of [him]…!!: […] He hugged her neck as if he was choking her… He contiguously bit her neck, arm, breast for a while.. [He] bit [,] by suddenly straightening up like a schoolteacher who could not take his frustration out [he] held the two legs of the poor [woman] with his two hands from somewhere close to her waist. (44-45)[52]

Looking at them biting each other makes him long for something soft, warm and alive to bite off and make bleed. His description of what he sees might recapture the primal scene that is first interpreted as "an act of aggression on the part of the father; second, […] it also induces fear of castration; third, the child assumes it is anal sex" (Buchanan 2010). After his first interpretation, Ali realises that this young man does not behave aggressively. By comparing what he sees to his own experience the night before with Mademoiselle, he concludes that the couple is joking with one another. Ali identifies himself with the man inside and states that if she did not wear her shirt, he would knock at her door and would ask her to laugh *with* him as well [my emphasis]. Thus, as Ali looks inside, the pleasure he receives from the look gradually changes from scopophilic to narcissistic pleasure.

[52] Bakınız! Kuş avlamaya hazırlanan kedi gibi sinerek yürüdü kaçırmamak için iki tarafa kollarını açmış! Başını da bir tarafa eğmiş dilenci biçimine girmiş.. Yavaş yavaş korkusundan gidip karyolaya arkası üstü yatkın yuvarlanan sevgili komşumun üstüne yürüyor...!!: […] Boğuyor gibi onun boynuna sarıldı... Bir müddet boynunu, kolunu, göğsünü muttasıl ısırdı.. Isırdı hırsını alamamış mektep hocası gibi birden doğrularak zavallının iki bacağını iki eliyle ta beline yakın yerinden tuttu.

Similar to the night he spent in the brothel, the night in the hotel makes Ali better at social decorum and everyday life in the Empire's capital. After a two-day stay in Istanbul, he states: "I have already learned a lot" [*artık çok şey öğrenmiştim*] (51). On his third day, he ultimately goes to Kanlıca where his uncle Cenan Bey lives. Ali finds the household of the mansion very crowded, including many young and fancy-looking ladies. He again makes many *faux pas* during conversations, piano playing, and at the table. Although he makes the household laugh at him many times, he does not mind being the object of laughter anymore. On the contrary, Ali likes making these ladies laugh.

Ali's room in the mansion is opposite that of a blonde woman who looks like his "neighbour" from the last night in the hotel. He intends to ask her to go to bed with her so as not to make an extra bed pointlessly soiled. However, Ali himself is aware that this excuse would be inappropriate. After tossing and turning in bed for an hour, he hears a noise and suspects that someone is looking at him through the keyhole. The idea of being exposed to an invisible gaze disturbs him. He proceeds to the door and begins to look outside through the keyhole to find out who it is. In the meantime, the door of the opposite room is suddenly opened. He sees the blonde woman letting in a young man from the household. After making sure that no one is around, Ali goes out of his room and starts looking through the keyhole of her door. Judith Mayne investigates looking through a keyhole in relation to the gendered voyeuristic space as follows:

> voyeurism often entails […] a look into a room – into a home, one could say, or into a private sphere; in other words, into that realm which traditionally and historically has been women's space. A gaze cast into a room, and a gaze cast at a female body. (1981: 33)

Drawing on Mayne, I contend that Ali's look metaphorically penetrates the room by looking through the keyhole, which, in this context, could perhaps be regarded as a vagina. This metaphorical penetration leads Ali to feel faint owing to seeing the young man and the blonde woman Nerime half-naked; they are having sexual intercourse.

What Ali sees gives insight into the way in which and under what circumstances sexual acts were put into practice in the late Ottoman society. As Schick remarks:

> The description of the house and its attractive denizens, his "plump and blonde" fellow guest, and her sexual escapades with one of the young men of the house suggest that the idea of sexual freedom was not limited to prostitutes and the Frankish district but had spread into the very bosom (as it were) of Muslim society. (2011: 213)

In other words, Ali's surrounding environment throughout the narrative informs us about the historical-national time of the late Ottoman society that is inherently related to and has an impact on Ali's development in a Bakhtinian sense.

The young man takes Nerime to bed by holding her by the arm. Once they lie on the bed, however, Ali is not able to see them anymore. He then notices a mirror inclined to the bed and looks at the couple through their reflection in the mirror. In a Lacanian fashion, I suggest taking his look at the couple's mirror reflection as his look at his own 'remote' reflection in the mirror. To that end, the nuance between the eye's look and the gaze is quite significant. According to Lacan, the subject encounters the gaze in the object, and thus, it is not a subjective gaze, but rather an objective one. Although the

gaze is frequently associated with an active process, Lacan inverts it into an object, which functions to generate the desire and becomes the *objet petit à* that signifies a gap (McGowan 2007: 5-6):

> This gap within our look marks the point at which our desire manifests itself in what we see. What is irreducible to our visual field is the way that our desire distorts that field, and this distortion makes itself felt through the gaze as object. (McGowan 2007: 6)

In a similar way, Slavoj Žižek explains how the mirror image (a') differs from the self (a) by an apostrophe. Here, what is missing in the self is the " ' ", which turns into the *objet petit à* (2001: 126). Thus, the couple's mirror reflection metaphorically turns into Ali's gaze and becomes the *objet petit à* in the narrative. He states that their reflection in the mirror reminds him of a sculpture of a cuddling couple in his hometown Çabakçur. Contrary to his false judgement about the 'fountain-looking' woman in the beginning, Ali states: "[t]hese, [the] sculptures I saw were alive" [*Bunlar, benim gördüğüm heykeller canlı idi*] (79). His recognition of the couple's aliveness from their reflection might correspond to the infant's distinction between its mirror reflection and itself. Hence, this recognition might be interpreted as the infant's entry into the symbolic order.

The symbolic father is the one who ensures the infant's entry into the symbolic order. Yet, he is not an actual subject, but a fundamental constituent. Jean-Michel Rabaté sketches out the father as follows:

> A father is not simply an "individual," but mainly a function; paternity is that place from which someone lays down a law, be it the law of sexual difference, the law of the prohibition of incest, or the

> laws of language. A father is not a person but the focal point where castration can be brought to bear on the structure of desire; as such he is the knot binding the anarchic compound of drives and the realm of cultural codification. Next, a father is not a "problem," but a nexus of unresolved enigmas, all founded on the mysterious efficacy of a Name, which in itself remains a riddling cipher. And lastly, […] a father is defined by his absence, paternity and patriarch are set adrift in a world of substitutes, in which everybody is endlessly elsewhere. (1981: 74)

Jale Parla reifies the symbolic father in the Ottoman Turkish novel by underlining the fathering role of the authors. She argues that the authors themselves are fatherless authoritarian children who undertake the role of the father in place of the absolute authority of the sultan in the late nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire. In these premises, the orphaned male protagonist is continually faced with the danger of carnality and sensuality in the absence of the father authority. In the Ottoman Turkish novel, the quest for an authoritarian father figure for guidance in the process of modernisation becomes a recurrent theme (2004b: 15-20). Hence, the Ottoman authors' fathering role plays along with the Lacanian symbolic order via language – the act of writing.

As mentioned in the beginning of this section, the author Ali retrospectively represents his sexual development. The protagonist Ali enters into the symbolic order via the author Ali's writing. However, counter to the reification of the symbolic father through the agency of the Ottoman authors and their fatherless protagonists, the protagonist Ali is neither fatherless, nor does the author Ali father him in the sense of Parla. He moves from his father's house to his uncle's house – supposedly a 'fatherly' house. Yet, this

changing status of paternal authority becomes crucial for the reading of the narrative. Ali's changing habitation represents a metaphoric replacement: the replacement of the symbolic father by the "anal father" that does not prohibit enjoyment like the symbolic father, but commands it instead. Todd McGowan informs us that contrary to the absence of the symbolic father, the anal father is present. Because the anal father suggests himself just as another subject, the identification of his authority is difficult. His authority is not an "openly authoritative authority" and it makes him more powerful compared to the symbolic father (2004: 46-47). I suggest that the author Ali plays the role of the anal father in *Anahtar Deliğinde*.

Žižek writes that the anal father

> is the subject's double who accompanies him like a shadow and gives body to a certain surplus, to what is "in the subject more than subject himself"; this surplus represents what the subject must renounce, sacrifice even, the part in himself that the subject must murder in order to start to live as a "normal" member of the community. The crucial point here is therefore that this "anal father" is Father-Enjoyment […]: it is not the agency of symbolic Law, its "repression," which hinders the sexual relationship (according to a Lacanian commonplace, the role of the Name of the Father is precisely to *enable* the semblance of a sexual relationship), its stumbling block is on the contrary a certain excessive "sprout of enjoyment" materialized in the obscene figure of the "anal father". [emphasis in the original] (2001: 125)

In analogy to the subject's renunciation of "the part in himself" to "live as a 'normal' member of the community", Moretti also speaks of "renunciation"

in a different yet related context for my discussion. He informs us that the young protagonist grows in maturity and fits into society in the classical *Bildungsroman*. Here, there is no conflict between the protagonist's individuality and socialisation. It is a voluntary reconciliation rather than a compulsory one. However, Moretti argues, socialisation began to be perceived as *Entsagung*, "renunciation" because of the psychological and narrative problematics of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (1987: 16). Drawing on Žižek and Moretti, I suggest that *Anahtar Deliğinde* offers a simultaneous renunciation concerning both the anal father and socialisation. The protagonist Ali renounces his childlike naiveté as well as his initial purpose of moving to Istanbul – to further his education – to socialise with and become a member of a certain community, Istanbulites in general and the Europeanised upper-middle class household of the mansion in particular.

Ali's renunciation remains of enjoyment that does not offer a 'preferred' development with regard to the classical *Bildungsroman*. Instead, it is, to a certain extent, comparable to the Balzacian *Bildungsroman*. While discussing Balzac's *Illusions perdues*, Moretti draws attention to the changing relationship between the protagonist and the reader (1987: 135). Because the protagonist Lucien never becomes mature owing to the socio-political circumstances of nineteenth-century France, Adam Bresnick considers *Illusions perdues* "less a *Bildungsroman* than an "*Entbildungsroman*," or novel of the failure […]" (1998: 824). The Balzacian *Bildungsroman* does not expect the reader's identification with the protagonist as does the classical *Bildungsroman*. What is expected from the reader, however, is to refrain from the identification with the protagonist and to "identify with the ironic gaze of a narrative apparatus […]" (Bresnick 1998: 824). Although there is no explicit hint that regards Ali's development as a "failure", *Anahtar Deliğinde* offers a similar reading as Balzac's work

and challenges development narratives under the authority of the symbolic father in the Ottoman Turkish literary canon. On that note, my contention is that the author Ali's retrospective self-representation of his development via writing turns into an "ironic gaze" yet not for himself, but for the reader. Given the nuance between the eye's look and the gaze in the mirror, the self – the author Ali – misses the gaze – the "ironic gaze" – while looking at and/or representing his own development in the narrative that turns into a mirror.

Lacan writes, "[t]he mirror stage establishes the watershed between the imaginary and the symbolic in the moment of capture by an historic inertia" (2006b: 54). I contend that *Anahtar Deliğinde* takes place in this "watershed" – in which the author Ali represents his own development in the form of the *Bildungsroman*. Jane Gallop writes that the mirror stage

> is a turning point in the chronology of a self, but it is also the origin, the moment of constitution of that self. […] The mirror stage is a decisive moment. […] This moment is the source not only for what follows but also for what precedes. It produces the future through anticipation and the past through retroaction. […] The retroaction is based on the anticipation. In other words, the self is constituted through anticipating what it will become, and then this anticipatory model is used for gauging what was before. (1982: 121)

Drawing on Gallop, I contend that *Anahtar Deliğinde*'s narration metaphorically resembles Lacan's mirror stage. The author Ali and the protagonist Ali ultimately overlap and become the same person at the end of the narrative. Ali states that he searches for ways to become more attached to his life in the mansion for the sake of young and fresh ladies and their seductive spectacles. Concordantly, the narrative not only retroacts to the past

by means of the retrospective self-representation of its author, but its ending also anticipates the future, as Ali declares his anticipation for days to come. Therefore, the mirroring narrative *Anahtar Deliğinde* reflects Ali's sexual development. By doing so, the narration becomes the mirror stage itself.[53]

Compensating the Lack: A Rivalry with the Mother

İrvin Cemil Schick informs us that together with *Bir Zanbağın Hikayesi* (The Story of a Lily), *Kaymak Tabağı*, published anonymously and without a publication date, is one of "the most notorious erotic books of the period" after the proclamation of the Second Constitution.[54] Compared to *Bir Zanbağın Hikayesi*, Schick argues, *Kaymak Tabağı* is "quite a bit cruder". Rumour has it that Mehmed Rauf is also the author of *Kaymak Tabağı*. However, that cannot be definitively proven. With reference to Ahmed Rasim's famous book *Fuhş-i Atik* (Prostitution in Old Times, 1922), which tackles the issue of prostitution in *fin de siècle* Istanbul, Schick underlines the idea that the eponymous character-bound narrator Kaymak Tabağı was probably named after a famous real-life prostitute (2011: 214-215). In his book, Ahmet Rasim describes Kaymak Tabağı as a corpulent woman, who used to be very pretty once upon a time (1922: 113, 337). In *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm (1908-1935)* (Women's Freedom and Feminism in Turkey (1908-1935)), Zafer Toprak shares her picture:

[53] For a different mirror metaphor in the twentieth-century Turkish *Bildungsroman*, particularly novels from the 1950s until the present day, F. Meltem Gürle refers to Cemil Meriç, who argues that the protagonists "try to construct their identity according to their reflection in a fancy mirror made in the West" (Meriç 68-69). She further states that these protagonists are conscious that they will stay as a reflection and detest both the mirror and the image (2013: 98). See F. Meltem Gürle. "'Wandering on the peripheries': The Turkish novelistic hero as 'Beautiful Soul.'" *Journal of Modern Literature*, 36.4 (2013): 96–112.

[54] *Kaymak Tabağı* was also hand-copied anonymously and without a date. Although I possess one of the hand-copied editions, I only use the published edition in this chapter. This is because the hand-copied edition does not differ from the published edition apart from certain additional obscene wording and does not say much about the reception of the text in the process of copying/rewriting.

Figure 5: Kaymak Tabağı's picture. (Figure taken from Toprak 2016: 129)

Nevertheless, there is no reference to the real-life Kaymak Tabağı in the narrative. It only tells the story of a young girl whose sexual development becomes the focus of attention. With regard to the sexual development and secretly looking at people engaging in sexual intercourse, *Kaymak Tabağı* could be compared to *Anahtar Deliğinde*. Hence, this section reads *Kaymak Tabağı* as the *Bildungsroman*, in which the young female protagonist narrates her sexual development.

Kaymak Tabağı is an epistolary narrative written entirely in letter format. The character-bound narrator begins with introducing herself:

> Sir!
> Your concubine is the daughter of [one of] the reputed merchants Zagyor-zâde Yusuf Efendi from Antalya and I was named “Kaymak Tabağı”. (2)[55]

Kaymak Tabağı presents herself as a once very beautiful young girl who used to come first in beauty contests. Because she is a one and only child, her parents always used to pamper her. Her father is old and likes to tipple, so much so that he becomes unable to perform sexual intercourse with her young and lustful mother. Since her mother is not able to soothe her lust with Kaymak Tabağı’s father, she used to get carried away by the male visitors and misbehave towards them behind the window. The father is represented as dysfunctional from the very beginning. His absence gives room to the course of events. Thanks to his absence, the women of the household have sexual intercourse without constraint. Kaymak Tabağı recalls being asked to sleep early certain nights together with her nanny Dilber when she was eleven or twelve. To her surprise, her mother and nanny used to satisfy their needs with the male visitors.

After this brief introduction to the household, the narrative jumps forward three or four years and Kaymak Tabağı describes her relation with the driver Hacı İbrahim:

> Despite the fact that I was sixteen I did not avoid Hacı İbrahim and I was his shadow and your concubine used to enter Hacı İbrahim’s room and [he] used to tell weird stories and take me on his lap, kiss [me], put [me] upon his penis and make all sorts of hocus-pocus by

---

[55] Efendim!
Cariyeniz tüccar-ı muʿteberândan Antalyalı Zagyor-zâde Yusuf Efendi’nin kerimesi olup ismim (Kaymak Tabağı) namıyla be-nâm idim.

> rubbing his penis between my legs. (3)[56]

Also that night Hacı İbrahim takes her on his lap and runs his hands over her body. He plays with his “dick” when he sees her “pussy”, whose mouth is as pink as a rose standing fleshy and untouched between her legs. When Kaymak Tabağı sees him masturbating: “Hacı İbrahim, what is that we were about to tell [a] tale. What happened to the rest of [the] tale.” [*Hacı İbrahim, o nasıl şey masal söyleyecek idik. Masalın arkası ne oldu.*] (4) Hacı İbrahim sucks her breasts and then rubs the head of his penis into the lips of her vulva. As he rubs it, Kaymak Tabağı delightfully enjoys it:

> I suddenly shivered from inside. My body became loose and oh Hacı İbrahim what is that stiff thing you put between my leg[s] I said. Thereupon, Hacı İbrahim showed [me] by taking [it] out. What is this Hacı I said; they call it penis he said. When I heard this word I laughed loudly. It is a weird thing like [a] stick, I said. My dear missy from now on [what] you will see is [a] tasty penis like this one he said. (4-5)[57]

She witnesses his ejaculation: “just then I saw something drained off quaveringly from Hacı’s dick” [*o sıra Hacı’nın sikinden titreye, titreye bir şeyler aktığını gördüm.*] (5) Although his sperm disgusts her, she likes the intimacy. The more Kaymak Tabağı spends time with Hacı İbrahim on the

[56] Her ne kadar sinnim on altı yaşına gelmiş ise de Hacı İbrahim’den kaçmaz ve yanından ayrılmaz idim ve cariyeniz Hacı İbrahim’in odasına girer ve tuhaf tuhaf hikayeler nakleder ve beni kucağına alır, öper, zekerinin üstüne çıkarır ve zekerini bacaklarımın arasına sürüştürerek türlü türlü hokkabazlıklar yapar idi.

[57] Birden bire içim titredi. Vücuduma bir gevşeklik geldi ve aman Hacı İbrahim o bacağımın arasına koyduğun katı şey ne idi dedim. Onun üzerine Hacı çıkarıp gösterdi. Bu ne Hacı dedim; buna zeker derler dedi. Bu sözü işitince kahkaha ile güldüm. Sopa gibi ne tuhaf şey, dedim. Mini mini hanımcığım bundan sonra göreceğiniz bunun gibi lezzetli zekerdir dedi.

excuse that she wants to listen to tales, the more she gains experience in sex. In comparison with Ali, who transforms his initial intimacy with Mademoiselle into a game – wrestling, she, in reverse, transforms telling tales into dalliances.

Kaymak Tabağı considers herself a "hussy" girl and wants to see sexual intercourse in the house. One night, she sees Dilber naked with Hacı İbrahim and focalises them as follows:

> […] Hacı İbrahim leaned Dilber on the cushion by her waist and he compressed his horse dick-like penis as seizing [it] my nanny's neck [it] stiffened so much so that it is impossible to describe. Hacı started compressing Dilber's vulva. Dilber then hugged his waist. By holding her hips with both hands Hacı inserted his dick into my nanny's pussy in one move that its squeak came to my ear. As Hacı İbrahim moved his penis inside and outside, both of them became suddenly awkward. Following this I assume that Hacı was not satisfied so that he turned my nanny's ass that was as bald as a coot. [He] moved his dick in and out of her ass a few times. However, my nanny could not stand being fucked in the ass. In fact I also drooled over their fucking. My aim is also my pussy. (6-7)[58]

Her first encounter with Hacı İbrahim and Dilber being naked corresponds to children's voyeuristic look; hence, it is exemplary of scopophilic pleasure.

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[58] [...] Hacı İbrahim dadımın belinden mindere dayamış ve at yarağı gibi zekerini dadımın ensesinden yakalayıp sıkıştırdıkça öyle bir kalktı ki tarifi kalem haricindedir. Hacı Dilber'in fercini sıkıştırmaya başladı. Dilber de Hacı'nın beline sarıldı. Hacı dadımın kaynaklarını iki eliyle tutup bir hamlede yarağını dadımın amına soktu ki gıcırtısı kulağıma geldi. Hacı İbrahim sokup çıkardıkça her ikisi bir tuhaf hal peyda ettiler. Bunu müteakip zanneder isem Hacı doymamış idi ki dadımın kabak gibi götünü çevirdi. Birkaç defa yarağını götüne sokup çıkardı. Halbuki dadım götünden sikişe dayanamıyordu. Doğrusu bunların sikişine benim de ağzımın suyu aktı. Benim de maksadım amımdır.

Mulvey's theory of the gaze gives special attention to the male gaze. Yet, the gaze in question here appears "female". As Kaplan explains,

> the gaze is not necessarily male (literally), but to own and activate the gaze, given our language and the structure of the unconscious, is to be in the masculine position. (1983: 30)

Kaymak Tabağı's focalisation, a male-conceived structure, precludes the representation of female experience. In addition, considering the domination of male authors in Ottoman Turkish literature, a male author most likely wrote *Kaymak Tabağı*. Thus, sex scenes are presumably shown to encourage male objectification in the guise of female focalisation throughout the narrative.

One day, Kaymak Tabağı tells Dilber that her "pussy" is itchy and she feels odd. Dilber warns her of not mentioning such things and tells her that if her mother hears it, she will be angry. Also, she remarks, "doing these things is sin" [*böyle şeyler yapmak günahtır*] (7). Dilber puts Kaymak Tabağı's mother forward as the Name of the Father in Lacanian terms. As Julia Kristeva points out, the child-father-mother link mostly takes shape with the father having the superiority over the former two in the Oedipal triangle. However, it may also vary depending on the matrilineality of society: a matrilineal uncle or a woman may occupy the father role (2000: 75). Even though Ottoman society is not a matrilineal society, Kaymak Tabağı's mother substitutes the father in his absence ad hoc. Hence, the mother replaces the symbolic father in the narrative. This replacement becomes more explicit, particularly at the end.

After the warning, Kaymak Tabağı begins to see Dilber as her rival inwardly: "However [Dilber] does not know that I knew the size of the dick

[she] takes in herself" [*Halbuki bilmiyor ki ben kendisinin yediği yarağın ölçüsünü bile bilirdim*] (7). This rivalry appears to be a displacement of and similar to the Electra complex, but still not quite the same. The Electra complex, introduced by Carl Gustav Jung in 1913, is frequently seen as the female equivalent of the Oedipus complex. It refers to the girl's sexual desire for her father and her competition with her mother whom she perceives as her rival. The possession of the father is comparable to the possession of the penis in the eyes of the girl. Thus, the Electra complex is more often than not regarded as "penis envy" (Scott 2005: 8). It is considered equal to castration anxiety in girls. I suggest that Kaymak Tabağı's 'inward' rivalry with Dilber, who has 'motherly' duties as the nanny, evokes the Electra complex. In this respect, her "penis envy" is frankly materialised by Hacı İbrahim's penis.

Kaymak Tabağı wants to experience sexual intercourse to satisfy her curiosity for penises. She then has her first experience with Nuri Cemal, a beautiful boy playing next to their garden. The emphasis on Nuri Cemal's youth and beauty, which is also self-evident from his name meaning "beautiful shining face", signals his sexual immaturity. Like Ali, he is not a 'man' or 'handsome'. Kaymak Tabağı does not raise any difficulties and opens her legs to Nuri Cemal:

> He, when seeing my pink-lipped pussy like a recently-blossomed rosebud between my cloudlike legs, his dick became so erect like a beam so to say.. After this by growing impatient he began to rub the head of his dick into the pink lips of my pussy.
>
> […]
>
> The more Cemal Bey rubbed his dick into the lips of my pussy, the more it was tickling my fancy and I was drooling, my eyes were going black. As for Cemal, he began to shiver [and] lost himself.

> And by tightening once or twice he inserted his dick into my pussy in a way that I could not understand where I was. In the meantime I uttered a scream. (9)[59]

In comparison with Ali, who contents himself with secretly looking at people and remaining a spectator, Kaymak Tabağı is represented as a self-determining protagonist with a strong agency.

Kaymak Tabağı wants to participate in what she sees. A few days after her sexual intercourse with Nuri Cemal, she again secretly looks at Dilber and Hacı İbrahim. She describes how Hacı İbrahim kisses Dilber's breasts by leaning her on the cushion and smells her from top to bottom. After lustful sexual intercourse, Hacı İbrahim feels tired and wants to rest. Yet, Dilber tries to convince him to carry on: "I am dying! Here it is, here I am dying insert [it] then rest when [it] is inside!" [*Ölüyorum! İşte, işte ölüyorum sok da içerisinde iken dinlen!*] (11) As she looks at them once again, her pleasure in looking transforms from scopophilic to narcissistic pleasure that prompts her to run out of patience and enter the room. She says: "Oh.. Bon appétit my puritan nanny!" [*O.. Afiyet olsun benim sofu dadım!*] (11) Dilber and Hacı İbrahim beg her not to tell anyone. Dilber even proposes that she can have sex with Hacı İbrahim too. Since this is already what Kaymak Tabağı wants, she opens her pink-lipped rosebud-like "pussy" to him. Nevertheless, he does not dare slide into her assuming that she is still a virgin. Instead of easing his worry, Kaymak Tabağı brings it to climax:

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[59] O, bulut gibi bacaklarımın arasında yeni açılmış bir gül goncası gibi pembe dudaklı amımı görünce yarağı öyle kalktı ki adeta kiriş gibi.. Artık sabredemeyerek bacaklarımın arasına yarağının başı amımın pembe dudaklarına sürüştürmeye başladı.
[...]
Cemal Bey yarağını amımın dudaklarına sürüştürdükçe fena halde içim gıcıklanıyor ve ağzımın suları akıyor, gözlerim kararıyor idi. Cemal ise artık titremeye başladı gözleri döndü. Ve bir iki defa gerilerek yarağını amıma öyle bir sokuş soktu ki nerede olduğumu anlayamadım. O sırada bir feryat kopardım.

> “Come Hacı you do not like my rosebud-like pussy? Is Dilber’s pussy better than mine?” I said. He said to me, “Missy you are virgin that is why I cannot dare”. “Come and just fuck [me] I am not virgin! Come..” I said. (11-12)[60]

Hacı İbrahim approaches her to insert his penis into her vagina. Although Kaymak Tabağı first fears for the length of his penis, after being ravished she asks him to insert it completely. Ultimately, her ‘inward’ rivalry with Dilber is resolved by means of engaging in sexual intercourse with Hacı İbrahim.

Kaymak Tabağı continues to have sexual intercourse with Cemal Bey “by pleasing one another” [*yekdiğerimiz memnun ederek*] (13) every night for a year. However, one night, after Nuri Cemal’s departure to Paris for his education, she decides to go to Hacı İbrahim’s room to have sexual intercourse with him. When approaching his room, she hears her mother’s voice and then sees her from the doorway sitting on Hacı İbrahim’s lap with her fleshy “pussy”. In contrast to Dilber and Kaymak Tabağı, who have had to convince Hacı İbrahim in order to have sexual intercourse with them, in this instance he is the one who tries to convince the mother by kissing and caressing her. As her mother grips his “dick”, Kaymak Tabağı focalises, it becomes so erect that:

> […] [he] could not overcome his lust [and] by embracing my mother and leaning her waist on the cushion[,] he leaned his iron-like erect penis against my mother’s pink-lipped pussy between her snow-white calves and [he] took her breasts into his mouth and began to suck

[60] “Gelsene Hacı benim gül goncası gibi amımı beğenmiyor musun? Dilber’in amı benimkinden daha iyi midir?” dedim. O, bana “Küçük hanım sen kızsın onun için cesaret edemiyorum.” dedi. “Sen gel sikiver ben kız değilim! Gel..” dedim.

> them [.] My mother, on the other hand, was making Hacı sad by showing all sorts of coyness and coquetry in the meantime even my mother was also being defeated by lust [.] She groaned by saying oh my Hacı you will devastate me. I am dying! Insert my Hacı insert!. As they were hugging and kissing each other, I felt overwhelmed outside. I drooled. I felt that the lips of my rosebud-like pussy opened and closed.
>
> Because I also wanted to taste the pleasure they received in the meantime. (13-14)[61]

What Kaymak Tabağı sees makes her fall down to her knees due to her thirst for sex. She considers her mother equal to herself: "However, like me, my mother is also a creature that cannot get enough of fucking" [*Lakin annem de benim gibi sikişe doyar mahluk değil ki*] (14). When Hacı İbrahim and her mother start having sex a second time, Kaymak Tabağı shivers with ambition and lust in front of the door. She wants to enter the room and have sex with Hacı İbrahim as she did last time with Dilber. Nevertheless, she does not dare enter the room owing to the maternal bonding, and also the mother's takeover of the symbolic father. She fails to make him her own, because she has to give way to her mother overnight as necessitated by the Electra complex.

Kaymak Tabağı envies the sexual intimacy between her mother and Hacı İbrahim, and her envy turns into penis envy in the full sense of the word. I contend that her penis envy overlaps with her mother's penis envy in

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[61] [...] şehvetine galebe edemeyerek annemi kucaklayıp belini mindere dayayarak demir gibi kalkmış yarağını annemin kar gibi beyaz baldırları arasındaki pembe dudaklı amının ağzına dayadı ve memelerini ağzına alıp emmeye başladı annem ise bin türlü naz ve cilve ederek Hacı'yı üzüyordu bu sırada annem dahi şehvete mağlup olarak ah Hacı'm beni mahvedeceksin. Ölüyorum! Sok Hacı'ım sok!. diyerek inledi. Onlar öyle birbirlerine sarılıp öpüştükçe dışarıda bana adeta bir hal geldi. Ağzımın suları aktı. Gül goncası gibi amımın dudaklarının açılıp kapandığını hissettim.

Çünkü onların almış oldukları o lezzetten ben de o sırada tatmak istiyordum.

the narrative. As Sigmund Freud claims, penis envy continues to exist in the unconscious as two desires: to possess a penis and/or to possess an infant (2001c: 179). Nevertheless, Lacan argues that even when the woman has an infant, it does not terminate the sense of the lack of a penis. In response to this, the infant tries to satisfy the mother's desire by identifying itself with the phallus (Evans 2006a: 121). This is how the infant enters the "dialectic of desire" in the Lacanian psychoanalysis. To that end, the infant desires the mother's desire, as she is the initial Other. Lacan famously puts it, "man's desire is the Other's desire" [*le désir de l'homme est le désir de l'Autre*] (2006c: 690). Yet, the desire here is a reference to the lack itself (Evans 2006b: 38). Drawing on Lacan, the desire to have sexual intercourse with Hacı İbrahim reifies penis envy both for Kaymak Tabağı and her mother, and transforms him into an object of desire in their eyes. However, Kaymak Tabağı's envy is not about *a* penis, but *the* penis – Hacı İbrahim's penis – as she desires her mother's desire [my emphasis]. That is to say, her desire for Hacı İbrahim becomes the *objet petit à* and intrinsically signifies her very lack of same.

Freud terms the Electra complex "the female Oedipus complex". In *The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex*, he initially argues that sexual development is simpler in girls because they do not undergo castration anxiety (2001c: 178-179). Yet, later in *Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes*, he declares otherwise, as the female Oedipal stage requires a shift in sexual object from female to male (2001d: 251).[62] Regarding the shift in sexual object, Nancy Chodorow informs us that the male and female Oedipus complexes are asymmetrical (1978: 127; 1989: 69). The girl enters the Oedipus triangle in a divergent

[62] Kristeva underlines the idea that Lacan's approach to the Oedipus complex and the question of incest is broader. The sex of the subject does not have a place in the question. Hence, the Oedipal triangle consists of "same", "other", and "Other" in Lacan (2000: 78-79).

relational scene in comparison to the boy (1978: 115). Julia Kristeva posits that the boy kills the father and desires the mother in a direct Oedipus complex. Accordingly, the boy simultaneously becomes both a "*symbolic subject*" and a "*desiring subject*" [emphasis in the original]. Like the boy, the girl's primary sexual object is the mother. She also kills the father in order to become a subject. However, by killing the father and desiring the mother, she undergoes an "inverted Oedipus complex". In order to experience the "direct Oedipus complex", she is obliged to change her object choice by detaching herself from the mother and desiring the father (2000: 79-80). Nevertheless, Chodorow claims, the shift in the sexual object is not the replacement of the girl's attachment to her mother by her father. The girl does not give up her pre-Oedipal relation with the mother entirely.[63] Instead, her relationship with the father is articulated in her relationship with the mother in which dependence, attachment, and symbiosis still persist. This articulation, Chodorow argues, makes female development and self-definition more complex compared to her masculine counterpart (1978: 92-93; 1989: 70).

The pre-Oedipal relation to the mother becomes important in the female *Bildungsroman*. The works of the British women authors to which Susan Fraiman refers in her book tell of "a struggle between rival life stories", so that the "major" narrative is being blurred and decentred via alternative stories regarding female destiny (1993: 10). *Kaymak Tabağı* also includes other stories of rivalry, which suggest a pre-Oedipal reading of the major narrative. Kaymak Tabağı's relationship with her nanny represents one example of rivalry, and the relationship with her mother closely reflects the Electra complex in which the daughter sees the mother as her rival. It is also

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[63] Amber Jacobs discusses Melanie Klein and Luce Irigaray's different approaches to the mother-daughter relationship through the Electra myth. See Amber Jacobs. "The Potential of Theory: Melanie Klein, Luce Irigaray, and the Mother-Daughter Relationship." *Hypatia*, 22.3 (2007): 175–193.

reified in her treatment of Hacı İbrahim with whom she has sexual intimacy for ten hours without letting him take his penis out of her vagina after seeing her mother with him. From that night on, Kaymak Tabağı and Hacı İbrahim continue to have sexual intercourse regularly for more than two years until she becomes twenty-one and marries the pharmacist Hüsnü Efendi.

At the end of the narrative, Kaymak Tabağı states that she gives up everything and spends her life with her husband since then. In the classical *Bildungsroman*, Moretti argues, narratives must end with marriages, which is indicative of a social contract between the individual and society (1987: 22). The narrative closure with marriage signifies the protagonist's reconciliation with society. On that note, Kaymak Tabağı's marriage might first appear as reconciliation with the late Ottoman society in the process of becoming a woman. However, I contend that her reconciliation with society turns out to be renunciation of her extramarital sexual affairs and her embrace of social norms. According to Fraiman, becoming a woman is not "a single path to a clear destination", but "the endless negotiation of a crossroad" (1993: x). Kaymak Tabağı also goes through a crossroad by way of her extramarital affairs. Nevertheless, because these affairs are against the grain given the premises of the late Ottoman society, she is obliged to complete her development by complying with society via marriage at the end of the narrative.[64] Therefore, I contend that *Kaymak Tabağı* offers the psychosexual development of the young female protagonist whose Electra complex is, to a certain extent, resolved once her development is restricted to marriage.

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[64] See Elif Akşit. "Being a Girl in Ottoman Novels." *Childhood in the Late Ottoman Empire and After*. Leiden: Brill, 2016: 93-114. Elif Akşit explores the ways in which the process of becoming differs in male and female authors' female *Bildungsromane* in Ottoman Turkish. She also underlines the difficulty of conceptualising "the girl" within childhood, because children, boys, and women are well defined, and are told to behave accordingly, but girls are different and therefore difficult to conceptualise (2016: 93-94).

Conclusion

Both *Anahtar Deliğinde* and *Kaymak Tabağı* tell the stories of sexual development in the period of adolescence. These narratives address the Oedipal attachments of their protagonists, and can be read psychoanalytically. When compared to each other, it is quite striking that both narratives begin with the reminiscences of their protagonists' first sexual involvements and their later sexual experiences. The ways in which Ali and Kaymak Tabağı engage with their sexualities follow the same path via looking at other people engaging in sexual intercourse. In this way, they become acquainted with sex and their own sexuality. Their narrations of looking at others, however, turn into looking at the self retrospectively through their narratives once they grow to maturity. Both of them have to renounce certain parts of themselves in the process of their development. Kaymak Tabağı is depicted as being more self-aware and self-determining regarding her sexuality, yet the development deemed appropriate for her does not allow her to experience her sexuality as does Ali at the end. She is obliged to reconcile with society by renouncing her extramarital sexual affairs. Ali's renunciation, however, carries him to a 'reckless' life. Thus, the renunciation takes different turns in these narratives: the sexual restriction Kaymak Tabağı is exposed to changes into the sexual freedom for Ali as Schick suggests. Although these narratives share common characteristics with regard to theme and composition, the closures succeeding the developments and growths in maturity of their protagonists diverge significantly due to their gender difference.

Moreover, the expectation from the reader also differs based on the difference in their renunciations, and intrinsically in their developments. *Kaymak Tabağı* expects the reader to identify with the female protagonist, because she meets with the requirements of the society and sets an

affirmative example for the reader. *Anahtar Deliğinde* demands the opposite. Although Ali's life-style is not necessarily a dissenting example, as the narrative neither criticises nor praises the direction of his development, neither does it allow the reader's identification as is common in the classical *Bildungsroman*. Based on Morgenstern's definition of the *Bildungsroman* that suggests gazing into the real world by putting emphasis on the reader's development, his 'contentious' life-style keeps the reader at bay only through which the reader can complete its development as the *Bildungsroman* intends. Thus, the gender-biased difference between Ali and Kaymak Tabağı becomes self-evident also on the part of the expectations from the reader. Nevertheless, despite this difference, both *Anahtar Deliğinde* and *Kaymak Tabağı* challenge the Ottoman Turkish literary canon with their intimate narrations of sexuality.

In addition, these narratives underscore the relationship between the notion of adolescence and modernisation in the late Ottoman context. As discussed earlier in this chapter, adolescence might largely be indicative of the late Ottoman period, a period of transition in which the Empire struggled with its passage into modernity. Although I have read both narratives psychoanalytically with regard to the sexual developments of their adolescent protagonists, my reading is not limited to the individual development stories. As examples of the Ottoman Turkish *Bildungsroman*, *Anahtar Deliğinde* and *Kaymak Tabağı* represent the expectations that the Empire had from Ottoman children and youth once they had grown into maturity, since they were seen as "the future of the Empire". The sexual investments of their protagonists are transformed into the social and cultural investments of the Ottoman Empire. On that note, the psychoanalytical readings of these narratives become an allegorical reading for the late Ottoman period. Such an allegorical reading represents the cultural and historical particularity of the

Ottoman Empire along with its ambitions, desires, and anxieties, all of which could perhaps be defined as the 'fantasmatic desire'. Here, the question of whose desire it is also becomes significant: whether it is the desire of the authors, of the texts or of the reader. I contend that the fantasmatic desire represented in these narratives is the desire of the culture in which the authors and the reader live and in which the texts were written. As it were, *Anahtar Deliğinde* and *Kaymak* signify the 'psychosocial' dynamics in the late Ottoman culture. By portraying the psychosexual developments of their protagonists, these narratives frame adolescence in and of the Ottoman Empire in the process of modernisation, a process that was as transitional as adolescence.