

# 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

Cemal Kafadar

One of the most significant aspects of modernity as a historical and experiential circumstance is the eagerness, or at least readiness, to manipulate one's tempo and mood through the use of various substances like herbs and concoctions, the rush to get a rush, the temptation to possess a 'thermostat' controlling one's ups and downs. Its long and convoluted history cannot be understood without taking note of certain developments which are centred in Istanbul for some key parts of the story. Just like chocolate, coca, sugar, and tea, whose stories have different centres of gravity, coffee has taken an important part in the 'rise of modernity' in the abovementioned sense, and its story cannot be told without a deep excursion into the social and cultural life of early modern Istanbul.

At the same time, it must be recognized that all of the major developments in Ottoman Istanbul have precedents, particularly in the cities of the late medieval Middle East, but they came together and were transformed by Istanbulites to design and perform a new urban life, a variant of early modernity. As Marshall Hodgson points out, with characteristic perspicacity and precocity, the phenomenon of fascination with and popular recreational use of mind- or mood-moulding substances was 'of special import for the growth of a human

---

Cemal Kafadar <kafadar@fas.harvard.edu>, Harvard University.

personality' in the Islamdom of the post-Mongol era.<sup>1</sup> The eventual emergence of a coffee-, tea-, or chocolate-consuming public with dedicated social institutions cannot be considered independently of that. The origins and early proliferation of these institutions can be located between Cairo and Istanbul from the early to the mid-sixteenth century, and their unfolding story thereafter, as one of the most significant sites where new modes of sociability and engagement with public culture were shaped, can be traced as a global phenomenon. By the end of the sixteenth century, they were ubiquitous in the cities of the Ottoman realm, and familiar in Iran where they would multiply within the next few decades. By the end of the seventeenth century, European cities were following suit.

The emergence and spread of coffeehouses in Istanbul (as well as Cairo, Aleppo, and other relevant cities) coincided with various other dynamics and processes of the early modern era, three of which are most important to underline for the purposes of the essay:

- (1) New levels and forms of urbanization accompanying the rise of a bourgeoisie, or a *Bürgertum*;
- (2) Increasing use of the night-time for socializing, entertainment, and labour, as part of emerging new regimes of temporality that redefined the spheres of work and leisure;
- (3) The rise of new forms of entertainment or performative arts, primarily of *Karagöz* shadow theatre and *Meddah* story-telling performances.

In other words, the story of coffeehouses is intertwined, to a great extent, with such related phenomena as changing night-time practices, including the emergence of certain new forms of art and public entertainment. All this is deeply related to — and, in fact, cannot be understood without taking into account — the emergence of a new kind of urban society, certain layers of which appear frequently in the sources of the sixteenth century and later as distinct political and social actors under the collective designation of *şehirliler* (literally, *Bürger* or *bourgeois*), with subcategories like *şehir oğlanı* (literally, 'city boy').<sup>2</sup>

© BREPOLS PUBLISHERS

THIS DOCUMENT MAY BE PRINTED FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY.

IT MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR TRANSMITTED IN ANY FORM WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER.

<sup>1</sup> Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, II, 568–69.

<sup>2</sup> One of the challenges lying ahead for a project exploring the 'new' in early modern Ottoman cities is to come to terms (no mean task) with the continuities and discontinuities from the late medieval Middle Eastern and Byzantine urban centres. I am in sympathy, for instance, with Thomas Bauer's use of the term *Bürgertum* for Mamluk Cairenes and his analysis of their literature in that light, as exemplified in his paper, 'The Aesthetics of Mamluk

When we speak of an emergence of a bourgeoisie (in the generic sense), we refer to a phenomenon closely connected to the rising volume and new patterns of trade across the globe, new approaches to production of commodities and organization of labour, with increasing interconnectivity among different regions, flows of (both new and old) commodities and of people, and a phenomenal rise in the levels and diversity of consumption. Cities were to play new roles in this world, as their populations tended to rise primarily through migration from the countryside. The emergence of the new city folk was, of course, a deeply stratified affair, with its cleavages, tensions, and layers of underclasses (*lumpenesnaf?*),<sup>3</sup> or ‘riff-raff’ — an English usage which also reflects well the discourse and the biases of the more prosperous, or established, urbanites in Ottoman society. A myriad of terms, some of them no more than a short-lived trend, were coined to capture different aspects, variants, and categories of this rapidly changing social layer. The best example would perhaps be the eighteenth-century term *pirpiri*, which gives a good sense of the restlessness of those milieus.<sup>4</sup> In thinking of this complex social formation, one should also take into consideration the extraordinary political dynamism — a creative as well as destructive energy of the time — as expressed and embodied in a plethora of subversive acts, including rebellions, the so-called ‘Janissary revolts’ and other

Literature’, presented in the symposium (8–10 December 2010) on ‘Inhithat — Its Influence and Persistence in the Writing of Arab Cultural History’, organized by the University of Münster, the American University of Beirut, and the Orient Institut in Beirut, where it was held. The papers of this symposium, including this author’s ‘Ottoman Debate on Ottoman Decline in the Long Seventeenth Century’, are forthcoming. Future studies must look closely and diachronically at comparable cultural practices like the shadow puppet theater in Cairo and in Istanbul, the literature of ‘city-thrillers’ in Tabriz (*shabr-āshūb*) and in the western Ottoman cities (*şehrengiz*), and guild organization in Byzantine Constantinople and in the Ottoman capital, and many other features of urban life.

<sup>3</sup> I still find the term ‘lumpen’ worth appropriating as a descriptive designation, while I am aware that it is exceedingly difficult to dissociate it from certain pejorative connotations. My reference here is to the *esnaf* in Ottoman-Turkish usage, namely the ‘class’ of artisans and tradesmen.

<sup>4</sup> The term was in vogue in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century and designated ‘scoundrels’ of the lower classes known for dissoluteness. Of uncertain etymology, it could simply be onomatopoeically suggestive or derived from the (possibly) Armenian word for purslane (see ‘pirpirim’ in Nişanyan, *Sözlerin Soyağacı: Çağdaş Türkçenin Etimolojik Sözlüğü*, which is characterized by gardeners as an infesting weed. Reşad Ekrem Koçu, who offers an excellent entry on the *pirpiri* in his dictionary of clothing, dismisses the derivation from the word *Berberi* (Berber) and convincingly suggests that the term must be an echo of the ‘flighty’ or ‘flippant’ nature of this social segment; see Koçu, *Türk Giyim, Kuşam ve Süslenme Sözlüğü*, pp. 191–92.

kinds of turbulence, which found coffeehouses most congenial for mobilizing public opinion and political action.<sup>5</sup>

\* \* \*

To turn to the early history of coffee and coffeehouses, more specifically, there must have been many instances when coffee was consumed as a plant found in the natural environment of Ethiopia and Yemen, but the earliest users who regularized its consumption as a social beverage, to the best of our knowledge, were Sufis in Yemen at the turn of the fifteenth century. Evidently, they discovered that coffee gave them a certain nimbleness of the mind, which they were keen on cultivating during their night-time vigils and symposia. Thus started the long history of the appreciation of coffee as a companion to mental exercise and conviviality, particularly when one wished to stretch or manipulate the biological and social clock. Sufis, in other words, well-known for their colonizing roles in terms of settlement and construction in physical space, also played a pioneering role in colonizing the night and redesigning the architecture of the nocturnal and the diurnal.

Nearly three centuries later, countless regions and peoples between Yemen and Britain had come to recognize coffee as a household item, as a favourite stimulant to start and punctuate the day and night with, as a popular beverage that regularly lubricated myriad social occasions, and as the excuse for a widespread social institution — the coffeehouse — dedicated to leisure, chatter, and the politically charged formation and circulation of public culture. The basic contours of coffee's northward expansion are clear: beyond Yemen, coffee made its way slowly northwards to Hijaz, where it was being consumed in the pilgrimage cities of Mecca and Medina in the mid-fifteenth century.

In the early 1500s, there were already coffee shops established in Cairo and Damascus. By the middle of that century, it was Istanbul's turn. The spatial evolution of the relevant establishments from coffee stall to coffee shop to coffeehouse needs to be investigated, but it is only in the latter part of the century that we begin to have detailed information about coffeehouses: verbal accounts in Arabic and Turkish, observations of European travellers, and visual renderings.<sup>6</sup> Here our interest is more on the story of the lands of Rum (literally, lands

<sup>5</sup> Kafadar, 'Janissaries and Other Riffraff of Ottoman İstanbul'.

<sup>6</sup> Hattox's typology of stall, shop, and house represents a useful starting point for such an investigation; see Hattox, *Coffee and Coffeehouses*, pp. 79–82. For a highly informative account of the early story of coffeeshops, particularly in Egypt, and of the controversies surrounding

of Rome, or of the eastern Roman empire, but in Ottoman usage the term implied the human geography of Anatolia and the Balkans) where coffeehouses appear in our sources in their classical form and, within half a century, spread outward in a huge swath of Ottoman territory and beyond, from the Danube to the Zayandeh River.<sup>7</sup>

The people of the lands of Rum seem to have remained uninformed about or impervious to the seductive properties of coffee for some time. The exhaustive work of pharmacognosy by Amirdovlat Amasiatsi (c. 1420–96) makes mention of a stunning array of herbs, plants, animals, and substances ingested in the world he knew, including some that must have been exceedingly rare, such as fox's lungs or rennet extracted from a calf's stomach. He names and describes plants and minerals from as far afield as China and Soqotra. Yet this Armenian physician of Amasya, who also served in the Ottoman court in Istanbul at the time of Mehmed II and lived in the Balkans for some time, does not refer to tea or coffee in his book completed by 1478. Even if he had heard about them, they did not yet mean anything in his world.<sup>8</sup>

The earliest mention, found thus far, of coffee in Istanbul — not of coffeehouses but of coffee — occurs in the endowment deed of Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha (1473–1546). When the grand admiral endowed his home as one of the properties committed to the family *waqf* that he registered in 1539, the property included a *kahve odası*, a coffee chamber. If Barbaros is indeed the pioneer

them, see Özen, 'Sağlık Konularında Dini Hükümün Belirlenmesinde'. A thorough survey of European travellers' depictions of coffee consumption and of coffeehouses in the Ottoman realm and the east, beginning with Leonhart Rauwolf (travels between 1573–76), with generous selections from their texts, is provided in Waldkirch, *Wie Europa den Kaffee Entdeckte*.

<sup>7</sup> The pioneering work of Ralph Hattox is widely recognized, and oft cited, but not sufficiently appreciated in terms of having paved the way for exploring the impact of coffee and coffeehouses on the nature of conviviality and on the rhythms of daily life in the late Mamluk and Ottoman worlds: Hattox, *Coffee and Coffeehouses*. Not even so widely recognized and cited is Elliott Horowitz's remarkable 'Coffee, Coffeehouses, and the Nocturnal Rituals', based on his unpublished dissertation 'Jewish Confraternities in Seventeenth-Century Verona'. I owe a good deal to both of these scholars whose research and insights I have benefited from over many years.

<sup>8</sup> Vardanyan, *Amirdovlat Amasiatsi: Of Soqotra*, for instance, he describes 'sabur (dried juice of aloe vera)', which 'clarifies the head of excessive moisture, helps against melancholy and strengthens the mind', qualities that were also associated with coffee from the fifteenth century onwards; see pp. 88 and 125. Amasiatsi's original text is published in its original classical Armenian, Amirdovlat, *Angitats' anpet kam bararan bzhshkakan niwt'ots*, ed. by Basmadjian, title also given in French: *Inutile aux ignorants, ou Dictionnaire des substances médicales*, with French or Latin equivalents for all the entry headings. For each entry heading, the fifteenth-century author himself provides corresponding Turkish words in Armenian characters.

of the use of coffee in the Ottoman capital, this would not be surprising, given his long seafaring career in and deep familiarity with the Arab Mediterranean. Murâdî, his biographer, writes that ‘sugary sherbets and musky coffee flowed like rivers’ in the banquets of his entourage.<sup>9</sup>

Kâtib Çelebi, the brilliant polymath writing in the mid-seventeenth century, was obviously not far off the mark when he offered ‘circa 950 AH (1543 AD)’ as the date of the earliest arrival of coffee in the lands of Rum by trade from the sea.<sup>10</sup> Still, the word ‘qahwa’ is given only in its ancient meaning of wine, or alcoholic beverage, in a comprehensive dictionary of Arabic into Ottoman Turkish that was completed in 1545. The lexicographer also gives the derivation of the word, based on his classical Arabic sources, from the root verb of ‘qa-ha-ya’ and describes it as ‘that which takes away or lessens the appetite for food’.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps the lexicographer knew about neo-qahwa, namely coffee as we now know it, but was not yet sure of its staying power. Even the exceptionally daring author of an Ottoman Esperanto (comp. 1566–74), whose life as a Sufi between Cairo and Istanbul cannot but have familiarized him with the beverage, coins his own word for ‘qahwa’ which he also uses for wine in two other instances, without any hints of a new usage.<sup>12</sup>

It is not surprising for lexicography to tend to be prescriptive and somewhat more conservative than the living everyday language with its unexpected twists, some of them quickly abandoned. Two leading jurist-scholars of the ‘classical age’, both of them highly influential in defining Ottoman orthodoxies in different venues, wrote treatises to warn against new and ‘incorrect’ lexical or orthographic usages that were spreading in this era of vernacularization.<sup>13</sup> The expansion of the realm of coffee — that is, coffee as we know it — was, however, simply unstoppable. In all the instances we know something about, consumption started in private environments and then spilled over into public establishments, namely coffeehouses. The most detailed and widely accepted account of

<sup>9</sup> *Gazavât-ı Hayreddin Paşa*, ed. and trans. by Yıldız, p. 243.

<sup>10</sup> Kâtib Çelebi, *Mizânü'l-Hakk fî İhtiyârî'l-Ehakk*, published with two different renderings into modern Turkish; see facsimile, p. 295.

<sup>11</sup> *Ahter-i Kebir*, ed. by Kırkkılıç and Sancak, see under ‘kahve’.

<sup>12</sup> Gülşeni, *Bâleyâlen*, ed. by Köç, pp. 574 (*kahve*), 590 (*süci*), 595 (*şerab*). The late eighteenth-century dictionary of Mütercim Âsim also begins with the archaic meaning but cannot leave it at that anymore and explains that ‘the beverage that is popular now is named after it [namely, wine] by people of pleasure (*keyf*)’.

<sup>13</sup> Develi, ‘Kemalpaşazade ve Ebüssüüd’un Galatât Defterleri’; Turan, ‘Şeyhülislam Ebüssüüd’un İmlâ Kuralları’; Kültürel, *Galatât Sözlükleri*.



the inaugural moment in Istanbul is provided by the historian Peçevi, whose chronicle of *c.* 1640 dates the establishment of the first coffeehouses in Istanbul to 1554–55 and attributes this grand feat of entrepreneurial ingenuity to two Syrian merchants, one from Aleppo and the other from Damascus. His overview of the early history of the institution, with the hindsight of two or three generations that witnessed coffee's reach to the status of daily habit and popular custom as well as its role in several controversies and prohibitions, is rather informative and convincing in general. His dating, however, may need to be slightly calibrated since we also have a chronogram commemorating and celebrating this novelty, namely 'coffeehouse, site of R&R (*kahvehâne, mahall-i eğlence*)', which gives the year 959 AH (1551–52).

This pithy formulation presents a historian of conviviality and leisure with a huge challenge — how should we understand or translate the word *eğlence*, the singular characteristic of coffeehouses that the poet squeezed into his sound bite, presumably because he found it to be its defining feature? The primary meaning of the word *eğlen-* has eventually (that is, in modern Turkish) come to be 'to have a good time, with things/activities that enable one to have pleasure and fun',<sup>14</sup> and *eğlence* is used in a more straightforward fashion in the sense of fun and entertainment. Yet, all the relevant usages compiled for a historical dictionary, on the basis of selected sources from the fourteenth to the early eighteenth century, indicate that it maintained for a long time its more restricted sense of 'to stop and rest, to spend time (someplace)'. The sun, for instance, 'rests (*eğlenir*) for thirty days in each constellation'.<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, something was obviously changing in the seventeenth century. Evliya Çelebi, the traveler and author of a monumental book of travels written in the latter part of that century, whose radar never missed an opportunity for fun, does capture on a number of occasions the new usage in the sense of amusing, heart-pleasing diversion.<sup>16</sup> The changing nature of leisure and of relevant social practices in

<sup>14</sup> Ayverdi, *Misalli Büyük Türkçe Sözlük*, see under 'eğlen-'.  
© BREPOS PUBLISHERS  
IT MAY NOT BE DISTRIBUTED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER.

<sup>15</sup> *Tarama Sözlüğü*, ed. by Aksoy and Dilçin, see vol. III under 'eğlemek', 'eğlenmek'. Muhyi gives ten counterparts for *eğlen-* in his esperanto, all of which remain within the range of 'stop and rest'. Also note that the fifteenth- to eighteenth-century examples given in the *Oxford English Dictionary* for the word 'entertain' present a similar range of meanings, at least a similar puzzle, for the pre-industrial period.

<sup>16</sup> He does, for instance, cite a couplet which speaks of music as *eğlence* for the heart (I [1996], 303), or refers to various performers as *eğlence* for connoisseurs (II [1999], 109). While *Eğlence* could be a name given to concubines (IV [2001], 67), it also appears in his account as the name (nickname?) of a holy man, a 'fool of God', *Eğlence Baba* (III [1999], 267): Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnâmesi*, ed. by Dankoff, Kahraman, and Dağlı.

early modern Ottoman society is no doubt reflected in the implied transformation of the range and order of the different connotations of the term (and related ones in the different languages of the empire).<sup>17</sup> The conundrum is not unlike the one entertained in the inspiring debate between Peter Burke and Joan-Lluís Marfany on ‘the invention of leisure in early modern Europe’.<sup>18</sup>

To speak of new conceptualizations of leisure does not imply, of course, that working people did not earlier or elsewhere recognize times and opportunities in which they could carve themselves a ‘sphere of activity and reflexivity’, where they could ‘affirm what is socially valuable: time spent with family and friends, community activities that confirm one’s membership in a social group, activities considered fun and pleasurable, rest and renewal from the demands and routine of work, and a relatively autonomous sphere, where individuals can flesh their own social identities’.<sup>19</sup> It is simply that there were new ways in which those times and opportunities offered themselves, and new uses to be made of them in cities of the early modern world. Coffeehouses had undoubtedly fallen on fertile ground and turned out to be famously user-friendly for those urbanites who constituted their clientele.

Mustafa ‘Ālī (1541–1600) — bureaucrat, intellectual, prolific author, keen observer of the social customs of his time, harsh critic of bad poetry, of those who lived beyond their station in life, of the ‘rising middle classes’, and of those statesmen who were incompetent in the face of all these and other signs of ‘decline’ — did not think highly of most of those clients. Still, as an acute observer of the social scene, or possibly even as a connoisseur of the beverage himself, he is the first to refer to ‘speed’ (*sür‘at*) as one of the qualities of coffee and as the desire of the dervishes and of the people of learning who went to such places. The city boys, the soldiers, and the simple folk, however, spent time there

<sup>17</sup> See, for instance, *Philotheou Parerga*, a philosophical novel written c. 1719 by Nicolas Mavrocordatos (1670–1730), a prominent member of Istanbul’s Phanariote Greek elite. The translation of the title by Fustel de Coulanges as ‘les loisirs de Philothée’ is maintained by the editor-translator who finds that it captures the polysemy of the original, including ‘les plaisirs quotidiens de l’honnête homme: les flâneries en compagnie d’amis, les entretiens, la bonne chère, les gestes humanitaires qu’inspirent la noblesse des sentiments et la solidarité humaine’; p. 52 of the introduction to *Les loisirs de Philothée*, ed. and trans. by Bouchard.

<sup>18</sup> Burke, ‘The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe’; Marfany, ‘Debate: The Invention of Leisure’; and Burke’s reply in the same issue, pp. 192–97.

<sup>19</sup> This formulation, which avoids the reduction of leisure to fun and games and recognizes the dimension of reflexivity and sociability in it, is on p. 3 in Akyeampong and Ambler, ‘Leisure in African History’; the article also offers an excellent reassessment of the literature on leisure from a non-Eurocentric perspective.



for no reason but gossip, self-promotion, and wasting time. He found it particularly disturbing that such riffraff could engage in ostentatious hospitality by ‘treating each other to a cup of coffee, of impressing their friends with one [cup] of something four cups of which costs one *para*’. Ever keen on social mobility as one of the ‘signs of disorder’ that beset Ottoman society in his time, ‘Āli was clearly disturbed by the democratizing impact of coffeehouses on social life.

The world of literature was also going to be reshaped in the same vein by these institutions. The tales of ‘Āşık Garîb, popular from the seventeenth century onwards, chronicle the adventures of a bard who established himself as the most cherished, and the best-paid, among the bards who made a living by competing for the attention of the coffee-consuming public as they moved from coffee shop to coffee shop, and from city to city. In other words, those who could afford a few cups could engage in literary patronage of a new sort and eventually create their own ‘pop’ icons.

Small wonder that, by the end of the sixteenth century, there were hundreds of coffeehouses in Istanbul and many more hundreds spread across the empire.<sup>20</sup> The inhabitants of several cities could choose among dozens. Even the small town of Safed in the Galilee could boast of some, which were open at night, as revealed by controversial issues raised in front of the rabbis. Jewish poets were composing Hebrew lyrics to Turkish songs that the clients were not inhibited from singing their hearts out to.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Often cited in this regard is the well-informed but rather late account of Ignatius Mouradgea d’Ohsson, *Tableau général de l’empire ottoman*, iv. 1 (1791), 79. He claims that there were fifty coffeehouses in Istanbul before the end of Suleyman’s reign (r. 1520–66), six hundred before that of his son, Selim II (r. 1566–74). Considering that there were five in the much smaller town of Jerusalem in 1565 according to an official document (see *Ottoman Documents on Palestine, 1552–1615*, ed. and trans. by Heyd, pp. 160–62), and its population relative to Istanbul, d’Ohsson’s first figure might well be accurate while the second figure of six hundred could be slightly exaggerated, still indicating the phenomenal growth during those years. Also indicative of Istanbul’s reputation in this regard are the over-the-top numbers given in a source written in India towards the end of the sixteenth century (comp. in 1593/94?) by an Iranian emigre intellectual: ‘four hundred mosques where communal prayers are held on Fridays [...] nine hundred bathhouses [...] seven thousand coffeehouses [...]’ Razi, *Haft Iqlim*, ed. by Tahiri, 3. 499. The sentence on coffeehouses is cited and translated in Sharma, ‘The City of Beauties in Indo-Persian Poetic Landscape’, p. 81: ‘from the palace to the city limits there are bazaars and shops, among which there are seven thousand coffeehouses. In every shop, a number of delicate and pretty youths are seated who have tresses and moles that are snares, and who act as magnets to attract hearts.’

<sup>21</sup> Tietze and Yahalom, *Ottoman Melodies*, p. 12.

A few years before 1600, Koca Sinân Pasha (d. 1596), the grand vizier, received an order from the Sultan in which he was asked to enforce a ban on some spaces of public sociability. Three types of establishments, three types of *-hâne* (<*khāna*, house, in Persian), were mentioned in the order: *meyhānes* (houses of wine), *bozahānes* (houses of boza, a fermented barley drink with no or little alcohol content), and *kahvehānes* (coffeehouses). The vizier responded:

You ordered that taverns, bozahouses, and coffeehouses should be banned. I shall look into it. You ordered that coffeehouses, too, should be banned. Fine with me, I have never been inside a coffeehouse, but these people (*bu halk*) need a place for R&R (*eğlence*), or they will eat each others' flesh. (*Bunlara, bu halka bir eğlence yeri lazım, yoksa birbirinin etini yirler.*)<sup>22</sup>

Koca Sinân Pasha evidently did not agree with the idea of enforcing the ban on the coffeehouses, but said he would readily comply with the other two institutions. A few pages later, we read of yet another edict from the Sultan, with similar content, and the pasha writes in his response that he is ready to enforce the ban on the taverns and bozahouses, but this time, without raising any objections explicitly, he simply omits any mention of the coffeehouses. There was something obviously different about the coffeehouse, catering to a particular social need and demand, and finding itself a firm niche in that new urban society within a generation.<sup>23</sup>

The problem of the authorities with respect to these institutions had less to do with the religious law as such than it did with the possibilities engendered for new forms of sociability and for political action of all sorts, from everyday gossip and debate to organized resistance.<sup>24</sup> Coffeehouses within that half-century between the chronogram and the letters of Koca Sinân Pasha turned into places where political matters were debated, negotiated, or subjected to myriad diversions and subversions. In the chronicle of Selânikî, one of Sinân Pasha's contemporaries, who was an eyewitness to those initial decades of this institution in Istanbul, dozens of cases of political commotion and turbulence are found to be worthy of mention. In some instances, the chronicler points out

© BREPOLS PUBLISHERS

THIS DOCUMENT MAY BE PRINTED FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY.

22 *Koca Sinan Paşanın Telhisi*, ed. by Sahillioglu, p. 104.

<sup>23</sup> On the means and spaces of sociability in the countryside in the sixteenth century, which highlights their limits before the arrival of the coffeehouses, see Yılmaz, 'Boş Vaktiniz Var Mı?'

<sup>24</sup> For a study that focuses on this aspect of coffeehouses, particularly in the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, see Kırılı, 'The Struggle Over Space'; and Kırılı, 'Coffeehouses'.

that this or that matter came to a boiling point through idle talk and seditious rumours concocted in coffeehouses.<sup>25</sup>

Well-known literary conventions were put to new uses in this context. Converting dates into words through the adroit use of the numerical equivalencies of letters in the Arabic alphabet, chronograms were composed for all sorts of events, from high politics to the daily life of cities. They are wonderful devices not only for dating events but also for tapping into the tastes and concerns of Ottoman urban society, as these pithy compositions (at least those that gained popularity) must have captured something essential with respect to public sentiments regarding ‘news’. The genre was certainly gaining in popularity in this age of rapid transmission and circulation of public opinion. In 1588, for instance, when Beylerbeyi Mehmed Pasha, who was in charge of dealing with the unprecedented monetary turbulence of those years, chose to engage in debasement as ‘coinage reform’, his measure was deemed *bid’at-i kabîha* (odious innovation) in a chronogram that turned into a buzzword carrying a political message. The slogan went from mouth to mouth, writes Selânikî, operating just like the catchy phrases of crowd politics or of advertising in modern times. Nicknames given to political figures had a similar function, of course, but they often enjoyed a much longer life than the chronograms, whose relevance seems to have been appreciated mostly in the immediate context of the events they were meant to commemorate. But they were no less effective for that — the reforming vizier was killed in 1589, when months of opposition, kept simmering through the use of such chronograms as slogans and various other means no doubt, culminated in a revolt.

The no-frills language of *mühimme* documents, summary accounts of the decisions made by the divan at the imperial court, makes clear that the state knew exactly what it wanted to prevent when it closed down the coffeehouses. In an order composed for the qadi of Eğrigöz in the year 1056 AH (1646–47 AD), a small town in north-western Anatolia, he is told to be vigilant about reports that some people are operating coffeehouses in his district, contrary to earlier orders that explicitly banned public gatherings, or congregations (*cem’iyyet*), in the ‘well-protected domains’ of the Ottoman realm.<sup>26</sup> What is banned, in other

© BREPOLS PUBLISHERS

THIS DOCUMENT MAY BE PRINTED FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY.

IT MAY NOT BE DISTRIBUTED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER

<sup>25</sup> *Tarih-i Selaniki*, ed. by Mehmet İpşirli, 1. 223, 1. 270, 2. 525, 2. 704, 2. 707.

<sup>26</sup> *Mühimme Defteri 90*, ed. by Tulum and others: ‘cem’iyyet memâlik-i mahrûsamda memnû’ olmagla ol vechile kahve ihdâs ve cem’iyyet itdürmeyüp’ (‘you should not allow for the establishment of coffeehouses and congregations since congregating is banned in my well-protected domains’). This edict, on p. 258, was issued during one of many bans, some of them local and short-lived, during the history of the coffeehouses.

words, is people congregating (outside the licit forms of congregating for religious ritual); coffeeshouses are simply a superb venue for that dangerous habit.

Now, coffee and (eventually) tea were consumed also in homes. The fairytale imagery of a riddle (from the nineteenth century?) depicts a domestic scene around such practices:

Bir karı ile koca mırır eder her gece  
Karı der ki 'ey koca, acep İstanbul nice?'

Every night, a woman and a man murmur and mumble  
She says: 'My man, what do you think is happening in İstanbul?'

The correct answer is 'tea kettle and pot'. By a certain time, this cosy scene somewhere in the countryside was perfectly familiar to the audiences of the riddle. There is visual and archival evidence already from the seventeenth century that the coffee kettle was becoming a regular part of everyday life in homes. Cups, kettles, and various utensils identified with the consumption of coffee appear in ever-increasing numbers in the probate inventories of the seventeenth century.

While my focus here is mostly on the coffeeshouses, coffee and its uses in private spaces should also be kept in mind. Both types of environments were part of the dynamics whereby new uses were forged of the night-time. Coffee and coffeeshouses, in other words, were congenial parts of a broader setting in which people wanted to test, or felt compelled to test, the elasticity of day and night.<sup>27</sup>

Koca Sinân Pasha was no fan of the coffeeshouses, judging by his own words, but he may well have enjoyed his coffee. The grand vizier makes repeated mention of working at night as an unusual practice that enhances the worth of the service he performs: he is serving the state with such zeal that he gives up his sleep in order to be a better servant. In his letters to the Sultan, he portrays himself as a night owl: 'Gecenin yarından çoğunu tefekkür ve teemmül ile

<sup>27</sup> Use of the nighttime is not always fun or a matter of desire, of course. Namely, there is also the issue of night labour that needs closer attention by researchers, but this topic is beyond the concerns of this paper, except for the labour of performers. There is very little work done on the history of nocturnity anywhere in the world; the general lack of interest of historians with regard to nocturnity is obvious also in the indexes of many books, including source editions, where 'night' or related entries hardly ever appear. Still, there are some pioneering works: for instance, see Verdon, *La nuit au Moyen Âge*, also published in English as Verdon, *Night in the Middle Ages*; Cabantous, *Histoire de la nuit*. For a sociologist's treatment, see Melbin, *Night as Frontier*. And for important new additions to this growing body of work, now see Ekirch, *At Day's Close*, and Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire*. Similar observations were recently made with regard to anthropology; for a thoughtful debate, see Galinier and others, 'Anthropology of the Night'.

geçiriyorum' ('I pass more than half of the night thinking and contemplating'). Elsewhere, he refers directly to working at night, in terms of having his hands on things and not merely contemplating. His correspondence indicates that a good deal of state business was being conducted at night, not just between the sultan and the grand vizier, who brags of giving up so much of his bedtime to do state work, but also in many other instances that are casually mentioned. The Head of the Treasury (*Defterdar*), for instance, is mentioned as having visited him many nights in order to complete certain financial affairs, or the Aga of the Janissaries visited another official in order to take care of some business. This is striking in comparison to the official correspondence and chronicles of the earlier part of the sixteenth century. It is even more exceptional, however, for night labour of this sort to be measured by hours. This is precisely what Koca Sinân Pasha does when he brags: 'I sleep no more than four hours a night in order to take care of state business.' Measuring one's work by the amount of sleep is certainly remarkable, and it may well be unprecedented.<sup>28</sup> One can only imagine the pity this would have triggered in the author of the *Qābūs-nāma*, an eleventh-century Persian book of advice for princes and courtly elites that enjoyed renown in late medieval Anatolia and was subject to several independent translations into Turkish in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. According to the author, as well as his appreciative and not-yet-caffeinated audiences presumably, one needed to rest for one-third of the day. To be more precise, the day was divided into three periods: eight hours for 'performing one's service of God and of one's occupation', eight for pleasure and refreshment, and eight for reposing: 'God Almighty created the night for rest.'<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> In praising Sultan 'Alāüddin Keykubād (r. 1220–37), the thirteenth-century chronicler Ibn Bibi seems to be making a similar point, but there is an important difference. It is reported from one of the grandees at the Seljuk court that he had spent eighteen years in the sultan's service and close company, day and night, and that he had never seen the sultan sleep for more than three hours a night in order to spend the time thus gained on reading the Qur'ān and other acts of piety; Ibn Bibi, *El-evāmirü'l-ala'iyye*, ed. by Erzi, p. 226; for a modern Turkish translation, see Ibn Bibi, *El evamirü'l-ala'iyye*, trans. by Öztürk, 1, 244.

<sup>29</sup> My translation is from the oldest Turkish rendering, a manuscript in the personal collection of Eleazar Birnbaum, published in facsimile with an introduction and analysis by Birnbaum, *The Book of Advice by King Kay Kā'us ibn Iska*, f. 62a. I am grateful to Helga Anetshofer for bringing this passage to my attention and allowing me to use her edition (in progress). The original Persian text, in a more aristocratic vein, mentions only 'service of God' (*tā'at-e hudā*) for the first eight hours and has no explicit reference to work: *The Nasihat-nāma known as Qābūs-nāma*, ed. by Levy, p. 51.

The day was still twenty-four hours in the age of coffee, and people still needed to work, play, and rest (though most had to work much more and play much less than was allowed by the aristocratic life of the *Qābūsnāma's* author). Yet they started to experiment, or were compelled to experiment, with different ways of experiencing nocturnity, as the night became increasingly punctuated with organized activity and labour of different sorts. Mystics of various persuasions were evidently among the pioneers of this development, beginning with Yemeni Sufis as mentioned above. Before the end of the fifteenth century, in 1491–92 to be precise, a new form of ‘communal nightly liturgical ritual’ was introduced to Cairo by Nūr Dīn al-Shūnī (d. 1537), in which the central component was ‘recital of supplications for divine grace for the Prophet’. Initially set for Thursday nights and extending into the noon prayer on Friday, the ritual known as *mahyā* met with such favour by so many that Monday nights were also scheduled for performing the same recitals.

The popularity of the nocturnal sessions was quickly followed by controversy, not only because it was an ‘innovation’ like the regularization of the equally controversial supererogatory night prayers, but also because it was accompanied by generous lighting in and around the al-Azhar mosque. The allure of night-time illumination must have enhanced the pleasure of those believers who became *mahyā* devotees, as the ritual spread from Egypt to Syria, North Africa, and the Hijaz. However, the expenditure irritated some students of theology who saw in this nocturnal practice parallels to Mazdaism (named after Mazdak, son of Bāmdādh, that is, ‘the Sunrise’).<sup>30</sup>

Just like the temptation of coffee, the consumption of the night-time also moved across linguistic, ethnic, and confessional boundaries. Candles must also have been burning at the nightly vigils of the Jewish mystics, at least when coffee was being prepared. Among the Jews in the Ottoman world there emerged a particularly vibrant mystical strand in the sixteenth century, associated with Lurianism, a movement of sixteenth-century Jewish mysticism which had its centre in Safed. According to one of its students, Elliott Horowitz:

A central element in Safed spirituality, especially in its Lurianic variety, was the considerable stress placed upon nocturnal forms of piety. Groups of followers of these mystical movements called themselves by names like ‘awakeners of the dawn’, ‘watchmen of the morning’,

MENT MAY BE PRINTED FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY.  
IT MAY NOT BE DISTRIBUTED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER.

Such groups flourished in the sixteenth century, while the nightly vigils of Sufis, such as the *mahyā* and kindred practices, were gaining new ground and new devotees.

<sup>30</sup> De Jong, ‘Mahyā’; and Bozkurt, ‘Mahyā’.



A new awareness of day and night spread across different areas of cognition. In his *Al-Itqān fi 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, al-Suyūṭī (1445–1505) was ready to add his own touches to the hallowed tradition of writing commentaries on the holy book. Among them, he dedicated a whole chapter to ‘verses revealed in the daytime and verses revealed at night-time’. He wanted to make sure that his originality was appreciated: ‘There are abundant examples of verses revealed in the daytime, and Ibn Ḥabīb says indeed most of the Qur’ān was revealed in the daytime. As for those revealed at night-time, I have researched and confirmed the examples which follow.’<sup>31</sup>

Coffeehouses in general did not limit their activities to daytime. The nights of Ramadan were particularly busy times for these establishments. Moreover, a new form of public lighting, more decorative and festive than functional, emerged soon after the middle of the sixteenth century, and is still familiar to Istanbul as well as many other cities of the former Ottoman world: *mahya*.<sup>32</sup> This kind of illumination was achieved by designing and lighting a set of lamps between minarets on holy nights, especially of Ramadan, as yet another manifestation of the growing obsession with finding unprecedented uses for the night.

Increasing uses of the night-time cannot properly be treated without at least a brief consideration of the social history of lighting, as it was also a matter of social stratification among other things. The poorer sort had access to poor lighting or no lighting at all, while the rich households would enjoy all sorts of regular, powerful lighting, not only because they could afford higher-priced candles and oil lamps, but also because they could employ servants. Before electricity, the constancy of which is now taken for granted in many parts of the world,

<sup>31</sup> *The Perfect Guide to the Sciences of the Qur'ān 1*, trans. by Algar and others, p. 31.

<sup>32</sup> Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, p. 67. Also see Bozkurt, ‘Mahyā’. Note that this kind of *mahya* is of a different derivation from the one above and of a different spelling in Ottoman Turkish: it is named after, which is named after *māh* (‘moon’, or ‘month’), and is the popular Turkish pronunciation of *māhiyye*. Conventional accounts among the members of the guild of *mahya*-designers attributed this innovation to a calligrapher, Ḥāfız Ahmed Kefevī, at the time of Ahmed I (1603–18), but clearly the practice had started earlier; see references (on p. 192 and engraving on p. 193) in Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, including Schweigger, *Ein neue Reysbeschreibung*. Schweigger, who stayed in Istanbul between 1578 and 1581, mentions designs shaped after various phases of the moon. Also note that du Fresne-Canaye, who was in the Ottoman capital during Ramadan in 1573, mentions lighting on the minarets but not between them, which suggests that the idea was evolving in the 1570s. The later calligrapher may still have played a key role in that the *mahya* designs eventually consisted of words designed by the order of lamps

lighting required a high dose of maintenance by manual labour. A good deal of tedious work was required and handled in upper class households by servants whose tasks included snuffing and changing the oil lamp when it began to smoke or emit unpleasant odours. All those aspects of lighting need to be considered, while we also need to be alert to the fact that there were improvements in lighting technologies even in the premodern era, albeit often tiny compared to the move to the gas lamp or electricity. After all, the oil lamp itself was an invention once and brought serious change to a world illuminated by torches.<sup>33</sup>

The problem of smell and smoke caused by candles, for instance, must also have mattered in Karagöz performances. Candles posed such annoyances unless a good deal of money was spent to purchase the highest quality of beeswax. Those were, in fact, regularly afforded only by the elites or used for major temples with rich endowers or donors. Given that wax was also used for sealing and as a lubricant for bullets, it is not surprising that beeswax was banned from export along with other 'strategic' goods like horses and silver.<sup>34</sup>

The cost of lighting ought never to be neglected. In one of the traditions about the age of the 'rightly-guided' caliphs, for instance, 'Umar ibn Al-Khattāb is portrayed as a pious and scrupulous head of state because he extinguished his lamp at the time of his supper. When asked about it, he replied that he did 'not dine under the light of a lamp owned by the public'. This is supposed to be a small but significant gesture of being loyal to the public trust and not wasting its resources. Lighting a lamp, or a candle, was not a negligible expenditure, particularly during activities of some duration after sunset, including games and performances.

More important for our purposes might be that street lighting began to get more attention from the late fourteenth century onwards in different parts of the Mediterranean. On the Rialto in Venice, for instance, the first public lighting for regular use, rather than for a particular festivity, was set up in 1397, and had to be improved in 1450 because it was not sufficient. Much more serious and consistent lighting schemes were adopted for public areas from the mid-seventeenth century onwards in Paris. Ultimately, the evolution of public lighting in different cities needs to be treated in a comparative manner, and noteworthy differences will likely be revealed. Still, it is significant that European travel-

<sup>33</sup> Zografou, 'Magic Lamps, Luminous Dreams'. For a general introduction to premodern technologies, primarily in Europe, see O'Dea, *A Social History of Lighting*.

<sup>34</sup> See, for instance, an order sent to the sub-governor of Herzegovina in 1545: document no. 389 in *Topkapı Sarayı Arşivi H.951-952 Tarihli*, ed. by Sahillioğlu.

lers of the early modern era, who are given to making comparative observations about Ottoman cities, streets, living conditions, etc., do not find Istanbul, for instance, particularly less well-lit at night. Beginning in the early nineteenth century with the revolutionary changes in lighting brought about by the technique of the argon lamp *c.* 1780–84 and, particularly, the use of coal gas from 1805 in London, significant technological gaps emerged between Europe and other parts of the world and led to attempts to catch up in lighting as in many other areas of life. Particularly in the Industrial Age, European travellers write about the ‘dark cities’ of the Middle East.<sup>35</sup> That contrast is pronounced in the late nineteenth century, but not earlier.

To return to early modern Istanbul, candle production and consumption seem to have reached new heights from the late sixteenth century onwards. Candle makers complained of colleagues who went out of the city to purchase animal fats at high prices before the tallow could be distributed at designated sites with official prices and quotas for each producer.<sup>36</sup> In other words, candle making and selling had become so lucrative that the more ambitious members of the profession, or avaricious ones according to the moral economy of guilds, attempted to corner the market, offering high purchasing prices for the raw materials. In the early seventeenth century, there were complaints that some candle makers were pushing candles made out of lard to unaware customers. Jewish and Muslim customers were particularly offended by that transgression, but the more relevant conclusion for our purposes is that producers were able to do this, were able to imagine such a scheme, only because there was demand and they were able to find consumers.

Some other uses of the night-time are illustrated in depictions of festivities that were held in early modern Istanbul on an increasing number of occasions: holy nights on the Islamic calendar, celebrations of military victories, births of princes and princesses — namely various occasions that called for so-called *donanma* and *şenlik*, etc. In that respect, too, Cairo seems to have set some of the trends for Istanbul. When Mustafa ‘Alī records his impressions of his visit to Cairo in 1599, for instance, he ventures into the praiseworthy and the less congenial qualities of Cairenes, as he saw them. Among the former, he mentions the vigilance of night watchmen, who kept each other wakeful by chat-

© HERIOTS WATSON  
THIS DOCUMENT MAY BE PRINTED FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY.  
IT MAY NOT BE DISTRIBUTED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER.

<sup>35</sup> See, for instance, the observations of a traveler in Istanbul in 1874; de Amicis, *Istanbul: 1874*, pp. 262–63; cited in an unpublished paper by Nurcin Ileri, whose ongoing dissertation work on the nighttime in Istanbul in the nineteenth century promises to shed significant light on our subject.

<sup>36</sup> See, for instance, Mühimme register 27, nos 205 and 624; and register 31, no. 364.

ting away the whole night. Their services may have been needed particularly in Cairo since the inhabitants of that city were just too playful at night, when they enjoyed outings that Ali records at some length. Cairenes found all sorts of occasions, for instance, to make the night festive for the public, such as the night of the market supervisor. Whether inspired by Cairo or not, Istanbul and other cities of the Ottoman world were changing their own night-time habits during the lifetime of Mustafa 'Ālī, but the real impact was to be felt in the seventeenth century. The festivities of 1582, held on the occasion of the circumcision of a prince, were accompanied by guild parades and all sorts of performances that entertained the inhabitants for two months. As told in many Ottoman and European accounts, the grand party of 1582 constituted a most ambitious organization which launched Istanbul as a prominent location of public festivities that regularly spilled over into the night-time. The use of the night for similar festivities of 1675 and 1720, however, shows remarkable differences.<sup>37</sup> Accounts of the latter regularly speak about shows and spectacles *scheduled for certain times and lasting for a certain duration*, unlike vague formulations like 'into the wee hours of the night' as in the accounts from 1582. It is as if the night was gradually charted for more adroit navigation and shaped for experiences that audiences would handle with more control over their time.

It is also worth looking at the history of the night in imaginative literature. Looking at the popular tales of different periods in order to gauge what is taken for granted, or imagined, to be nocturnal activities and happenings, the early modern era seems to have ushered in a new kind of night. There are many episodes set at night in medieval works such as the two famous works of *Maqāmāt* by Hemedhānī and by Harīrī, in the *Ferec bā'de-ş-şidde* cycle of tales, in the *Saltuknāme*, and of course in the *One Thousand and One Nights*. What the night offers in them is a time of merrymaking in private gatherings, for visits to holy men or temples, for daring raids or spying expeditions, for escapades to taverns, a playing ground for thieves and prostitutes, and the like. The settings are somewhat differently imagined after the sixteenth century, in meddah narratives for instance, especially by the inclusion of coffeehouses as popular venues and of nocturnal public festivities with the possibility of a full sense of normalcy and without having to repeatedly underline privacy or criminality as obvious aspects of living the night.<sup>38</sup>

© 2011 BY THE PUBLISHERS  
THIS DOCUMENT MAY BE PRINTED FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY.  
IT MAY NOT BE DISTRIBUTED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER.

<sup>37</sup> Some of the most relevant texts are edited by Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri*.

<sup>38</sup> Dror Ze'evi perceptively observes that even the setting of the shadow play itself moves from interiors to the neighbourhood square, as one moves from Mamluk to Ottoman versions of this kind of theater; Ze'evi, *Producing Desire*, p. 138.

Nocturnal social activity, within coffeehouses or elsewhere, included entertainments shaped around spectatorship. Most of the performances, Karagöz and Meddah, took place in coffeehouses and at night, especially during the Ramadan. In fact, given the technique of the Karagöz, where the audience looks not at the puppets themselves but at their reflection on a back-lit screen, it works only in the dark. It does not have to be the night-time of course, it can be a dark space like a day-time movie house, but it works particularly well in the dark. Not surprisingly, both Karagöz and meddah performances took place mostly at night, where the composition of the audience was somewhat different than the usual coffeehouse clientele. Coffeehouses were, with respect to gender, exclusivist bastions of homosociality for men in the Ottoman world, and possibly also in Europe in the early modern era. Only when they doubled as venues for entertainment and performance does one read about families, women, and sometimes children, attending those events. It is worth considering two uses of coffeehouses: as a regular site of sociability among men, and, at designated times or within a certain schedule, and certainly in a limited number of shops, as a theatre.<sup>39</sup>

What about the tale of love? Now, happy endings are not Hollywood inventions. We know from various cultural traditions of genres that tend to go for a happy ending. In fact, there is a genre in medieval Islamic literatures, also quite popular among late medieval Turkish readers and audiences, known as *Ferec badeş-sidde* which could be rendered as ‘deliverance after difficulty’. The structure of the tales is embodied in the German phrase *Auf Regen kommt Sonnenschein*, in which the emotional states of the audience are pegged to an assurance like ‘do not worry, something good will come out at the end of the story!’. While the prevalent opinion held until recently that *Ferec-badeş-sidde* texts were merely translations or re-renderings of one central Ur-text, it now looks more likely that there are many independent compositions with that title and that general framework: a protagonist goes through many difficulties, such as being robbed or imprisoned; genies and spirits may be involved (they also act mostly at night); and ultimately, something happens through a triumphalist turn in the plot, and the protagonist gets the deliverance after many a difficulty — happy end! These are not tales of love — although they may have a bit of romance and flirtation, they are mostly stories of drama and suspense.

<sup>39</sup> As noted by Kırılı, ‘The Struggle Over Space’, p. 167. Children are mentioned among the audience of a ‘much too gross’ performance in a garden, by Théophile Gautier in 1854; cited in Zé’evi, *Producing Desire*, p. 146.

If one turns to tales of love of the late medieval era in the Islamicate Middle East, one finds mostly sad tales, such as the immensely popular *Leyla and Mecnun*, or *Ferhad and Şirin*. Moreover, such tales tend towards allegory and are very different from the meddah/Karagöz stories, namely the kinds of composition that were popular in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. This new attitude towards storytelling actually started with the tale of *Anabacı*, which was composed as a piece of self-avowed original fiction in the early sixteenth century. The information on the circumstances of its composition points towards a milieu of literati who suffered a fatigue (boredom?) with re-renderings and translations of the classical tales of medieval Islamic literature, and thus ventured into new stories in the early sixteenth century. It is this 'early modern sensibility' that invited and inspired the composition of *Anabacı*, which is not at all interested in exploring the metaphysical and moral dimensions of love but rather relishes in downgrading it to worldly folly that turns into a joke on the protagonist. The romantic aspect of the tale is not necessarily central — and in any case, it is rendered with a light touch, just like the meddah stories it anticipates. Perhaps more significantly, there is no overt moral to the tale. There is a moral universe behind these stories, of course, and a moral economy, if you reflect on them, but the story does not lead to a moral, either in the case of *Anabacı*, or in the case of the meddah stories or Karagöz scripts (to the degree we can tell from the fragmentary evidence concerning the early repertoire). It might rather be characterized as an in-your-face commentary on the human condition, frailties, and temptations that shape lives according to the vicissitudes of (what we would call) social structures, as well as fate. The sinful heroes may fall, but they do not have to, they are not necessarily expected to. In the *ferec-badeş-şidde* literature, on the other hand, it always has to come down ultimately to the good being rewarded and the bad falling. In the Meddah stories, there is no such concern. It may happen, but it is incidental. Neither is it the case in Karagöz stories.<sup>40</sup>

And this situation is precisely what Ebussuud finds to be objectionable in the puppet shows of his time. In fact, such shows could be perfectly acceptable provided one knew what to get out of them, as he pronounced in a *fetva*: it would not be grounds for the dismissal of a religious functionary that he take part in an assembly for a shadow play and that he watch the play 'until its end', if he watched it for its lesson, or the moral of the tale.<sup>41</sup> The conditional in this

<sup>40</sup> For an original and more detailed interpretation of the Karagöz plays in this vein, see Ze'evi, *Producing Desire*, pp. 140–41.

<sup>41</sup> Cited in *Şeybülislâm Ebussuûd Efendi Fetvaları Işığında 16. Asır Türk Hayatı*, ed. by Düzdağ, p. 200.



pronouncement should not be read as a veneer of piety over a pillar of laissez-faire pragmatism. This ‘lesson thing’ is precisely the element that seems to be missing in the developing new literature of the Karagöz and the meddah. Here we are confronted with a very different literary universe where bringing us to a moral of the tale is not at all the concern.

In short, the cultural scene of early modern Istanbul offers not merely some new forms of entertainment and genres but also striking transformations, if not self-conscious innovations, in terms of the moral economy and attitudes with which popular tales are constructed, in the ways these popular tales are performed and convey messages, and in the very lives portrayed in them. This new literature, which also presents us with a new balance between homo- and (and an increasingly visible) hetero-sexuality, found its niche par excellence in the coffeehouses.

To turn to the changing nature of leisurely activity as such, the boundary between leisure and work was not necessarily hazy, as is often deemed characteristic of pre-industrial societies. Nonetheless, it is worth underlining that entertainment activities became much more structured in the age of coffeehouses, Karagöz and meddah. A new understanding (discipline?) was introduced to the scheduling as well as the duration of performances, along with practices like punctuating them with planned breaks, or intermissions, for the purpose of both socializing and commerce. At least from the eighteenth century onwards, manuscripts that contain the ‘scripts’ to be recited and performed begin to have records of the duration and location of the performances, as given by different performers.

Moreover, within the stories themselves, we begin to find out about various types of leisurely activities taking place according to newly established routines of experiencing the city. Such routines appear, for instance, within the meddah stories which offer sightseeing in Istanbul as a recurrent theme. In one of those stories, a ‘Turk’ arrives in Istanbul for the first time, and is utterly confused, which sets the scene for him to run into an acquaintance who will not only take him in but also guide that country bumpkin on a city tour for the next few days: Here this is the Hagia Sophia, and tomorrow we shall see the grand bazaar and the slave market, and the next day it is time for visiting the shrine of Eyüp Sultan and the picnic sites in that area, and so on and so forth.<sup>42</sup> Looking at these accounts, it is very clear that there was a routine established of sightseeing which one might compare profitably to medieval prototypes again. The latter are devoted to temples, tombs, and shrines, which were also visited according to certain routines. Booklets were written as to the procedures of shrine visitations with the purpose of ordering the visitor’s spiritual experience.

<sup>42</sup> *Destân-ı Kısâ-i Şâd ile Gam*, ed. by Elçin, pp. 176–205.

In the meddah stories, however, we are confronted with ‘secular’ sightseeing.<sup>43</sup> Even the visit to the Hagia Sophia, the fabled temple then serving as an imperial mosque, is not part of a religious performance, but simply part of seeing the beauties of the city.

Such ‘pointless’ sightseeing is also written into works which I am tempted to characterize as a nano-genre which called itself *nefsü'l-emr-nāme*, with multiple examples from the late sixteenth to the early nineteenth century.<sup>44</sup> These works display a panorama of ‘ill’ manners, while offering various ways of cursing those who perform them. In their own way, they echo those collections of common errors in linguistic usage that were mentioned above. If the manuals of *galāt* capture the *ill-said* (or ill-written), with severe pedantry mostly but not totally without an understated humour and even secret pleasure in the local, the invectives in the tracts of *nefsü'l-emr* attempt to sort out the *ill-done* and, with a big tongue in cheek, rant at the offenders, using an impressive menu of maledictions. Among the reviled are those ‘wretches’ or ‘pimps’ who take their family sightseeing in different parts of the city as well as ‘boylovers of the nature of cooks’ dogs that satisfy themselves through their eyes’, who hustle around Istanbul all day and boast ‘I have seen so many sights today’ — new trends in flanerier.<sup>45</sup>

\* \* \*

What Horowitz writes about the Jewish mystics is equally true for others in the Ottoman world and beyond, who fell under the spell of coffee. The introduction of coffee, in other words, ‘brought with it beyond the mere availability of the stimulus, the emergence of a new perception of the night in which the hours of darkness could be shaped and manipulated by human initiative rather than condemn man to passive repose.’<sup>46</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Once again, one needs to look at Cairo for precedents: in the early fifteenth century, Maqrizi had composed his famous *Khitāt* that represented the culmination of a tradition but also a new departure, at least in its monumentality. It is not irrelevant for our concerns that the autograph copy of the work is in the Topkapı Palace Library. For copies of the work, see Ayman Fu'ad Sayyid's introduction to his edition of Sayyid, ed., *Manuscrit autographe d'al-Mawā'iz*. The text was also fully translated into Turkish in the sixteenth century; Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS suppl. turc 216.

<sup>44</sup> An eighteenth-century example (copied in 1720) was edited and published by Develi, *xviii. yy İstanbul'a Dair Risale-i Garibe*.

<sup>45</sup> Develi, *xviii. yy İstanbul'a Dair Risale-i Garibe*, pp. 24–25.

<sup>46</sup> Horowitz, ‘Coffee, Coffeehouses, and the Nocturnal Rituals’, p. 27.

But playing with the architecture of the night-time naturally meant adjustments for the morning as well, as those who were tempted to burn the candle at both ends quickly found out. Sometime before 1581, a professor at one of Bursa's respected madrasas saw himself in a dream, crying his heart out while making preparations for his father's burial. Upon awakening in a state of trepidation, he knew he needed a reliable oneiro-analyst and was led by friends to a renowned Sufi, Sheikh Üftâde Efendi (d. 1581). The saintly man knew exactly why the young scholar had been visited by that disturbing dream: he must have missed the morning prayer, for that 'is the most powerful of all the ritual prayers, just as there is no being closer and more powerful for a son than his father'. Üftâde's hagiographer who related this anecdote happened to be the guilt-ridden dreamer's son, for whom the interface between one's faith and filial piety must have served as an additional lesson. He was in a good position to not only certify the truthfulness of the sheykh's interpretation but also offer his father's explanation for the slip: he 'had been to a show [on the night before] and could not wake up in the morning'.<sup>47</sup>

Worse than the disorientation of waking up is the trauma of waking up late. Even worse, many millions evidently voted with their lips during the last half-millennium, is not having the assistance of some substance like coffee or tea to reorient us, to warm us up and to give us a buzz. They decided, in other words, that if 'the coming awakening stands in the Troy of the dream like the wooden horse of the Greeks',<sup>48</sup> those invading soldiers, once released from the belly of the horse, need to be caffeinated to be able to confront their tasks. The day ahead was likely to be busier than days used to be, and the night before certainly offered more diversion than nights used to.

This is why even Mustafa 'Âlî approved of certain uses of coffeehouses: 'Early rising worshippers and pious men get up and go [there], drink a cup of coffee adding life to their life. They feel, in a way, that its slight exhilaration strengthens them for their religious observance and worship. From that point of view coffee-houses are commended and praised.'<sup>49</sup>

© BREPOLS PUBLISHERS

THIS DOCUMENT MAY BE PRINTED FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY.  
IT MAY NOT BE DISTRIBUTED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER.

<sup>47</sup> Bursevî, *Menâkib-ı Üftâde*, pp. 10–12.

<sup>48</sup> Walter Benjamin, cited in Heller-Roazen, *The Inner Touch*, p. 77.

<sup>49</sup> *Mustafa Ali's Description of Cairo of 1599*, ed. by Tietze, p. 37.

## Works Cited

### Primary Sources and Reference Works

- Ahteri-i Kebir* [Arabic-Turkish Dictionary of Ahteri], ed. by Ahmet Kırkkılıç and Yusuf Sancak (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 2009)
- Amirdovlat', Amasiats'i, *Angitats' anpet kam bararan bzhsbkakan niwt'ots* [Inutile aux ignorants, ou Dictionnaire des substances médicales], ed. by K. J. Basmadjian, K.H. Basmajian matenadaran I (Wien: Mkhit'arean Tparan, 1926)
- Arslan, Mehmet, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri*, 8 vols (İstanbul: 2008–09)
- Ayverdi, İlhan, *Misalli Büyük Türkçe Sözlük* [The Great Turkish Lexicon with Examples] (İstanbul: Kubbealtı Akademisi Kültür ve Sanat Vakfı, 2005)
- Birnbaum, Eleazar, *The Book of Advice by King Kay Kâ'us ibn Iskander: The Earliest Old Ottoman Turkish Version of his Kâbüsnâme*, Sources of Oriental Languages and Literatures, 6 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1981)
- Bursevi, Hüsameddin, *Menâkıb-ı Üftâde* [The Vitae of Uftade], ed. Abdurrahman Yünel (İstanbul, Seçil Ofset, 1996)
- De Amicis, Edmond, *İstanbul: 1874*, trans. by Beynun Akyavaş (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1981)
- Destân-ı Kissa-i Şâd ile Gam: Ferruhdil ile Mehmed Bey'in Hikâyesi*, ed. by Şükrü Elçin, in *Halk Edebiyatı Araştırmaları* (Ankara: Akçağ, 1997), pp. 176–205
- Develi, Hayati, 'Kemalpaşazade ve Ebüssuûd'un Galatât Defterleri' [The Tracts of K. and E. on Erroneous Popular Usages], *İlmî Araştırmalar*, 4 (1997), 99–125
- , *XVIII. yy İstanbul'a Dair Risale-i Garibe* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 1998)
- D'Ohsson, Ignatius Mouradgea, *Tableau général de l'empire othoman: divisé en deux parties, dont l'une comprend la législation mahométane; l'autre, l'histoire de l'empire othoman*, 7 vols in 8 (Paris: De l'imprimerie de monsieur [Firmin Didot], 1788–1824)
- Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, 12 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1960–2005)
- Evliya Çelebi b. Derviş Mehmed Zilli, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi, Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 304 Yazmasının Transkripsyonu — Dizini*, ed. by Robert Dankoff, Seyit Ali Kahraman, and Yücel Dağlı, 10 vols (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, 1996–2009)
- Gazavât-ı Hayreddin Paşa (MS 2639, Universitätsbibliothek İstanbul): kommentierte Edition mit deutscher Zusammenfassung*, ed. and trans. by Mustafa Yıldız (Aachen: Shaker, 1993)
- Gülşeni, Muhyi-i, *Bâleybelen*, ed. by Mustafa Koç (İstanbul: Klasik, 2005)
- Ibn Bibi, *El-evâmirül-'alâ'iyye fi'l-umuri'l-'alâ'iyye*, ed. by Adnan Erzi (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1956)
- , *El evamirül-'alâ'iyye fi'l-umuri'l-'alâ'iyye* [Selçuk Name], trans. by Mürsel Öztürk, 2 vols (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1996)
- Kâtib Çelebi, *Mizânü'l-Hakk fi İhtiyârî'l-Ehakk* [The Balance of Truth], facsimile of the 1869–70 edition, ed. by Orhan Şaik Gökyay and Süleyman Uludağ (İstanbul: Kabalcı, 2008)

- Koca Sinan Paşa'nın Telhisleri* [Vizirial Letters by Koca Sinân Pasha], ed. by Halil Sahilliođlu, Osmanlı devleti ve medeniyeti tarihi serisi, 8 (İstanbul: İslam Tarih, Sanat ve Kültür Araştırma Merkezi, 2004)
- Koçu, Reşad Ekrem, *Türk Giyim, Kuşam ve Süslenme Sözlüğü* [A Dictionary of Turkish Costume, Accessories and Adornments], Sümerbank Kültür Yayınları, 1 (Ankara: Başnur, 1967)
- Kültürel, Zühal, *Galatât Sözlükleri* [Dictionaries of Erroneous Popular Usages], Simurg Yayınları, 99 (İstanbul: Simurg, 2008)
- Les loisirs de Philothée*, ed. and trans. by Jacques Bouchard (Athens: Association pour l'étude des Lumières en Grèce; Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1989)
- Misalli Büyük Türkçe Sözlük* [The Great Turkish Lexicon with Examples], ed. by İlhan Ayverdi (İstanbul: Kubbealtı, 2005)
- Mustafa Ali's Description of Cairo of 1599*, ed. and trans. by Andreas Tietze (Wien, Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1975)
- Mühimme Defteri 90* [Register #90 of Mühimme Documents], ed. by Mertol Tulum and others (İstanbul: Türk Dünyası, 1993)
- The Nasihat-nâma known as Qâbûs-nâma*, ed. by Reuben Levy, E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Series, orig. ser., 25 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1905–27); n.s. 33 vols to date (London: Luzac, 1921–)
- Nişanyan, Sevan, *Sözlerin Soyağacı: Çağdaş Türkçenin Etimolojik Sözlüğü* [The Genealogy of Words: An Etymological Dictionary of Modern Turkish] (İstanbul: Adam, 2007) <www.nisanyansozluk.com> [accessed 15 July 2010]
- Ottoman Documents on Palestine, 1552–1615*, ed. and trans. by Uriel Heyd (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960)
- The Perfect Guide to the Sciences of the Qur'an I*, trans. Hamid Algar and others (Reading: Garnet, 2011)
- Razi, Amin Ahmad, *Haft Iqlim* [Seven Climes], ed. by Muhammad Riza Tahiri, 3 vols (Tehran: Surush, 1999/2000)
- Sayyid, Ayman Fu'ad, ed., *Manuscrit autographe d'al-Mawâ'iz wa-al-i'tibâr fi dhikr al-khitâ'at wa-al-âthâr de Taqî al-Dîn Ahmad b. 'Alî b. 'Abd al-Qâdir al-Maqriẓî (766–845 AH/1325–1441 AD)* (London: Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 1995)
- Schweigger, Salomon, *Ein neue Reysbeschreibung auss Teutschland nach Constantinopel und Jerusalem* (Nurnberg: [n. publ.], 1608; repr. Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1964)
- Şeyhülislâm Ebussuûd Efendi Fetvaları Işığında 16. Asır Türk Hayatı* [16th-Century Turkish Life according to Fatwas by Ebussuud Efendi, the Shaykh al-Islam], ed. by Ertuğrul Düzdağ (İstanbul: Enderun, 1972)
- Tarama Sözlüğü: XIII. Yüzyıldan beri Türkiye Türkçesiyle yazılmış kitaplardan toplanan tanuklarıyla* [A Dictionary of Words Scanned from Books Written in Turkey Turkish Since the 13th Century], ed. by Ömer Asım Aksoy and Dehri Dilçin, 8 vols (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 1943–57)
- Tarih-i Selaniki* [The Chronicle of Selâniki], ed. by Mehmet İpşirli, İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 3371, 2 vols (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1989)

- Topkapı Sarayı Arşivi H.951–952 Tarihli ve E-12321 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, ed. by Halil Sahillioğlu, Osmanlı devleti ve medeniyeti tarihi serisi, 7 (İstanbul: İslâm Tarih, Sanat ve Kültür Araştırma Merkezi, 2002)
- Turan, Fikret, 'Şeyhülislam Ebussuûd'un İmlâ Kuralları: Onaltıncı Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmlasında Yerleşme Eğilimleri ve Bir Tepki', *İlmi Araştırmalar*, 7 (2000), 221–36
- Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* [Encyclopedia of Islam published by the Turkish Endowment for Pious Affairs], 42 vols to date (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1988–), xxvii (2003)
- Vardanyan, Stella A., *Amirdovlat Amasiatsi: A Fifteenth-Century Armenian Natural Historian and Physician*, ed. by Ara Der Marderosian, trans. by Michael Yoshpa (Delmar, NY: Caravan, 1999)
- Waldkirch, Antoinette Schnyder von, *Wie Europa den Kaffee Entdeckte: Reiseberichte der Barockzeit als Quellen zur Geschichte des Kaffees*, Veröffentlichungen des Jacobs Suchard Museum zur Kulturgeschichte des Kaffees, 1 (Zurich: Jacobs Suchard Museum, 1988)

## Secondary Studies

- Akyeampong, Emmanuel and Charles Ambler, 'Leisure in African History: An Introduction', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 35 (2002), 1–16
- Bozkurt, Nebi, 'Mahyâ', *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* [Encyclopedia of Islam published by the Turkish Endowment for Pious Affairs] (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1988–), xxvii (2003), 398
- Burke, Peter, 'The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe', *Past & Present*, 146 (1995), 136–50
- Cabantous, Alain, *Histoire de la nuit: xvii<sup>e</sup>–xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 2009)
- De Amicis, Edmondo, *İstanbul: 1874* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1981)
- Ekirch, Roger, *At Day's Close: Night in Times Past* (New York: Norton, 2005)
- Galinier, Jacques, and others, 'Anthropology of the Night: Cross-Disciplinary Investigations', *Current Anthropology*, 51 (2010), 819–47
- Hattox, Ralph, *Coffee and Coffeehouses: The Origins of a Social Beverage in the Medieval Near East* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1985)
- Heller-Roazen, Daniel, *The Inner Touch: Archaeology of a Sensation* (New York, Zone Books, 2007)
- Hodgson, Marshall G. S., *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, 3 vols (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974)
- Horowitz, Elliott, 'Coffee, Coffeehouses, and the Nocturnal Rituals of Early Modern Jewry', *Association for Jewish Studies Review*, 14 (1989), 17–46
- , 'Jewish Confraternities in Seventeenth-Century Verona: A Study in the Social History of Piety' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Yale University, 1982)
- Jong, F. de, 'Mahyâ', *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edition (Leiden: Brill, 1986–), vi (1991), 87–88
- Kafadar, Cemal, 'Janissaries and Other Riffraff of Ottoman İstanbul: Rebels Without A Cause?', in *Identity and Identity Formation in the Ottoman World: A Volume of Essays*



- in *Honor of Norman Itzkowitz*, ed. by Baki Tezcan and Karl Barbir (Madison: Center for Turkish Studies at the University of Wisconsin, 2007), pp. 113–34
- Kırlı, Cengiz, 'Coffeehouses: Public Opinion in the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Empire', in *Public Islam and the Common Good*, ed. by Armando Salvatore and Dale F. Eickelman, Social, Economic and Political Studies of the Middle East, 95 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 75–97
- , 'The Struggle Over Space: Coffeehouses of Ottoman İstanbul, 1780–1845' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, SUNY, Binghamton, 2000)
- Koslofsky, Craig, *Evening's Empire: A History of the Night in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011)
- Marfany, Joan-Lluís, 'Debate: The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe', *Past & Present*, 156 (1997), 174–91; response essay, pp. 192–97
- Melbin, Murray, *Night as Frontier: Colonizing the World after Dark* (New York: Free Press, 1987)
- Necipoğlu, Gülru, *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (London: Reaktion, 2005)
- O'Dea, William T., *A Social History of Lighting* (London: Routledge and Paul, 1958)
- Özen, Şükrü, 'Sağlık Konularında Dinî Hükmün Belirlenmesinde Fakih-Hekim Dayanışması: Kahve Örneği' [Jurist-Physician Solidarity in Determining Religious Legal Decisions on Matters of Health: The Example of Coffee], 38. *Uluslararası Tıp Tarihi Kongresi Bildiri Kitabı*, ed. by Nil Sarı and others, 3 vols (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2005), pp. 699–735
- Sharma, Sunil, 'The City of Beauties in Indo-Persian Poetic Landscape', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 24 (2004), 73–81
- Tietze, Andreas and Joseph Yahalom, *Ottoman Melodies, Hebrew Hymns: A 16th Century Cross-Cultural Adventure*, *Bibliotheca orientalis Hungarica*, 43 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1995)
- Verdon, Jean, *Night in the Middle Ages*, trans. by George Holoch (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002)
- , *La nuit au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Perrin, 1993)
- Yılmaz, Fikret, 'Boş Vaktiniz Var Mı? Veya 16. Yüzyılda Şarap, Suç ve Eğlence' [Do You Have Free Time? Wine, Crime and Entertainment in the 16th Century], *Tarih ve Toplum* (2005), 11–49
- Ze'evi, Dror, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006)
- Zografou, Athanassia, 'Magic Lamps, Luminous Dreams: Lamps in PGM Recipes', in *Light and Darkness in Ancient Greek Myth and Religion*, ed. by M. Christopoulos and others (Lanham: Lexington, 2010), pp. 276–94



© BREPOLS PUBLISHERS

THIS DOCUMENT MAY BE PRINTED FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY.  
IT MAY NOT BE DISTRIBUTED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER.