

SEXUALITY, ANXIETY, AND USES OF SPACE IN THE EARLY
MODERN OTTOMAN WORLD: CINÂNÎ'S BEDÂYÎÜ'L-ÂSÂR

by
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ABSTRACT

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Keywords: sex and sexuality, public and private space, prose fiction, privacy,
sixteenth century

The studies on early modern Ottoman prose fiction are relatively limited compared to comprehensive research conducted on Ottoman poetry. However, by placing these texts in their historical context, we can illuminate the ways in which public and private spaces were utilized, as well as the roles of sex and sexuality. Through the examination of Cinânî's (d. 1004/1595) *Bedâyîü'l-âsâr* ("The Original Stories"), this study seeks to enhance our understanding of early modern Ottoman prose fiction. Relying on the stories set in *hamâm* (public bathhouse), *pâzâr* (marketplace), and *ev* (home), I firstly argue that even when an individual's sexual privacy becomes exposed to the public, it does not necessarily constitute an infringement of privacy as long as the sexual encounters remain within the "licit" (or alternatively, "marital") sexual intercourse. Secondly, I suggest that "illicit" (though not necessarily same-sex) sexual relationships between partners, even if conducted within the confines of the home, are consistently vulnerable to the risk of being publicly disclosed. Based on the insights gained from my research, I argue that any categorization framework that prioritizes the public/private divide falls short in fully understanding the complexities of the Ottoman urban spaces as represented in Cinânî's *Bedâyîü'l-âsâr*. Instead, I propose that interpreting early modern Ottoman spaces through the lens of licit/illicit sexual encounters could offer a more nuanced understanding of the socio-cultural context during the period in which the *Bedâyîü'l-âsâr* stories were narrated and circulated.

ÖZET

ERKEN MODERN OSMANLI DÜNYASINDA CİNSELLİK, KAYGI VE
MEKÂN KULLANIMLARI: CİNÂNÎ'NİN *BEDÂYİÜ'L-ÂSÂR*'I

AYDIN BARAN GÜRPINAR

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Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. TÜLAY ARTAN

Anahtar Kelimeler: meşru ve gayrimeşru cinsel münasebetler, kamusal ve özel alan, mahrem, mensur hikaye, onaltıncı yüzyıl

Erken modern Osmanlı mensur hikayeleri üzerine yapılan çalışmalar, Osmanlı şiiriyle ilgili yapılan kapsamlı araştırmalara kıyasla oldukça sınırlıdır. Oysa ki bu tür metinlerin tarihsel bağlamlarına yerleştirilmesi, erken modern kamusal ve özel alana ilişkin genel bir çerçeve sunmakla kalmaz; özel, mahrem ve kamusal olanın inşaasında cinselliğin oynadığı role dair de bir tartışma zemini yaratabilir. Bu tezin temel amaçlarından birisi Cinânî'nin (ö. 1004/1595) *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* başlıklı hikaye derlemesinde yer alan, “hamam”, “pazar”, ve “ev”de geçen hikayelerden yola çıkarak, erken modern Osmanlı kentsel mekanlarına ve pratiklerine yönelik kamusal alan/özel alan, mahrem/namahrem, kamu/özel gibi ayrımların ne ölçüde ve hangi durumlarda geçerli olabileceğini tartışmaya açmaktır. Bu çerçevede ilk olarak, hikayelerdeki anlatılara dayanarak, evlilik birliği üzerinde temellenen “meşru” bir cinsel hayata ilişkin bilginin kamusal alana sızması durumunun bir mahremiyet ihlâli olarak değerlendirilmediğini iddia ediyorum. İkinci olarak, ev içi sınırlar dahilinde vuku bulsalar dahi, “gayrimeşru” olarak addedilen cinsel ilişkilerin istisnasız bir biçimde kamuya ve kamusal alana sızdığını/sızdırıldığını göstermeye çalışıyorum. Bu bağlamda, erken modern Osmanlı kent mekânlarının, kamusal/özel ve kamusal alan/özel alan ayırımı merkeze alan yaklaşımlarla analiz edilmesinin yaratacağı problemleri işaret ediyor, bu tür ayrımların sınırlarının “meşru”/“gayrimeşru” cinsel münasebetler ve karşılaşmalar tarafından belirlendiğini ileri sürüyorum.

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Dedem Aydın Gürpınar ve babam Hasan Cemaleddin Gürpınar'a...

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iv
OZET	v
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Studying Sexual Content in Early Modern Ottoman Prose: Why and How?.....	1
1.2. Finding Cinânî in His Works	2
1.3. The Scholarship on the <i>Bedâyiü'l-âsâr</i> : A Brief Critical Review	5
1.4. Research Framework, Argument, and Approach	6
1.5. Literature Review.....	9
2. PRIVACY AND ANXIETY IN THE <i>HAMÂM</i>: SHADES OF SEX or “I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST NIGHT”	15
2.1. Introduction	15
2.2. Reading the Ottoman <i>Hamâm</i> Through the Available Scholarship....	16
2.3. The Stories Set in the <i>Hamâm</i> or the <i>Hamâm</i> Set in the Stories.....	21
2.4. Reading and Imagining the <i>Hamâm</i> Under the Shadow of <i>Pax Ottomanica</i>	23
2.5. <i>Hamâm</i> as a Site for Publicizing “the Private but Still Legitimate”? .	27
2.6. A Penis, a <i>Qadi</i> , and the Nightmares	30
3. HOME AS A TENTATIVE PRIVATE SPACE	37
3.1. Introduction.....	37
3.2. Reading, Drawing and Imagining the Home: A Literary Review	38
3.3. The Home Stories.....	44
3.4. Making Sexual Intercourse Between Opposite Sexes Illicit.....	47
3.5. Making Same-Sex Encounters Licit	55
4. USE OF THE MARKETPLACE AS A PRIVATE SPACE?.....	59

4.1. Introduction	59
4.2. Historical Setting: the Early Modern Ottoman Marketplace	59
4.3. <i>Pâzâr</i> in the Stories	64
4.4. If On a Night an Unexpected Visitor	64
5. CONCLUSION	69
BIBLIOGRAPHY	71
APPENDIX A	83
A.1. Referenced Figures in the Thesis	83
A.2. Figures not Specifically Referenced in the Text.....	92

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Studying Sexual Content in Early Modern Ottoman Prose: Why and How?

Examples of fictional narratives in early modern Ottoman prose literature are legion. However, in contrast to scholarly literature on early modern Ottoman poetry, scholarship on early modern Ottoman prose fiction reveals a significant lacuna in our understanding of the attitudes, beliefs, needs, aspirations, forms of sociability, and urban settings shared among Ottomans in fictional prose stories that produced before the nineteenth century. Historicizing these texts, as this thesis will try to do, could highlight the uses of public and private spaces, as well as sex and sexuality in the early modern Ottoman world. These topics feature prominently in Cinânî's (d. 1004/1595) *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* ("The Original Stories"), a collection of short stories on various themes such as emotions, morals and decorum, focusing on honor, anxiety, debauchery, pederasty, and sex and sexuality.¹

The *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* was dedicated to Sultan Murad III (r. 1574-95) Like contemporaneous poets, painters, prose writers, and storytellers (be they either prose story writers or story-collectors, as these definitions are often intertwined in the premodern context), Cinânî also aimed to receive court patronage throughout his career. Recent scholarship demonstrates that early modern poets, painters, and writers could make a living from intermittent commissions from less prestigious and affluent elites.² In other words, neither all artists nor their audience/patrons had to be members of the social, cultural or political elite. Although, they often aspired to affiliation with it. In one way or another, nonetheless, these artists needed a close relationship

¹Cinânî, *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, ed. Osman Ünlü (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2009).

²See, for example, Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of the Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005); Haluk Ipekten, *Divan Edebiyatında Edebî Muhitler* (Istanbul: MEB, 1996); Sooyong Kim, *The Last of an Age: The Making and Unmaking of a Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Poet* (Routledge: London and New York, 2018).

with the members of ruling elite to advance their careers. Cinânî's career is not an exception to this "rule". In his *Hadâiku'l-hakâik fî tekmeleti's-Sekâik*, Nevîzâde Atâî (d.1635) reveals that Cinânî's patrons consisted of high-ranking officials, including the Ottoman Sultan.³ In addition to his significant reception by the courtly elites, several şair tezkires (biographical dictionaries of poets) also acknowledges his merits as both a prose story writer and a poet. Nevîzâde Atâî⁴, Kınalızâde Hasan Çelebi⁵, and Âşık Çelebi⁶ enthusiastically praise Cinânî, the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, and Cinânî's multidimensional literary talent which manifested itself in poetic composition and storytelling.

1.2 Finding Cinânî in His Works

In addition to the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, Cinânî has a *divân* (collection of poems by one author) and two didactic mesnevîs (long poems in double rhymed verse): *Riyâzü'l-cinân* and *Cilâü'l-kulûb*.⁷ *Riyâzü'l-cinân*, Cinânî's first mesnevî, was composed in 1578 and dedicated to Murad III. Mahmut Şarlı, who published *Riyâzü'l-cinân* and a comprehensive analysis⁸, suggests that the following verses in the text indicate its intention as a nazîre (poetic parallel⁹) to Nizâmî-i Gencevî's (d. 1209) Mahzenü'l-esrâr, the mesnevî which is widely recognized as one of the most significant examples of didactic literature in the Islamicate world:

³Nevî-zâde Atâyî, *Hadâiku'l-hakâyik fî Tekmeleti's- sakâyik (Sakayık Zeyli)*, ed. Abdülkadir Özcan (İstanbul: Çağrı Yayınları 1989), 396-7.

⁴Ibid. 396-7.

⁵Kınalızâde Hasan Çelebi, *Tezkiretü's-şuarâ*, vol. 1, ed. İbrahim Kutluk (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1989), 266.

⁶Osman Ünlü, "Cinânî'nin Bedâyiü'l-âsâr'ı, İnceleme-Metin" (PhD. diss, Ege University, 2008), 13. Also see: Âşık Çelebi, *Meşâirü's-şuarâ*, ed. Filiz Kılıç (Ankara: TC Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Kütüphaneler ve Yayınlar Genel Müdürlüğü, 2018).

⁷For Cinânî's *divân*: Cihan Okuyucu, *Cinânî: Hayatı-Eserleri-Divânının Tenkitli Metni* (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, 1994). For *Riyâzü'l-Cihan*: Mahmut Sarlı, *Cinani'nin Riyazu'l-Cinân'ı: İnceleme-Metin-Çeviri* (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, 2018). For *Cilâü'l-kulûb*, Okuyucu, 209-236.

⁸Mahmut Şarlı, *Cinani'nin Riyazu'l-Cinân'ı: İnceleme-Metin-Çeviri* (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, 2018), 43.

⁹According to Andrews, Black and Kalpaklı, "The composition of "parallels" was the practice of writing a poem using the rhyme, rhythm, and basic imagery of another poet's poem." (Walter G. Andrews, et al, *Ottoman Lyric Poetry: An Antology* (University of Washington Press: Seattle and London, 2006), 129. For an insightful analysis on the nazîre as a literary form in Ottoman literature see Brandon Teola, "The Value of the Nazîre: Comparing the Poems of Nejâtî and Bâkî in the Tradition of Ottoman Lyric Poetry," *SUURJ: Seattle University Undergraduate Research Journal* 7 (2023): Article 7. On several nazîres to *Mahzenü'l-Esrâr*: Ağâh Sırrı Levend, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* (İstanbul: Dergâh, 2014) 71-79; I.Hakkı Aksoyak, "Mahzenü'l-Esrâr Geleneğine Bağlı Mesnevilerdeki Ortak Hikâyeler," *Bilig* 3 (1996): 182-9.

Yâver olup hâme-i sihr-intisâb
Ben de diyem Ravza-sıfat bir kitâb
Peyrev-i üslûb-ı Nizâmî olam
Cur'a-kes-i meclis-i Câmî olam¹⁰

The *Riyâzü'l-cinân* is divided into 20 *ravzas*, each representing a “garden” or section, with each *ravza* covering various topics. The first four *ravzas* consist of the author’s advice to sultans, viziers, governors, and *qadis* (judges). The remaining sixteen *ravzas* explore a range of themes, including generosity, love, insatiability, and gossip. Following the *Riyâzü'l-cinân*, there is another didactic mesnevî called the *Cilâü'l-kulûb*. The themes emphasized by Cinânî in the *Cilâü'l-kulûb* are similar to those in the *Riyâzü'l-cinân*¹¹. However, according to Osman Ünlü, the *Cilâü'l-kulûb* exhibits a more complex and sophisticated language style.¹² Of greater importance for our discussion is the reason behind the composition of this *mesnevî* (*sebeb-i te'lif*), as it provides significant insights into how male same-sex encounters and homoerotic relationships were portrayed in the world of the seventeenth-century Ottoman literati.

The *sebeb-i te'lif* section of the *Cilâü'l-kulûb* narrates a “story” as follows¹³: After leaving his position in Istanbul, Cinânî experiences deep sadness and disappointment. Losing his motivation to write poetry, he spends his free time with close friends. One day, during a social gathering in İstanbul where he is drinking and chatting with a group of literati, a beautiful boy enters the room. This boy, who is also a poet, poses a question to Cinânî. Impressed by Cinânî’s answer, the boy expresses his desire to have Cinânî as his tutor. As time passes, their bond grows stronger, and Cinânî eventually falls in love with the boy. This newfound love reignites Cinânî’s passion for writing poetry, with the boy becoming his source of inspiration. The *Cilâü'l-kulûb* is also a product of this inspiration. Through my analysis of the story depicting a same-sex encounter and homoerotic relationship between a beautiful slave boy and an older man in the third chapter, I aim to provide further insight into Cinânî’s authorial stance towards sexuality and homoerotic love, as conveyed in the *sebeb-i te'lif* section of the *Cilâü'l-kulûb*.

Cinânî’s *divân* is also worth mentioning for several reasons. Firstly, it offers insights

¹⁰Cited in Şarh, *Riyazu'l-Cinân*, 43.

¹¹Ünlü, “Cinânî’nin”, 30.

¹²Ibid.

¹³For the “story” narrated in the *sebeb-i te'lif* section, see Ünlü, “Cinânî’nin”, 28. See also Mustafa Özkan, *Cilâü'l-kulûb: İnceleme-Metin-Sözlük* (İstanbul: İ.Ü. Basımevi ve Film Merkezi, 1990), 254-7.

into the role of patronage in the literary tradition of the period. The *divân* contains 41 *qasidas*, with 9 of them dedicated to Murad III.¹⁴ Some *qasidas* were devoted to members of the ruling elite and prominent religious figures of the time.¹⁵ Notably, there are also a significant number of *qasidas* dedicated to female elites¹⁶ such as Nurbanu Sultan (the mother of Murad III), Şemsiye Hatun (the wife of Atâullah Ahmed Efendi¹⁷), Hubbî Hatun (a sixteenth-century female poet), and Fatıma Sultan (the daughter of Selim II)¹⁸. The *qasidas* dedicated to Murad III are particularly important as they allow us to grasp the extent of the early modern artists' and writers' reliance on patronage mechanisms even for their basic needs. In one of these *qasidas*, for instance, Cinânî appeals to the Sultan to fulfill his urgent need for new and proper clothes. However, as I have mentioned above, early modern artists were not solely dependent on court patronage. A poem dedicated to Mahmûd Çelebi, the son of Muâllimzâde who served as the chief judge (*kazasker*)¹⁹ with jurisdiction over Anatolia, serves as an apt example of this phenomenon.²⁰ In the poem, Cinânî laments about his old clothes once again.

Apart from the *qasidas*, there are several poems in the *divân* that shed light on various aspects of the author's daily life, particularly his socioeconomic hardships. In one verse, for instance, Cinânî expresses his longing for *baklava* (a pastry dessert) and opium. In another, he complains about Karesi, a municipality and district in today's Balıkesir Province, where he worked as a *qassam* (a government officer responsible for the distribution of estates of the deceased among beneficiaries).²¹ A thorough analysis of the *divân* can provide the researcher with further detailed biographical information. Cihan Okuyucu's comprehensive research supports this assumption.²² Based on Cinânî's poems and scattered *manzum mektups* (epistolary poems) in the *divân*, Okuyucu demonstrates that the writer's career in the religio-judicial

¹⁴Okuyucu, *Cinânî*.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶For an insightful analysis on *qasidas* written for female dynastic elite, see Hatice Aynur and Didem Havlioğlu, "Medhiyenin Cinsiyeti: Kadınlara Yazılmış Kasideler (1566-1603)", *Eski Türk Edebiyatı Çalışmaları VIII-Kasîdeye Medhiyye: Biçime, İşleve ve Muhtevaya Dair Tespitler* (2013): 76-121.

¹⁷Atâullah Ahmed Efendi (d. 1571) was one of the high-profile figures in the ilmiye hierarchy. In his later life, he was promoted to the position of *hâce-i padişahship* of Selim II.

¹⁸Ünlü, *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, 19.

¹⁹In the Ottoman Empire, there were two *kazaskers*, known as *Rumeli Kazaskeri* and *Anadolu Kazaskeri*, who held jurisdictional authority over the regions of Rumeli and Anadolu, respectively.

²⁰"*Libâsum kalmamışdur geydügüm pesîmenüñ dahi Belirsüzdür yüzi astarı dâmâni giribânı*" (cited in Okuyucu, 50-1.)

²¹Ibid. 149-50.

²²Okuyucu, *Cinânî*, 184.

administration (*ilmîye*) among the *ulema* did not unfold as he had envisioned.²³ Despite holding short-term teaching positions as a müderris at *Köseler Medresesi* and *İvaz Paşa Medresesi* in his later life in Bursa, a petition addressed to *Şeyhülislam* (chief mufti) Zekeriya Efendi reveals that Cinânî struggled to make a living for most of his life.²⁴

1.3 The Scholarship on the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*: A Brief Critical Review

Although there has been prior scholarly focus on Cinânî's poetry, the same level of analysis has not been extended to the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*. Fuad Köprülü was the first modern scholar to pay attention to the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*'s stories.²⁵ However, instead of analyzing its stories, Köprülü emphasizes their significance for "Turkish literature" since he assumes that Cinânî's stories were among the first "original" Ottoman Turkish stories. Köprülü relies on Cinânî's own introduction to the story collection, in which Cinânî claims to be writing previously untold stories in the Ottoman world, to support his argument.²⁶ Inspired by Köprülü's originality thesis, the second generation of studies on the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* has also emphasized the notion of originality, highlighting Cinânî's ability to "preserve" his stories from external influences of Arabic and Persian literature.²⁷ However, these studies offer more than just the examination of originality. They also provide brief information about the author's literary career, based on details derived from the *tezkires*. Furthermore, they have contributed to scholarship by categorizing the stories according to their themes.²⁸ Interestingly, though, these studies ignore stories with erotic and sexual elements in the collection.

Recent scholarship has led to a more nuanced understanding of the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*. A notable contribution in this regard is Osman Ünlü's critical edition, which includes

²³Ibid.184-5

²⁴M. Fuat Köprülü, *Edebiyat Araştırmaları-I* (Istanbul:1969, 460).

²⁵Ibid., 390.

²⁶Ibid. 394. Also see: Cinânî, *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, 3 (S1b15-2a4).

²⁷For instance, Özdemir Nutku, "XIV. Yüzyıldan XVIII. Yüzyıla Kadar Bursalı Kıssahanlar ve Meddahlar," in *Meddahlık ve Meddah Hikâyeleri* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Başkanlığı Yayınları:1997), 247-8; Cihan Okuyucu, "Bedâyiü'l-âsâr", *DİA*, İstanbul, 1992, 296-297; Cihan Okuyucu, "Mustafa Cinânî ve Bedâyiü'l-âsâr'ı," *ÜFTD Prof. Dr. İbrahim Kafesolu Hatıra Sayısı* 13 (1983-1987): 351-85.

²⁸Cihan Okuyucu, "Mustafa Cinânî ve Bedâyiü'l-âsâr'ı".

thorough analysis and an informative introduction.²⁹ Unlike previous studies, Ünlü does not dismiss the presence of stories with bawdy and sexual content, thereby avoiding self-imposed censorship. Moreover, his work provides valuable insights into early modern Ottoman prose stories in general. However, it should be noted that Ünlü’s literary-historical analysis of the *Bedâyiü’l-âsâr* stories is relatively limited, focusing mainly on transliteration, categorization, and technical specifications. Another valuable source for the study of prose stories, including the *Bedâyiü’l-âsâr*, is İpek Hüner Cora’s PhD dissertation.³⁰ However, since she focuses on prose stories scattered in various manuscripts, she does not discuss the *Bedâyiü’l-âsâr*’s stories extensively. Instead, she “uses” a couple of anecdotes from one or two stories.

There are twelve available manuscript copies of the *Bedâyiü’l-âsâr*. Among these, however, three manuscripts have missing parts.³¹ For this thesis, the primary source used is the manuscript located at Yapı Kredi Sermet Çifter Araştırma Kütüphanesi in Istanbul under the catalogue number Yz. 842.³² The Yz. 842 titled *Kitâb-ı Mekk ü Zenân-ı Nâdide: Kitâb-ı Letâ’if-i Cinânî* is considered to be the closest to the author’s own copy. As is also shown by Ünlü, the manuscript consists of two parts: the first part is comprised of seventy-six stories, while the second part has twenty very short stories and anecdotes, titled “*acibe vü garibe*” by the copyist. Although the collection covers a wide range of themes, including tricks and tricksters, talismans, witches, seafaring heroes, cunning women, adulterous husbands, and various sexual encounters, the present study is confined to representation of sex and sexuality.

1.4 Research Framework, Argument, and Approach

In this thesis, I examine the relevance of the private/public distinction in the context of the early modern Ottoman world, focusing on stories set in *hamâm* (public bathhouse), *ev* (home), and *pâzâr* (marketplace) as case studies. Based on the narratives presented in the stories, my argument is that the exposure of an individual’s sexual privacy to the public would not be considered an invasion of privacy, provided that the intimate experience remains within the bounds of socially accepted

²⁹Osman Ünlü (ed.), “Introduction and Analysis” in *Bedâyiü’l-âsâr* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2009).

³⁰İpek Hüner Cora, ““The Story Has It”: Prose, Gender and Space in the Early Modern Ottoman World” (PhD diss., the University of Chicago, 2018).

³¹The available manuscript copies of *Bedâyiü’l-âsâr* including those with missing parts are listed in the APPENDIX.

³²Cinânî, *Bedâyiü’l-âsâr*. ed. Osman Ünlü, (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2009). Hereafter referred to as *Bedâyiü’l-âsâr*.

sexual intercourse, such as those occurring in a marital context. Conversely, I also posit that illicit sexual relationships between partners, regardless of whether they are same-sex encounters or not, and even if conducted in the privacy of their homes, are inherently susceptible to being disclosed to the public. My primary contention, informed by the findings of my research, is that any categorization framework which emphasizes the public/private divide is insufficient in comprehending the intricate complexities of Ottoman urban spaces as portrayed in the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*. Instead, I put forth an alternative viewpoint, advocating the examination of licit/illicit encounters to comprehend early modern Ottoman spaces as depicted in the stories, since the characterization of these spaces as public or private is contingent upon the prevalence of licit/illicit sexual behaviors and attitudes within them.

Having selected the stories based on their settings, I have particularly focused on the stories that reflect the relationships and interactions between sexuality and space. Following the introduction chapter, the thesis comprises three subsequent chapters, each dedicated to one of the main settings in the selected stories: *hamâm*, *ev*, and *pâzâr*. With sexuality as a spatial component, I consider the settings in the stories also as settings of sexual encounters. When discussing these stories, thus, I focus primarily on (1) how sexuality acts out in the space; and (2) how sexuality regulates the nature of the space. In this sense, one of my goals in this thesis is also to contribute to our understanding of sexuality, space, and literature.

Even a casual look at the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* shows that the story collection was not merely produced for a tiny elite circle. Although Cinânî's patrons consisted of high-ranking officials, including the Ottoman sultan, contrary to Nergisî's prose story collection entitled *Nihâlistân*, the first story collection with explicit sexual content that was penned three decades after the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*'s compilation, the stories in the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* seem to be composed in a way that appears to have been suitable even for an illiterate audience.³³ With its readability (ease of reading or understanding), the stories appear to have transcended arbitrarily drawn boundaries between "high" and "low" forms of literature produced in the early modern Ottoman world. The presence of such stories, therefore, alone raises heretofore understudied questions about readership and audience. Cinânî's career and his prose story collection, furthermore, can help us uncover several issues related to the practice and appreciation of popular fictional narratives in Ottoman prose. They can also shed light on the social function of prose fiction in early modernity, the types of stories favored in various literary circles, and the extent to which certain socio-economic factors were elements in determining the production and reception of authors/narrators

³³For *Nihâlistân* see, Süleyman Çaldak, *Nergisî ve Nihâlistân'ı* (Kesit Yayınları, 2010).

and readers/audiences.

In the aforementioned preface of his compilation, Cinânî alleges that his stories are different in the sense that they were as yet untold stories. By the same token, he argues that the stories are by no means influenced by the Arabic and Persian storytelling traditions. Although Köprülü³⁴ uses Cinânî's aforementioned preface to draw attention to the "authenticity" of Cinânî's collection, a close reading of the stories shows that the majority of them were already popular in the Islamicate world.³⁵ On the other hand, it should also be emphasized that the stories cannot belong to a given culture, a country, or a group of people in the sense that each author and narrator could always come up with new elements and undertones based on the audience and the socio-cultural context of his/her period. Also, the author's own social and political engagement, personal experiences, and privileges could possibly affect his way of writing/narrating. In this regard, the stories in the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* are parts of the early modern Ottoman world and thus give us certain insights about the perceptions of their readers/audiences and narrator.

The stories in the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* are embedded within the early modern Ottoman world, providing valuable insights into the perspectives of both the readers/audiences and the narrators. For instance, story 6, which revolves around a man seeking pleasure outside his marriage through "heterosexual" relations, provides a notable example of this phenomenon.³⁶ The story portrays the man engaging in secret sexual encounters with his concubine in a room adjacent to the *sofa*, an open or confined room giving access to other rooms, where his wife and female guests engage in conversation. Unexpectedly, a domesticated ram enters the room and forcefully knocks both the man and the concubine into the *sofa*, publicly shaming them and eliciting condemning and surprised gazes from the guests. A similar version of this "story" albeit with minor differences, is narrated in the fifteenth *nefha* (a pleasant smell) of Nevîzâde Atâî's *Nefhatü'l-ehzâr* (The Breeze of Blossoms), a *mesnevi* composed in 1625 as a *nâzire* to Nizâmî-i Gencevî's *Mahzenü'l-esrâr*³⁷. This story is also "depicted" in the 18th-century illustrated copies of the *Hamse-i Atâî*.³⁸ Last but

³⁴Fuad Köprülü, "Türklerde Halk Hikâyeciligine Âit Bazı Maddeler: Meddahlar," in *Edebiyat Araştırmaları* (Ankara: TTK Basımevi, 1966) 390-1.

³⁵For Ünlü's discussion of intertextuality, see Ünlü, "Introduction and Analysis" 108-116.

³⁶Cinânî, *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, 179-81 (S14b-S17a).

³⁷For a detailed description and an analysis of the stories in the *Hamse-i Atâî*, see Tunca Kortantamer, *Nevîzâde Atâî ve Hamsesi* (İzmir: Ege Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1997). For the stories in *Nefhatü'l-Ezhar*, see Muhammed Kuzubaş, "Nevîzâde Atâî'nin Nefhatü'l-Ezhâr Adlı Mesnevisinin Metin, Biçim ve İçerik Bakımından İncelenmesi" (MA thesis, Samsun Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi).

³⁸Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi (TSM) R. 816; Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi (TIEM) 1969; British Library (BL) Or. 13882; Free Library of Philadelphia (FLP) (John Frederic Lewis Collection) T. 97;

not least, it would also be noteworthy to mention that the 20th-century storyteller Ömer Seyfettin extensively utilized Cinânî's aforementioned story in his own story entitled "Tos".³⁹

The present reading of the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* is inspired by a number of studies that depict literary production to have a two-way dialogical relationship with cultural, ideological, and political issues of a specific period, both affecting and being affected by them. Therefore, it is language from which we tend to learn what is normal and what is abnormal, whom to love and how to love, and how to behave under what circumstances.⁴⁰ On the other hand, texts and social attitudes are mutually related without either being subordinate to the other. My approach to literature-centered view of the narrating, writing, and scripting of social attitudes, thus, is similar to that of Louis Montrose, who in his study of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, maintains:

To the extent that the cult of Elizabeth informs the play, it is itself transformed within the play. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is, then, in a double sense, a creation of Elizabethan culture: for it also creates the culture by which it is created, shapes the fantasies by which it is shaped, beget that by which it is begotten.⁴¹

1.5 Literature Review

Does literature give us a certain insight into the past? To what extent can a historian benefit from the literature as a tool for gaining a reliable understanding of people's social attitudes about various issues and themes as sexuality and leisure, death and religion? Could unconventional literary documents – such as fictional prose stories

Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery (WAG) W. 666.

³⁹Ömer Seyfettin, "Tos", in *Yüksek Ökçeler* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınları, 1970), 117-28.

⁴⁰See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1983).

⁴¹Lois Adrian Montrose; "A *Midsummer Night's Dream* and the Shaping Fantasies of Elizabethan Culture: Gender, Power, Form," in *New Historicism and Renaissance Drama*, edited by Ferguson, Quillian and Vickers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986). 65-87; Cited in Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of the Beloveds*, 38. A similar approach to cultural artifacts could be found in the works of Stephen Jay Greenblatt. According to Greenblatt, "literature functions within this system in three interlocking ways: as a manifestation of the concrete behavior of its particular author, as itself the expression of the codes by which behavior is shaped, and as a reflection upon those codes" (Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 4.

– be seen as points of departure to trace the mentalities, perceptions, and daily lives of early modern Ottomans? Could fictional stories be seen as the textual description of urban social life, modes and means of sociability, leisure culture, and public and private gatherings and interactions among people? What is a documentary value of fictional prose stories?

Although one may pose a challenge to such use of imaginative literature as historical evidence, suggesting that the referential nature of fiction is always uncertain and that evidence derived from literature about specific historical changes is inherently problematic,⁴² numerous successful endeavors have demonstrated the value of incorporating literature into the realms of social and cultural history.⁴³ These efforts provide evidence to support the reliability of fictional literature for historical inquiry. Using literary texts as historical evidence has particularly appealed to social and cultural historians working on the eighteenth-century France and Britain.⁴⁴ Due to the limited number of primary sources that could have informed their research, some European historians have appeared to consider using literature as a primary source.⁴⁵ It was in line with this approach, for example, in his “Peasant Tells Tales: The Meaning of Mother Goose”, that Robert Darnton utilizes fairy tales as useful elements for the points of entry into the mindsets of eighteenth-century French people.⁴⁶

On the other hand, regarding the historical-literary analysis of narrative sources that were produced prior to the eighteenth century, among other names, Natalie Ze-

⁴²Philip Stewart. “This Is Not a Book Review: On Historical Uses of Literature,” *Journal of Modern History* 66 (1994): 524. Also in: Allan H. Pasco, “Literature as Historical Archive,” *New Literary History* 35, no. 3 (2004): 390.

⁴³For example; Natalie Zemon Davis, “The Historian and Literary Uses” *Profession* (2003): 21–27); Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-century France* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1987); Allan H. Pasco, “Literature as Historical Archive,” *New Literary History* 35, no. 3 (2004): 373–94; Walter Laqueur, “Literature and the Historian,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 2, no. 2 (April 1967): 5–14; Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984); Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, ed. and transl. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); Mikhail Bakhtin *Rabelais and His World*, transl. Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984); Lois Adrian Montrose; “A Midsummer Night’s Dream and the Shaping Fantasies of Elizabethan Culture: Gender, Power, Form”, 1986; Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of the Beloveds*, 2005).

⁴⁴Alan Pasco, “Literature as Historical Archive”, 375.

⁴⁵Lest I be misunderstood, that is not to say that cultural historians of eighteenth-century Europe devoid of such “official” documents as records of legislation or more “personal” documents including published correspondences, speeches and memoirs of learned elites. However, as is succinctly maintained by Allan Pasco, “because of the paucity and unreliability of documents remaining to us, most information about those who were not “notables” (...) which constituted perhaps ninety-five percent of the population, is nonexistent” (Alan Pasco, 2004, 386). Therefore, the dearth of reliable documents appear to be the main reason why the European social and cultural historians needed to find novel ways in their attempt of obtaining access to the cultural customs, beliefs, daily practices, anxieties, passions and mind-sets of the “ordinary” people who constituted the majority.

⁴⁶Robert Darnton, “Peasant Tells Tales: The Meaning of Mother Goose” in *The Great Cat Massacre* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 9–75.

mon Davis seems to deserve particular credit for her pioneering focus on heretofore understudied fictional aspects of archival documents. In *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth Century France*, a thorough literary-historical analysis of sixteenth-century French royal letters of pardon and remission for homicide sent to the king,⁴⁷ Zemon Davis studies the literary narratives in the letters to understand the attitudes of sixteenth century French peasants' and artisans' towards violence, suicide, revenge, as well as other popular social and cultural customs.⁴⁸ *The Return of Martin Guerre* is another important contribution to the field in which Zemon Davis succinctly traces the transformation, if not reshaping, of the eye-witnesses accounts and other documented narratives into the "story" by demonstrating the blurring boundaries between the "real", and the "fictional".⁴⁹ The repercussion of this historiographic trend, taking fiction as a novel and reliable source of historical inquiry, has been a blessing in Ottoman studies on sex and sexuality.⁵⁰ Among recent works on this theme, several publications appear to deserve particular attention. My thesis will follow in their wake in that it historically contextualizes early modern sexuality reflected in the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*.

In *Before Homosexuality in the Arab-Islamic World, 1500-1800*, Khaled El-Rouayheb challenges established scholarly views on the literary representations of chaste love for boys and male-to-male sexual desire in the context of Arab-speaking parts of the Ottoman Empire.⁵¹ In contrast to a great number of studies on Arabic love poetry, El-Rouayheb argues that the emphasis on pederastic love in poetry was by no means purely fictitious, and frequent expressions of male-to-male sexual desire must have conformed to established cultural norms and sexual behavior among both poets and their audiences. Although his study demonstrates that what conventionally regarded purely fictional could indeed reveal the attitudes of certain members of the Arabic-speaking elites towards sexual norms and sexuality, contextualizing

⁴⁷According to Davis, "By the categories of Renaissance rhetoricians and literary theorists the letter of remission was a mixed genre: a judicial supplication to persuade the king and courts, a historical account of one's past actions, and a story" (Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, 3). Elsewhere, she goes further: "The letter of remission was a composite construction, with notaries and legal formulas and rules playing their role, but the pardon seeker's voice could still be followed as it crafted a believable tale" (Zemon Davis, "The Historian and Literary Uses", 24).

⁴⁸Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-century France* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1987)

⁴⁹Natalie Zemon Davis. *Return of Martin Guerre* (Harvard University Press, 1983).

⁵⁰For studies on Ottoman fictional prose that are not particularly interested in sexually explicit stories, please see M. Fuad Köprülü, *Edebiyat Araştırmaları*; Hasan Kavruk, *Eski Türk Edebiyatında Mensûr Hikâyeler* (Istanbul: M.E.B., 1998); Hakan Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski, "Osmanlı Nesrinin Cumhuriyet Devrinde Algılanışı," *Eski Türk Edebiyatı Çalışmaları V, Nesrin İnşası, Düzyazıda Dil, Üslûp ve Türler* (2010): 44-55; Metin And "İslam Ülkelerinde Gösterim Niteliğinde Hikâye Anlatımı," *Tarih ve Toplum* IV, no. 24 (1985): 362-367.

⁵¹Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Before Homosexuality in the Arab-Islamic World, 1500-1800* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 2005).

other elements of the intellectual, cultural and social life of that period from poets' and audiences' perspective remain beyond the scope of his work.

Walter Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı's study, *The Age of the Beloveds*, with its primary attention to the representation of sex, sexuality, and same-sex practices in Ottoman literature, confronts the heterosexual norms of the nation-state that were consolidated throughout the transformation from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey.⁵² Its particular attention to chaste love towards boys as well as illicit (same-sex) sexual relations challenges the conventional standards of the field. However, like the majority of studies on early modern Ottoman and Islamicate Literature, including El-Rouayheb's study on Arabic poetry mentioned above, it confines itself to analyzing Ottoman poetry, paying less attention to narrative literature.

David Selim Sayer's *The Wiles of Women in Ottoman and Azeri Texts*, with its focus on fictional prose stories, is devoted to different types of social behavior towards women and their stereotypical wiles.⁵³ His other book, *Tıflî Hikâyeleri*, is another important contribution to our understanding of sociosexual practices, roles, and underlying ambiguities as represented in Ottoman Turkish prose fiction. However, the author only makes use of nineteenth-century literature and does not attempt to contextualize the pre-nineteenth-century versions of the stories.⁵⁴

Selim Kuru's dissertation provides an insightful analysis of the *Dâfi'ü'l-gumûm ve râfiül-humûm* ("The Book that Repels Sorrow and Removes Grief"), a largely neglected sixteenth-century collection of sexually-oriented prose stories by Deli Birader.⁵⁵ Kuru focuses on the representation of same-sex relationships and various actors of sexual intercourse in the text to challenge much of today's scholarship and its established norms about Ottoman Turkish literature. Because Deli Birader provides a distorted representation of illicit sexuality for entertainment purposes to distance the readers from their worries, we should interpret this cautiously as representative of Ottoman social attitudes to sex and sexuality in the early modern period.

Most of the aforementioned studies address the general neglect that Ottoman prose stories are subject to. The first reason for this neglect might be their illicit sexual content and profane character, which previously excluded them from the canon in

⁵²Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of the Beloveds*.

⁵³David Selim Sayers, *The Wiles of Women in Ottoman and Azeri Texts* (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2019).

⁵⁴David Selim Sayers, *Tıflî Hikâyeleri* (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2013).

⁵⁵Selim Kuru, "A Sixteenth-Century Scholar: Deli Birader and His *Dâfi'ü'l-Gumûm ve Râfi'ü'l-Humûm*" (PhD Diss., Harvard University, 2000).

Ottoman literary and cultural studies. Another reason, which is connected with the first one, has to do with the prevalent conventional approach that favors poetry over prose due to its allegedly higher literary style. Although widely-held notion of Ottoman poetry's superiority over prose has been challenged by recent studies, a review of available scholarly literature reveals a significant lacuna in our understanding of the attitudes, beliefs, needs, aspirations, forms of sociability, and urban settings shared by early modern Ottomans, as portrayed in the fictional prose stories that were produced prior to the eighteenth century. The reason for this neglect emanated from a scholarly trend which approaches these stories as a part of an inherited Islamicate literary tradition such as *the Thousand and One Nights*. According to this approach, pre-eighteenth century prose fictions derived their strength from their connection to historical context rather than relying solely on the intricacies of their plots, although they were influenced by Ottoman culture to a certain degree. This viewpoint is prominently highlighted in Zeynep Altok's "The Eighteenth-Century 'Istanbul Tale': Prose Tales and Beyond," where she regards pre-eighteenth century prose stories as prototypes for the prose tales of the eighteenth century.⁵⁶

Among recent works on Ottoman prose tales, İpek Hüner Cora's dissertation is a notable exception in that she centered her analysis on sixteenth and seventeenth-century stories without devising a stratified hierarchy between the eighteenth century tales and those produced prior to that time.⁵⁷ In her study, she mainly focuses on prose stories scattered in manuscripts as well as several prose story collections including the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, albeit to a small extent. Throughout her study, she focuses on gender as a main category of her analysis and confines her research to the representations of gender, and more particularly women, in prose literature prior to the nineteenth century. Although she focuses on how gender and gendered representations in these stories were narrated and circulated, she does not discuss Ottoman textualization of sexuality extensively. Equally, she does not approach the stories as a tool for understanding the general cultural and social climate that produced them.

The available scholarship of Ottoman literary history focusing on the representation of sex and sexuality in prose fiction before the nineteenth century is still limited. While prose stories are not seen as worthwhile to be included in mainstream literary histories, the same holds even more true for prose with sexual content. However,

⁵⁶Zeynep Altok, "The 18th-Century 'Istanbul Tale': Prose Tales and Beyond," in *A Companion to Early Modern Istanbul*, eds. Shirine Hamadeh and Çiğdem Kafescioğlu (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 581-607, p. 598. However less directly, a comparable approach could also be found in David Selim Sayers' works. For example, see: *Tıflî Hikâyeleri*, ed. David Selim Sayers (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2013).

⁵⁷İpek Hüner Cora, "The Story Has It": Prose, Gender and Space in the Early Modern Ottoman World" (PhD diss., the University of Chicago, 2018).

the great number of copies of the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* in manuscript libraries attests to the popularity of Ottoman erotic literature in the early modern period.

2. PRIVACY AND ANXIETY IN THE *HAMÂM*: SHADES OF SEX OR I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST NIGHT

2.1 Introduction

Among eight stories referring to the *hamâm* in the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, there are three stories in which the *hamâm* appears as a main setting: Stories 16, 33, and 34. The stories set in *hamâm* provide a fertile ground to discuss the socio-economic, confessional, and ethnical identities/boundaries in the early modern Ottoman world. On one side, the *hamâm* functions as a versatile space where social and religious distinctions temporarily fade away. The atmosphere is so revitalizing that diverse groups come together to enjoy, relax, and rejuvenate themselves. On the other side, the *hamâm* serves as a setting through which the historian can gain valuable insights into moments of tension among individuals from various social classes and ethnic backgrounds. In this chapter, I aim to explore this complex duality through the story 33, which unfolds in a *hamâm*.

Situating this chapter within the context of the *hamâm*s also allows a deep examination of the relevance of private/public as well as private space and public space. Building on the insights from story 34, therefore, this chapter also aims to challenge a conventional classification scheme that emphasizes the public nature of the *hamâm*. By doing so, it seeks to understand the flexible and conditional characteristics of early modern Ottoman spaces. To accomplish this, I will begin with a review of existing scholarship on the early modern Ottoman *hamâm* before I analyze stories.

2.2 Reading the Ottoman *Hamâm* Through the Available Scholarship

William Joseph Grelot's seventeenth-century travelogue entitled *A Late Voyage to Constantinople* provides an unprejudiced and remarkably non-orientalist depiction of Ottoman *hamâms*. In his account, Grelot observes the multi-religious nature of the bathhouses, noting that "there are a great number of these houses all over Turkie, and some not inferior to the ancient Thermae of the Roman Emperours".¹ According to Grelot, "all sorts of persons are admitted into these Baths, as well Christians and Jews as Turks, in regard they are Built for the publick good and for the common health of all people".² The all-encompassing public nature of *hamâms*, however, should not be limited to religious aspects. In this regard, Grelot's observations on the entrance fees provide a compelling example of how early modern Ottoman *hamâms* were socially and economically intertwined. Grelot notes that "all sorts and sexes pay, masters, mistresses, and slaves; only little children until they reach the age of seven are exempted".³

Observations of contemporary European travelers in written or painted forms on the status of Ottoman women have been subject to diverse interpretations.⁴ The increased and evidently unprecedented representation of Ottoman women in general, and Istanbul women in particular in the eighteenth century, however, should be cautiously analyzed.. Instead of being regarded as the "liberation of women", this emerging phenomena seems to have more to do with the liberation of local artists from the court patronage.⁵ Likewise, as Tülay Artan reminds us, it is important to acknowledge that "western artists, too, seem to have incorporated absentee women into their landscapes in order to satisfy the curiosity of their customers."⁶ Keeping all these in mind, nonetheless, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's depiction of Ottoman women in her letters rather reflect the social reality of her time and of upper-class

¹William Joseph Grelot, *A Late Voyage to Constantinople* (London: Printed by John Playford, 1683), 188.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 189.

⁴Among the studies that associates the increased visibility of women in the literary works and the paintings with their "actual" liberation in the public life Hamadeh's *The City's Pleasures* is of particular importance in that she uses both the local and European sources to support her arguments. See Shrine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Seattle: The University of Washington Press, 2008).

⁵Tülay Artan, "A composite universe: arts and society in Istanbul at the end of the eighteenth century," in Hüttler, Michael and Weidinger, Hans Ernst, (eds.) *Ottoman Empire and European theatre. The Age of W.A. Mozart and Sultan Selim III (1756-1808)* (Vienna. Don Juan Archiv: Wien, 2013), 751-794.

⁶Tülay Artan, "Forms and forums of expression: Istanbul and beyond, 1600–1800," in *The Ottoman World*, ed. Christine Woodhead (Routledge: London/New York, 2011), 400.

women in particular.⁷ In one of her letters portraying the everyday life of the local people “around her”, Montagu suggests *hamâm*’s essential role in women’s social lives. In 1718, Montagu claims that there were almost two hundred bathers in a *hamâm* she visited in Edirne:⁸ “’tis the women’s coffee-house, where all the news of the town is told, scandal invented, etc. They generally take this diversion once a week, and stay there at least four or five hours.” This portrayal is of particular importance in that it pays attention to the extensive public use of *hamâm* to the extent of associating it with the coffee-house — and of course, the possibilities for social interaction and increased anxiety it possibly offer—. In this regard, as convincingly argued by Tülay Artan, the *hamâm* provided women with the chance to engage in social interactions with friends and even individuals from different socio-economic backgrounds, expanding their social circles beyond their usual confines and comfort zones.⁹ In this context, it can be argued that *hamâm*s served as an early modern social network, enabling women who faced challenges leaving their homes to engage in a wide range of conversations. These discussions encompassed local news topics such as wealth disparities, marriage arrangements, health updates, and even extended to public gossip about promotions or dismissals.¹⁰

The *Zenânnâme*, (“Book of Women”), by Fazıl Enderûni (d. 1811), serves as an additional valuable source that enhances our knowledge and comprehension of social forms and forums during the early modern period. One of the *hamâm* scenes depicted in the book, accompanied by a painting (Figure A.1), showcases a woman wearing a distinctive outfit, which suggests the prevalence of conspicuous consumption among the urban elite.¹¹ In the same scene, a group of naked women is depicted, including one woman who is accompanied by a child whose gender remains unknown to us. However, it is important to approach the representativeness of the scene with caution, as the women depicted in the scene appear to adhere to “proper” and “ideal” bathing conventions, displaying a privileged appearance and the use of luxurious bathing materials.

Besides its “positive” characteristic, *hamâm*s also comprises a large spectrum of

⁷Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, Vol. 1, edited by Robert Halsband (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), 325-30.

⁸Ibid. p. 313.

⁹Tülay Artan, “Forms and Forums”, 387-88.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹For a comprehensive analysis that explores conspicuous consumption in the Ottoman Empire, see Suraiya Faroqhi, “Peasants and the Art of Conspicuous Consumption in the Ottoman Empire,” *Journal of Social History* Vol. 36, No. 3 (2003): 631-649.

criminal activity such as intoxication, prostitution, and robbery.¹² In this context, it is worth noting that the stokeholes (*külhan*) of neighborhood *hamâms* were operated by men who were sentenced to involuntary servitude. These men were often under the control and supervision of a despotic leader known as the *külhanbeyi* (chief stoker). Traditionally, this local group of men held a certain level of power as long as they maintained order in the neighborhood.¹³ Additionally, *külhans* also served as spaces for providing shelter and food to both orphans and future mobs.¹⁴ It was also a common practice for the young individuals “to leave the *külhan* everyday to beg for alms and food; the latter was cooked by the *külhanbeyi* and consumed communally”.¹⁵ Furthermore, it should be emphasized that the *külhan* was not exclusively a Muslim space. To the contrary, homeless people and riffraffs from non-Muslim confessional identities were also allowed to shelter and eat.¹⁶ Just as *külhans* provided shelter and warmth to its *ahâli*, *hamâms* also provided people with shelter to its ordinary costumers. As documented by Selânîkî Mustafa Efendi, for instance, after watching the Safavid prince Haydar Mirza’s procession in January 1590, female spectators were unable to return home after nightfall.¹⁷ Consequently, some stayed overnight at the *Beyazîd Hamâm* for their safety and convenience.

In his *A Neighborhood in Ottoman Istanbul, Kasap İlyas*, Cem Behar argues that the *hamâm*, except for the *mescid*, was the only public space in a neighborhood in pre-modern Turkish-speaking Ottoman cities. According to Behar, it was not until the nineteenth century that coffeehouses became seminal social hubs.¹⁸ However, Kafadar challenges Behar’s perspective, arguing that coffeehouses played a more cru-

¹²See: Artan, “Forms and Forums”; Ekrem Isın, “Turkish hamams: public baths as social venues,” in *Istanbul’da Gündelik Yaşam (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002)*.

¹³Mehmet Demirtaş, “XVIII. yüzyılda Osmanlıda bir zümrenin alt-kültür grubuna dönüşmesi: külhanbeyleri,” *Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 7/1 (2006): 113-41. Ömer Düzbakar, “Osmanlı devletinin dilenciler bakışı (Bursa örneği),” *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Derneği* 1/5 (2007): 290-312.

¹⁴Düzbakar, “Osmanlı” 2007; Isın, 2002, 270-1.

¹⁵Artan, “Forms and Forums”, 388.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Selânîkî Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selânîkî*, vol, I, ed. Mehmet İpşirli (Istanbul: İÜ Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1989), 216-220; cited in Tülay Artan, “Patrons, Painters, Women in Distress: The Changing Fortunes of Nev’izade Atayi and Üskübi Mehmed Efendi in Early Eighteenth-Century Istanbul,” *Muqarnas Online* 39, no. 1 (2022): 60.

¹⁸Cem Behar, *A Neighborhood in Ottoman Istanbul: Fruit Vendors and Civil Servants in the Kasap İlyas Mahalle* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 6. Behar’s pessimism regarding the rise of local coffee shops in pre-modern Istanbul overlooks the fact that coffeeshops had already been established in the city by the mid-fifteenth century. To understand the significant and irreversible transformation of leisure culture in late-sixteenth and seventeenth-century Istanbul due to the flourishing coffeehouses, see Cemal Kafadar, “How dark is the history of the night, how black the story of coffee, how bitter the tale of love: The changing measure of leisure and pleasure in early modern Istanbul,” in *Medieval and Early Modern Performance in the Eastern Mediterranean*, ed. Arzu Öztürken and E.B. Vitz (Turnhout, 2014): 243-269. When examining the effects of coffee and coffeehouses on the sociability of the early modern Ottoman world, the bibliography in Cemal Kafadar’s work “How Dark is the History of the Night” should provide sufficient resources.

cial role much earlier. Kafadar supports his stance by referring to an Indian source written towards the end of the sixteenth century (possibly compiled in 1593/94) by an Iranian emigre intellectual.¹⁹ This source exaggerates the numbers, claiming that Istanbul had “four hundred mosques where communal prayers are held on Fridays, nine hundred bathhouses, and seven thousand coffeehouses”, indicating the city’s reputation regarding coffeehouses long before the nineteenth century.²⁰

Behar’s understanding of the *mahalle* (neighborhood) primarily revolves around a set of public amenities, such as mosques, *hamâms*, fountains, and a few shops. Notably, Behar places considerable significance on *hamâms* in his depiction, convincingly arguing that they functioned as one of the principal public spaces. According to his perspective, *hamâms* played a crucial role in facilitating social interactions and gatherings among members of the same sex within the *ehl-i mahalle* (the people of a specific neighborhood) while partaking in a purifying bath.²¹

Although Elif Ekin Aksit’s study primarily centers around the transformation of women’s public baths in Republican Turkey, it also strengthens the understanding of the public nature associated with *hamâm*. Her study is noteworthy as it demonstrates a certain continuity in the public aspect of *hamâms* from the sixteenth century onwards at the context of the neighborhood.²² Cemal Kafadar, in his noteworthy and often overlooked article, also highlights the distinctly public nature of the Ottoman *hamâm*.²³ He examines the public/private space dichotomy through a theoretical framework inspired by Habermas and applies it to public gathering spots in the early modern Ottoman world. Kafadar sees *hamâms* as integral public spaces within the socio-cultural life of the era. By analyzing their spatial, material, and socio-cultural characteristics, he proposes that *hamâms* offer insights into the evolving and persistent nature of various public spaces in the Lands of Rum (*Diyâr-ı Rûm*).

Studies on early modern Ottoman neighborhoods convincingly highlight the central role of religious communities and collective action derived from religious worship

¹⁹Kafadar, “How Dark”, 251.

²⁰Amin Ahmed Razi, *Haft Iqlim* [Seven Climes], ed. Muhammad Riza Tahiri, 3 vols (Tehran: Surush, 1999/2000). In Kafadar, “How Dark”, 251.

²¹Cem Behar, *A Neighborhood in Ottoman Istanbul*, 44.

²²Elif Ekin Aksit, “Kadınların Hamâmı ve Dönüşümü,” in *Cins Cins Mekan*, ed. Ayten Alkan (Istanbul: Varlık Yayınları, 2009).

²³Cemal Kafadar, “Dünya Tarihçiliğinde Yeni Gelişmeler ve Osmanlı Tarihçiliği” in *Osmanlı medeniyeti: Siyaset, İktisat* (İstanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2005), 37-65.

in shaping a sense of belonging within a given mahalle.²⁴ However, this does not imply a strict segregation among people based on their religion, to the extent that they were unable to live together in the same neighborhood. On the contrary, as demonstrated in Mina Rozen's research on Jewish neighborhoods in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Istanbul, middle-class Ottomans often resided in neighborhoods predominantly inhabited by members of the same religious confession, while neighborhoods with a mix of religious communities were more common among the poorer and wealthier strata.²⁵ A similar trend regarding the diverse composition of neighborhoods, as reflected in the presence of *hamâms*, can also be observed in the late eighteenth-century *bâhnâmes* (books of sex-related subjects) that depict individuals from different social classes bathing together in the same *hamâm*.²⁶

The association of early modern Ottoman *hamâms* with representations of chaste love for boys and male-to-male sexual also deserves brief consideration. In an insightful article "Sexing the Hammam", Semerdjian reconstructs the sexual behaviors and norms of 18th-century Aleppo's population based on local archival records.²⁷ Semerdjian's research demonstrates that there is no evidence "that sought to monitor or control the contact between men and boys in bathhouses."²⁸ As is shown by Semerdjian in an earlier article, although a late sixteenth-century royal decree appears to blame beautiful boys and *mahbubs* (male lover or lovely boy) of seducing older male bathers, the general silence of Ottoman authorities regarding "illicit" sexual behaviors that took place in *hamâms* demonstrates the exceptional nature of the aforementioned edict.²⁹ Andrew and Kalpaklı supports Semerdjian findings.³⁰ As they maintain in the context of both homosociality and homoeroticism, Ottoman central authorities tended to neglect the sexually licentious character of the *hamâm* unless there was a public criticism or reported sexual violation.³¹

This "tolerance", however, was not consistently upheld by imperial and local author-

²⁴Özer Ergenç, "Osmanlı Şehrindeki 'Mahalle'nin İşlev ve Nitelikleri Üzerine," Osmanlı Araştırmaları [The Journal of Ottoman Studies] IV (1984): 69-78; and Cem Behar, *A Neighborhood in Ottoman Istanbul*.

²⁵Mina Rozen, "Public Space and Private Space Among the Jews of Istanbul in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Turcica* 30 (1998): 339; in İpek Hüner Cora, *The Story Has It: Prose, Gender, and Space in the Early Modern Ottoman World* (Unpublished PhD thesis, The University of Chicago), 119.

²⁶See Tülay Artan, *Patrons, Painters, Women in Distress*, 76.

²⁷Elyse Semerdjian, "Sexing the Hammam: Gender Crossings in the Ottoman Bathhouse" in *Gender and Sexuality in Muslim Cultures*, ed. Gul Ozyegin (Ashgate, 2016), 258.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Elyse Semerdjian "Naked Anxiety: Bathhouses, Nudity, and the Dhimmī Woman in 18th-Century Aleppo" *The International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (2013): 656.

³⁰Walter Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of Beloveds*, 284–85.

³¹Ibid.

ities when it came to co-confessional bathing practices during certain periods. The 1640 Market Regulations (1640 *Narh Defteri*), for instance, contradicts the findings of the aforementioned western travelogue and studies that highlight the multi-religious nature of seventeenth-century *hamâms*.³² As Semerdjian compellingly illustrates, the 1640 *Narh Defteri* reveals explicit attempts to regulate interactions between Muslim and non-Muslim bathers.³³ These regulations mandated that Christian and Jewish bathers wear distinguishing marks on their clothing and included separate basins for women bathers, specified according to religion. The following passage from a bathhouse order dated 1762, which informed Aleppo bathkeepers of clothing regulations, exemplifies the provincial efforts made to reinforce communal and confessional boundaries in the highly cosmopolitan urban setting of the eighteenth century:

When entering [the bath], Christian and Jewish men should wear first a towel with a black stripe known as a *mazar* free of any distinguishing mark, and when leaving the hot room give to every Christian and Jew two of those towels with black stripes on the side distinguishing it and known by it. On the condition that a lock is put on the door of the hot water basin (*khazzana*) nightly [in case] someone enters into the water before washing so that it becomes used continue with this agreement and do not break it for any reason. Whoever breaks this agreement will be punished and reprimanded by the judge.³⁴

2.3 The Stories Set in the *Hamâm* or the *Hamâm* Set in the Stories

Archival sources such as *fetvâ* collections, dictionaries, chronicles³⁵, religious manuals, *nizamnâmes*, and even paintings brilliantly demonstrate the ruling class's per-

³²Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlılarda Narh Müessesesi ve 1640 Tarihli Narh Defteri* (İstanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1983), 260-61; also in Semerdjian, “Naked Anxiety,” 659-660.

³³Semerdjian, “Naked Anxiety,” 659.

³⁴Semerdjian, “Sexing the Hamâm,” 266-267.

³⁵Here, I do not refer to contemporary chronicles (*yawmiyyât*) that differ from official chronicles in terms of both language and content. Unlike elite chronicles, contemporary chronicles—another form of conventionally neglected primary sources in Ottoman historiography, along with diaries and *mecmuas*—are penned by middle-class urban dwellers. These chronicles have the potential to answer the following questions: What was life like for learned non-elites? What were the social currents of the period as understood by people who did not occupy high-ranking positions in the hierarchical madrasa system? How did barbers, butchers, farmers, or coffee shop owners perceive the Ottoman world and the society to which they felt they belonged? For a thorough discussion about contemporary, non-elite, and “secular” chronicles, please refer to: Dana Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Levant* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013).

spective on how middle and lower-class people “should” behave in a certain public place or how the ideal *hamâm* experience should be. However, these sources have their limitations, as they tend to overlook the everyday events that went unrecorded, such as in court registers. It is my argument, on the other hand, that the stories presented in this chapter fill this gap by providing a closer examination of the daily customs, social behaviors, anxieties, passions, and mindsets of the ordinary bathers, whose experiences and perspectives are often overlooked in the official records. In other words, these stories offer a unique glimpse into the lived experiences of individuals and shed light on aspects of *hamâm* culture that may otherwise remain hidden.

The stories in the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* depicts the *hamâm* as multifunctional space in which people from different socio-economic backgrounds come together to have ritualistic and physical cleansing. Although *hamâms* emerged as crowded melting pots as other sociable spaces prevalent in early modern Ottoman lands – such as *meyhânes*, *bozahânes*³⁶, and *kahvehânes* (taverns, bozahouses and coffeehouses) – bathers had the opportunity to enhance their pleasure by making use of basins for longer durations at night.³⁷ For instance, in story 16, which is mostly based on fairy tale components and supernatural occurrences (*jins*) two friends visiting *hamâm* at midnight.³⁸ They thought that the *hamâm* in the wee hours of night would be largely empty – that avoiding the condemning gazes of others who watched the proverbial clock would boost their bathing pleasure. The two went to bed early to wake up in the middle of the night, during which ordinary *hamâm*-goers were thought to be asleep.

Stories in the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* set in *hamâm* usually present a picture of an overcrowded setting. The *halvets*, the sections for personal bathing and sweating on which the bather were lying and relaxing, did not prevent people from seeing one another while taking a bath, offered limited privacy due to its small marble walls. As an almost “rule” in the stories, all of these *halvets* in the *hamâm* had been already taken by bathers of different ranks and classes at the time of the protagonist’s arrival. It is, however, these overcrowded *hamâms* in which the characters appear to have faced unusual experiences while hopelessly looking for an unoccupied *kurna*, a bath basin made up of marble or stone. In story 34, for instance, the protagonist

³⁶ *Boza*: a drink made by fermenting various grains.

³⁷ Kafadar’s “How Dark is the History of the Night”, while primarily focusing on the effects of coffeehouses on the social and cultural life of early modern Ottomans, also discusses the aforementioned spaces of public sociability. These spaces presented several challenges to the authorities but also offered new possibilities for the city-dwellers. According to Kafadar, these possibilities gave rise to “new forms of sociability and political action of all sorts, from everyday gossip and debate to organized resistance” (Kafadar, 258).

³⁸ Cinânî, *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, p. 226-228 (S43a-S44b).

goes to a *hamâm* to perform the ablution (*abdest*).³⁹ After looking at *halvets* and *kurnas* with the hope of finding one, he realizes that the *hamâm* is overflowing with people, leaving no space even for a quick bath. While searching for an unoccupied *kurna*, he remembers it is Friday and the bathers are performing *ghusl* (the full body purification/canonical fully-body ablution). Shortly afterwards, he finds a relatively undercrowded *kurna* and approaches it. Although waiting for a long time for a good-looking man enjoying the *kurna* who sat idle in the bath – to the extent that the protagonist even misses the Friday prayer – the protagonist cannot tell him to hurry up. His decision to not intervene in the man’s extended bathing ceremony originates from the his position in the Ottoman ruling class – or, so our protagonist thought. After going out to the *camekân* (entrance and dressing room), the place where bathers get relaxed, consume coffee, take a nap before getting dressed, he understands that the man is a Jewish. The protagonist is agitated that the man who led him to miss the prayer was not a high-ranking upper-class Muslim male, but a *kâfir* (unbeliever). Sometimes later the protagonist visits the *hamâm* again. He encounters a similar situation and decides to assault a similarly slow, important-looking man. Afterwards, he realizes that the man he has just verbally and physically attacked is the *âsîtane-i ‘alîye başkapıcıbaşı* (Chief Doorkeeper).⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the *başkapıcıbaşı* behaves well to him, even offering his own glass of wine, which embarrasses the protagonist due to his misunderstanding.

2.4 Reading and Imagining the *Hamâm* Under the Shadow of *Pax Ottomanica*

There are various ways of approaching and interpreting story 34. It suggests that certain forms and expressions of dislike and antipathy towards marginalized religious and ethnic communities in Ottoman lands – here, antipathy against a rich Jewish man.⁴¹ The story’s narrative suggests a far more complex picture of the social and

³⁹See, Cinânî, *Bedâyiü’l-âsâr*, p. 285-286 (S78a-S79a).

⁴⁰*Başkapıcıbaşı* means the “Chief Doorkeeper” or “Head Chamberlain.” The *başkapıcıbaşı* held an important administrative position in the Ottoman palace, responsible for supervising the palace gatekeepers, controlling access to the Sultan, and managing the affairs related to the palace’s entrances. The position held significant influence and was considered prestigious within the Ottoman court hierarchy. The *başkapıcıbaşı* played a crucial role in maintaining security and order in the palace and had direct interactions with the Sultan and other high-ranking officials. For more on this, please see: Sir Hamilton Alexander, Rosskeen Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West: A Study of the Impact of Western Civilization on Moslem Culture in the Near East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950), 347.

⁴¹The object of dislike and antipathy, nonetheless, should not be confined to non-Muslim groups in the Ottoman society. As Erdem Çıpa argues in “Changing Perceptions about Christian-Born Ottomans,” expressions of dislike and antipathy used by early modern Ottoman chroniclers particularly seem to be abounded in denominational and ethnic prejudices. Among such uses “were the euphonious religio-ethnic

cultural realities in the early modern Ottoman world than assumed by conservative historical studies, if not contemporary populists. These uncritical historical views have taken for granted the multicultural, multireligious, and non-confrontational coexistence of different communities and groups under the *Pax Ottomanica*. As is brilliantly formulated by Karateke, this way of thinking argues that “the economic and social stability of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries made the Ottoman lands a relatively safe and secure environment for trade, the flourishing of arts and crafts, peaceful coexistence, and settlement, particularly for groups—for example, Jews—for whom the situation in Ottoman lands compared favorably to that in other parts of the world”.⁴²

The mentioned perspective goes hand in hand with the doctrine of so-called “Turkish-Islamic synthesis”, or to put in a more fashionable way, “neo-Ottomanism”. That is not to say, however, that dislike and antipathy for different religious and ethnic communities were defining characteristics of the early modern Ottoman world. On the contrary, recent studies highlighting the cosmopolitan nature of the Ottoman lands reveal that the Ottoman imperial polity allowed for the coexistence of numerous officially recognized religious, ethnic, and linguistic groups, along with the presence of competing claims held by these communities.⁴³

Among several studies Ottoman cosmopolitanism, Tülay Artan’s, “Cosmopolitanism in the early 18th-century Ottoman capital”, holds particular significance. According to Artan, we could easily discern a range of instances demonstrating the hospitable treatment of strangers from diverse backgrounds in Istanbul. These instances include individuals such as Seigneur Francisco, Murad Buharî, Johann Friedrich Bachstrom, and İbrahim Müteferrika, all of whom exemplify the cosmopolitan customs prevalent in the capital.⁴⁴ Artan’s approach to early modern Ottoman cosmopolitanism is noteworthy as she not only considers the extensive presence of non-Ottoman Muslim components in the Ottoman world but also examines both widespread and subaltern

slurs referring to the ‘cursed, dishonorable Hungarians’ (engürüs-i menhūs, engürüs-i bī-nāmūs), ‘wicked Kurds’ (ekrād-ı bed-ni- hād), ‘disunited, ignorant, Turks/Turkomans’ (etrāk-ı alilü’l-ittihād, etrāk-ı bī-idrā), and ‘despicable and scheming Laz’ (mezmüm-u-ğammāzolan Laz), not to mention the ızılbas, who were commonly depicted as evil-mannered (bed-maas) and rabble-rousers (evbās).” Please see, H. Erdem Çıpa. “Changing Perceptions about Christian-Born Ottomans: Anti-ul Sentiments in Ottoman Historiography,” in *Disliking Others: Loathing, Hostility, and Distrust in Premodern Ottoman Lands*, edited by Hakan T. Karateke, H. Erdem Çıpa, and Helga Anetshofer (Academic Studies Press, 2018), 1-21, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv209xmps.6>.

⁴²For a critical perspective on this approach, see Hakan Karateke, “Introduction,” in *Disliking Others: Loathing, Hostility, and Distrust in Premodern Ottoman Lands*, edited by Hakan T. Karateke, H. Erdem Çıpa, and Helga Anetshofer (Academic Studies Press, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv209xmps.6>.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Tülay Artan, “Cosmopolitanism in the Early Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Capital: The Impostor, the Alchemist, the Merchant and the Personal Dimension,” in *The Balkan Provinces of the Ottoman Empire: The Personal Dimension. I. The Agents of Faith*, edited by R. Gradeva (Sofia: AUB Press, 2019), 11.

forms of cosmopolitanism.⁴⁵ This includes exploring the various forms and platforms of cosmopolitan customs.

In his accounts of what we now refer to as the cosmopolitan mores of Istanbul, Evliyâ Çelebi attests to the existence of a Hindu Convent near the banks of Kağıthane. He also mentions witnessing the cremation of deceased bodies on funeral pyres on three separate occasions in that area.⁴⁶ The prominent existence of Hindustani Sufi lodges in various cities such as Istanbul, Mecca, Cairo, Damascus, Aleppo, Jerusalem, Antakya, Adana, Tarsus, Konya, Tosya, Bursa, and Vukovar can be seen as a compelling example of the non-confrontational and cosmopolitan character of the early modern Ottoman world.⁴⁷

Although the urban settings in Ottoman lands in general, and particularly in Istanbul, appear to have allowed cosmopolitanism to become the norm, early modern expressions of xenophobia and alterophobia directed against “others” can still be reconstructed through a wide array of historical sources. This perspective allows us to better understand the attitudes and beliefs of people living in the Ottoman territories during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁴⁸ In this context, story 34 can be seen as an illustrative example of alterophobia, reflecting the biases and prejudices that existed towards marginalized religious and ethnic communities during that time. By the same token, it can also be interpreted as a reflection of spatial anxiety experienced by an ordinary Ottoman Muslim male in the presence of an upper-class male from the Jewish community. At this point, it is important to exercise caution and avoid conflating state-sponsored persecution or discriminatory policies with individual antipathies and dislikes among groups and communities within the early modern Ottoman lands. While story 34 may reflect a certain spatial

⁴⁵Unlike the majority of works that focus on Ottoman cosmopolitan mores through the lens of a Muslim/non-Muslim dichotomy, based on an Orientalist understanding of the so-called “East-West mosaic” recent studies on everyday cosmopolitan practices in eighteenth-century Paris and Istanbul provide new insights for researchers. See Ian Coller, “East of Enlightenment: Regulating Cosmopolitanism between Istanbul and Paris in the Eighteenth Century,” *Journal of World History* 21, no. 3 (2010): 447–70. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40985025>. For a different, but equally remarkable point of view on the search for Ottoman cosmopolitanism, see Edhem Eldem, “Istanbul as a Cosmopolitan City,” in *A companion to diaspora and transnationalism*, edited by Ato Quayson and Girish Daswani (Wiley-Blackwell, 2013) 212-230.

⁴⁶*Tekye-i âtes-perest-i Hindüyân: Bir çemenzâr soffah ve bir kaç bîd-i sernigûn drahtlı küçük tekyedir. Islâmbol'da ve etrafında bir Hindû mürd olsa bunda getirüp âtese yakarlar. Hakîr üç kerre vâkıf oldum.*” see Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi*, vol.1. Transliterated and edited by Robert Dankoff, Seyit Ali Kahraman and Yücel Dağlı (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2006), 239 [146a]; quoted and by Tülay Artan “Cosmopolitanism in the early eighteenth-century Ottoman capital”, 1-13.

⁴⁷For a broader interpretation of the current discussion on Sufi Hindu lodges, Tülay Artan, “Cosmopolitanism”, 10, 13, 14, 19. For the Hindu Sufi Lodges in Ottoman lands see: Thierry Zarcone, “Hindiler Tekkesi,” in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* vol. 4, (1994): 74; M. B. Tanman, “Hindiler Tekkesi,” in *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 18 (1988): 67-69; *Idem*, “Kalenderhâne,” *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 24, (1988): 249-250. The previously mentioned sources on Hindu lodges in the main text are quoted from Artan, “Cosmopolitanism”, 13.

⁴⁸This idea is succinctly expressed by Karateke. While xenophobia can be defined as a dislike of foreigners, alterophobia can be interpreted as “dislike of ‘the other,’ that is, members of alternative groups within the same society”. See Karateke “Introduction”, *Disliking Others*, 2.

anxiety experienced by an ordinary Ottoman Muslim male towards an upper-class male from the Jewish community, it should be still understood within the context of personal interactions and individual mindsets rather than being generalized to broader social or political dynamics. In this regard, the story offers us a glimpse into the self-perception, attitudes, and perspectives of a specific Muslim individual.

In summary, while story 34 provides insight into certain social conflicts within early modern Ottoman society, it is important to approach it with caution for several reasons. We should keep in mind that mentalities and perceptions are inherently challenging to define and can be subject to multiple interpretations because, “delineating negative perceptions can prove particularly difficult, in part because altrophobic sentiments often were not explicitly presented.”⁴⁹ In order to better understand, imagine, and reconstruct bygone perceptions and mentalities, therefore, a wide range of historical sources, including but not limited to fictional narratives, should be read in dialogue with one another. Needless to say, this is beyond the scope of this study. On the other hand, the shared use of the *hamâm* in the story does not fit the widely-held image of clear-cut spatial segregation between religious communities. The characters have transgressed not only religious boundaries but also class borders. This is evident in the appearance of the *kapıcıbaşı*, a significant member of the Palace, in the *hamâm*. Also, the encounter between an ordinary (read it male and Sunni) member of the community and a member of ruling-class, the *kapıcıbaşı*, adds nuance to an uncritically welcomed narrative that assumes a strict dichotomy between *âmne-i halk* (public) and *hassâ* (official). That is not to suggest that cross-boundary encounters taking place in the *hamâm* are representative of a common public space in the Ottoman context. The historian should always keep in mind that widespread class-based and confessional segregation in early modern Ottoman society tends to isolate lives within their own cultural and socio-economic atmospheres. As Karateke demonstrates in the context of congregational practices involving communities of different religious backgrounds, it is evident that average person likely did not have access to the private aspects of different religious communities.⁵⁰ As a result, they had limited knowledge about their customs and beliefs, only relying on what they observed in public, which was often influenced by prevalent stereotypes and biases of that time.

Last but not least, the multifaceted uses of the *hamâm* for both cleanliness and religious purposes should be recalled when examining the extent of inclusiveness in

⁴⁹Ibid, 3.

⁵⁰Hakan Karateke, “Evliyâ Çelebi’s Perceptions on Jews,” in *Disliking Others: Loathing, Hostility, and Distrust in Premodern Ottoman Lands*, edited by Hakan T. Karateke, H. Erdem Çıpa, and Helga Anetshofer (Academic Studies Press, 2018), 146, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv209xmps.6>.

terms of denomination, ethnicity, and social class. A study on the Istanbul *vakıf* register of 1546 reveals that the availability of bathing spaces was quite limited in sixteenth-century Istanbul. As highlighted by Tanyeli, it is worth noting that “only a very small minority of even the largest dwellings possessed private baths”, and a significant majority of individuals lacked access to running water.⁵¹ Hence, one could argue that the limited availability of bathrooms in upper-class residences in sixteenth-century Istanbul potentially facilitated the mingling of bathers from diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

2.5 *Hamâm* as a Site for Publicizing “the Private but Still Legitimate”?

Although the importance of the *hamâm* as an urban space for Ottoman city dwellers could not be neglected, there are a considerable number of fictional narratives in Islamicate storytelling tradition that appears to have challenged the clear cut-dichotomy between public and private. Story 33 in the *Bedâyiü’l-âsâr* distinguishing itself with its narrative that blurs the distinction between private and public stories set in the *hamâm*. Before discussing the story, it would be useful to provide some background on a specific form of spatial and spatio-temporal thinking depicted in Hafız Hüseyin Ayvansarayı’s work, *Hadîkatü’l-cevâmi*.⁵² Because his text may play a significant role in enabling us to envision, narrate, and present the *hamâm* within the framework of the early modern Ottoman world.

Hafız Hüseyin Ayvansarayı’s portrayal of mosques in eighteenth-century Istanbul within his aforementioned work showcases what I would describe as *hamâm*-centered early modern spatial thinking when delineating the locations of important landmarks, particularly the city’s congregational and imperial mosques during that period.⁵³ Throughout his work, Ayvansarayı mentions *hamâms* 66 times in total and refers to them 19 times as points of reference. These accounts by Ayvansarayı hold significant value as they imply the nature and extent of the relationship between Ottoman city-dwellers and *hamâms*, both as physical surroundings and as

⁵¹Uğur Tanyeli, “Norms of Domestic Comfort and Luxury in Ottoman Metropolises, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries,” in *The Illuminated Table, the Prosperous House: Food and Shelter in Ottoman Material Culture*, edited by Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (Würzburg: Ergon, 2003), 306.

⁵²Howard Crane, ed. and trans., *The Garden of the Mosques: Hafız Hüseyin al-Ayvansarayı’s Guide to the Muslim Monuments of Ottoman Istanbul* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2000); cited in Nina Cichocki, “Continuity and Change in Turkish Bathing Culture in Istanbul,” *Turkish Studies* 6:1 (2005): 93-112, doi: 10.1080/1468384042000339348

⁵³*The Garden of the Mosques: Hafız Hüseyin Ayvansarayı’s Guide to the Muslim Monuments of Ottoman Istanbul*. Cited in Nina Ergin, “Continuity and Change in Turkish Bathing Culture in Istanbul”, 110.

sites of sociability. Ayvansarayi's work emphasizes the central position and defining characteristic of *hamâms* within the intricate cultural and geographical landscape of Istanbul. By showing the imagination of the city's inhabitants, the *Hadîkatü'l-cevâmi'* offers us a glimpse into how deeply *hamâms* were understood spatially and culturally by the past residents of Istanbul. As argued by Çiğdem Kafesçioğlu, the baths of early Ottoman Istanbul, sharing architectural similarities with religious buildings, can be interpreted as elements in the monumentalization of a capital city deliberately populated, according to Kritovoulos, with "people of all nations, but more especially of Christians."⁵⁴

The majority of *hamâms* were primarily situated in commercial districts and residential areas that were predominantly populated by non-Muslim or non-confessional communities. According to Kafesçioğlu, the *Sırt Hamâmı*, located adjacent to the *Kapalı Çarşı* (Covered Bazaar) and also serving as a primary setting in story 33 of the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, was one of the grand-scale *hamâms* that held sway over the urban landscape. This *hamâm* was distinguished by its entrance halls that opened directly onto the street and its impressive domes, which exceeded the size of the majority of religious monuments. Another *hamâm* mentioned in the story was built in the *Uzunçarşı*, connecting the *Tahtakale* and *Bedesten* areas.⁵⁵ Let us now turn to the backdrop of the aforementioned historical, socio-cultural, and spatial context discussed in the story.

In story 33, the protagonist visits a *hamâm* in order to perform the *ghusl*. After getting undressed in *camekân*, he enters the *halvet* to settle in a *kurna*. Immediately afterward, he realizes that it was Friday and the bathers in the *hamâm* were performing *ghusl*. The plot so far resembles that of story 34, which featured aspects of xenophobia and alterophobia, cosmopolitanism and social inclusiveness. Hereafter two stories begin to diverge. The narrator of story 33 to plunge into more "private" issues. Namely, he explicitly tells the reader that the bathers are performing *ghusl* because they had sexual intercourse with their wives last night. Although the plot continues with a narrative about a certain bather's (illicit) sexuality and sexual privacy leaking to the public beyond his own will and consciousness, it would be better to first focus on the "remains" of the "last night's" marital sexual intercourse(s) leaking in the *hamâm* before moving on.

It should be noted that the narrator does not seem to allow space for ambiguity and uncertainty in the reader's mind as to the reason for the *ghusl*. Although it is

⁵⁴Cited in Çiğdem Kafesçioğlu, *Constantinople/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 2009), 108.

⁵⁵*Ibid*, 107, 108, 109.

traditionally assumed that *ghusl* is required to reestablish the *tahâret* (ritual purity) after sexual intercourse,⁵⁶ it should be noted that it may also suggest preparation for sex.⁵⁷ Based on the customary use of *ghusl* in the Islamicate world, as outlined by Islamic law, the bathers in the story must therefore be in the *hamâm* either to regain ritual purity after engaging in sexual activity or for engaging in sexual intercourse after prayer. However, the tone of the narrator is unmistakable, as he unequivocally attributes a “post-intercourse” *ghusl* to the situation.

Did the normative principles on the use of *ghusl* in Islamic law differ from what may have been practiced, if not what was actually practiced, in the *hamâm*? A clear-cut answer to the question of why the narrator chose to focus on the post-intercourse function of *ghusl* in the story would only be speculative but brings another possibility to mind. Post-coital *ghusl* was possibly more popular among the bathers in the Ottoman context, therefore its narration in the story might have been appreciated by the reader/audience. Lacking locker rooms, we might say it was a “*hamâm* talk”. It would therefore not be inappropriate to argue that the narrator and the reader/audience of the story agreed on the post-intercourse use of *ghusl*.

The general cultural stance that *ghusl* is indicative of recent sexual intercourse can also be demonstrated from a court case documented in a 1734 Aleppo court record, as referenced by Semerdjian in a pioneering work “Sexing the *Hamam*”.⁵⁸ The case involved a certain Mustafa, the owner of a shop located in front of a neighborhood *hamâm* (known as *tujaha’ al-hamâm* in Arabic, equivalent to a *mahalle hamâmi*). Mustafa was accused of disturbing public order with his aggressive comments, in which he claimed, “This woman’s husband had sex with her once last night, and this one, her husband had sex with her twice!”⁵⁹ He supports his claim in court by relying on his experience of working in front of the bathhouse in the quarter, which enables him to meticulously count the daily number of visits made by female bathers. This archival record is particularly significant as it provides us with glimpses into the cultural attitudes of females towards *ghusl*, which appears to be a similar trend to that of males in the context of the early modern Islamicate world. Regardless

⁵⁶For example, Nina Ergin, “Continuity and Change in Turkish Bathing Culture in Istanbul”. For a significant cultural history study that examines Ottoman *hamâm*s in a comparative perspective with Seljuk, Safavid, and Mughal baths, please refer to: Nina Ergin (ed.), *Bathing Culture of Anatolian Civilizations: Architecture, History, and Imagination* (Peeters Publishers: 2011).

⁵⁷See Elyse Semerdjian, “Sexing the Hammam: Gender Crossings in the Ottoman Bathhouse”. For a more comprehensive discussion on the boundaries of ritual purity and sexuality see, Carol Delaney, *The Seed and the Soil: Gender and Cosmology in Turkish Village Society*, vol. 11 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

⁵⁸Syrian National Archives, Markaz dar al-watha’iq al-tarkhiyya, Aleppo court records, *SMH (Sijillat al-mahakam Halab)*, 55:48:162 2 Rajab 1147H/November 28, 1734, Damascus, Syria. Cited in Elyse Semerdjian, “Sexing the Hammam: Gender Crossings in the Ottoman Bathhouse”, 257.

⁵⁹Ibid.

of gender, it indeed appears that the societal notion holds that bathing itself is an indication of being in a state of impurity (*junub*) that occurs after engaging in sexual activity, rather than before.⁶⁰

Reading the aforementioned court record in tandem with story 34 gives us ideas not only about the perceptions of the Ottoman *hamâms* apparent in the writings of literati but also about the cultural proclivities of *hamâm* customers. At this point, it is important to emphasize that the protagonist explicitly states that the collective practice of performing *ghusl*, referred to calmly by the narrator upon his entrance, stems from recent marital sexual intercourse with a particular *hatun* (wife) that is believed to have occurred “last night”. Therefore, despite presumed to be a private matter, the possibility arises that the recent sexual encounters that the majority of bathers had with their wives were seemingly shared, albeit implicitly.

What do the findings of available scholarship on male honor in the Mediterranean and Islamicate worlds —that underscore the strong connection between honor, shame, and gender-relations— tell us about the story?⁶¹ Doesn’t the practice of *ghusl*, the post-sexual ablution that traditionally took place at the *hamâm*, possibly indicate that even if one’s sexual activities were known publicly, it would not be considered a violation of privacy as long as the sexual experiences remained within the boundaries of “legitimate” (marital) intercourse? Does this indicate a strict boundary between licit sexual life and others’ knowledge about the “dos and don’ts” of one’s marital (and licit) sexuality —which is a form of sexuality that I will extensively examine in the subsequent chapter—? Although these questions may not be answered convincingly at this stage, the various possibilities of reading stories set at *hamâm* without confining ourselves with public/private dichotomy could lead us to have various windows into mentalities and perceptions of this bygone era.

2.6 A Penis, a *Qadi*, and the Nightmares

As mentioned above, upon telling the readers about the bathers’ sexual encounters with their wives, the narrator proceeds to introduce another form of sex and sexuality

⁶⁰Elyse Semerdjian, “Sexing the Hammam: Gender Crossings in the Ottoman Bathhouse”, 257.

⁶¹See, for example: Stanley Brandes, “Introduction,” in *Honor and Shame and the Unity of the Mediterranean*, ed. David D. Gilmore (Washington, D.C: American Anthropological Association, 1987), 2-21; Yaron Ben-Naeh. “Honor and Its Meaning among Ottoman Jews.” *Jewish Social Studies* 11.2 (2005): 19–50.

— that is the sexual intercourse between a *qadi* and a female slave.⁶² In the following section, I will explore the remaining part of the story 33, as it deserves thorough analysis for several compelling reasons. Firstly, it reveals the blurred boundaries of public and private spheres. Secondly, it illustrates that illicit/licit sexual encounters determine the nature of the space. Lastly, it implies that sexuality was powerful enough such that it could easily subvert existing societal, class-based, and gendered hierarchies.

Remember that story 33 begins in a *hamâm*, where the protagonist was unable to find an unoccupied *halvet*.⁶³ Following this typical *hamâm* encounter, the protagonist notices a man who appears to be important and respectable (*ehl-i 'ırz şekilli kişi*) — reminiscent of the events in story 34.⁶⁴ However, instead of repeating the rest of the plot from story 34, where the protagonist realizes vehemently that the good-looking man is not an upper-class Muslim, but a Jew, the protagonist portrays an exceptional scene: the important-looking man puts his right arm back and forth in a hole somewhere around the *kurna* on a regular basis while still sleeping. After having waited for a while, nonetheless, the protagonist decides to tell the man that he should wake up as soon as possible so as not to miss the prayer for which the protagonist needs to perform *ghusl*.

The man then wakes up and expresses his apology for having kept the narrator waiting for so long. The protagonist's eloquent expression of his embarrassment, coupled with his respectable appearance, catches the narrator's attention to such an extent that the narrator directly asks if he is a *qadi*. The man confirms that he is indeed a *qadi*. In turn, he asks the narrator if he is also a *qadi*, to which the narrator replies affirmatively. It is at this point that the *qadi* (the sleeping individual who was already present in the *hamâm* when the narrator arrived) begins his "story": Upon collecting the *avariz* tax⁶⁵ from a certain province in which he works as a *qadi*, he reaches to Istanbul. The *qadi* further reveals to the narrator that he has a considerable sum of money, amounting to a few thousand *akçes*, at his

⁶²Regarding slavery in the early modern Ottoman Empire, please refer to the following sources: Ehud R. Toledano, David Eltis, and Stanley L. Engerman, "Enslavement in the Ottoman Empire in the early modern period," *The Cambridge world history of slavery* 3 (2011): 25-46; Necdet Sakaoglu, "Esir Ticareti," in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* 3 (1994).

⁶³Cinânî, *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, 281-4, S76a-S78b.

⁶⁴Cinânî, *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, 287-8, S78a-S80a.

⁶⁵In the early modern Ottoman Empire, the property tax was paid annually in cash by households registered in a defter. In this particular case, it seems that the *qadi* was working in a province outside Istanbul. This suggests that he must have been in Istanbul at the time he tells his story in order to deliver the collected tax. According to *sharîa*, *qadis* were expected to perform various extrajudicial functions, which included, but were not limited to, guardianship over orphans, as well as auditing and supervising public works. However, in the story, the *qadi* appears to have taken on an additional duty of collecting the property tax on behalf of the state.

disposal. One day, he makes a decision to visit the marketplace with the intention of purchasing a *câriye*. Because he thinks that the *câriye* would not only fulfill his sexual desires but also serve him in daily tasks such as cooking and housekeeping. He could therefore take her to the province from which he came to Istanbul.

With this in mind, the *qadi* goes to the market. After a while, he spots a stunning *câriye* and decides to buy her without hesitation. However, before the haggling, the owner of the *câriye* discloses that she has a defect and is being sold with this flaw.⁶⁶ Unaware of any deformity, the *qadi* proceeds to purchase the *câriye*, informing the owner that the defect doesn't matter to him.⁶⁷ The *qadi* and the *câriye* then return home together. After sharing a meal, they undress and engage in sexual intercourse. Satisfied and exhausted, the *qadi* eventually falls asleep. However, after a while, the *câriye* wakes him up and inquires if she has satisfied him. The *qadi* confirms that she has. She then suggests having sex once more, although the *qadi* initially appears reluctant, he eventually agrees. After their second encounter, the *qadi* feels utterly exhausted and falls asleep once again. However, the *câriye* remains eager for more sexual activity. She persistently prods the *qadi* to wake up and engage in sex once again. This time, he becomes extremely agitated with the fact that she wakes him up second time. Consequently, he rejects her offer, saying he is sixty-five years old and only a young man could succeed with what the *câriye* would like the *qadi* to do. Hereupon, she comes up with a new offer: She proposes him to not do anything, except for allowing her to grasp his penis so that she could make him erected. Although the plan goes well and she succeeds to get him erected, he does not become pleased with the sex as the two previous two times. Following the third time, he fiercely tells her not to awake him again since he thinks he could not get through having sex again.

Time passes and the *qadi* sleeps a bit more. After almost one hour, however, she wakes him up again. This time, nonetheless, she uses heavy-handed methods: she appears with a sword which hung on the bedside wall and pokes at his behind with her foot. Surprised, frightened, and groggy – seeing the *câriye* being almost ready to attack him – the *qadi* desperately tries to convince her to stay calm. He then gently asks what happened and why she holds the sword. In response, she says that she has a sex addiction, revealing the fact that no matter how many times she has sex, she cannot get enough of it.⁶⁸ She adds that this is the reason why people

⁶⁶In the original work, the seller says “Ben cariye mi külli ‘ayb satarum” (Cinânî, Bedayü’l-as ar, 282, S76b).

⁶⁷“N’ola min külli ‘ayb aluram” (Cinânî, S76b).

⁶⁸Ibid., S77b.

suppose that she is defective. At this point, she frankly tells the *qadi* that he had not satisfied her urge once since the beginning of the night. The *qadi* says even if she were to kill him now, he cannot have sex with her again because of exhaustion. In return, if her desire is not fulfilled, she says, he should bring a young man outside of the home. Hearing her offer, the *qadi* becomes extremely annoyed to the point of saying that it is better for him to die than to do what she would like him to do. He then offers to satisfy her by masturbating her vulva. She accepts. He thereby starts to bring her sexual pleasure through the stimulation of her vagina and clitoris. He continues throughout the night, during which the *qadi* sometimes falls asleep. She, however, hits his belly a couple of times so that he wakes up and continues to satisfy her. Finally, the morning comes and he returns the concubine to the market at a lower price. At the end of the story, the *qadi* tells the narrator that this should be the reason why he kept putting his right arm back and forth in a hole nearby the *kurna* while sleeping. The story concludes with a couplet reflecting on the insatiable sexual desire of lustful women.

At first glance, it seems to be an ordinary example of women's wiles literature where the emphasis revolves around the lustful, seductive, and deceitful character of women.⁶⁹ In this regard, it could be argued that the storyteller reminds the reader/audience of the extent of women's wily and insatiable nature about which he should be wary. Therefore, even if we assume that the "pornographic" elements in the story are probably in line with its contemporary audience's desires and expectations, making it easy for them to imagine sex, they are still cautioned against women's wiles.⁷⁰ Lustful and sexually unsatisfied, the slave woman in the story has wiles to the extent that she could easily overwhelm and manipulate a powerful man. Therefore, we clearly see a man realizing how his sexual stamina is fragile compared to his concubine's appetite for intercourse. In other words, the story implies that the man's high status and authority could not prevent him from being seduced and manipulated by a deceitful and seductive women, even if the woman was his property.

The story, however, contradicts existing studies on the portrayal of women in lit-

⁶⁹For women's wiles stories in different literary traditions throughout the world, see: Marilyn Jurich, *Sheherazade's Sisters: Trickster Heroines and their Stories in World Literature* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998). For a study that places the women reader/audience at the center, see: Afsaneh Najmabadi, "Reading and Enjoying: 'Wiles of Women' Stories as a Feminist." *Iranian Studies* 32, no. 2 *The Uses of Guile: Literary and Historical Moments* (1999): 203–222 and Afsaneh, Najmabadi, "Introduction to 'The Uses of Guile: Literary and Historical Moments.'" *Iranian Studies* 32, no. 2 (1999): 179–179. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4311235>. For the recent studies on the women's wiles literature focusing on the Ottoman context, see: Sayers, "The Wiles of Women" and İpek Hüner Cora, "'The Story Has It': Prose, Gender, and Space in the Early Modern Ottoman World".

⁷⁰On *imagining sex*, see: Sarah Toulalan, *Imagining Sex: Pornography and Bodies in Seventeenth-century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

erature, which suggest that the imperialization of the Ottoman Empire resulted in the marginalization of women in literary works. According to scholars such as Selim Kuru, the emergence of a self-conscious and refined written literary tradition, developed by or under the patronage of a new bureaucratic elite, gradually led to the exclusion of women from Ottoman Turkish literature.⁷¹ This shift occurred following the establishment of the imperial state apparatus after the conquest of Constantinople. Consequently, the transformation from a borderland principality to a fully-fledged empire in the fifteenth century brought significant changes in the representation of gender in Ottoman literature, resulting in women being confined to sexual jokes and lyric romances in the stories.⁷²

Kuru further argues that the strong emphasis on the lustful nature of women in literature created a space for their humiliation, leading to the portrayal of women as dishonorable and corrupt beings. Anetshofer's study on the evolution of the *Nasrū'd-din Hâce* stories in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries supports this perspective.⁷³ Anetshofer suggests that in the sixteenth-century versions of the stories, female characters have more dominant roles and their sexual passion is more evident. The style and language of the *Hâce* stories underwent transformation in the following centuries due to the increasingly bureaucratized, educated, and urbanized socio-economic context in which they were narrated. In other words, in response to the changing patterns of socioeconomic life within the circles that produced these stories, the seventeenth-century narratives began to emphasize male authority while portraying women as foolish, lustful, seductive, deceitful, or ignoring them entirely. According to Anetshofer, female characters have already been negatively portrayed in the seventeenth century.

The story, however, by no means portrays the female slave as a passive or submissive character. On the contrary, despite being purchased from the market by a man of power, the *câriye* possesses an authoritative and assertive voice. She has the ability to compel the *qadi* to satisfy her sexual desires, easily making him obedient to her every command. It is evident from the plot that the woman in the story is the one

⁷¹Sirri Selim Kuru, "Representations: Poetry and Prose, Premodern: Turkish," *Encyclopedia of Women Islamic Cultures* (Leiden: Brill, 2003–2007), 494.

⁷²In the story of *Yusuf and Züleyha*, for instance, Züleyha's sexual eagerness for Yusuf is appreciated and rewarded due to her loyalty to him. This story was quite popular in previous centuries. However, in the newly emerging imperial literary tradition, the story of *Leyla and Mecnun* supersedes *Yusuf and Züleyha*. In this tradition, Leyla serves merely as an instrument for Mecnun to recognize God's beauty, as reflected in her. For more information on the transformation in the depiction of female characters in the Ottoman Turkish literary tradition, refer to Selim Kuru's article "Representations: Poetry and Prose, Premodern", 493-6.

⁷³Helga Anetshofer, "Representations [of Women, Gender, and Sexuality]: Humorous Depictions: The Ottoman Empire," in *Encyclopedia of Women Islamic Cultures* Vol 5. 437-38; Helga Anetshofer, "Representations: Legends and Epics, The Ottoman Empire," *EWIC* Vol 5., 443–445.

who has the greater sexual demand, not the man. While revealing her unceasing sexual desire, she also reveals the *qadi*'s frailty. Despite the expectation that the *qadi*, as the master, would hold authority in their relationship, it becomes apparent that his female slave takes on the role of the dominant figure, while the supposed master is treated as if he were a slave. It, therefore, appears that the women's unrestrained sexual power in the story subverts the initial societal, class-based, and gendered hierarchy between the *qadi* and the *câriye*. Yet it is significant to note that the man's frailty contributes to upending the hierarchical order between the *qadi* and the slave. Making the slave a master and vice versa denotes the importance ascribed to the sexual competence in deciding who will be the *de facto* authority.

At this point, it should be also remembered that the woman threatens to kill the *qadi* when he rejects her for sex. Nevertheless, he does not change his mind, saying he ran out of strength due to the previous times. However, when she says that he should then bring a young man to make her sexually fulfilled, the *qadi* becomes annoyed and gives in to her demands. He says that it is better for him to die than to invite a stranger male to sexually penetrate his own concubine. Then, he offers to satisfy her with his hand. As a result, the *qadi* protected his "honor" by not allowing a stranger to have sex with his concubine. Nonetheless, he could not refrain from being humiliated, dishonored, and shamed due to his frailty because he must desperately use his hands to satisfy his concubine. In a nutshell, the female character in the story does not confirmed the findings of the available studies on the representation of women in Ottoman Turkish literature. She is not a dishonored, humiliated, deceitful, or ignored figure. Quite the contrary, she's depicted as an authoritarian, strong-willed, and self-opinioned character. More importantly, she by no means goes behind his back. Conversely, she is unreserved and initiates an honest and direct conversation about what she wants. The story portrays the *qadi* as a dishonored, ashamed character: Dishonored because his concubine reveals his frailty. His worldly authority, relying on his prestigious status in society, seems to have become lost. Also, he must have felt ashamed since other customers in the *hamâm* see him putting one of his arms back and forth in a hole on a regular basis while still sleeping as if he is still in his own house—conventionally a private sphere—trying to sexually fulfill someone's desires.

Can this story be deemed as a lesson to the public? If so, what kind of lesson could be derived? At first glance, the story appears to have reproduced the image of the insatiable women, giving a didactic lesson to warn the readers about the voracious female desire against which the reader/audience should always be cautious. Does the author tell the reader/audience that how on earth do they deal with such and uncontrollable female desire with which even a *qadi* cannot struggle? My answer

would be yes. However, I believe that the following questions are more important for deepening our discussion: Why does the author/narrator make the *qadi* embarrassed to the extent of allowing other bathers to witness his unusual relationship with a hole in the *qurna*? Considering the fact that the *qadi*'s sexuality and sexual privacy were exposed to the public without his consent or awareness, unlike the previous case of *hamâm* customers whose sexual privacy is typically revealed through *ghusl* performed while awake, could we argue that early modern Ottomans tend to see a sexual intercourse between the master and the slave "incorrect"?

First, it is important to note that Islamic law distinguishes between legal and illegal sexual intercourse. Legal sexual intercourse is permitted between a man and a woman who are married to each other. However, it is important to highlight that legal sexual intercourse is not limited to marital relationships but also includes relationships with female concubines. As Musallam aptly points out, "a man could legitimately engage in sexual intercourse with his own female slave, but only in the capacity of a concubine, not as a wife."⁷⁴

At this point, it is thus tempting to hypothesize that there was a gap between theory and the textual evidence from the story about the nature of legitimate sexual intercourse. Based on the plot, it also seems safe to argue that the *qadi*'s sexual privacy leaked to the public because he was involved in a theoretically legitimate, but practically illicit encounter with his *câriye*. Although there is not enough evidence to make a generalization about the discrepancy between the day-to-day societal practices and theory, this story may lead us to think about the issues where theory does not necessarily correspond with practice. The stories discussed in the following chapters support this observation.

⁷⁴Basim F. Musallam, *Sex and Society in Islam: Birth Control before the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 31.

3. HOME AS A TENTATIVE PRIVATE SPACE

3.1 Introduction

How can one define an early modern Ottoman home? Or, drawing inspiration from Raymond Carver, perhaps it would be better to reframe the question as follows: *What do we talk about when we talk about home?*¹ Although the stories set in the house do not provide us with specific details about household goods, decorative elements, textiles, or kitchen utensils, they offer valuable insights into the mentalities, practices, norms, and ideals of early modern Ottoman urbanites. Through these house stories, we can gain an understanding of the relationship between the home (as a “tentative”, if not imagined, private space) and various forms of sexualities. Finally, these stories give us clues about the ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ of licit and illicit sexual encounters that are assumed to have taken place at home.

Although fifteen stories in the collection are set in house, I chose the stories that show us how the (assumed) private character of the house is heavily dependent on unconditional obedience to the sexual norms of the day. Stories 6 and 7 are about the violation of licit sexual behaviors, and/or encounters, and the social consequences of these violations. In these stories, we clearly see how illicit sexual encounters annihilates the initial private character assigned to the house at the beginning of these stories.² In both stories, the illicit (yet male-to-female) sexual relationship between the partners becomes known to the public. In contrast, the stories reveals that if the sexual encounters between partners (in this case, an encounter between two males) do not threaten sexual norms, their sexualities remain private.³ In this way, the house maintain its private nature.

¹Raymond Carver, *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love* (Vintage Contemporaries, 1989).

²*Bedâyyü'l-âsâr*, 179-81, S15a-S16b and *Ibid.* 181-2, S16a-S17b.

³371-4. S29a-S132A.

In the following section, I will provide a brief review of the scholarship of the house in the early modern Ottoman context. After reviewing the primary sources and secondary studies on the architectural features of the “Ottoman house”, I will address a brief survey of relevant scholarly sources revolving around the public-private dichotomy in the context of the house. In the last section, I will provide a contextualize the stories.

3.2 Reading, Drawing and Imagining the Home: A Literary Review

Among the Western artists of the sixteenth century who produced drawings of Istanbul, Melchior Lorichs (b. 1526/7) holds significant importance.⁴ Lorichs, an aristocrat born in Flensburg, a city that would soon come under Danish rule, was employed by the ambassador of the Holy Roman Empire to Constantinople and became a member of his entourage in 1559. He is renowned today for creating numerous drawings of historical value, including Ottoman costumes, monuments, and a funeral ceremony. However, his *Panorama of Constantinople* of 1559, a series of intricate drawings illustrating various aspects of sixteenth-century Constantinople from the vantage point of Galata, holds particular significance as it provides a glimpse into the city’s appearance in the middle of the century.⁵ Consisting of 26 sheets, this collection offers a comprehensive visual representation of the city’s architecture, topography, and daily life.

The *Panorama* illustrates not only popular Byzantine and Ottoman structures but also unknown buildings most of which were subjected to considerable modifications, if not entirely vanished, shortly after the drawing was made. It also gives us clues about the exterior architecture of early modern Istanbul houses. According to Westbrook and Rainsbury, the *Panorama* showcases a continuum, the absence of symbolism, and the absence of a distinct focal point.⁶ These characteristics suggest that the drawing was based on empirical observations, depicting a wide array of buildings and structures, including numerous homes, scattered across the hills descending towards the sea.⁷ In this sense, it could be argued that the houses depicted

⁴For an overview of Lorichs’s drawings in general, including his drawings of Istanbul, see Nigel Westbrook, Kenneth Rainsbury Dark, and Rene van Meeuwen, “Constructing Melchior Lorichs’s Panorama of Constantinople,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 69, no. 1 (2010): 62-87. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1525/jsah.2010.69.1.62>.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷In contrast to earlier representations of the city, Lorichs’s drawing appears to be indexical, with its elements

in the *Panorama* do not represent the typical “sea of houses” (Figures A.2, A.3, A.4, and A.5). Earlier representations of the city in which only the main landmarks such as the Tower of Galata, the Hagia Sophia, or the Column of Constantine were represented faithfully. Instead, in the *Panorama*, other urban structures were portrayed in an idealized bird’s-eye view. The “reader” of the *Panorama* could clearly see the city as the human eye saw it in 1559: “blocks” of steep-roofed houses and courtyards (meaning “*avlu*”s, not gardens) immediately adjacent to each other.⁸

Suraiya Faruqi’s classical book on Kayseri and Ankara homes, *Man of Modest Substance*, has had a considerable impact upon the scholarship on early modern urban Ottoman dwellings.⁹ Based on her research on court registers from Ankara and Kayseri, Faruqi reconstructs urban life the sixteenth and seventeenth century Anatolia. By analyzing a substantial sample of sales and property disputes, she provides insights into the physical layout and distinctive features of urban houses during this period. According to Faruqi, the terms *menzil* and *ev* were used to refer to houses. The term *mulk* (freehold property) is also found in the registers of the period.¹⁰ Faruqi highlights that an ordinary house typically consisted of a building and a courtyard, although a separate garden connected to the houses was not commonly present.¹¹ One notable feature of the so-called “traditional” house was the *tabhane*. It seems that the *tabhane* served as the main room of the house where guests were received. It was the only room in the house with a hearth, making it a common living space for family members during the winter. In this regard, one could argue that the *tabhane* corresponds to what is now referred to as the living room in modern houses. During winter nights, it is plausible to assume that bedding was arranged in the *tabhane* to provide proper sleeping accommodations for the family members.¹² The sofa was another distinctive element of the house, serving as a partially open or enclosed area that provided access to other rooms. In modern terms, one might view the sofa as a “hall” with certain reservations. Rooms without additional features were referred to as *oda*, similar to their present-day usage. Faruqi’s research also reveals that it was common for many houses in Ankara and Kayseri to have designated spaces for accommodating animals (*ahur*).

not expressed as overt symbols but as figures within a larger field. Refer to the source mentioned (Ibid, 76) for further information.

⁸Ibid. 69.

⁹Suraiya Faruqi, *Men of Modest Substance: House Owners and House Property in Seventeenth-century Ankara and Kayseri* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

¹⁰Ibid. 65.

¹¹146

¹²Ibid 61.

Based on Faroqhi's research, the presence of courtyards in the majority of homes, coupled with the cost-effective method of constructing mudbrick buildings in the region, likely enabled people to avoid overcrowding in existing rooms.¹³ In this sense, Faroqhi convincingly suggests that residents had the capacity to conveniently expand their homes by adding rooms to their homes as per their requirements. Additionally, Faroqhi emphasizes that property ownership was reasonably attainable, particularly for individuals of moderate financial means. While finding affordable housing in larger cities may have been challenging, house ownership remained relatively accessible due to the Sharia rules of divisible inheritance, which promoted the distribution of property among heirs.¹⁴ Another significant contribution of Faroqhi's study is her clear demonstration of an evolutionary trend in the domestic architecture of houses during the seventeenth century. Towards the end of the century, it became increasingly common to observe the addition of a second story and a second courtyard in many houses. Moreover, some houses also underwent modifications to include additional living spaces and semi-open areas such as verandahs and porches. Last but not least, an equally noteworthy contribution of Faroqhi's research is that she attributes these architectural alterations not solely to population growth in these cities, but also takes into consideration the evolving tastes, values, and the impact of economic prosperity in shaping and defining domestic architecture. She recognizes that societal changes and shifting cultural preferences played a significant role in influencing the design and development of houses during this period.¹⁵

Stephane Yerasimos' "Dwellings in Sixteenth-century Istanbul" gives a comprehensive outline of sixteenth-century housing patterns in Istanbul. Examining three different *vakif* registers from the sixteenth century, he reveals that there were evident functional differences between the sixteenth-century houses and those from the eighteenth century onwards in Istanbul. The conventional sixteenth-century home was a single-story, half-timbered or masonry house at which at least one courtyard was frequently available in contrast to multi-story wooden houses that will be seen in later periods. When it comes to the sixteenth-century Istanbul houses, therefore, "we are not dealing with a structure closed on all four sides, often in immediate proximity to its neighbor, with the sofa functioning as a kind of central hall providing access to the rooms".¹⁶ In this regard, it is clear that the availability of courtyards

¹³Ibid. 20-1.

¹⁴Ibid. 215-6.

¹⁵See *ibid*: 101-2, 180-1, and 202-20.

¹⁶Stéphane Yerasimos, "Dwellings in Sixteenth-century Istanbul," in *The Illuminated Table, the Prosperous House: Food and Shelter in Ottoman Material Culture*, edited by Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (Würzburg: Ergon, 2003), 299.

in most dwellings in the sixteenth-century Istanbul houses coincides with Faroqhi's findings on the seventeenth-century Ankara/Kayseri houses. But even more importantly, while brilliantly outlining a clear typology for the sixteenth-century houses in Istanbul, Yerasimos also discusses the social and cultural meanings of the changes in the housing patterns that developed after the sixteenth century. For instance, he convincingly shows inhabitants' tendencies for making their lives more comfortable by integrating several service-related make-ups in the main building. Istanbulites no longer needed to store firewood, water, or cooked food outside the house. Even more importantly for this thesis, Yerasimos successfully incorporates private and public discussion into his analysis. According to him, in addition to the amenities in the main building, the city became more crowded in the following centuries, resulting in a dramatic increase of houses with courtyards due to a lack of space. In this context, semi-open *sofas* gradually disappeared since the close proximity of houses compromised the privacy of family life. Yerasimos' emphasis on the relationship between the need for privacy due to lack of space and the changing patterns in habitation provides significant insights into the spatiality of privacy.

Uğur Tanyeli's essay on "Norm of Domestic Comfort and Luxury" focuses on the living standards of domestic comfort from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.¹⁷ His analysis is based on a *vakif* register from 1546, which was published by Barkan and Ayverdi and provides valuable insights into the topic.¹⁸ He primarily argues that standards of living for ordinary Ottomans dramatically increased in the eighteenth century, as reflected in the significant growth in the number of specialized kitchens. According to Tanyeli, kitchens did not become a permanent feature of Ottoman houses until the eighteenth century. This observation is significant, but even more importantly, he highlights the existence of different "kitchen regimes" that varied based on the social status of the homeowners. In doing so, he implies that there is no such thing as a typical "Ottoman house" —although there are certain similarities to be considered. By addressing the lack of kitchens and pantries as an integral part of the house even among three- and four-room houses until the mid-sixteenth century, he shows that these service spaces were almost unreachable even for better-off families. He claims that kitchens and pantries were spaces fit for palaces, functioning as status symbols. Meanwhile, poorer and wealthier people seem to have had baking ovens placed in their courtyards to prepare and cook their meals. However, from the sixteenth century onwards, wealthy people no longer had to cook their meals in the open air. Instead, they cooked in their kitchens. According to Tanyeli, this is a

¹⁷Uğur Tanyeli, "Norm of Domestic Comfort and Luxury".

¹⁸For the vakif register that Tanyeli utilizes as a primary source in his article, please consult: Ömer Lutfi Barkan, Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, *Istanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri: 953 (1546) Tarihli* (Istanbul, 1970).

good example of former luxuries turning into necessities and norms. He also suggests that wealthier Istanbulites of the sixteenth century were probably no more comfortable than eighteenth-century ones, while the ordinary Ottoman houses noticeably developed between the sixteenth and the eighteenth century. Tanyeli's study is of particular importance in that he pays attention to social class in analyzing early modern Ottoman houses.

In addition to the above-mentioned studies on the architectural features of Ottoman houses and several social meanings they convey, we should mention several contributions that historicize the private and public in the early modern Ottoman context with a particular focus on houses. Abraham Marcus' "Privacy in Eighteenth-Century Aleppo: The Limits of Cultural Ideals" regards privacy as an area mainly determined by the people's socio-economic status.¹⁹ He highlights that variations in personal wealth played a significant role in shaping housing conditions and household structures, ultimately impacting the degree of privacy individuals could attain. Based on his examination of local court records from 1746 to 1770, he distinguishes between personal privacy and the privacy of personal information. By physical privacy, he addresses certain Islamic and societal norms and standards some of which led to strict restrictions "on relations between sexes, which set up, particularly around women, private spheres immune from public observation and unlicensed contact".²⁰ The second aspect of privacy discussed by Marcus relates to the access to personal information. While Islamic law offers certain safeguards against surveillance and unwanted exposure, he argues that poverty and the absence of legal protections for information privacy contributed to the infringement of domestic privacy. Marcus observes that the people in Aleppo society had a high level of familiarity with their neighbors' personal details, including their identities, origins, and familial events. He views this familiarity as indicative of the absence of privacy in the society. He provides an example of a recorded case in which a man sells two rooms of his home to another family, resulting in the sharing of the same yard, main entranceway, and indoor amenities by both families. This case serves as evidence for the absence of privacy, as Marcus defines it. Based on this specific example, he implies that individuals with greater wealth have more opportunities to protect their privacy compared to those who are less affluent. To conclude, the role of sexuality in rendering certain acts and spaces private or public, however, is neglected in Marcus' approach. According to him, sexual acts and the information about these acts remained categorically private. Although Marcus' article is one of the earlier contributions to

¹⁹ Abraham Marcus. "Privacy in Eighteenth Century Aleppo: The Limits of Cultural Ideals," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 18, no.2 (1986): 165–183.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 166.

the private and public dichotomy in the Ottoman context, the main drawback of his approach is that he confines his analysis to a narrow sense of privacy without considering the role of licit and illicit sexuality and sexual behavior in determining what is considered to be private or public. Another problem in his analysis is that he defines home as a fully-fledged private space if the residents have high socio-economic status in the society.

In her groundbreaking study entitled “Mahremiyet: Mahrumiyetin Resmi”, Tülay Artan discusses the meanings of the public (*'amm(e)*) and non-public (*hass(a)*) by drawing attention to a clear shift in the choice of subject matter in the post-seventeenth century book paintings.²¹ While pre-eighteenth century Ottoman paintings primarily depicted representational, unimaginative, and monotonous scenes, such as architectural spaces, official histories, and court figures, the author notes that the eighteenth century marked a notable shift. During this period, there was an abundance of single-leaf paintings and albums comprised of these individual leaves, which introduced a new iconography. These works were based on observations of daily life and occasionally incorporated imaginative elements, creating a fresh perspective on artistic representation. In addition to the albums, the 18th-century illustrated copies of Nev'î-zâde Atâ'î's *Hamse* hold significant value in providing a wealth of information about the daily lives of urban commoners, as argued by Artan.²² Based on the several paintings in the illustrated *Hamses*, Artan brilliantly comes up with a third area between private and public in which the assumed boundaries between individuals and society became obscured. When boundaries between the private and public blurred, Artan references a particular painting in the *Hamse* illustrating male same-sex copulation in a home setting. (Figures A.6, A.7, and A.8). In the painting, while one is penetrating the other anally in the home, several intruders suddenly appear to “catch” the couple. In the meantime, the intruders also play drums and zurna to humiliate them (A.9). Although the “story” was probably intended to be a warning against illicit sexual behavior, Artan convincingly argues that it is also a perfect case of violation of privacy in a home where a third ear interrupts public and private boundaries. In a later study, Artan also states that such paintings played an important role in the construction of gender, by strengthening masculinity within a socio-cultural environment shaped by the homosociality of social practices.²³

²¹Tülay Artan, “Mahremiyet: Mahrumiyetin Resmi,” *Defter* 20 (1993): 91–115.

²²Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi (TSM) R. 816; Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi (TIEM) 1969; British Library (BL) Or. 13882; Free Library of Philadelphia (FLP) (John Frederic Lewis Collection) T. 97; Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery (WAG) W. 666.

²³Tülay Artan and Irvin Cemil Schick. “Ottomanizing Pornotopia: Changing Visual Codes in Eighteenth-century Ottoman Erotic Miniatures,” *Eros and Sexuality in Islamic Art*, edited by Francesca Leoni and

In “Limits of Privacy in Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Society”, Fikret Yılmaz argues that the preservation of the assumed privacy at home was largely dependent on the mindset of the majority towards the nature and forms of sexual relationships thought to take place behind closed doors.²⁴ Based on the sixteenth-century local court records of Edremit, Yılmaz suggests that despite formal legal protection of the private nature of homes and individuals’ privacy, as stated by the requirement of *qadi*’s permission for domiciliary searches, neighbors did not always adhere to this regulation. According to Yılmaz, the social control mechanism within the community could easily blur the boundaries of privacy when community members deemed it necessary to intervene in the affairs happening inside the home. The court registers contain numerous records of illicit sexual encounters, including cases of adultery, prostitution, and same-sex relationships, which often attract the most attention from the community. However, the registers also contain testimonies about other activities, such as individuals consuming wine or engaging in the exploitation of women. In summary, Yılmaz’s study is highly valuable as it effectively reveals the vast expanse of the public domain, while also highlighting the fragility and contingent nature of privacy and private spaces.

3.3 The Home Stories

In the *Bedâyiü’l-âsâr*, the most frequent word used to refer to the house is *ev*. A house is also referred to as *oda*. Although *oda* usually denotes a house in its entirety, it sometimes points a room of a certain home. In some cases, *oda* also appears as a modest, though not necessarily single-room, residence. However, there are also stories in which *oda* points to fully-fledged, if not extraordinary, homes of high(er)-status people. In this sense, having an *oda* is by no means a symbol of occupying a modest rank in the societal hierarchal order. *Yârân odası* is another form of residence passing in the stories. It could be argued that it corresponds to a bachelor pad in modern terminology. For instance, while in story 4, *yârân odası* occurs as a single man’s home in which some friends come together to have a man-to-man conversation and to drink during the night, in story 37 it appears as a young man’s house, a port in the storm, in which a male friend can stay for a night for security

Mika Natif (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 167.

²⁴Fikret Yılmaz, “XVI. yüzyıl Osmanlı Toplumunda Mahremiyetin Sınırlarına Dair,” *Toplum ve Bilim* 83 (1999/2000)

reasons.²⁵

Contrary to recent scholarship's emphasis on women's privileged use of domestic settings as well as the men's "out-of-place" status when it comes to the interior spaces, the house in the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* is mostly accessible to man during night and day.²⁶ In other words, although the house appears as a space where women rule and come together during the daytime, a man's access to the home is not necessarily "condemned" in the stories. Based only on the stories, therefore, it would be difficult to argue that men's presence at home does not appear to be necessarily against the social norms of the society-at-large. Rather, their presence seems to be considered problematic if they are home to have illicit sexual encounters, mostly appearing in the form of sex with their concubines.

In most of the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* stories, *ev* serves as the primary setting. That is to say that most of the stories feature at least a scene of the protagonist or other main characters being in the home. This, however, does not generally hold true for the use of marketplace or the *hamâm* in the stories. In most stories, the narrator does not choose these urban spaces as a setting. Moreover, although there are many stories in which events take place at the home from the beginning to the end, there is not even a single story that the narration of events completely occurs either in the marketplace or in the bathhouse. Story 33, discussed in the first chapter, exemplifies this "convention". Although the *qadi* was telling the narrator his "story" —the details of his sexual experience— while both the protagonist and the narrator were in the *hamâm*, the story was mainly about a *qadi*'s sexual adventures taking place at the home.

The aforementioned case also informed my story selection in this chapter. Whereas the first chapter is about the stories in which the characters' sexual privacy in their home is violated and leaked to the public at the *hamâm*, the stories discussed in this chapter are about the illicit sexual encounters taking place in the home whose privacy leaked to the public, once again, in the home. In other words, in the stories I discuss in the following section, the home appears as a place in which both the illicit encounters and the violation of the privacy of these encounters take place. On the one hand, I am aware that this methodological issue helps me in the organization of the stories according to their settings. On the other hand, I emphasize that this approach does not prevent from selecting the stories that allow me to discuss the conditions in which a home's private character vanishes. On the contrary, the opposite is true.

²⁵ *Bedâyiü'l-âsar*, p. 290-296 (S81a-S86a); and p. 172-176 (S11a-S44a).

²⁶ For instance, see: İpek Hüner Cora, "The Story Has It" 56-114.

Although there are fifteen stories in the collection that are set in houses, I specifically selected the stories that highlight the significant role of unconditional adherence to sexual norms in shaping the (assumed) private nature of the house. Stories 6 and 7 are about the violation of licit sexual behaviors and encounters, shedding light on the social consequences that arise from these violations.²⁷ Through these stories, it becomes evident how “illicit” sexual encounters can disrupt and undermine the initially presumed private nature of the house. In both stories, partners’ illicit – but still male to female – sexual relationship leaked to the public. Story 55, on the other hand, reveals that if the sexual encounters between partners – in this case, between two males – do not threaten the sexual norms, their sexualities remain private between them.²⁸ In this way, the house keeps its initial private character set at the beginning of the story.

²⁷pp. 179-81 (S14b-S17a) and pp. 181-2 (S15a-S17b)

²⁸pp. 371-4 (S130a-S132a)

3.4 Making Sexual Intercourse Between Opposite Sexes Illicit

Story 6 is about a man fulfilling heterosexual desire outside the bounds of his marriage.²⁹ After finding some money unexpectedly, the man goes to the market, buys a *câriye*, and takes her to his home. His wife became angry when she saw the *câriye*. The *câriye*, by the same token, feels sorry because the man did not tell her that he is married. The wife accuses her husband of behaving inappropriately for a man of his status, demanding him to account for what he is going to do with a young *câriye* because he is a *pîr*. Based on the words she utters and the context of the plot, one cannot make sure whether the word *pîr* is used to indicate an old man, a patron saint, a spiritual teacher and/or the leader of a certain dervish lodge.³⁰ Notwithstanding the narrator has left us some ambiguity whether the wife calls his husband *pîr* relying on his old age or for his having an upper rank in a certain religious context. However, it could still be argued that this ambiguity does not affect the reader's perception of the man since both being old and being a leader of a certain order were respected statuses, considering the social and moral constructions, customary and cultural patterns, and the social mentality of the day. As is argued by Leslie Peirce, “[t]here was among males a deference towards elders, reflecting a belief that the elder possessed greater learning and social wisdom by virtue of experience.”³¹

Several days pass but the old man cannot find the opportunity to have sexual intercourse with his *câriye* because his wife follows him around wherever he goes in the home. After some time, his wife gives birth to a boy. One day, while she was taking some rest with her newborn in the company of her female friends and relatives on the *sofa*, the *pîr* takes his changes, giving the *câriye* a sign to meet in an *oda*. The *oda* in the story is depicted as a building, consisting of a single room and a window from which one could directly get to the sofa which is separated from the main house by a boundary wall. Finally, the couple meet in the *oda* and have sex. While they are having sex, however, they find themselves standing against the window. Since both the window and the curtain are closed, they do not mind, thus continue their rendezvous. At that time, the wife is still lying on the mattress next to the other side of the window, taking care of her baby while the guests are still inside. At

²⁹ "ihvân-ı vefâdan ve yârân-ı safâdan biri hikâyet idüp eydür.", S15a.

³⁰ *Red House Sözlüğü Türkçe/Osmanlıca İngilizce* (İstanbul: Sev Yayıncılık: 2017), 934.

³¹ Peirce, "Seniority, Sexuality, and Social Order: The Vocabulary of Gender in Early Modern Ottoman Society," in *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era*, edited by Madeline C. Zilfi (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 187.

this point, the reader is suddenly informed about the presence of a domesticated ram who strolls around the courtyard. The ram steps into the *oda* and knocks both the adulterous husband and the *câriye* into the *sofa*. As a result, the husband is publicly shamed, drawing the condemning gazes of the guests. His wife spits in his face. Embarrassed, the man leaves the house, goes back to the marketplace and sells the *câriye*. In the end, we see that a male friend hosts him for a couple of days in his place, a *yârân odası*, until he finds the courage to get back home.

The story presents us a circumstance, if not a case, in which the privacy of sexuality and privacy of information with regard to sexuality are thought to be contravened. We clearly see how the home dramatically loses its private character because of the sexual encounter between the master and his female slave. In other words, the narrative emphasizes the idea that the home's privacy is conditioned by the absence of the extra-marital sexual experience. Although the reader is kept informed about the details of the sex positions in the extra-marital encounter on a regular basis throughout the story, the information regarding the marital sex in the narrative is confined to the wife's pregnancy. This attitude reveals that the narrator is by no means concerned with marital sexuality.³² Rather, he focuses on an illicit encounter and its "well-deserved" consequences. It could be argued that the primary intention of the narrator is to show the reader what happens when a married man does not curb his illicit desires. Another significant motive in the story is the wife's jealousy behaviors towards the husband to prevent him from being alone with the *câriye*. It should be noted, moreover, that from the first time the adulterous husband appears in home with his *câriye*, he seems to be aware of his unruly sexual desire which would violate marital sexuality.

According to the Islamic law, the realm of legal sexual intercourse is by no means limited to the institution of marriage. A man is also allowed to have sex with his female slave as a concubine.³³ Then why is the protagonist "thrown away" by an "invisible hand" – the ram? To discuss this question, we should briefly look at the conventional notions ascribed to marriage in the early modern Ottoman world. Ottoman scholars on Islamicate treaties of conduct (*adab*) wrote frequently about the benefits and disadvantages of marriage and the ideal relationship between the husband and the wife. While discussing the nature of the marital union, one of the primary texts that was widely read and debated by the Ottoman authors was Muhammad al-Ghazali's (d. 1111) *Îhyâü ulûmi'd-dîn* ("The Revival of the

³²By attitude, I refer to the way the author/narrator thinks or feels about the subject.

³³Musallam, *Sex and Society in Islam*, 31.

Religious Sciences”).³⁴ According to Al-Ghazali, the main advantage of marriage is its reproductive character.³⁵ Also, marriage leads people to confine their sexual desire thanks to marital intercourse. Last, but not least, it trains people to avoid illicit acts by developing their personalities.³⁶

As maintained by Kayhan Elbirlik, among the didactic texts that prominently refer to Al-Ghazali’s *İhyâü ulûmi’-d-dîn* in the early modern Ottoman world, Kinalizâde Ali Çelebi’s *Ahlâk-ı Alâî*, a treatise from the sixteenth century, holds particular significance.³⁷ The text is important not only for its popularity among the Ottoman-Turkish speaking cultural elites but also for the author’s strict negative stance on polygamy. In the text, Kinalizâde argues that a man should only have one wife regardless of his financial status.³⁸ Because he believes that a stable and harmonious family life, as well as shared responsibility, could only be achieved through monogamy. If a man increases the number of women in his household, it will lead to chaos and conflict, resulting in an unsatisfactory way of life.³⁹

This perspective of Kinalizâde seems to have been influenced by the social realities and region-specific practices of a particular segment urban society, as evidenced by the estate inventories of the period. In his analysis of the estate inventories in Edirne during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Ömer Lütü Barkan found that only seven percent of males were married to more than one wife.⁴⁰ *TBD III/5-6* (1966), 13- 16. Similarly, Hüseyin Özdeğer, based on estate registers from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries in Bursa, argues that the prevalence of polygamous marriages was no more than five percent.⁴¹ There is also the significant number of scholarly researches on probates of males who were involved in either monogamous or polygynous marriages, underscoring the substantial infrequency of polygyny among

³⁴In Sırrı Selim Kuru and Leyla Kayhan Elbirlik, “An Uncanny Discourse on Sex and Marriage from the Early Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Empire,” in *Crafting History: Essays on the Ottoman World and Beyond in Honor of Cemal Kafadar*, edited by Rachel Goshgarian, İlham Khuri-Makdisi, and Ali Yaycıoğlu (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2023), 195-6. Also see: Al-Ghazali, *İhya’ ‘ulum al-dîn*, 4 vols, (Beirut: Dar al-Marifa, 1982).

³⁵Kuru and Kayhan Elbirlik, 196.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid. 198-200. See also: Kayhan Elbirlik, “Negotiating Matrimony: Marriage, Divorce, and Property Allocation Practices (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2013) 28-31.

³⁸Kayhan Elbirlik, 29.

³⁹Ibid. 30, 32, 33.

⁴⁰Cited in Elbirlik, “Negotiating Matrimony”, 79. Also see: Ömer Lütü Barkan and Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, “Edirne Askerî Kassamma Ait Tereke Defterleri (1545-1659).”

⁴¹Elbirlik, 79. Also see: Hüseyin Özdeğer, *1463-1640 Yılları Bursa Şehri Tereke Defterleri* (Istanbul: Bayrak Matbaacılık, 1988), 55- 56.

upper-class elites.⁴² Lady Montague's first-person account from the 18th century also provides valuable insights into the practice of marrying multiple spouses among the Ottoman elites:

Tis true their Law permits them four wives, but there's no instance of a man of quality that makes use of this liberty, or of a woman of rank that would suffer it. When a husband happens to be inconsistent (as those things will happen) he keeps his mistress in a house apart and visits her as privately as he can, just as tis with you. Amongst all the great men here I only know the Tefterdar that keeps a number of she slaves for his own use (that is on his own side of the house, for a slave once given to serve a lady is entirely at her disposal) and he is spoke of as a libertine, or what we should call a Rake, and his wife wont see him, tho she continues to live in his house.⁴³

Contrary to the common assumption in Middle Eastern scholarship, the sources mentioned earlier including Lady Montague's first-person accounts, challenge the belief that the practice of polygamy was limited to a specific social milieu, such as the higher positions in the royal administration. Conversely, the sources and accounts mentioned suggest that polygamy was much less prevalent than commonly believed, even among the upper-class elites who had the means to support multiple wives. At first glance, it could be argued that the studies mentioned, including Lady Montague's accounts, primarily reflect the men's attitudes towards polygamy given the prevalent patriarchal view informing the primary sources available to the researchers. Therefore, based on these studies, it could be reasonably assumed that what appeared to be husband's choice of being in monogamous/polygamous marriage was a primary factor affecting the wife's status within home. However, it is important to note that the husband's stance on polygamous marriage and the number of spouses in the marital union are not necessarily mutually exclusive. While the husband's attitude towards polygynous marriage could be a status-determining factor affecting women's welfare inside and outside of the home, women's legal and social capacity—which was also supported by Sharia— could also determine the husband's attitude towards polygamy.

⁴²Elbirlilik 79-80. Also see: Demirel, "1700-1730 Tarihlerinde Ankara'da Ailenin Niceliksel Yapısı," *B* 211 (1991): 945-961; Ömer Demirel et al., "Osmanlılarda Ailenin Demografik Yapısı," *Sosyo-kültürel Değişme Sürecinde Türk Ailesi* 1 (Ankara: Aile Araştırma Kurumu, 1993), 97-161; Ömer Düzbakar, "Osmanlı Toplumunda Çok Eşlilik: 1670- 1698 Yılları Arasında Bursa Örneği," *OTAM* 23 (2008): 88-89; Said Öztürk, "Osmanlı Toplumunda Çok Evliliğin Yeri", *Osmanlı V*, ed. Güler Eren (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 1999), 408.

⁴³Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, Vol. 1, edited by Robert Halsband, 325-30.

Kayhan Elbirlik’s findings on the perception and reaction of eighteenth-century Istanbulite women to polygamy support this argument.⁴⁴ In her PhD thesis, primarily based on the local estate and court records, Elbirlik convincingly shows that Sharia allowed women to take precautionary actions to keep the monogamous nature of their marital union. Furthermore, her study reveals that women were also able to follow different strategies in the absence of stipulations preventing the husbands from marrying another wife. In such cases, women appear to have made complaints about the husband’s negligence to prove that the husband is no longer able to provide a dowry—which was promised in the marriage contract made before the marriage—due to the substantial decrease in the share. Tellingly, as Elbirlik demonstrates, the timing of identical financial complaints relying on the husband’s inability to provide the dowry corresponds with the arrival of a second wife.⁴⁵ That is not to say that women did not care about securing their benefits such as a dowry, a share of the inheritance, or estate after the death of the husbands. On the contrary, the study reveals women’s awareness of their rights within marriage and the legal mechanisms available to them. On the other hand, the timing of complaints “strengthens the contention that [the wife] was more bothered by the arrival of a [second] woman into what was her territory than his lack of provision of her due effects”.⁴⁶ Hunt’s study, which examines the social and economic position of women in the seventeenth-century Ottoman lands, is consistent with Elbirlik’s findings.⁴⁷ Based on two hundred marriage contracts from seventeenth-century Cairo, Hunts not only reveals the women’s negative perception to polygamy but also emphasizes women’s “playmaker” role in shaping the nature and the future of marriage. Among the conditions that women included in their marriage contracts, several are particularly relevant to our discussion. These conditions include living near the wife’s sister, allowing the wife to continue her trade, granting her permission to go on pilgrimage, and granting her freedom to visit public baths. Many women also added clauses prohibiting the husband from taking a second wife or a concubine. Violation of these clauses often resulted in immediate divorce, with the woman receiving her dowry (*mehr*) in full.⁴⁸

At this point, let us return to the story. Here, we should remember that the *câriye* feels sorry when she realizes that the master (the adulterous husband) is married.

⁴⁴Kayhan Elbirlik, “Negotiating Matrimony”.

⁴⁵Ibid., 80.

⁴⁶Kayhan Elbirlik, 82

⁴⁷Margaret R. Hunt, *Women in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Great Britain: Pearson Education Limited, 2010).

⁴⁸In Elbirlik, 146.

Therefore, regardless of the husband's initial intentions upon acquiring the *câriye*, it can be surmised that the reader becomes aware of the potential transformation of the monogamous household into a polygamous one when the narrator discloses the *câriye*'s disappointment upon realizing that the home is already under the authority of the legal wife. At this juncture, it is worth remembering the perception and understanding of family within the socio-cultural context of the period. The following words by Kınalızâde shed light on certain aspects of the values that influenced perceptions of the meaning of marital union in urban society, which also appear to inform the approach to marital issues in the story:

Striving for decency, there is no likelihood of meddling with vice and perpetrating corrupt behavior. it is better even for...(sultans) to abstain from polygyny, because a husband in his dwelling is like the soul in the flesh. Thus, there cannot be one soul in two bodies. For this reason, it is not fitting for a man to be a husband in two dwellings. The merit of relinquishing of this practice has been previously referred to by the sharia.⁴⁹

Story 7 echoes a similar attitude towards marriage and sexuality with an emphasis on the husband's "illicit" carnal desires.⁵⁰ The protagonist in the story is a *kâtib* having extraordinary wealth who lives with his wife. Although the reader is not informed about the *kâtib*'s physical appearance, the wife in the story is depicted as an extremely ugly woman. One day, echoing the *pîr* in story 6, the *kâtib* goes to the marketplace. As he wanders around, he notices a *câriye* who attracts even the attention of the *hâces*, causing them to wait in line.⁵¹ After haggling over the price for some time, *kâtib* manages to stand out among others and buys the *câriye*. He then brings her to his house, but he finds it challenging to have a sexual encounter with her due to his wife's constant presence. However, he devises a plan. One night, the *kâtib* engages in prolonged conversations with his wife, sharing all the stories he knows. As time passes, his wife starts feeling sleepy. They both retire to bed, and it appears that his plan is working as his wife falls into a deep sleep.

Thereupon, the *kâtib* gets out of bed and wakes the *câriye*. Together, they sneak into the uninhabited house located in the same yard. The home has two windows under which the *kâtib*'s recently put two different bottles in case he needed them. Whereas

⁴⁹Cited in and translated by Elbirlik, 146-7. Also see Kınalızâde Ali Çelebi, *Ahlâk-ı Alâî*, ed. and translated by Mustafa Koç (Istanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2007), 354.

⁵⁰pp. 181-2 (S15a-S17b)

⁵¹The term *hâcı* was an honorific title given to individuals who went to pilgrimage to Mecca.

one of the bottles was filled with rose water, the other one was filled with ink. He confuses the ink bottle with the rose water and puts the ink on his face. Being unaware of his mistake, he starts having sex with the *câriye*. In the meantime, the wife wakes up. She gets extremely annoyed with her husband because she thinks that he is having an affair with the *câriye*. She lights a candle to find her way and gets out of the room to the courtyard. Seeing the candlelight moving towards them, the *kâtib*'s jumps out of the window to the stable which is located next to the window. But he stumbles and accidentally mounts a resting camel. Meanwhile, the wife discovers the *câriye* and becomes sure that they had left the house to engage in a sexual encounter. At the same time, the husband remains on the camel, desperately trying to remain unnoticed. Eventually, the wife spots him perched on the camel, his face stained with ink. The story concludes with the woman uttering the following sentence: "May God grant the sultan many years of life; this is the fate of those who rise from their beds at night to engage in shameful acts."⁵²

The story is about an illicit encounter taking place in the domestic sphere that brings unintended consequences. The intent and the moral of the narration emphasizes that no matter what the adulterous husband does, he cannot hide that he is "cheating" on his wife. Also, the motif of self-awareness about one's illicit desire – echoing story 6 – is repeated in the narrative. The husband should know having sexual intercourse with the *câriye* is not a "correct" behavior. This seems to be the reason why he initiates sexual affairs with the *câriye* after he makes sure that his wife is sleeping. In other words, the protagonist has a clear knowledge of the wife's role and intervention against the extra-marital encounters inside the boundaries of the home.

Cinânî's emphasis on indecent sexual acts in the home intended to foster self-control, showing the importance of restraining any illicit sexual desires the protagonists might have. The author's vision of sexuality in stories 6 and 7 clearly considers the negative impact of men's extramarital carnal desires regardless of the protagonist's involvement in the sexual encounter with his *câriye*, who could be the wife-to-be in some cases, as in the story 6. In the fictional world of the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, licit encounters are confined to the realm of monogamy. Even cases in which a wife is unattractive and/or a *câriye* is extraordinarily beautiful are not exceptions.

Recalling the aforementioned discussion, the authorial attitude in the stories "condemning" heterosexual carnal experiences which are beyond the confines of monogamy is similarly formulated in several other primary sources. Previously, I

⁵² "Tanrı pâdisâha çou yıllar ömür virsün gice ile döseginden turup uğurlayanvarup yüz karalığı idenün siyâseti budur". (S17a).

maintained that Kinalizade Ali Çelebi's *Ahlâk-ı Alâî* with its comments on the advantages of monogamous marriage and the negative aspects of polygamy stands out among other treatises of conduct and ethics for its popularity among the Ottoman-Turkish literary elites. There are also other examples from Ottoman-Turkish literature displaying a positive regard for males' heterosexual licit desire occurring within the marriage. Among these texts, Deli Birader's (Mehmed Gazâlî) *Dâfi'ü'l-gumûm ve Râfi'u'l-humûm* ("The Expeller of Sorrows and Remover of Worries"), a sixteenth-century collection of sexually explicit stories is of particular importance. According to Deli Birader, "those sexual experiences that are outside the boundary of marriage would (...) metaphorically be likened to animalistic inclinations of the body which ultimately conquers the soul."⁵³ Although a chapter on the "virtues of marriage" in *Dâfi'ü'l-gumûm ve Râfi'u'l-humûm* is mainly about the conciliatory nature of marriage standing against the "uncontrollable urges of the soul" and the "animalistic appetite of the body", as Selim Kuru convincingly shows, the positive atmosphere revolving around the benefits of the sexual intercourse inside the marriage disappears as the author approaches the conclusion.⁵⁴ Towards the end of the chapter, Gazâlî comes up with a surprisingly contrasting perception about the marital union.⁵⁵ Although some people can gain some advantages of marriage, he alleges that marriage is nothing but a form of suffering because it causes man to lose his independence sooner or later. Deli Birader further argues that in marriage, the husband's life is no longer a real life and there is no place for freedom. In this regard, it would be wrong to state that Deli Birader's "perspective on marriage serves as a means to emphasize his ultimate point about the supremacy of celibacy."⁵⁶

Ibrâhîm Hakki of Erzurum (d. 1780), one of the most influential intellectuals and sufi thinkers of the eighteenth century, takes one step further. A letter in which he addresses his four wives is a significant source through which different perceptions and attitudes about polygamy in society could be unraveled.⁵⁷ The letter is comprised of four notes for each wives, with whom the sender seems to have possessed devoted camaraderie. Ibrâhîm Hakki's tone also suggests a form of polygamous marital union where the husband could have sophisticated and creative debates with his wives. Furthermore, the fact that the letter also suggests the wives to be friendly with each other may indicate the practice of polygyny did not always result in un-

⁵³In Kuru and Kayhan Elbirlik, 196.

⁵⁴Ibid., 202.

⁵⁵Ibid., 203- 205, 215.

⁵⁶Ibid. 203.

⁵⁷Gündüz Akıncı, "Erzurumlu İbrahim Hakki Efendi," *Türk Dili: Mektup Özel Sayısı* 274 (Temmuz 1974), 75-77.

easy relationships both between the wives and between the husband and the wives. The letter's implication that only two of wives had reading skills also attests to this. As only two of the wives knew how to read raises the possibility of companionship and genuine harmony between the husband and the wives and between the wives in the marital union to the extent that the wives read each other's love letters.

The sources through which we could get positive approaches and attitudes towards polygamy can be duplicated. The opposite is also possible. Indeed, we could choose to focus on those sources that consider the negative regard of polygamous marital unions. That is to say that neither of the group of sources universally representative of Ottoman attitudes to sex and sexuality in the early modern period. There existed, and continues to exist, a diverse range of behaviors and attitudes towards the ways individuals experience and express their sexuality. Nonetheless, what is more important here is to look at what kind of sexual encounters are regarded as illicit and what kind of roles are ascribed to the private and public in Cinânî's fictional world, which represents at least certain features of a specific value system of the period and which does not have to be the dominant form of social values among several others in the society. Based on stories 6 and 7, we could maintain that heterosexual encounters that took place outside the confines of monogamy were subject to a penalty, in which both home and sexuality lose their assumed private nature. This does not hold true for same-sex, "controllable" sexualities. In the following section, based on story 55, I approach the home as a secured space for same-sex sexualities.

3.5 Making Same-Sex Encounters Licit

Story 55, which makes same-sex sexuality the central theme in the plot, implies that male-to-male sexual desires and practices were acceptable and licit so long as there was no penetration between the partners.⁵⁸ The story starts with a portrayal of a slave trader who is an expert on beautiful boys/boys-beloved (*gulâms*). No matter where they are, he can easily find and sell them to the *hâces*. One day he encounters an extraordinarily beautiful boy somewhere far away. After buying him, he immediately brings him to his city. He carefully dresses him up and "exhibits" him in the marketplace. Soon after, a polite man falls in love with the boy. Every time the man sees the *gulâm* in the market, he puts some amount of money into the boy's pocket. The money, however, is not enough to buy the *gulâm*. In the

⁵⁸ *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, 371-4. S29a-S132A.

meantime, the boy keeps his masters up to date. Whenever the lover gives him the money, he informs his master. The day passes and the frequency of the money the lover has been giving to the boy increases. However, the money is still not enough to meet the master's expectations. After a couple of days, the master comes up with a plan: he tells the boy that they should go to the lover's place because he feels indebted to the lover even if the total sum of the money is well below the price of the boy. To this end, the master finds the lover's home, offering him to host the boy for a night. He tells the lover that he should go somewhere for business where he cannot take the boy with him. However, he could take the boy back in the morning. The lover accepts the master's offer and invites the boy. The time flies and morning comes. Looking extraordinarily pale and blanched, the boy goes back to the marketplace and finds his master. Surprised by the boy's appearance, the master asks him if the man did something bad to him. The boy says no. On the contrary, the lover treats him well. The flow of events seems to have developed as follows: Before dinner, the boy asks the lover why he puts money in his pocket on a regular basis. The lover responds to the boy by saying that he is in love with him. However, he does not have enough money to buy him. Notwithstanding, he goes to the market every day and leaves some money in the boy's pocket to see his beautiful face. After this brief conversation, the lover and the boy have their dinner. Afterward, they together perform the prayer. When the boy felt sleepy, the lover makes his bed properly, using a clean mattress and a feather pillow. The lover keeps watching the boy's beautiful face all night. While doing this, he does not let go of the boy's hand even for a moment. Once the boy wakes up, however, the lover is deceased. At the end of the story, we see that both the master and the boy remember the lover fondly.

It is clear that home keeps its assumed private character in the sense that the partners do not transgress the existing norms attached to the male-to-male encounters in Cinâni's literary world. This positive image of the "controllable" same-sex (homeroptic) relationship in the narrative could also be identified in both Nergisi's (d.1635) *Nihâl-i Sâni*, —the third *mesnevî* in his *hamse* entitled *Nihâlistan*, and Nevizade Atai's *Hamse-i Atâi*.⁵⁹ In these works, these authors also appreciate same-sex "romantic" encounters which preclude sexual penetration. In such narratives, the adult male in the relationship conventionally manages to canalize his interest in the beloved boy's beauty. Instead of being guided by the same-sex carnal desire, the protagonist's praiseworthy morality focuses on several features of the boy such as, including but not limited to, his beautiful face, white skin, and beautiful eyes. According to this moral, adult males' interest for boy beloveds is regarded as ordi-

⁵⁹Süleyman Çaldak, *Nergisi ve Nihâlistân'ı*; Tunca Kortantamer, *Nevizade Atai*.

nary if they render sexuality without sex. However, the same moral also dictates the “punishment” of same-sex sexualities with sex by the “other’s” intrusion. In such cases, the partner’s privacy and the privacy of information are leaked to the public without exception. Moreover, the private character of the home once again vanishes.⁶⁰ Story 55 is by no means an exception to this literary convention. Since the form of sexuality between the partners remains within limits of the above-mentioned moral, their encounter is regarded as licit. Their privacy, therefore, is protected. It is the same reason why “intruders” have no idea about the dos and don’ts of their relationship. I would also argue that even if the outsiders (in other words, the “public”) had known about the sexual goings-on, they would probably not have cared, if not condemned, their encounter just as the protagonist finds reasonable the presence of yet another form of licit sexual intercourse — that is the sexual intercourse with the wife — in story 33, which was analyzed in the first chapter.

As in the Introduction, the literary representation of pederastic love and male-to-male sexual desire in Ottoman literature challenges both the heterosexual norms of the nation-state and much of today’s conservative scholarship and its established norms about Ottoman-Turkish literature. Furthermore, as is demonstrated in recent scholarship, what is conventionally seen as purely fictional could reveal the attitudes of certain members of the early modern Ottoman society towards sexual norms and sexuality.⁶¹ In this regard, on the one hand, one could argue that Cinânî’s perspective towards male sexuality was informed by the intellectual, cultural, and social life of his period. On the other, Leslie Peirce’s aforementioned article entitled “Seniority, Sexuality, and Social Order” in which she shows that the socio-sexual roles that the adolescent boys might be carnally desirable (*müşteha*) —and thus the potential object of the desire of adult males— Cinânî’s literary position on the male-to-male encounter may fall behind most of his contemporaries’ more “liberal” approach towards pederastic love. We should not forget that most love poetry written by adult males in early modern Ottoman literature was devoted to boy-beloveds.

To sum up, contrary to stories 6 and 7, the home keeps its assumed private character in story 55. The partners do not transgress the norms attached to male-to-male encounters in Cinânî’s literary world. As I maintained above, this “world” cannot

⁶⁰Male-to-male same-sex encounters, however, becomes norm in the 19th-century Tiffi’s stories. Not only homoerotic relationships but also same-sex sexual copulations are the common occurrences. In a story, the protagonist appears as a boy lover (*gulamperest*) to the extent of saying “by God, brother, I have never chased after women in my life. I don’t even like my own mother” (*Hikayet*, 26a). In Tiffi stories, therefore, the protection of character’s privacies does not rely on the absence of sexual copulation. Similarly, the private nature assigned to home is not conditioned by the licit encounters. See David Selim Sayers, *Tiffi Hikâyetleri* (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2013).

⁶¹See: Andrews and Kalpaklı, *The Age Of Beloveds*; Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Before Homosexuality in the Arab-Islamic World*.

claim to be representative of Ottoman social attitudes to sex and sexuality in the early modern period. In this regard, one should always avoid the danger of allowing one of the possible worlds to emerge as representative of the sex and sexuality for all early modern Ottomans. However, similar to the rest of the stories in the book, story 55 could give a general idea about some of the currents, beliefs, and values of sexual behavior and sexuality that circulated through the Ottoman world. Keeping this in mind, however, what is more important for our discussion is that what determines the spatial character of the home in the story is nothing but the illicit/licit nature of the sexual encounter inside the home. In other words, privacy is allowed so long as it promotes social and cultural norms underlined in the narratives.

4. USE OF THE MARKETPLACE AS A PRIVATE SPACE?

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on two stories (story 16 and story 26) set in the marketplace. While there are multiple stories with several scenes in the marketplace, only story 26 reflects the relationships and interactions between sexuality and the space: When discussing the story, I focus primarily on (1) how sexuality acts itself out in the marketplace and (2) how sexuality affects the public character of the marketplace. In addition, I will briefly touch upon story 16 to address the social norms on the use of the marketplace. The story shows that the marketplace loses its public character at night.

4.2 Historical Setting: the Early Modern Ottoman Marketplace

The fifteenth-century chronicler Kritovoulos's account of Mehmet II's (r. 1444-6; 1451-81) endeavors regarding the recently conquered capital highlights the significant role of the marketplace in the Ottoman political and cultural consciousness.¹ According to Kritovoulos, the construction of marketplaces, alongside with of baths, inns, inns, and mosques, became one of the central instruments of the Sultan's political agenda, which was mainly shaped by his desire to surpass the Byzantine past of the city. In addition to being the center of the city's commercial activity and interregional and long-distance trade, the marketplace was a place of social interplay among urbanites. Bertrand de la Broquiere, for example, portrays the 1430s Bursa *Bedestân* as a locus of sociability and leisure in which various merchant groups not only engaged in commercial activities but also freely exchanged ideas

¹Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, translated by Charles T. Riggs (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1954), 83.

and knowledge about the outside world.² In his travelogues, which focus mostly on the sixteenth-century Istanbul, Hans Dernschwam further portrays the Istanbul *Bedestân* as a venue in which high-quality textiles and gold were exhibited and sold on the benches outside the shops.³ Even more importantly for our discussion, he further clarifies that the role of the mentioned benches was not limited to being commercial hubs.⁴ These benches, according to him, served as a locus around which wealthy urban merchants found opportunities to engage in daily conversations and to enjoy the pleasures of various sociabilities, be it in the form of drinking, chatting, eating, or smoking together.⁵

Urban spaces played a significant role in providing Istanbulites with a public forum for discussing and spreading rumors about state policies and authorities. According to Kafadar, *kahvehânes* (coffeehouses), *meyhânes* (taverns), and *bozahânes*⁶ were particularly important in shaping public attitudes towards news. Apart from serving as venues for socializing and leisure activities, these urban spaces also acted as platforms for organizing political resistance and dissent.⁷ Therefore, it can be argued that the unique sociopolitical environment of Istanbul played a significant role in fostering a heightened awareness of political developments, transformations, and upheavals.⁸ For example, the rumors and discussions surrounding Osman II's (t. 1618-22) ambitious project to relocate the capital from Istanbul seem to have contributed to the outbreak of the 1622 revolt.⁹ Similarly, the unsuccessful military campaign against the Venetians and the potential consequences of the encirclement

²la Broquiere, *Le voyage d'outremer de Bertrandon de la Broquiere*, edited by Charles Schefer (Paris: E. Leroux, 1892), 83-84. Also see, Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, 42.

³Hans Dernschwam, *İstanbul ve Anadoluya Seyahat Günlüğü*, translated by Yaşar Onen (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1992), 130-31.

⁴Ibid, 131. See also, Halil Inalcık, "Hub of the City: The Bedestân of Istanbul," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 1 (1980): 6.

⁵Dernschwam, *İstanbul ve Anadoluya Seyahat Günlüğü*, 131.

⁶*Bozahânes* were gathering places where common folks would often visit to drink boza, a warm malt drink, especially during the winter. See R. Mantran, *Istanbul dans la seconde moitié du XVIIe siècle: Essai d'histoire institutionnelle, économique et sociale* (Paris, 1962), 205-6; R. Mantran, 17. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında İstanbul: Kurumsal, İktisadi, Toplumsal Tarih Denemesi, trans. M.A. Kılıçbay and E. Özcan, 2 vols. (Ankara, 1990); I.O. Selçuk, "Boza consumption in early-modern Istanbul as an energy drink and a mood-altering substance," *Akademik İncelemeler Dergisi* 11/1 (2016): 61-81; İ.O. Selçuk, "State meets society: a study of bozakhane affairs in Bursa," in *Starting with Food: Culinary Approaches to Ottoman History*, edited by A. Singer (Princeton, 2011), 23-48.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Gülây Yılmaz, "Urban Protests, Rebellions, and Revolts," in *A Companion to Early Modern Istanbul*, edited by Çiğdem Kafescioğlu and Shirine Hamadeh (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 569-571.

⁹Necdet Sakaoğlu "Ayaklanmalar", DBİst.A, I, 440-445. Midhat Sertoğlu, "İstanbul (1520'den Cumhuriyet'e Kadar)", İA, V/2, s. 1214 (1-44).

of the Dardanelles also must have drawn the attention of the capital city’s dwellers.¹⁰ Regardless of whether it originates from the sultan’s daring political plans on the capital or from the general discontentment with the unsuccessful campaigns, Istanbulites “were well aware of the importance of being dwellers of the capital city and likely felt they were empowered, to a certain degree, to impact state politics by their involvement in the protests”.¹¹ Marketplaces, along with such urban establishments as coffeehouses, *hamâms*, and taverns functioned as loci of conversation and rumor to the extent that some protests and rebellions even started at the marketplace. Eunjeong Yi’s book on the Istanbul guild, for instance, convincingly denotes the active participation of the artisans of the *bedestân* in the Grand Bazaar in the 1651 and 1688 rebellions.¹²

To better understand the nature of the early modern Ottoman marketplace, we should also mention its cross-confessional nature.¹³ Contrary to juridical citations and a few court orders that theoretically justify the spatial segregation of Muslim and non-Muslim presence in urban establishments such as *hamâms* in Ottoman Arab lands,¹⁴ markets were regarded by most Ottoman jurists as non-confessional urban establishments where Armenians, Muslims, Orthodox Christians, and Jews operated their shops without any religious or ethno-centric crystallization.¹⁵ This non-segregational set-up echoed the contemporary urban setting prevalent in early modern Istanbul in which subject communities were thought to be living and working next to each other regardless of their confessional identities.¹⁶ As Karen A. Leal argues in the context of Galata, Eyüp, and Üsküdar, “[t]here were no ghettos in Greater Istanbul.”¹⁷ Although “many neighborhoods were centered around a house of worship—whether a masjid, church, or synagogue—[. . .] this did not necessarily mean that only members of that faith lived there”.¹⁸ Based on Leal’s accounts,

¹⁰Please see: Marc D. Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 57–58; Naima Mustafa Efendi, *Târih-i Nâima: Ravzatü'l-hüseyin fi hulâsati ahbâri'l-hâfikayn* [History of Naima], edited by: M. Ipsirli (Ankara, 2007).

¹¹Gülay Yılmaz, “Urban Protests”, 570.

¹²Eunjeong Yi, *Guild Dynamics in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul: Fluidity and Leverage* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2004)

¹³Inalcık, “Istanbul: An Islamic City,” *Journal of Islamic Studies* (1990): 1-23.

¹⁴Semerdjian, “Naked Anxiety”, 666.

¹⁵Selim S. Kuru, “Istanbul: A City of Men,” in *A Companion to Early Modern Istanbul*, eds. Çigdem Kafescioglu and Shirine Hamadeh, (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 63-85.

¹⁶Behar, *A Neighbourhood in Ottoman Istanbul*, 4.

¹⁷Karen A. Leal, “Communal Matters”, in *A Companion to Early Modern Istanbul*, eds. Çigdem Kafescioglu and Shirine Hamadeh, (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 366.

¹⁸Ibid.

therefore, buyers, makers, and sellers in the marketplace were conversant about each other's daily lives. Although it is tempting to portray the marketplace as an all-encompassing urban grid, we should still be careful in generalizing. In this regard, for instance, the Armenian intellectual Eremya Çelebi K m rciyan's (d. 1695) following description of several urban areas of Istanbul is telling in the sense that it implies a growing sense of spatial differentiation among the city-dwellers:

“We could not enter the greater town. We weren't able to count great and smaller mosques and identify their districts. We couldn't see the soup kitchens and the food prepared for madrasa students, nor the schools that trained the children. What are those madrasas to us, since ours are shut down, they inflict only more sorrow”.¹⁹

Besides madrasas, smaller mosques, and soup kitchens, K m rciyan's list of self-restricted – if not self-censored – urban spaces include shopping districts, several markets, and the Greek Orthodox churches in the central areas. Considering the high presence of non-Muslim artisans and customers in early modern Istanbul, one could also hypothesize that K m rciyan consciously refrained from leisurely strolling through the aforementioned urban spaces. How should we then interpret K m rciyan's Istanbul description, which was full of don'ts and couldn'ts? The answer does not lie underneath the author's confessional identity. Instead, K m rciyan's upper-class background is a promising start for further discussion. There are, indeed, many works that may provide us with what one could call the upper-class/elite perspective on the social makeup of the marketplaces and other urban districts. The anonymous author of the *Ris le-i Gar be*, for instance, gives the reader such a biased depiction of some of the commercial areas in Istanbul while cursing the people who “occupied” these places: “the ‘turbaned Turks’ from Anatolia who pray for a rise in the price of grain at Unkapam; the lowly people who eat clams, crabs, and oysters at Balık Bazarı; and the porters who shout at people to make their way through the crowds of G mr k.”²⁰ Elsewhere, he enunciates his “problem” with the people who wander about the marketplace as follows: “May his horse stumble while passing through a crowded market, may his turban fall from his head and may he be publicly disgraced.”²¹

¹⁹Eremya Çelebi K m rciyan, *Istanbul Tarihi: XVII. asırda Istanbul*, trans. and edited by H.D. Andreasyan (Istanbul, 1952), 55.; for madrasas that are “abandoned” for Eremya Çelebi and “his” people see, *Ibid.*, 294. Also see Kuru, “İstanbul: A City of Men”, 80.

²⁰Cited in Kuru, “İstanbul: A City of Men”, 77. See also [n.a.] XVIII. Y zyıl Istanbul Hayatına Dair Ris le-i Garibe, edited by Hayati Develi (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 1998), 20.

²¹*Ris le-i Gar be*, 20.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning Evliyâ Çelebi's negative perspective on taverns and coffeehouses.²² This can be inferred from the fact that he did not include these establishments in his summary of public places in the first volume of his travelogue, where he mentioned various other public buildings such as inns, single-man lodgings, janissary lodges, and bathhouses.²³ Therefore, it can be argued that literate Muslims, like their non-Muslim counterpart K m rciyan, also displayed a certain level of anxiety when it came to participating in the vibrant social life of ordinary Istanbul residents who were, in the derogatory words of L t fi of Kastamonu (d. 1582), "drinking wine and accepting harlots to men's lodgings (*odalar*)" and "playing chess, rolling the dice in proximity to mosques and the marketplace".²⁴

People from lower socio-economic statuses and their daily practices, which characterized the overcrowded, multiethnic, and arguably proto-democratic²⁵ quarters of Istanbul, seem to be a potential cause of what I would like to call the anxiety of the learned men. Ironically, however, some learned men were also enthusiastic about the city. They romanticized its architectural, natural, and above all, human beauties to the extent that they created a genre known as * hrensiz* (city thrillers) - texts consisting of "versified catalogs of young men encountered in the market districts of urban centers".²⁶ Predominantly written by court poets from among men of pen and bureaucracy, * hrensiz* works comprise encomiastic poems that typically begin with an opening section involving prayers to God and the city. This is followed by a catalog section dedicated to handsome city boys (*mahb b*), symbolizing worldly desires, including sexual desires. Despite their skepticism about the illicit activities that the city readily accommodated, it can be inferred that the elite men found something enticing in the bustling and crowded urban spaces of Istanbul, which were often regarded as unfamiliar and mysterious, yet equally alluring. Therefore, as Selim Kuru convincingly argues, "On the one hand, elite men revealed their desire for the city by commenting on and refashioning discourses about the city through their lists of people and places; on the other hand, they had a precarious relation with its mean streets, on which they must have stood out with their gestures, outerwear,

²²Evliy  Çelebi, Volume I, 201a.

²³Robert Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Çelebi* (Leiden, 2004), xvi.

²⁴Ahmet Refik (Altınay), *On Altıncı Asırda İstanbul Hayatı (1553-1591)* (Istanbul: 1988), 133. Cited in Kuru, "Istanbul", 79.

²⁵Please see Kafadar, "How Dark"; Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

²⁶For a comprehensive summary of scholarship on *sehrensiz*, see Barış Karacasu, "Eski T rk Edebiyatında Sehr-engizler", *TALID T rkiye Arastırmaları Literat r Dergisi* 10 (2007): 259-313.

and accents.”²⁷

4.3 *Pâzâr* in the Stories

In the *Bedâyiü'l-âs'ar*, the marketplace is referred to as *bâzâr*, *çârsû*, *bâzâristân*, and *bezistân*. These terms were used interchangeably in the stories, and this is reflected in this chapter. The stories portray *pâzâr* as a venue in which several shops (*dükkan*) including, but not limited to, bakeries, *attârs*, food shops, and textile shops all of which were built near each other. These various building all together comprise the *pâzâr*. This overall portrayal is in line with the above-mentioned primary and secondary sources. In the following section, I will address two stories. The first one, story 16, implies the diurnal public character of the marketplace. However, it is also important to keep in mind that practice may deviate from the normative regulations and law. The second, story 26, is a good example of this deviation. With a plot on themes of honor and shame featuring such characters as *qadis* and a concubine, the story provides a significant perspective on the relationship between the sexuality, literature and the use of space.

4.4 If On a Night an Unexpected Visitor

This bedesten in Istanbul is filled with shops, it is a place in which all kind of precious and interesting goods are for sale (...) This place is open during the day but it is closed at night; no one remains inside. Each shopkeeper closes his shop and goes home, leaving all his goods to the good intentions of the guards.²⁸

Although Albertus Bobovius' aforementioned eyewitness account specifically depicts *Kapalıçarşı*, it also provides a general overview of the functions of marketplaces. His definition, moreover, draws attention to the sense of normalcy associated with the daytime use of the space, highlighting a distinct boundary between night and day. This characteristic is also supported by scholarly research. During nighttime, the

²⁷Kuru, "Istanbul", 80.

²⁸Albertus Bobovius / Ali Ufki Bey, "Topkapı Sarayı'nda Yasam," edited by. Stephanos Yerasimos and Annie Berthier, trans. Ali Berktaş (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2002) 84-5.

marketplace is typically closed to the public, and the covered avenues are expected to be empty, monitored by the *subaşı* (night guard).²⁹ It could be argued, therefore, that the public nature of the marketplace disappears at night. But what happens if the societal and legal norms assigned to the marketplace are violated? What are the consequences when someone goes against the established functions of the marketplace? Last but not least, what are the repercussions of blurring the boundaries between day and night? In the stories, the marketplace is portrayed as a vibrant and bustling urban space. However, certain stories carry morals that condemn the nighttime use of the marketplace. Through these narratives, we can gain insights into the social norms that regulate the temporal and spatial dynamics of the market. While these stories provide clues and idealized norms regarding social sensibilities and understandings of public space, it is important to note that they also offer entertainment value to readers and audiences.

Story 16 serves as a notable example.³⁰ As mentioned in the previous chapter, this story revolves around two friends who plan to visit a *hamâm* during the late hours of the night when it is expected to be empty. They set out from their homes, passing through the marketplace (*çârşı*) on their way to the *hamâm*. However, during their walk in the marketplace, one of them ("A") notices that his friend ("B") suddenly grows to the height of a minaret. Initially, "B" dismisses it as a joke or a hallucination caused by excessive hashish consumption. However, they soon realize that *jinn*s are responsible for "B" appearing gigantic. While different interpretations of the story can lead to various morals, one possible conclusion that can be drawn is that it is safer to stay at home at night.

Another story, Story 26, centers around a person of pleasure (*keyf*) and sheds light on the perilous use of the marketplace as a nighttime venue for illicit sexuality.³¹ The story starts with a first-person narrative of a young man who usually goes to a tavern (*meyhâne*) with his drinking buddies at nights. The tavern is located at a marketplace called *Karaoğlan Çarşısı* in Ankara (*Engüri*). The narrator tells the reader that his home, in which he and his father live together, is close to the marketplace. Consistent with the available literature, the tavern in the story appears to be a venue in which many social classes and professions gather for conversation

²⁹The functions of the *subaşı* (chief of police) have varied depending on the local context and the specific period. Among the various roles that the *subaşı* have undertaken, some include assisting the *qadi* (judge), monitoring the streets during nighttime, and enforcing punishments. For more information about the *subaşı*, please see the article on the *subaşı* in M.Z. Pakalın, "Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü", 3rd ed (Istanbul, 1983).

³⁰Cinani, *Bedayü'l-asar*, 226-228 (S43a-S44b).

³¹Cinani, *Bedayü'l-asar*, 259-262 (S63a-S64b)

– most of which are inclined to pleasure and drink.³²

The young man, therefore, seems to be one of those *ehl-i keyf*, seeing drinking as an occasional and social habit. One day, after his drinking buddies leave the tavern following the night prayer (*yatsı*) to get some “rest”, he again drops by the *pâzâr* as he had in previously. He wants to see his female beloved (*nigâr*) who is supposed to be in the vicinity. While waiting for her appearance, he has some fun³³ and gazes at his environ.³⁴ Shortly after she shows up. Seeing her dancing in a dazzling dress full of golden pieces, he could not prevent himself from being seduced to the extent he walked up to her. As he approaches her, one of the golden pieces falls from the beloved’s dress to the ground. He immediately collects it. Then, she tells him that it would be better for him to keep the golden piece or she will kill him. Afterwards, he gets home in horror and finally falls asleep while still holding the golden piece in his pal. In the morning, he sees that the golden piece turned out to be a pinecone peel which was already broken while he was sleeping at night. Frightened and puzzled, he does not know what to do. Even though he wants to get rid of it at first, he changes his mind because he remembers that she threatened his life. On the one hand, he is scared of his beloved one. On the other, he yearns for her. The following night, he goes to the market to see her again. While hopelessly begging her to take the golden piece back, he feels quite relieved and happy because he could again see her. She rejects his offer, saying he should keep golden piece forever as he took it indecently. Then it is clear that he is not able to do anything except for obeying her wish.

After this conversation about the golden piece, they have sexual intercourse in the middle of the *pâzâr*. At this point, the young man confesses that this is not the first

³²On the taverns of Istanbul, please see G. Yavuzer, “Istanbul Wine-Taverns as Public Places in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries” (MA thesis, Bogaziçi University, 2015); Ebru Boyar and Kate Fleet (eds.), *Ottoman Women in Public Space* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 194-201; Ahmet Refik, *On Altıncı Asırda; Evliya Çelebi, Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, vol. 1, ed. Dankoff, Kahraman, Dağ; Eremya Çelebi, *Istanbul Tarihi*, trans. Andreasyan; Lâtîfî, *Evsâf-ı İstanbul [Descriptions of Istanbul]*, edited by N. Suner Pekin (Istanbul, 1977); Polonyalı Simeon, *Polonyalı Simeon’un Seyahatnâmesi*, edited and translated by H.D. Andreasyan (İstanbul, 1964). See also Mantran, *Istanbul*, 106.

³³*Bir midâr eglenüp cevanibe naar iyledüm.*” (Cinani, *Bedâiyü’l-âsâr*, S63a).

³⁴The character uses the words “*seyr*” here (Cinâni, *Bedâyü’l-âsar*, S63a). For the role of gaze in experiencing early modern Istanbul see: Tülay Artan, “Form and Forums” and Tülay Artan, “I. Mahmûd saltanatında Boğaziçi eğlenceleri: temâşâ, tefekkür, tevakkuf ve “Şehr-i Sefa”,” in *Gölgelenen Sultan, Unutulan Yıllar: I. Mahmûd ve Dönemi (1730-1754)*, edited by Hatice Aynur (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları), 92-159; Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, “Picturing the square, streets, and denizens of early modern İstanbul: practices of urban space and shifts in visuality,” *Muqarnas* 37 (2020): 139–77. As Kafadar eloquently states in “The City Open Your Eyes”, “*Seyr* was essential to the expectation of having a pleasurable life, or at least pleasurable moments (...) Often coupled with the Persian word *temaşa*, it became the buzzword for a pleasant outing to enjoy or contemplate the beauties of the world. While it was regularly associated with socializing, the more internalized, reflective dimension was also appreciated and philosophized; sufis used the term for spiritual progress from one stage to another. In all of these guises, the notion and especially the practices of *seyr* grew into one of the biggest preoccupations of Ottoman urban society in the early modern era, with pride of place often given to İstanbul as the pinnacle of a culture of *seyr ve temaşa*.” (Cemal Kafadar, “The City Opens Your Eyes Because It Wants to Be Seen,” in *A Companion to Early Modern İstanbul*, edited by Çiğdem Kafescioğlu and Shirine Hamadeh, (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 51.

time they had sex, telling the reader that they had sexual intercourse many times in the *pâzâr* before. The young man also maintains that his friends were hiding in a store, watching him and his beloved's passion. However, they could not see the details of their engagement. After a couple of days, the young man and his friends gather in the same tavern to drink and have some food (*ays u 'işret*). While they are drinking, one of the fellows orders lamb *biryani*, which is a highly appreciated food consisting of the aromatic rice and meat. Soon the *biryani* is served and the young man gets a leg of lamb inside the food to give his beloved later that night. After having their drinks, they leave the place as usual. The young man then goes to the market to meet his beloved. Before long, he sees her dancing. Once he offers her the food she thanks him, adding that it is better to give it to a dog since as *jinn*s, they could only eat animal bones. At this point, it should be emphasized that this is the first time in the narrative that the young man reveals that the beloved is a *jinn*. Although the reader was already informed about supernatural elements in the young man's narrative, such as when the golden piece turned out to be a pinecone peel while the narrator was sleeping, it was not evident to the reader whether the beloved was a supernatural being until she revealed herself. In the following days, a homeless man – who witnessed the young man's affairs with the *jinn* in the marketplace – goes to his father and tells him everything he saw. The father gets scared that the *jinn* could give his son an incurable sickness. The father decides to talk to his son. He threatens to disinherit him if he ever goes to that marketplace again. As a result, the young man never goes to that marketplace again and his affair with the *jinn* ends.

At first glance, the story suggests to the reader that the danger is close to the marketplace: You may drop by the marketplace, but your presence needs legitimation. The narrator's motive for being in the marketplace is quite questionable; he neither buys nor sells anything. The story, furthermore, presents the night as a variable. Abounded with fantastic and supernatural components, the story clearly shows that the marketplace is expected to be empty at night – at least, not without an acceptable reason. Furthermore, it implies that manipulating and tampering with the boundaries of the night could lead to serious troubles for a person, such as engaging in illicit encounters with a female *jinn*. These supernatural beings have the ability to easily seduce and manipulate individuals. It may be a speculation to discuss whether the Ottoman readers and narrators believed in supernatural events, such as the presence of the sexually active, seductive *jinn*s in the stories.³⁵ However we

³⁵For a comprehensive study that provides a comprehensive framework for the sexual encounters between humans and *jinn*s in the Islamic tradition, see Pierre Lory, "Sexual Intercourse Between Humans and Demons in the Islamic Tradition," in *Hidden Intercourse: Eros and Sexuality in the History of Western Esotericism*, edited by Wouter J. Hanegraaff and Jeffrey J. Kripal (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008), 49-64.

could still get a sense of why this story was told. On the surface, the author emphasized that what was assumed to be problematic – wandering about the market in the night without a tolerable, descent reason – may possibly cause something dangerous. Why? During the night, the marketplace is closed to the public to such an extent that only homeless people and supernatural creatures like *jinn* could horse around.

The public characteristic of the marketplace is regarded as illicit act. What I am more interested in, however, is not to find out whether the story conforms to the findings of available literature on the temporal characteristics of the early modern Ottoman spaces. Instead, I think that it would be more promising to look at what kind of role sexual intercourse plays here. In the story, a certain illicit act, such as the violation of a social practice of not being in the market at the night, precedes a second illicit act – that is, sexual intercourse with an attractive female *jinn*. At this point, we identify another example of illicit sexuality which leaked to the public when we remember the protagonist’s voyeur friends hiding in a store watching. Let me emphasize, however, that what I mean here is not public as a space, but public as the people and their knowledge about dos and don’ts of one’s sexuality.

Lastly, what makes this story a slightly different from other stories discussed in this thesis should also be mentioned. As the story clearly shows, the protagonist does not have any illicit sexual intercourse — but, he finds himself getting “sentenced” to illicit intercourse because he is thought to have overstepped spatial/temporal boundaries assigned to the marketplace. In other words, while illicit sexuality seems to be the main reason leading to a trouble in other stories that are discussed in this thesis, it appears to be an unavoidable result here. Therefore, in contrast to other stories in which public becomes private (and vice versa), due to the characters’ illicit sexual act, this story shows us how certain public characteristics ascribed to a space totally disappear without becoming something that is thought to be private.

5. CONCLUSION

Cinânî's *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*, a collection of short stories encompassing various themes including emotions, morals, honor, anxiety, debauchery, pederasty, and importantly, sex and sexuality, served as the primary source for this thesis. Although the collection covers various themes, including tricks and tricksters, talismans, witches, seafaring heroes, cunning women, adulterous husbands, and various sexual encounters, in this thesis, I chose to focus specifically on areas related to the representation of sex and sexuality. By examining the stories set in the *hamâm*, *ev*, and *pâzâr* as case studies, I aimed to explore the significance of the private/public distinction in the context of the early modern Ottoman world.

In the first chapter, I analyzed the stories set in the *hamâm*. These stories were the ones in which characters' private information, specifically their sexual privacy within their homes, is violated and exposed to the public in the *hamâm*. By focusing on these stories, I found an opportunity for a thorough examination of the relevancy of the private space/public space dichotomy in the early modern Ottoman context. Also, I demonstrated that a conventional classification system emphasizing the public nature of *hamâms* is insufficient for comprehending the flexible and context-dependent characteristics of early modern Ottoman spaces.

The stories I explored in the second chapter revolve around illicit sexual encounters taking place within the home, and once again, the privacy of these encounters is exposed to the public within the same household. In essence, the stories examined in the second chapter depict the home as a setting where both illicit encounters and the breach of privacy surrounding these encounters occur. In the first part of my discussion, which is based on stories depicting instances where partners engage in illicit (yet heterosexual) sexual relationships that become public knowledge, I observed how these "illicit" encounters completely shatter the initially private character associated with the home. Moving on to the second part of the chapter, which focuses on a story centered around a male-to-male homoerotic relationship, I demonstrated that if the sexual encounters between partners (in this case, two males) do not chal-

lenge societal sexual norms, their sexualities remain private, thereby allowing the home to maintain its initial private nature established at the beginning of the story.

In the third chapter, my primary focus was twofold: (1) examining how sexuality manifests itself within the marketplace, and (2) exploring how sexuality influences the public nature of the marketplace. In contrast to the stories discussed in the first two chapters, where the public and private realms interchange due to characters' illicit sexualities, the story discussed in the third chapter served to demonstrate how certain public characteristics attributed to the space entirely dissipate without transforming into the perceived opposite (private).

To conclude, relying on the selected stories, my primary argument posited that when an individual's sexual privacy becomes public, it may not necessarily be considered an invasion of privacy as long as the sexual encounters remain within the boundaries of "licit" (or alternatively, "marital") sexual intercourse. Additionally, I suggested that illicit (though not necessarily same-sex) sexual relationships between partners, even if conducted within the privacy of their home, consistently face the risk of public exposure. Based on the insights gleaned from my research, my central assertion was that any categorization framework giving precedence to the public/private divide falls short in fully grasping the complexities of Ottoman urban spaces as depicted in Cinânî's *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr*. Instead, I proposed that interpreting early modern Ottoman spaces through the perspective of licit/illicit sexual encounters could provide a more nuanced understanding of the socio-cultural context during the period in which the *Bedâyiü'l-âsâr* stories were narrated and circulated.

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APPENDIX A

A.1 Referenced Figures in the Thesis

Figure A.1 A group of female bathers and a child, with a women wearing a distinctive outfit, from Fazıl Enderunî's *Hubannâme ve Zenannâme*, Istanbul University T 5502, folio 145a. Reproduced from Metin And, *Osmanlı tasvir sanatları I: minyatür* (Istanbul: Is Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2002), 460.



Figure A.2 Detail of Hagia Sophia, from Melchior Lorichs's *Panorama of Constantinople*, sheet VI (University of Leiden, the Netherlands)

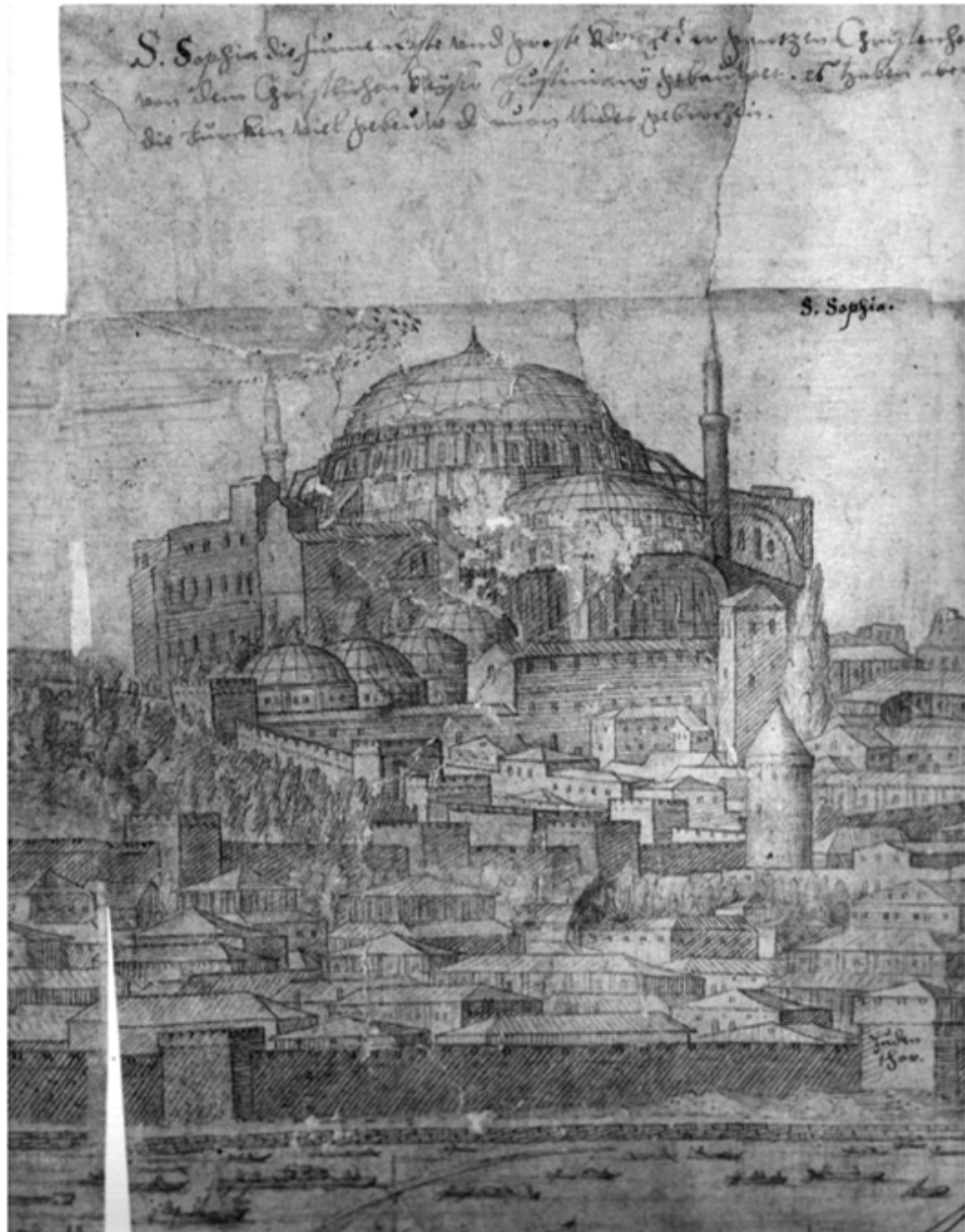


Figure A.3 Detail of the vicinity of Constantine's Column, from Melchior Lorichs's *Panorama of Constantinople*, sheet IX (University of Leiden, the Netherlands)

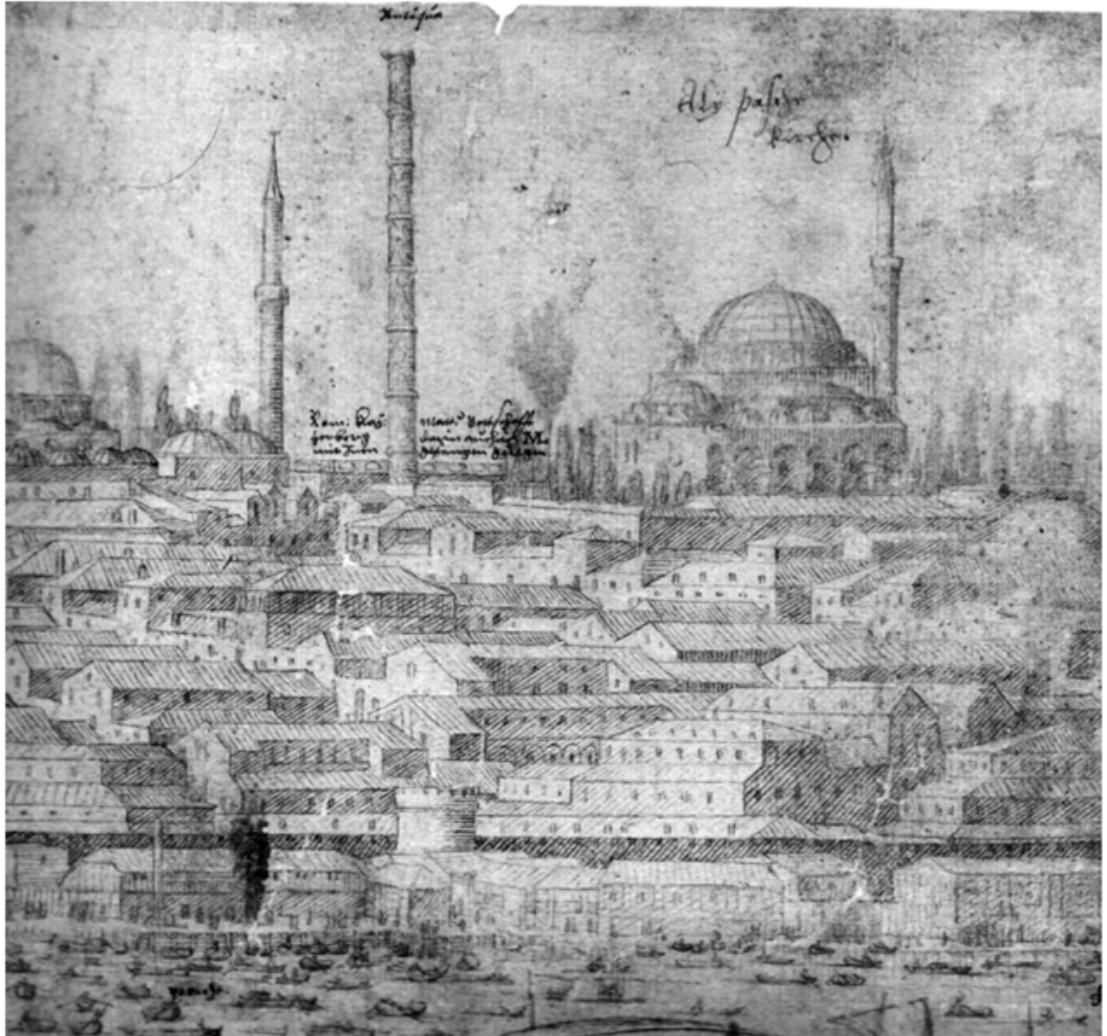


Figure A.4 Detail of semicircular building and ruins of porticoes, from Melchior Lorichs's *Panorama of Constantinople*, sheet X (University of Leiden, the Netherlands.)



Figure A.5 Detail of the artist overlooking Istanbul and the Golden Horn, from Melchior Lorichs's *Panorama of Constantinople*, sheet XI

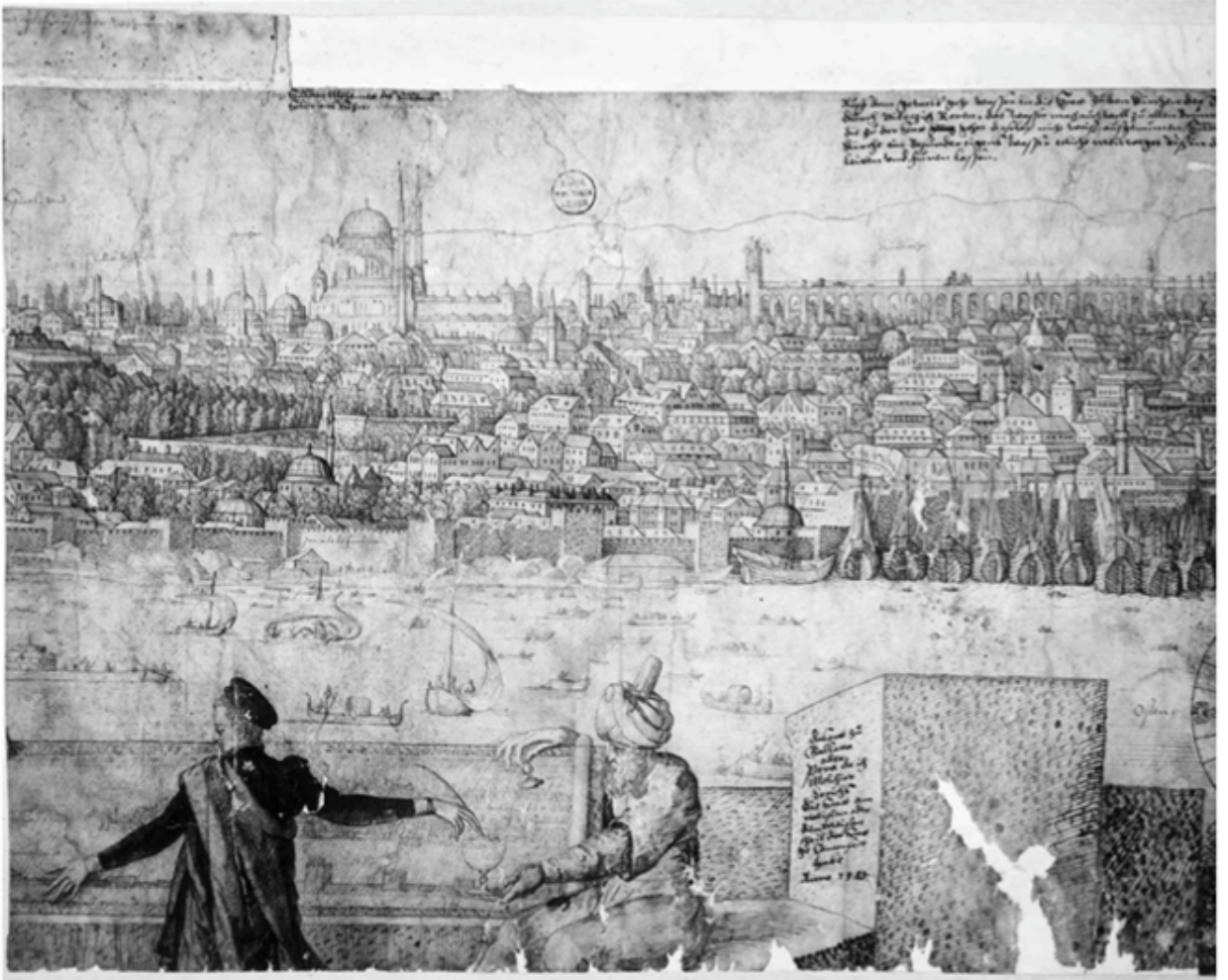


Figure A.7 An adulterous husband and his *câriye* butted by a ram into the room, while his wife, newborn son, and a guest are present, Istanbul, 1141 AH/1728 CE, from a manuscript of *Hamse-i Atâyî*, ink and color on paper, 10.5 × 11.3 cm, Topkapı Palace Museum Library, Istanbul, R. 816, fol. 77a.



Figure A.8 An adulterous husband and his *câriye* butted by a ram into the room, while his wife, newborn son, and a guest are present, Istanbul, 1720–1730s, from a manuscript of *Hamse-i Atâyî*, ink and color on paper, 15.3 × 10.9 cm, Free Library of Philadelphia, John Frederick Lewis Collection, O. 97, np.



Figure A.9 A male couple “caught” in the act and humiliated by the intruders, İstanbul, 1133 AH/1721 CE, from a manuscript of *Hamse-i Atâyî*, ink and colors on paper, 11.5 × 11.8 cm, Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, MD, W. 666, fol. 59b.



A.2 Figures not Specifically Referenced in the Text

Figure A.10 A shared pool in a *hamâm*: Ahmed I Album, Topkapı Palace Library B, 408, folio 18a.

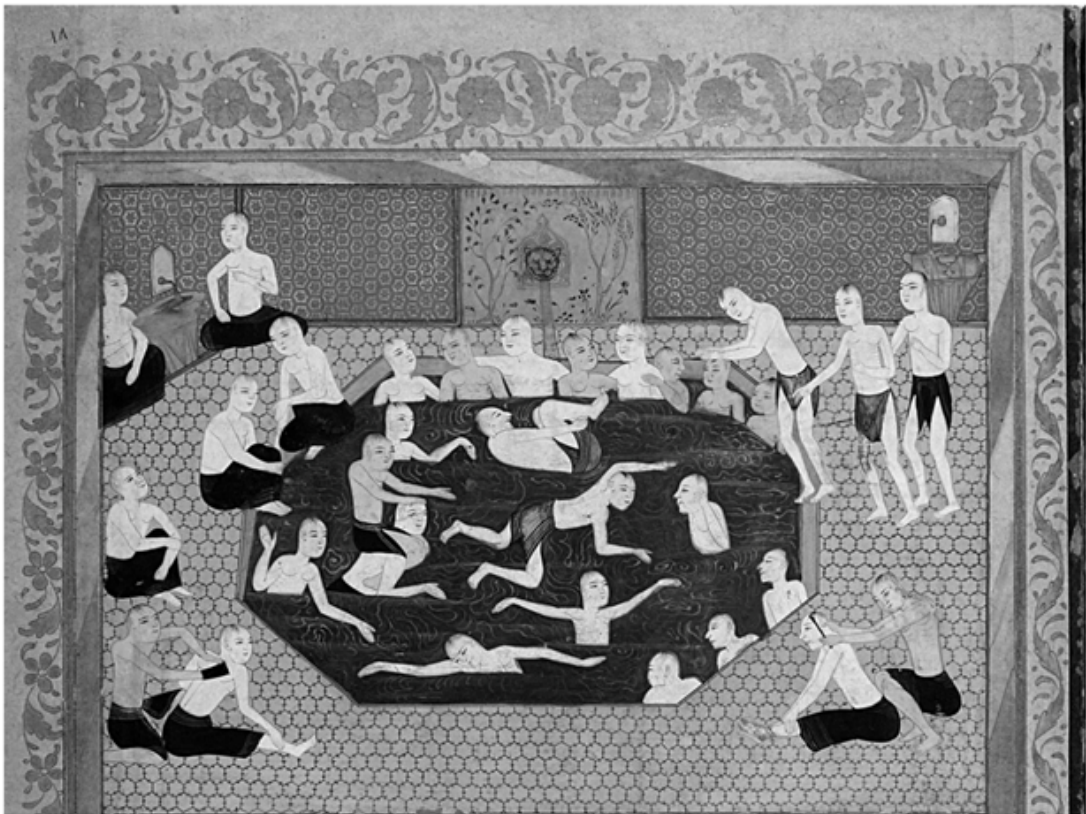


Figure A.11 Melchior Lorichs, view over rooftops toward the Arcadius Column in Constantinople, ca. 1559, pen and black ink, 208 × 326 mm (cat. KKSgb4625, Department of Prints and Drawings, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen)



11