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

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Propositions

1. Reading erotic narratives of the twentieth century creates a new form of understanding of the Ottoman Empire in the present day.
2. Ottoman Turkish erotic narratives demonstrate how social and cultural values in times of transition influenced the collective anxieties and aspirations in the beginning of the twentieth century.
3. The imperial trauma often finds an expression in masculine characters in Ottoman Turkish fiction.
4. The canonisation of certain works rather than others is a political decision.
5. The alignment between penis and phallus is an indication of power. Having the phallus means having power. Being the phallus, on the other hand, signifies lacking the phallus, and thereby, lacking power. Having it brings about the possibility of losing it, however.
6. The meaning of a text is not pre-given. Its reading frames its meaning.
7. Men and masculinity studies investigate one's relation to and position of power.
8. Reading literature should include both content and form, or as Terry Eagleton writes, "[t]he most common mistake students of literature make is to go straight for what the poem or novel says, setting aside the way that it says it. To read like this is to set aside the 'literariness' of the work – the fact that it is a poem or play or novel, rather than an account of the incidence of soil erosion in Nebraska." (How to Read Literature, 2013: 2)
9. Many departments of Turkish Language and Literature still concentrate on literary historiography and hardly ever provide theoretical approaches to literature. These departments should include critical and comparative methodologies in their curriculum.
10. Doing a PhD is a challenging phase in which one's epistemological problems might easily turn into ontological problems in its course.