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ИНТИМНИ И
ПУБЛИЧНИ
СВЕТОВЕ НА
БАЛКАНИТЕ

INTIMATE
AND PUBLIC
WORLDS ON
THE BALKANS



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**Closeness and barriers between gender and ethnic groups
in a late Ottoman urban setting, Smyrna**

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Smyrna was one of the main so-called “cosmopolitan” cities in the Eastern Mediterranean, comparable to Alexandria, Constantinople, Odessa and Salonica.¹ Here, a majority of Greek-Orthodox inhabitants lived, if not together, at least *side by side*, with a large Muslim Turkish population and other groups,² such as Armenians of various denominations, Catholics and Protestants from various ethnic backgrounds and a Jewish community, which was of predominantly Sephardic origin.³ The city was one of the richest in the Ottoman Empire as well as a major military port: new-comers, visitors and soldiers flew through this major Mediterranean hub. Because these ethnic dynamics mixed, *volens nolens*, with gender-related issues such as sexuality, marriage and reproduction, a need was created whereby closeness and barriers between the groups needed to be carefully managed.

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The main sources for this text are provided by Greek language narratives about Smyrna, travelogues by Westerners visiting Smyrna, Armenian language reports about the city after its destruction, and Greek and Armenian language monographs which some former residents of the city wrote after 1922. As far as possible, I also use the Armenian and Greek press of Smyrna. Another main source is provided by *A survey of social conditions in Smyrna, Asia Minor*, written when the Greek state administered the city. Other archival material is quoted below.

The Ethnic Urban Space: Avoidance of Undesired Contact

The urban space in Smyrna was, at first glance, easy to read until 1922, showing us that the ordering of the city has changed dramatically between today's Izmir and former Smyrna. Izmir officially is a Turkish-only city, while Smyrna seemed to be a mosaic of ethno-religious districts. Individuals living in the urban fabric of the late 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries were rapidly, more or less adequately, identified

by other inhabitants in terms of gendered, ethnic, cultural and religious categories. Like other late Ottoman cities, Smyrna divided its space according to urban functions, thus in gendered-zones. While the older-style markets (*çarşıs* and *bezestens*) were the domain of men, the areas of residence and homes were areas of femininity. The Frankish Street and the new Quarters built at the end of the 19th century made these divisions less compelling.

In residential areas, every inhabitant was responsible for the honour of the quarter. A soft but nonetheless efficient social control regulated behaviours and contacts between the people. Greek-orthodox Smyrniots used to leave their doors open at lunch or dinner time, so that they could be seen from the outside world and display the honour of their household to the world, while at the same time checking on passers-by and neighbouring families.⁴ This social functioning had occasionally unexpected consequences in the political sphere. At the beginning of the 20th century, the moral vigilance of an old Greek-Orthodox lady disturbed the activities of Armenian revolutionary agents, who were indulging in very different matters than those she suspected.⁵ Instead of revealing a female adultery, or even worse, she in fact provoked the failure of a massive terrorist scheme, designed by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, the *Tashnagtsoutioun*.⁶

The urban district that is the *mahalle* or *semt* (in Turkish) or *tagh* (in Armenian) or *synikia* (in Greek) is viewed by social agents as an entity, whose honour every inhabitant is in charge of. I doubt that the tremendous changes in terms of population composition, levels of education, and occupational patterns completely changed these attitudes in today's Turkey and Greece. According to Magnarella, the "*defended neighbourhood*" was still an institution in Turkish urban life at the beginning of the 1970's: "[*Inhabitants of a same neighbourhood*] share in the consequences of any member's behaviour, as there is a collective pride and guilt over one another's achievements and shortcomings"⁷ I assume that his remark was valid in the Ottoman lands and have survived in all societies of the region, regardless of the religious, national or linguistic barriers, be they old or new. A similar perception of inhabited space is remarkable in contemporary Armenia, Syria, and Lebanon. The fact that most of the vocabulary describing neighbourhood or family-ties, rather more than less, match between Greek, Turkish and Armenian may be an indication of analogous social structures, despite of the repeatedly stressed differences between these groups.

Residential areas were fairly homogeneous from a religious point of view, though no legal basis compelled any one to comply with an explicit rule, all the less so as a Westernized status of private property of real estates was enforced in Sefer 1284 – June 1867. It would not be adequate to placate on the Ottoman reality the discourse about race, which was designed in Europe, before the Young-Turks came to power⁸, or the racialism still much present in the society of the USA, if no more in the explicit form of former anti-miscegenation laws, though in predominant housing, marriage and

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adoption behaviours.⁹ However the prevalent social darwinism in Western Europe had a growing echo in the Near East, so that racialist hierarchy between groups was latently gaining ground. Social barriers had to be respected in the Ottoman society, but they were built upon another discourse than racism, originally of a more religion-centred nature. Every group worried much about its self-perpetuation and about keeping others at distance. The potential exogamy of male Muslims destabilized the balance of intermarriage relationships. Since non-Muslim groups could never acquire a Muslim woman, Muslim males were seen as a latent threat to the collective perpetuation of all non-Muslim communities. At the end of the 19th century, and especially in an urban context, such misalliances were immediately known and fought against by the communities, regardless of the personal opinions of the women involved.¹⁰ In a rural context, tribal relations in such regions as Dersim, may have eased the socio-religious norms, making it possible for an established Armenian man to marry, after kidnapping her and bargaining with her upset family, a Kurdish girl.

Intimate family life had to be protected from possible observers or intruders from other religious groups. Especially at night, people were not welcome in residential areas, others than their own. This tacit rule meant that the city was partially unfamiliar to its inhabitants: for example, Armenians having to cross Greek-Orthodox residential areas needed guidance from a local resident to find their way.¹¹ Greek Orthodox streets were part of an intimate sphere, not all Armenians in Smyrna knew about. Without being unknown, these belonged to a grey zone for the majority of them. This example reveals that the barrier between groups did not merely run along clear-cut religious lines, such as Christianity vs. Islam, but also within the larger Christian group between the various denominations: an Apostolic Armenian was considered as an outsider by the Greek-orthodox group, even though maybe closer than a Muslim Turk. Armenian young men, present by the hundreds for seasonal work in Smyrna, had nothing to look for in Greek-orthodox populated areas.

These tacit provisions made contacts between males and females from different groups improbable in ethnic neighbourhoods. But Smyrna was not a static urban fabric.

The Quay: "Modernisation" of Space and Behaviours

The impact of capitalism on the city changed the urban space, to some extent. The construction of the *Quais* started in 1868 and was completed in 1876-77.¹² *Dussaud Frères*, a company based in Marseilles, created a new city extension jutting out over the sea. A new world and a new closeness were hence territorialized. Class tended to prevail over religious and ethnic background in the daily contacts among well-off Smyrniots, for whom exogamy was culturally more acceptable and practically more likely.

A Greek narrative even describes an improbable teenage flirt taking place in this area of the city, between a Greek-Orthodox boy and a highly educated Muslim

girl, who had just come back from Europe.¹³ The episode is supposed to happen in wartime Ottoman Smyrna. The superior social and educational level of the young lady, Melik hanım, and her family situation are supposed to make this episode plausible. She is the only daughter of a widowed father, who is a high-ranking officer in the Ottoman army, an institution well-known for its modernising effect on Turkish society. Because of the family pattern, she escapes to some extent the tight control of relatives. In the novel, she has presumably just arrived from Vienna, where she was taught to play the piano, and where she got accustomed of living unveiled, socially interacting with young men, and considering them as potential comrades. As a member of the higher layers of the Ottoman society, her father can afford living in an apartment within a modern building on the Quays. Melik hanım openly is also a proponent of progress and equality between sexes and ethnic groups. Some words of hers sound curiously contemporary of the Kemalist time. Still, the episode is allegedly *remembered* by the author, and somehow *confessed*, as if he had been breaking forbidden limits for both religious-national groups. The platonic affair had endangered him and the young lady as well, because mixed couples of this kind were just exactly what the embattled Ottoman society, as a whole, did not want in these years. I hardly believe this passage to be truly remembered, because I perceive families as almost all-mighty institutions in this geographical zone. A Turkish father would not easily abandon his daughter in an apartment, deprived of company, at the beginning of the 20th century. But it remains interesting to notice how the author told his story, incorporating in his narrative a bunch of necessary circumstances to make the scene credible and, by doing so, revealing social constraints among the late urban Ottomans.

Fulfilled Human Life: Getting Married, Norms and Practices

Marriage represented the normal course of adult human life in any Ottoman *millet*,¹⁴ though interestingly enough there were sociological *niches*, which permitted some people not to marry, as the celibate clergy for the Christians.¹⁵ Marriages should have as a result the procreation of heirs, that is of sons. Thus, family is at the centre of most of narratives, more or less autobiographical, written in Greek about the late Smyrna. To marry or be married to someone by one's father is a right of a maturing individual. Being deprived of a family by remaining single, for any reason, or because of one's deportation, is always depicted as a destitute and miserable situation. The individual in the Ottoman lands has to belong to a larger social unit, the family, under which there may not have been much social room.

In the censored press of the Hamidian period, articles about the preparation of the dowry were a recurrent theme.¹⁶ In times of political stalemate, everyday life concentrates on the private sphere, in all the groups. In the late 19th century, nationalism developed and the community élites developed discourses supporting endogamy, in order to assure the self-perpetuation of their ethnic or religious groups. However, the

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élites promoted greater social control on marriages, in order to prevent any possible exogamous unions: discursive barriers between the collective self and other groups were thus consistently re-erected. These were, of course, quite difficult to implement, especially when the group was small. The Armenian community, of Smyrna, which counted about 10,000 souls for many decades, fought hard to promote real endogamy, but to little avail. Educated people authored papers in *Aravelian Mamoul*, the liberal weekly of Smyrna Armenians, in order to strongly advocate internal marriages, depicting mixed alliances as something “impure” with a rich, derogatory, newly coined or re-motivated vocabulary.¹⁷ The word “mixed”, in all local languages, acquired a very derogatory connotation.

As a side effect of this, the strong emphasis put on endogamous marriages increased the desirability of having love-affairs with the other group. The beauty of the Other woman was a *topos* in Greek and Turkish language folk songs, as well as in Greek narratives. Many CDs have recently been published with older popular music in Greece. Some are devoted to the Other in Greek songs from the East, the Other being often the desirable, but out-of-reach, woman of a neighbouring, ethnic or religious, group.¹⁸ In Greek prose about Asia Minor, the figure of the Westerner is also an erotic element.¹⁹ In this respect, a reversed Orientalism among the locals directed towards the West is well attested. In Ilias Venezis’ autobiographical narrative, *Aeolian Earth*, the imagination of the young Greek-orthodox narrator is struck by the presence of Doris, the young Greek-Scottish wife, married by the heir of the most renowned local Greek-orthodox landlord. The narrator and his sister spy her. Her numerous talents as well as her fair complexion are envied.²⁰

In Kosmas Politis’ narrative, the central teenage figure is fascinated by Perla, the Jewish lady from the Heptanese. In this case, his interest strikes infringes on many regulations: Perla is already married and she belongs to a despised group. On the other hand, non-marital liaisons are supposed to take place with women from the other group. The pattern is until now much true in urban settings of the still plural Near East (Istanbul, Lebanon, Syria, etc.). Is this discourse a reflection on reality or on the practise of asserting, at any cost, one’s manliness? In Politis’ narrative, Pantelis should have a mistress, according to his pairs. The term used to designate this absent sexual partner is Turkish, *yavuklu*, implying that she may belong to the other group, or at least, that boys in Smyrna who spoke about sexuality, were referring to a living Turkish background rather than a Greek, re-hellenized one.

Women in Smyrna were famous in Europe, but also in the Near East and in the Greek world for being highly seductive and supposedly licentious in their behaviour.²¹ The iconography produced in Smyrna, that is photographs and especially postcards, played with this *topos*, be it in the form of the Oriental woman or of the elegant Europeanized lady, passing through a European looking street.²² Though this may not be a very accurate image, my assumption is that gender relations and sexuality in the

late urban Ottoman context differed sharply from Roman Catholicism norms as experienced in the West, in the same period.²³ Hence this place fascinated outsiders and newcomers from an erotic point of view. The cultural framework for sexuality was formed by several patterns and was not homogeneous in the city. Polygamy was legitimate among Muslims, even if it was limited in practice, especially in urban contexts.²⁴ Harems must have been the privilege, if this is one, of the very rich and the most powerful.

Greek-Orthodox individuals were allowed to divorce twice during their life. Though feminism may emphasise the differences between male and female rights as far as sexuality is concerned, some of my sources suggest that the practice among Greek-Orthodox people in Smyrna may have endowed girls and women with more liberty than expected.²⁵ At the beginning of the 1920's, teenage Greek-Orthodox girls would know how to find the right pastry-shop, *zacharoplasteion*, in order to meet in groups or rather to see boys of their age. Individual romance may not have been part of a normal evolution. Along the same lines, married Greek-Orthodox women could legitimately contemplate divorcing from a non-satisfactory husband.²⁶ This would be a subject of conversation between neighbours. Greek-Orthodox and Muslim women might have been less remote from one another as generally assumed.²⁷ In fact, I would assume that the idea of marriage as implying satisfying sex for both the husband and the wife was shared by the whole of the population, regardless of the religious communities.²⁸ Dissatisfaction of one of the partners was a socially reasonable ground for leaving the other, something I identify as a very earthly conception of marriage.²⁹ I would even go as far as suggesting that Islamic conceptions of sexuality harmonized, at least partly, with those of the neighbouring groups.

Plural ethnicity and non-marital sexuality

In many respects, Smyrna was a focal point in the Ottoman context. It was the most important port of Ottoman Anatolia and its real rebirth, after the conquest, during the 17th century, was due to its incomparable natural harbour, leading it to become a busy and rich city in the 18th century, mainly due to long-distance trade. It thus functioned as a magnet for many young Anatolian men of all ethnic backgrounds, who tried to come and work in Smyrna, at least for a season. This internal migration is known among former Ottoman subjects as *gurbet*. Smyrna was also a garrison city; hence many males with no family bounds would be gathered in the barracks. These three characteristics made Smyrna a gendered place, where the sexuality of non-married men had to be organised. Smyrna shared only partly the double moral standards of the Western *Belle-Époque*.³⁰ Brothels were numerous and venereal diseases were prevalent in the city.³¹ These two phenomena overlapped.³² It seems to me that there was less hypocrisy in the Ottoman lands on issues related to sexuality, despite the common condemnation of such an activity in the three monotheisms.³³

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Going to the brothel was the normal sexual initiation for males.³⁴ Male virginity was a matter of open mockery. There are literary testimonies about that phenomenon.³⁵ In his autobiographical novel, *In the District of Chatziphrangos*, Kosmas Politis, let the children laugh at the prudery of Pantelis, a teenager “*who still has not gone with a woman*” and refuses systematically to go to the place known as *Saint Constantine*, famous for its numerous whorehouses.³⁶ The other boys behave as if they were well acquainted with this reality. This initiation path is still valid in today’s Near Eastern cities, and I suppose that the situation of cities in inner Turkey is not different. The class factor may play a role too. Apart from the apparently Westernized middle classes, such patterns may still be very actual even in larger cities, maybe not only in Turkey or Syria.

Prostitution interacted with the religious and ethnic division of the population. Going to the brothel often meant possessing the women of the Other group.³⁷ The theme of ethnic otherness reappears once again in the context of gender. Prostitutes were always, at least in the written sources, members of another group. The procurer too was often some person belonging to another group. If the East is often seen as an alleged sensual place by Westerners, as Edward Said³⁸ has claimed, a careful social historian must also see that the opposite perception was, and still is, true. Western women were associated with prostitution and were supposed to be ‘easy’ conquests. Diplomatic archival material and literature bear the traces of some European female migration flux across the Mediterranean, in connection with sex work.³⁹

Open Violation of Norms and Outrage

Researchers are not always as well informed about practises which infringe on rules and regulations as on these latter. I think there is a heuristic value of such breaks of norms in gendered interethnic relations. Abuses, as far as known and traceable, reveal something about the dead angles of a society, whose functioning is not to be found in prescriptive texts. I will here speak only about two examples in normal peace time and then about a major outburst of violence, even though of symbolic nature, which took place in 1914.

I found quite a few examples of abuses perpetrated on children, especially on orphans. The regulations of the Greek orphanage at Smyrna even forbid the presence of an isolated adult, even the teaching staff, with children, acknowledging thus the potential danger of such proximity. The first example is that of a foreigner in charge of the education of destitute children, which ill-treated some of them. A Levantine of Dutch origin, Bishop Ferken, himself a native from Smyrna, abused young Armenian girls, in 1898.⁴⁰ The Armenian Apostolic community kept an eye on its orphans and the scandal is known through this flexible but efficient control. In fact, the Oriental Christians were always cautious about missionary work from the West. The conversion of one of their members, be it by marriage, was seen as a potential threat to the

perennially of the group. Another example deals with two unmarried persons of Western origins.⁴¹ A physician and a nurse at the English Hospital were suspected of having an affair and were thus swiftly suspended by the British Consul at Smyrna. The morals of the *Belle-Époque* applied to some circles of the local population. The example is almost not to be understood today, because of the radical shift in values and norms. It is telling that such scandals involved only Westerners in interaction, if one may say, with the local people. New-comers or religious outsiders were especially controlled in their private life. They fell out the normal network of the nuclear or extended family and were a latent threat to the social gendered and ethnic order of the city.

The urban fabric of Smyrna was not as clearly divided along ethnic or religious lines as 19th century cartography wanted to fix things. The modernization of the city but also its complicated past made mixed areas possible. For instance, in the Turkish area there was a Greek-Orthodox parish close to the Saint-John church. Such an interweaving made people vulnerable in case of politicisation of ethnicity, much on the agenda in the late 19th century.⁴² The alien pockets were endangered by the majority group which could attack women and children, though open violence on the streets in Smyrna was very seldom, compared to the situation in Anatolia and Ottoman Armenia.

The violence between groups in the Ottoman context, after the Balkan Wars and on the eve of the First World War, had a highly gendered nature. In March 1914, a Turkish mob came into houses and kissed non-Turkish women. The gendered dimension of the violence committed is to be put in relation with the violence suffered elsewhere, and the violence used by the nationalist propaganda to mobilise people in the remaining Ottoman territories. The French diplomatic archives are replete of Turkish nationalist leaflets and engravings representing Turkish women and "virgins" (a favourite wording of this time) being raped by Christians, in the lost territories to the benefit of new Balkan Christian States: Macedonia and Thrace. What strikes me is the acceptance by the local population of violence patterns, allegedly already perpetrated elsewhere. The idea of necessary retaliation eased moral barriers to fall.

Men of the neighbouring group are not considered as equally manly as those of one's own community. This is combined with the fact that active homosexuality is not really infamous in the late Ottoman Empire.⁴³ The Turkish language differentiates very carefully between active and passive roles: respectively *kulanpara* and *ibne*.⁴⁴ Same-sex erotic attraction is a *topos* in narratives or even songs by Ottoman or formerly Ottoman subjects, pertaining to all groups: narratives of Kazantzakis⁴⁵, songs in Turkish and performed by Armenian artists, like Kanuni Garbis, in New York.⁴⁶ These are renowned personalities and this implies that the subject was part of the mainstream Ottoman and Post-ottoman erotic culture. There is, of course, a welcome dissociation of the artist from the topic, thanks to the ethnic border, between him and the person involved. This dissociation is often at the very core of actual transgressions.⁴⁷ But in spite of shared moral canons (The Torah, hence the Old Testament and the

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Koran condemn these practises), an author's attention was attracted by this dimension of human Eros.

When Smyrna was conquered by the Kemalist troops, sexual violence was committed in all forms. An 18-year-old man, born in Ayvalı, (150 km, north of Smyrna) and retained for forced-labour, Ilias Venezis includes in his famous narrative about his detention time in Anatolia, the constant fear for young men to be turned to sexual objects of victorious soldiers.⁴⁸ About Smyrna proper, there are scenes of homosexual rapes in Didô Sôtiriou's *Matômena Chômata*.⁴⁹ The author, born in Aydın in 1911, was known for her liberalism in sexual matters, and therefore, there is little chance that she indulged in disparaging the conquerors, using similar accusations if unfounded. I would not argue about the fact that this form of violence has something specific to the area, but rather that testimonies and repeated allusions are, at first glance more numerous in the Ottoman or Post-Ottoman case. According to Becker and Audouin-Rouzeau, no comparable testimonies are to be found on the Western front.⁵⁰ And therefore I would imply, that indeed sexuality, in most respects, do not have the same place in both cultural zones.

Rape has the particularity of imposing shame on the victim, not the perpetrator, being thus effective in devastating the self-esteem of one human group.⁵¹ It certainly implied the social death of the woman and more certainly of the man submitted to such a treatment, in the Ottoman society or in the heir countries. Angèle Kourtian, a Greek-language autobiographer from Asia Minor, describes the former victim of a rape during the conquest of Smyrna, as a thoroughly dishonest woman. The Armenian refugee community in Athens in the 1930s, had conservative and oppressive views about raped persons, denying them any status of victim and at least indulgence.⁵² Similarly, according to Panait Istrati's narrative structure, Stavros, one of the male characters in *Kyra Kyralina*, was just doomed to become an outcast, though he was first a victim of a rich Turk from Constantinople, Nazim Efendi.⁵³ Once again we find in this text, crossing ethnic boundaries depicted as perilous for the sexual integrity of individuals and groups, in many respects: Stavros' first real name is Dragomir, he is kidnapped and detained by a Turk, in remote Constantinople.⁵⁴ In his recent study about the specificities of genocidal violence against children, the historian, Vahakn N. Dadrian, recently insisted on the frequency of such rapes, made instrumental in the annihilation of the Armenian people during the 1st World War.⁵⁵ Such children could simply not be imagined as family heads, after such an experience, the only perspective of human life.

The ethnic division makes the gender-lines more complicated, as if ethno-religious groups could multiply genders, jeopardizing the basic dual setting. Women of diverse groups did, at some places, and did not share, at others, the same baths at the same time. Special days in the week for Christian and Muslim women, at least this is the way informants of the Centre for Asia Minor Studies remember practising the *hamam*

in Smyrna, as if, in their memory, such a closeness to women of the other group was slightly indecent.⁵⁶

It seems that any indecent behaviour was attributed to another group, as if the others were closer to animality than one's own community. On a more general level, I would suggest that this is the deep meaning of maintaining community boundaries, the belief in one's special participation to mankind. The vocabulary describing non-marital sexual relationship is often borrowed from the language of the other. In still non homogeneous cities of the Near East until today, Armenians refer to the *dost* of a man, irrespective of her alleged ethnic identity, which should be non Armenian, using thereby a Turkish word of Persian origin. Turkish expresses then moral disapproval, but also envy. In Western Armenian, there are supposedly no 'bad words', and people tend to use Turkish for such realities, dissociating themselves from these. Insults referring to sexuality are often borrowed from another language: "*siktir!*" seems to be part of the minimal *lingua franca* from the Balkans to the Caucasus.⁵⁷

As a conclusion: Gender relations and multi-ethnicity interfered greatly in late Ottoman urban contexts like Smyrna, in peaceful times as well as in outbursts of violence, which eventually destroyed the city. Multi-ethnicity was endangering the self-centeredness of each group, but was also questioning the clear-cut divisions between genders.

This topic is still a field for further research. Private life and intimacy are the ignored sides of history in the region, from the Balkans to the Caucasus, about which heroic narratives about national destinies have been long enough favoured by historians rather than everyday life.⁵⁸

Notes:

¹ H. Georgelin, « Smyrne à la fin de l'Empire ottoman : un cosmopolitisme si voyant », in *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, (Nice: CMMC n° 68, under press: June 2004).

² I prefer this word to 'community'. Its simplicity evokes the possible fluidity of social and ethnic boundaries. Cf. Barth Fredrik, *Ethnic groups and boundaries: the social organization of culture difference*, (Oslo: Pensumtjeneste, 1994).

³ At the beginning of the 20th century, there were about 300,000 inhabitants in Smyrna, according to the German consul, Mordtmann, who apparently based his estimation on the official *salname*. (DJB-6 715, *Yearly Business Reports of the Imperial Consulate at Smyrna*, T. 4, I.08-II.14, sent from Smyrna, on 18.XI.09, by the Imperial Consul Mordtmann to the Imperial Chancellor, von Bethmann-Hollweg.) He divided the population according to the religious and the political status of inhabitants: 245,000 Ottoman subjects were residents, among whom 90,000 Muslims, 110,000 Greek-orthodox, 30,000 Ottoman Jews, and 15,000 Ottoman Armenians. Among the 55,000 foreigners established in the city, there were 30,000 Hellenic citizens, 10,000 Italians, 2,000 French, 1,200 British and 10,000 other Europeans. The Greek-Orthodox group was at least a plurality in the city, totalizing 140,000 people out of a total of 300,000, while the

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Turkish group was in the minority. In 1914, the trend was reinforced in the whole *sancak*, according to the 1915 edition of the *Annuaire Oriental*, which evaluated the population in Smyrna at 500,000 inhabitants, counting 30% Turks, 64% Greeks, 4% Jews, 2% Armenians, and some 2,000 "foreigners". In absolute terms, Smyrna was an unfaithful city and a highly plural one.

⁴ Kosmas Politis, *Stou Chatziphrangou*, (Athens: Hermis ; 1990, 1st edition by instalments: Tachydromos, 1962) p. 75. (In Greek).

⁵ Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères Français [AMAÉF], Turkey, Home Politics, Asia Minor, Vol. 68, 1905-1907, folio n°10, 19th August 1905, diplomatic dispatch n°15, *Armenian Plot at Smyrna*, from the French General Consulate to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁶ The *Hay Heghapokhagan Tashnagtsoutioun* was created in 1890-92, in Tiflis. Its ideology articulates vibrant nationalism and socialist views. It embarked on a terrorist course in the late 1890's, much after the pattern of the Bulgarian nationalist movement. It supported the Young-Turkish *Committee of Union and Progress*, from 1908 until 1915. Cf. www.arfd.am

⁷ Paul J. Magnarella, *Tradition and Change in Turkish Town*, (New York, Schenkman Publishing Co., 1974), pp. 43-45, quoted in Emelie A. Olson, «Duofocal family Structure and an Alternative Model of Husband-Wife Relationships », pp. 33-72, in Çiğdem Kâğıtçıbaşı (ed.), *Sex Roles, Family, & Community in Turkey*, (Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 1982)

⁸ Zeev Sterhell, *La droite révolutionnaire, 1885-1914, les origines françaises du fascisme*. (Paris: Gallimard, 1997/Fayard, 2000). Cf. Chapter III: "Déterminisme, racisme et nationalisme", quotation of Henri Taine, p. 171 : « *Ce qu'on appelle la race, ce sont ces dispositions innées et héréditaires que l'homme apporte avec lui à la lumière, et qui ordinairement sont jointes à des différences marquées dans le tempérament et dans la structure du corps. Elles varient selon les peuples.* », H. Taine, *Histoire de la littérature anglaise*. Paris, Hachette, 1883-1865, Vol. 1, p. xxiii.

⁹ Rachel F. Moran, *Interracial Intimacy, The Regulation of Race and Romance*, (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001).

¹⁰ AMAÉF, Correspondence on Trade and Politics, New Series n° 67, folio n°128, diplomatic dispatch of the Consul General of France to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, from Smyrna, Sept. 13, 1901, n° 32, (Series B, box 74, file 8), « *Difficulties between the Orthodox Metropolitite and the Vali of Smyrna* ».

¹¹ Mgrdich Toqajian, "Tsoutsagan Kordzouneoutioun", p. 84, in *Hayrenik*, monthly, (Boston: Vol. 38, n° 9, September 1960), (in Armenian). After the failure of the planned terrorist attacks, Armenian revolutionaries, in fact mere exalted amateur young people, had to rely on the help of local Greek-Orthodox friends or exceptionally informed local Armenians to find a safe way out of the city. Such a political cooperation between the groups was the exception and not the norm in Ottoman times. When it occurred though, the Ottoman police had a very hard time to prevent political radical actions. But this efficiency was not really noticed by the people in question. Ethnic boundaries defeated political cleverness.

¹² Georgiadès D., *Smyrne et l'Asie Mineure au point de vue économique et commercial*, (Paris: Imprimerie et Librairies centrales des chemins de fer, Imprimerie Chaix, 1885). See « L'établissement des Quais et des droits de quai à Smyrne », pp. 154-163 and « Annexes au tarif des droits de quai de la ville de Smyrne (19 VII.83) », pp. 174-177.

¹³ Christos Manólis, *Beyler Sokak*, (Athènes, 1966), (in Greek).

¹⁴ Ayşe Saraçgil, *Il maschio camaleonte, Strutture patriarcali nell'Impero ottomano e nella Turchia moderna* (Milan: Mondadori, 2001), p. 30: "Responsibility, the main requirement of manhood, was acquired through marriage."

¹⁵ The Armenian Apostolic and the Greek Orthodox churches have a much different attitude toward sexuality than the Roman Catholic one. It is a prerequisite for a regular priest to be married before entering his functions. However, clergymen have to be monks and hence to have pronounced the vow of celibacy, in order to climb the hierarchical ladder in the church. Under normal conditions, only monks may become *metropolités* or patriarchs.

¹⁶ See *Arevelian Mamoul, Smyrna*, (in Armenian).

¹⁷ H. Georgelin, "Être arménien dans une société plurielle : Le cas de la Smyrne ottomane tardive", in *Actes du Colloque, CNRS-EFA, « Diasporas »*, (Paris & Athens : École Française d'Athènes, to be published in 2004).

¹⁸ *Greek Archives, Vol. 8: Armenians, Jews, Turks & Gipsies in Old Recordings*, (Athens: FM Records, November 1995).

¹⁹ Ilias Venezis, *Aioliki Gi*, (Athens: Hestia, 1996 (37th edition)), (in Greek).

²⁰ The European woman may be imported to these Anatolian shores, I would suggest that the contrary would not fit easily into the cultural imagery of the time, the frame of a narrative being the continuity of the husband's family.

²¹ Andonios Dalgas (performer), "Mia Smyrnia stin Kokkinia", Athens, 12th May 1931, in *Great Voices of Constantinople*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Rounder Records Corp., 1997). The district of Athélns referred to in this love song was inhabited by refugees from Asia Minor. The beloved woman is only described by her place of origin, she is a *Smyrnia*. This label seems to sufficiently evoke charm and sensuality, reinforced by the use of Turkish words: "Come here my sweet *Smyrnia meraklou/ So I can make you my own yavouklou*". (merakli: jovial, generous and expert about pleasures in life)

²² Cf. an interpretation of the postcard, "Rue franque" in H. Georgelin, « Smyrne à la fin de l'Empire ottoman, ... », art. cit.

²³ Jean-Louis Flandrin, *Le sexe et l'Occident, Évolution des attitudes et des comportements*, (Paris: Seuil, 1981). Cf. Chapter 6: "La doctrine chrétienne du mariage, À propos d'un livre de John T. Noonan", pp. 101-108, & Chapter 14: "Répression et changement dans la vie sexuelle des jeunes", pp. 279-299.

²⁴ Alan Duben & Cem Behar, *Istanbul Households*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

²⁵ Eder Franz X., Hall Lesley A. & Hekma Gert, *Sexual Cultures in Europe, National Histories*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 7: « Notwithstanding [the conservatism of Orthodox churches] women had always a relatively strong position ».

²⁶ Kosmas Politis, *Stou Chatziphragou*, (Athens, Hermis, 1963), (in Greek).

²⁷ Kosmas Politis, *op. cit.*

²⁸ Kosmas Politis, *op. cit.*

²⁹ Ayşe Saraçgil, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-35: "One of the most important causes which enabled a woman to ask for divorce was the sexual impotence of the man."

³⁰ Philippe Ariès & Georges Duby (dir.), *Histoire de la vie privée, T. IV, De la Révolution à la Grande Guerre*, Paris: Seuil, 1987.

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³¹ Birge J. K., (dir.), *A Survey of some Social Conditions in Smyrna, Asia Minor*, (Smyrna, May 1921).

³² Snell Sara & Forsythe Margaret, "Recreation", in *A Survey ...*, *op. cit.*

³³ While Ayşe Saraçgil, *op. cit.*, argues that, p. 18 : "Islam does not conceive the body as the place of sin, exactly as it does not conceive sexuality neither as illegitimate nor sinful.", Malek Chebel, *Encyclopédie de l'amour en Islam*, (Paris : Payot, 1995, 2003 (paper back edition used)), Vol. II, p. 237, reminds us that: "La prostitution est perçue comme une débauche morale et physique inexpiable et dont il faut se protéger."

³⁴ Malek Chebel, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-238 : « Aen croire les historiens, la prostitution a accompagné le développement des villes turques. Ainsi sous le règne de Sélim II (XV^e siècle), certaines courtisanes ont acquis une célébrité comparable à celle des poètes. Des maisons publiques recrutent des Grecques, des Juives, des Arméniennes, des Circassiennes, voire des Européennes et même [sic] des musulmanes (Syriennes, Iraniennes ou Turques). D'autres femmes, libres, prostituées, s'établissent dans les cabarets, ou des boutiques de kaymakdji (vendeurs de crème fraîche). À la fin du XVI^e siècle, les quartiers les plus mal famés sont ceux de Galata, Tophané et Eyoub. »

³⁵ Kosmas Politis, *op. cit.*

³⁶ Kosmas Politis, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

³⁷ Gaston Deschamps, *Sur les routes d'Asie* (Paris : Armand Colin, 1894), pp. 172-173.

³⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978).

³⁹ AMAÉF, Turkey, Home Affairs, Asia Minor, Vol. 70, 1910-1914.

⁴⁰ AMAÉF, Turkey, Home Politics, Asia Minor, Vol. 67, 1897-1903, folio n° 41, General Consulate of France at Smyrna to Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris, 24 June 1898, diplomatic dispatch n°11, "Scandal in a sewing room of the American Bible Society".

⁴¹ *Ibidem.*

⁴² AMAÉF, Turkey, Home Affairs, Asia Minor, Vol. 70, 1910-1914, Smyrna, 3rd March 1914, diplomatic dispatch n°16, folio n° 127, "Anti-Christian Demonstrations at Smyrna".

⁴³ Interview of Philippe Blacher, sociologist, by Kürşad Oğuz, "Yeni Jöntürkler: Eşcinseller", in *Aktüel* (Istanbul : n° 334, December 3, 1997) : "In the 17th century [...] the city was full of köçek (homosexual dancers) and of tellak (private masseurs in hamams). These two professional categories (one in entertainment, the other in hygiene) were in touch with the whole male population. [...] With the establishment of the Republic, köçek were forbidden, and tellak dispersed. They were indeed, in the Republicans' eyes, real traces of Ottoman culture and incompatible with the belonging to the West, the leaders of that time favoured."

⁴⁴ Yiğithan Yenicioğlu, "Gay identities, communities and places in the 1990s in Istanbul", in *Cultural Studies Courses* (Istanbul: The British Council, 1997).

<http://www.grd.org/grd/www/world/europe/turkey/study.htm>

⁴⁵ Nikos Kazantzakis, *Ho Christos xanastavrónetai*, 1948. The Turkish ağa of the Anatolian village depicted in this narrative is a pederast.

⁴⁶ Kanuni Garbis (performer), "Güvende Havası", in *Armenians on 8th Avenue*, compact disc, (New York: Harold G. Hagopian, 1996). According to H. Hagopian's leaflet, Kanuni Garbis (1885-1969) had performed at the court for Sultan Abdülhamit II and played in musical groups with the most renowned musicians. He was in the inner circle of Armenian intellectuals and musicians of Istanbul, frequently premiering the works of his colleagues. He was a master of

kanun, but also had a powerful voice. He was ordained as a deacon to serve as the soloist for the Armenian Apostolic Patriarch Maghia Ormanian of Constantinople.

⁴⁷ Ph. Blacher, "The development and the emergence of an identity based on sexual relevance in Turkey" in MESA Congress of Chicago, *Urban Collapse and Social Changes in Today's Istanbul*, December 1998: "Male prostitution in Bursa and Istanbul was mainly practiced by young men from colonies subject to Ottoman rule. It was possible to find a large number of Balkan and Albanese young men among the prostitutes, who had come to Istanbul attracted by its cultural, political and economic shining. Many had obviously come to take part in the prostitution trade as a main reason. These foreign communities had to share this kind of activities, even if on a lesser scale, with Greek, Jew, Armenian and Levantine young men, all of whom were already settled in Istanbul."

<http://www.geocities.com/Paris/9440/mesa.htm>

⁴⁸ Ilias Venezis, *To Noumero 3/328* (Athens: Hestia Editions, 1931), (in Greek).

⁴⁹ Didó Sôtiriou, *Matômena Chômata*, (Athens: Kedros, 1962), (in Greek).

⁵⁰ Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau & Annette Becker, *14-18, Retrouver la guerre*, (Paris: Gallimard, 2000).

⁵¹ Georges Vigarello, *Histoire du viol XVI^e-XX^e siècles*, (Paris : Seuil, 1998).

⁵² H. Georgelin, « La fin de la société ottomane polyethnique dans les récits en grec », in *Études Balkaniques*, Cahiers Pierre Belon (Paris : Association Pierre Belon, n° 9, « L'Autre dans le Sud-Est Européen », 2002).

⁵³ Panait Istrati, *Kyra Kyralina*, (Paris, 1924).

⁵⁴ 1884, Brăila – 1935, Bucarest

⁵⁵ Vahakn N. Dadrian, "Children as Victims of Genocide: The Armenian Case", pp. 421-437, in *Journal of Genocide Research*, 5, n° 3 (September 2003). Quotation, p. 428, of Jacob Künzler, *Im Lande des Blutes und der Tränen: Erlebnisse in Mesopotamien während des Weltkrieges* (Berlin-Potsdam: Tempel Verlag, 1921; Zurich: Chronos, 1999): "nobody can imagine the magnitude of crimes of unnatural sex inflicted upon hundreds, yes thousands, of Armenian boys."

⁵⁶ Center for Asia Minor Studies, Archives of the Oral Tradition, Karantina, IÖN 16, interview of Athanasia Katsivani, born in Smyrna, in 1892 approximately, interviewed by Alexis Kyritsopoulos, folio n° 12.

⁵⁷ 'Hai sictir!' is in use in Romanian though becoming more seldom. 'sikter!' is in use in Serbian, as an archaism. It is also in use in Armenian (in the Near East) and in Greek, especially among males.

⁵⁸ Michelle Perrot, in Philippe Ariès & Georges Duby, *Histoire de la vie privée*, (Paris : Seuil, 1987), p. 9 et p. 13. « Au seuil du privé, l'historien – tel un bourgeois victorien – a longtemps hésité, par pudeur, incompetence et respect du système de valeurs qui faisait de l'homme public le héros et l'acteur de la seule histoire qui vaille d'être contée : la grande histoire des États, des économies et des sociétés. / Pour dire qu'il y pénètre enfin, il a fallu que, par un renversement de l'ordre des choses, le privé devienne autre qu'une zone maudite, interdite et obscure : le lieu plein de nos délices et de nos esclavages, de nos conflits et de nos rêves ; le centre, peut-être provisoire, de notre vie, enfin reconnu, visité et légitimé. Le privé : une expérience de notre temps. [...] Car, au-delà de toute anecdote, l'histoire de la vie privée est aussi l'histoire politique du quotidien. »

Резюме

Изследването представя факти от публичния живот и обвързването му в определени социални норми в град Смирна (Турция). Статията разглежда обществения живот на градския конгломерат в периода от края на XIX и началото на XX век. Интересът именно към тази епоха е мотивиран не само поради факта, че в Смирна е концентрирана голяма част от търговския и социален живот на страната тогава, но и поради струпването на много и различни етнически групи там – турци, гърци, арменци, българи и т. н. Особено внимание е отделено на социалните норми и регулацията в социалното общуване между различните етноси, както и междуполовите отношения във всяка от посочените групи. Поставен е и въпросът за „другостта“ и нейното възприемане.

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