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Burkay Pasin

Department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design, Yaşar University, İzmir, Turkey
burkay.pasin@yasar.edu.tr

Revisiting Homosociality and Homosocial Spaces in Pre-Modern Ottoman Society

Abstract: This paper examines diverse conceptions of homosociality in pre-modern and modern societies, and discusses how these conceptions are politically, socially, culturally and spatially constructed and transformed throughout history, particularly during the modernization processes of the mid-19th century. Concentrating on two significant homosocial spaces, men's coffeehouse and women's section of the Ottoman-Turkish baths, it aims to demonstrate how homosociality is spatialized through the dissolution of the public/private dichotomy, as well as constructions of functionality in pre-modern Ottoman society. The paper follows a historical interpretative research methodology. Based on data derived from the second-hand sources available in the literature, the privatized public, complex, homoerotic and multi-functional characteristics of these homosocial spaces and their extensions towards and reflections on the Ottoman urban neighborhoods are critically analyzed and interpreted. The dissolution of the public/private dichotomy in these spaces also exemplifies the Foucaultian concept of heterotopia. The paper concludes that these traditional spaces and their modern versions demonstrate the constructedness of both gender categories and patriarchal structures.

Keywords: homosociality, homosocial space, public/private, functionality, heterotopia

Introduction

The concept of homosociality, which basically signifies socialization among individuals of same sex and the exclusion of those of the opposite, is a complicated phenomenon by nature. It has not only varied among different cultural geographies, but also gone through a conceptual and operational transformation as a result of modernization. The binary structures of public man/private woman, publicity/domesticity, homo/hetero, as well as modern gender categories of homosexual, heterosexual, bisexual, etc., did not strictly exist in pre-modern societies, especially in those based on religious norms. However, while the sexual binary of man/woman is religiously – and legal-

ly in some societies – based on these norms, gender conceptions and daily practices in pre-modern societies are far beyond them (Yalur 2013, 68). Until the mid-19th century, homosocial relations and practices in Ottoman society challenged the values of public production and domestic reproduction attributed to man and woman, emerging within the blurred boundaries between urban neighborhoods, residents and workplaces. Hence, examining the spatial reflections of homosociality in pre-modern Ottoman society provides us with a useful case to comprehend the historical, social and geographical constructedness of gender identities and norms.

Homosocial spaces in pre-modern Ottoman society reflected a hybrid, intertwined and heterotopic character shaped by solidarity networks, political debates and various forms of homoerotic desire. While spaces like coffeehouses, bachelor rooms, taverns, barber shops, gardens and workplaces strengtehened the social, cultural and sexual bonds between men, with their physical and functional proximity in the urban environment, the women's section of the Ottoman-Turkish baths functioned as an extension of the female venues of domestic space, namely the harem and the kitchen. Among the homosocial spaces of both sexes, coffeehouses and hammams, on which this paper concentrates, are significant in two aspects. First, they provide their users with a privatized public environment where the binaries of public/private, homo/hetero, production/reproduction are subverted, as well as a multi-functional space, constructed to conceal the intimate same-sex relations and homoerotic desire among its users. Second, they are the only homosocial spaces, the counterparts of which still exist in various forms, reflecting a historical and cultural continuum, yet having transformed to conform to modern gender norms.

This paper concentrates on men's coffeehouses and the women's section of the Ottoman-Turkish bath as homosocial spaces which challenge religion– and state-oriented gender norms legitimizing reproductive sexuality while conforming to an asymmetrical patriarchal hierarchy. Based on the few relevant sources available in the literature, it provides a critical insight into the concept of homosociality and how it is spatialized in the Ottoman urban environment. In the first section, with reference to the American scholar Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's conceptions of vertical and horizontal homosociality, it discusses the effects of patriarchal hierarchy on these conceptions, and how it differs between the homosocial practices of pre-modern and modern societies. In the second and third sections, it examines the two significant homosocial spaces, coffeehouse and the Turkish bath, and presents how they have challenged modernist aspects of public/private and functionality, respectively. The paper concludes that these two homosocial spaces and their modern versions demonstrate the constructedness of both gender categories and patriarchal structures.

Conceptions of Homosociality

Homosociality (n): of, relating to, or involving social relationships between persons of the same sex and especially between men (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary).

This seemingly simple definition of homosociality actually reflects a complicated conception that hybridizes sexual segregation and a patriarchal hierarchy, respectively a "horizontal homosociality" signifying "relations that are based on emotional closeness, intimacy, and a nonprofitable form of friendship", and a "vertical homosociality" as "a means of strengthening power and of creating close homosocial bonds to maintain and defend hegemony" (Hammarén and Johansson 2014, 5). It implicitly associates homosociality with hegemonic masculinity, as "a mechanism and social dynamic that explains the maintenance of hegemonic masculinity, situating gender relations within a reasonably stable power structure" (Hammarén and Johansson 2014, 2). In other words, the patriarchal conception of homosociality "tends to simplify and reduce homosociality to an almost descriptive term that is used to show how men bond, build closed teams, and defend their privileges and positions" (Hammarén and Johansson 2014, 1). This patriarchal duality of homosociality is considered by Sedgwick, an asymmetry between male and female homosociality: "male homosociality is first and foremost fashioned through the exchange of women and the consolidation of men's power in society, whereas for women, this sharp cleavage between homosociality and homosexuality is not that distinct, clear, and stable" (Hammarén and Johansson 2014, 5).

Sedgwick (1990) provides an argument on the two contradictory views of gender through which same-sex desire could be understood: inversion and separatism. From the point of view of inversion, same-sex desire is considered as a desire within which "an essential *heterosexuality*" is preserved so that it "subsists in the current that runs between one male self and one female self, in whatever sex of bodies these selves may be manifested" (Sedgwick 1990, 87). In contrast, the separatist view proposes that "people of the same gender [...] whose economic, institutional, emotional, physical needs and knowledge may have so much in common" naturally bond together "on the axis of sexual desire" (Sedgwick 1990, 87). Sedgwick (1990, 88) further explains this contradiction by highlighting that the separatist models depend on the "continuum of male and female homosocial desire" by reassimilating to one another whereas the "inversion models, by contrast, depend on their distinctness". Hence, the separatist models suggest that same-sex desire does not simply rest on the realization of same-sex activities by an arbitrary group of people but necessitates a shared sociality among a specified group who have more commonalities than sexual identity, such as cultural rituals, socio-economic similarities and/or hierarchies, ethnic bonds, etc.

Such a conception of homosociality, not merely reduced to tropes of an essential homoeroticism and sexual intercourse, challenges the modernist constructions of not only reproductive sexuality (man/woman), but also homosexuality as a distinct identity category (homo/hetero). In modern societies that conform to those binaries, homosexuality and homoeroticism are conceptualized as by– or end-products of homosocial relations, concealed behind the particular social act itself, described by the Danish sociologist Henning Bech (1997, 84) as an "absent homosexuality" which "can only be comprehended in its relation to the other pole in the modern form of male-male eroticism, i.e. the homosexuals, in its simultaneous connection to and demarcation from them". Since the invention of modern gender categories such as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, monosexual, etc., in the late 19th century (Katz 1995, 52), this association of homosociality with eroticism and sexual intercourse has been the underlying conception of West-oriented populist and orientalist discourses, represented and (re)constructed in various genres of art and literature.

By contrast, in pre-modern societies, especially those based on religious norms and values, homoerotic desire is an integral component of homosociality, which is constructed through solidarity networks, socio-cultural hierarchies, power structures, as well as cultural gatherings and rituals. The oldest example of the coexistence of homosociality and homoeroticism is seen in the ancient Greek culture, in which the exposition of naked men exercising and socializing together in gymnasiums, represents the desired, the ideal and the political body (Yılmazlı 2020, 45). A more complicated version of this coexistence can be seen in pre-modern Ottoman-Turkish society. It is evident in sources of Ottoman art and literature that until the mid-19th century, homoerotic desire had not been considered an abnormal behaviour in Ottoman society, and took various forms of sexual discourses and practices, emancipated from predetermined functional typologies, as well as modern binaries of public/private and homo/hetero. For instance, the Israeli historian Dror Ze'evi (2008, 43) analyzes such discourses in three types of cultural production, medical treatises, shadow theater plays, and erotic books, in which an attitude towards sexuality "that could be characterized as pleasure-bound, male-oriented, and practically uninhibited by religion or morality" is examined.

Under the effects of a West-oriented modernization, followed by urban and socio-political transformations and centralization processes in the mid-19th century, the conception of homosociality in Ottoman-Turkish society had been strictly eliminated from discourses and practices of homoeroticism. All these processes, according to the Turkish political scientist İrem Özgören Kınlı (2013, 382), "led to a profound transformation of categories of gender, new balance of desires, powers and tensions between women and men". Kınlı (2013, 382) asserts that "as a result of bureaucratic reforms, homosexual practices lost any

public legitimacy by appearing in the guise of the homosociality". This signifies a conceptual paradox in the history of homosociality, which is simultaneously integrated with and segragated from homoeroticim and homosexuality, on the basis of modernist gender norms.

The Dissolution of Public/Private in Homosocial Spaces

In a post-structuralist perspective, public and private cannot be considered fixed categories but unstable signifiers that can be interrelated freely from their normative signifieds. In other words, a public space may be privatized to certain degrees depending on daily spatial practices, sense of morality as well as the matter of time.

Modernist discourse has long benefited from the dual conception of homosociality, associating gender segregation with the private/public dichotomy. Even the early critical scholars of gender, i.e. the feminists of the 1970s, considered this association as a causal relation between women's lack of power and a preponderance of women in the domestic sphere and men in extra-domestic spheres. They believed that women were nearly universally confined to the private sphere, which prevented their access to authority, prestige and cultural values, as the prerogatives of men who competed for these sources of power in the public sphere. The American feminist anthropologist Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo (1974) relates this distinction between the public man and the private woman as an assignment of roles and spaces based on women's motherhood. While women become absorbed primarily in domestic activities due to their role as mothers, men are free to engage in extra-domestic activities linking households to society at large. As a result, women are identified with domestic life and men with public life, through which homosocial segregation is linked with this spatial segregation.

These essentialist and modernist views on the public man and the private woman distinction are challenged with respect to the construction of homosociality in pre-modern Ottoman-Turkish society. The American historian Alan Mikhail (2014, 145) explains this lack of distinction as follows: "Space within Ottoman neighbourhoods was fluid and overlapping and should not be understood in terms of divisions and distinctions". The coffeehouses of the 18th century, which had been an inseparable part of the Ottoman urban geography, exemplify such a hybrid homosocial space for men, "where the rules of normal (public) space do not apply" (Mikhail 2014, 169). Mikhail (2014, 139) relates the popularity and rapid spreading of the coffeehouses to their economic efficiency, stating that they were one of the most affordable and profitable building

types in new Ottoman neighborhoods along with dwellings. In a critical approach to the Habermasian claim for the strict separation of public spaces from the private home, Mikhail (2014, 135–136) further conceptualizes Ottoman coffeehouses as privatized public venues, which were simulatenously "domestic spaces, places of business and leisure, an extension of the street or market, a venue of entertainment, a space of courtship, an arena of communication, a place in which to read and a realm of distraction".

The privatized public character of the coffeehouses is also constructed through discursive practices in the form of informal gossips and homoerotic poetry during which femininity was an integral part of this masculine space (Mikhail 2014, 137). Contrary to the belief that these practices are feminine in nature, they emerged in the coffeehouses to strenghten the solidarity networks among men of various ages, ethicities and socio-economic status. The French Protestant apothecary Philippe Sylvestre Dufour (1685) considers the coffeehouse a primary locus of gossiping, stating that "with this ... this Drink, which they [the Turks] call *Cahue*, they divert themselves in their Conversations... sometimes the space of seven or eight hours". In predominantly non-gendered Ottoman literature and poetry, Sufi erotic poetry distinguishes itself with its grammatical, symbolic and rhetorical peculiarity in which metaphorical love and homoeroticism becomes a significant expression of spiritualism within Islam. There are numerous verses that exemplify such expressions of homoeroticism, some of which are as follows: "A man of pleasure always has coffee." by Kâmì; "Coffee with its being the ornament of every meeting and council, is the white face of the elderly and helper of the younger in their passion." and "Coffee is the drink of the wisdom lovers." by Kânì; "No mercy comes from a beloved one that does not offer a cup of coffee to her lover." by İlhâmì (Durmaz 2010).

The Ottoman-Turkish bath, especially its women's section, provided a similar homosocial atmosphere to the coffeehouses in terms of penetration of the private into the public. Female homosociability in the *hamam* can be conceptualized threefold: "(1) as a cultural space of female reproductivity and domesticity, (2) as a representational space of femininity, (3) as a feminotopia of female autonomy, empowerment and pleasure" (Pasin 2012, 58). Yet, the public/private dichotomy is subverted in women's baths by means of the extension of the domestic sphere into the shared public zone of the neighborhood where the bath is located, as well as female autonomy and empowerment. While the women's section of an Ottoman-Turkish bath was usually out of sight, its centralized location was accessible from many urban neighborhoods. Thus, visits to the bath became a ceremonial act, as groups of women from diverse backgrounds proceeded to the bath, creating "one materialized form of understanding women's direct involvement in the city" (Akşit 2011, 279).

A further privatization in the women's section of the Ottoman-Turkish bath occured in the form of a hierarchy among autonomous groups of women with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, which was not much seen in men's coffeehouses. This has been well reflected in spatial practices and positionings inside the bath. Although Ebru Boyar and Kate Fleet (2010, 249) assert that hamams were "multi-ethnic and multi-religious spaces" where women mix with other women "not from their immediate family circle", other scholars hold an opposite view. For instance, the Turkish restoration specialist Tülay Taşçıoğlu (1998, 118) highlights that "inside the *camekan*, the coldest entrance section of the *hamam* for clothing and resting before and after the bathing ritual, the women were separately seated by corners in accordance with their intimacy and social status". Other strategies were developed to ensure the separation of various groups, not only the poor and the rich but also the Muslim and non-Muslim. One strategy of creating a religion-based homosocial space was to build special baths for diverse communities operating within their neighborhoods (Işın 1990, 270). Another strategy was to assign separate days for the weekly bath visits for Muslims and non-Muslims, taking into account the need to avoid the holy day of each group. Therefore, Wednesdays or Thursdays were allocated for Muslims, and any day except Saturday and Sunday for Jews and Christians respectively (Taşçıoğlu 1998, 117).

Similar to men's coffeehouses where the female is existent in various modes of informal conversation among the users, the male power and public authority also exist in the women's section of the Ottoman-Turkish bath, that transcend the public man and the private woman distinction. Ludwig Ammann, the German scholar in Islamic Studies (2006, 111), relates this to an asymmetrical division of production among men and women, familial reproduction and production of society respectively: "Men and their activities are more highly valued and they are given formal authority over women who may... exercise a good deal of informal influence and power". In a similar vein, the Dutch cultural anthropologist Marjo Buitelaar (1998, 104) argues that "women could exert considerable informal power within the private sphere and were also often able to influence decisions taken in the public sphere through their husbands and sons".

The dissolution, subversion and transversion of the public/private dichotomy in both the men's coffeehouses and the women's baths exemplify a multi-layered and temporal spatiality, which is conceptualized by the French philosopher Michel Foucault as a heterotopia. Foucault (1986, 25) defines heterotopia as a space "capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible". According to Foucault (1986, 24) heterotopias "have the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect". Mikhail (2014, 160) supports the Fou-

caultian conception of heteotopia by signifying the multi-layered and fluid characteristics of hybrid spatial paradigms, in which public and private coexist, such as the communal home, interior neighborhood and private street. In this context, coffeehouses and baths where informal conversations and assigned functions overlap within a triangulation of same-sex intimacy, homoerotic desire and homosociality, could be considered gendered heterotopias. For Foucault (2014, 300), heterotopias subvert the public/private distinction by simultaneously isolating the users inside and allowing those outside to penetrate inwards by a specific permission and behaviour pattern.

Even though the existing Ottoman-Turkish baths in rural regions of Turkey and in low-income neighborhoods of Turkish cities still offer an alternative (homo)social environment for women, it can no more be considered a homosocial space as it used to be for two main reasons. First of all, the total division of the private and public spheres along the lines of sex/gender which existed in Ottoman-Turkish urban space has been replaced by the free association of male and female in the modern public sphere. This can be seen as a twofold transition: (1) from the public/private into the male/female dichotomy; (2) from homosociability into heterosociability. Second, there are no longer any valid reasons for most women either to celebrate their reproductivity, or to self-express their femininity to other women or to claim existence and visibility in the public sphere.

Constructed Functionality in Homosocial Spaces

Another significant aspect of homosocial spaces in Ottoman-Turkish society is the lack of a pre-assigned function peculiar to the modernist understanding of space. On the contrary, functionality had been constructed through layering and manipulation of various related and/or unrelated functions within the same space. Mikhail (2014, 145) argues that "space within Ottoman neighbourhoods ... should not be understood in terms of divisions and distinctions". Therefore, multi-functionality and constructed functionality in Ottoman-Turkish homosocial spaces stems from not only the need to camouflage intimate, homoerotic and homosexual encounters likely to occur, but also the lack of a Western-oriented functional zoning in the Ottoman urban environment.

Constructed functionality occurs in the form of gender-related cultural rituals and political acts in both men's coffeehouses and women's baths. In addition to drinking coffee, for instance, the men's coffeehouse was quite a convenient social venue for night-time activities to be held outside the home, such as smoking, chatting, playing, and gossiping (Mikhail 2014, 141). They were not only venues of passive opposition to the existing authority in the form of political

discussions, the content of which ranged "from the corruption of a certain pasha, changes in the cabinet to the possibility of war" but also of active resistance in the form of "rebellion and sedition" (Çaksu 2014, 141). In the 17th century, for instance, the Janissary men used coffee-houses as places not only to criticize political authority, but also to plan riots, such as the Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730 (Karababa and Ger 2011, 746).

Homosociality in Janissary coffeehouses had extended its boundaries in close relation to another homosocial space, bachelors' rooms, which had also been managed by the coffeehouse owners (Çaksu 2014, 123). The inhabitants of these rooms, ranging from migrant workers to Janissaries themselves, formed a homosocial cohesion based on common interests and benefits (Çaksu 2014, 124), extending the physical boundaries of domestic and social functions. The Turkish sociologist Nurhayat Kızılkan (2009, 45) states that "[T]he Janissaries were calling young people in these rooms in each time they commit a political action", as this homosocial zone turned out to be "a hideaway and as a base to organize militates".

Compared to the men's section, there are a lot more homosocial rituals that take place in the women's section of the Ottoman-Turkish bath, some of which are the fortieth-day bath, match-making, the bath of the bride and the bath of oblation. The fortieth-day bath is a traditional ritual in which "Babies and mothers are washed on the fortieth day after the birth of the baby... accompanied by special prayers, and the washing itself follows a certain ritual order" (Boyar and Fleet 2010, 256). The match-making in the bath is a special visit by women "in order to find suitable brides for their sons or brothers, ... judging the possible candidates physically and checking out their manners and behavior" (Boyar and Fleet 2010, 257). The bath of the bride is a ritual "held a few days before the wedding by reserving the hamam for the female members of both families, together with their relatives and neighbors" (Taşçıoğlu 1998, 126). During this ritual, "[t]he bride is washed while singing religious hymns, traditional folksongs and dancing", and "the entire day might be spent in the hamam in an endless round of washing, eating, drinking and chatting" (Taşçıoğlu 1998, 126). The bath of oblation is another ritual, "particularly taken by women who cannot become pregnant", who are supposed to "sit in the hottest corners of the hamam, make regular health cures and treatments and pray for 15–20 days" (Taşçıoğlu 1998, 126), in order for their wish to come true. It is significant to note that while all these rituals are based on female sexuality, they do not necessarily lead to a lesbian relation in the modernist sense. Though being less regular and widespread, similar rituals celebrating the transformation periods of male sexuality such as the circumcision bath, the soldier's bath, the groom's bath, have also occured in the male section of the Ottoman-Turkish baths.

As the abovementioned rituals represent, the women's bath is far more than a space for bathing, rather a feminine venue, where female sexuality and reproductivity are celebrated. However, intimacy among women mostly occurs in the form of visual contact and bodily exposition, since there is relatively few evidence of homosexual relations between women, compared to men's homosocial spaces. Hence, it can be claimed that traces of patriarchy are also evident in homosocial spaces, as same-sex relations between men are culturally more tolerated than those between women.

The constructed functionality in homosocial spaces could also be considered to reflect a heterotopic character, in that a homosocial space may take another function with respect to the historicity of the culture within which it exists (Yılmazlı 2020, 57). Accordingly, intimate and instant same-sex relations are concealed behind the actual functions of these spaces. The men's coffeehouses, for instance, were also "centers of desire and entertainment", which were frequently visited by "unemployed adolescents staying in bachelor rooms and young boy customers" (Yılmazlı 2020, 58). Similarly, the Ottoman-Turkish baths have not only helped women "to vindicate their right to walk around the city" (Akşit 2011, 279) but also "to claim their historical existence in the city... continuing the Ottoman, Byzantine and Roman traditions" (Akşit 2011, 288). In this regard, the baths reflect a heterotopic spatiality that rests on the idea of timelessness, in Foucault's words, "the idea of creating a sort of universal archive, the desire to enclose all times, all eras, forms and styles within a single place, the concept of making all times into one place... a place that is outside time and inaccessible to the wear and tear of the years" (Foucault 1997, 355).

Concluding Remarks

Concentrating on homosocial spatial practices in men's coffeehouses and women's section of the Ottoman-Turkish baths, this critical paper has once more testified that gender identities and norms are constructed phenomena and have been transformed, subverted and destroyed within cultural, religious and political complexities embedded in local social histories. Even the purported historical consistency of patriarchal structures and hierarchies may take different forms in accordance with degrees of privacy and functional ambiguity as seen in the cases of the coffeehouse and bath. The paper has further shown that the dissolution of the public/private in homosocial spaces exemplifies Foucaultian heterotopias, shaped by "heterogenous, disharmonious, political, religious, literary, provocative, disruptive, artistic, theatrical, carnivalesque" facilities that have occured within their boundaries (Yılmazlı 2020, 56).

The West-oriented modernization of Ottoman-Turkish society not only transformed the elusiveness of gender identities but also the organization of the urban

built environment. Contrary to the popular modernist belief, the emergence of urban venues where men and women socialize together did not weaken patriarchal structures but reproduced them through the modern binaries of public man/private woman, urban production/domestic reproduction, masculinity/femininity, etc. This social transformation has also affected the complex, multi-functional and heterotopic character of homosocial spaces, reducing them to manageable public spaces with clear functions. In modern Turkey, the biggest inheritor of the Ottoman Empire, pre-modern coffeehouses and traditional baths still exist but in relatively homogenous forms, cleared of political, artistic, homoerotic discourses and acts, as part of a modern and heteropatriarchal consumption culture and tourism.

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Burkay Pasin
Department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design,
Yaşar University, İzmir, Turkey
burkay.pasin@yasar.edu.tr

Homosocijalnost i homosocijalni prostori u premodernom osmanskom društvu

U radu se istražuju različita poimanja homosocijalnosti u premodernim i modernim društvima, i prikazuje se kako su se ova poimanja politički, društveno, kulturno i prostorno konstruisala i transformisala kroz istoriju, naročito tokom procesa modernizacije polovinom XIX veka. Cilj rada je da na primeru dva bitna

homosocijalna prostora – muških kafana i ženskih odaja u turskim kupatilima – prikaže kako se homosocijalnost spacijalizuje kroz nestajanje dihotomije javno/privatno, kao i konstrukcije funkcionalnosti u premodernom osmanskom društvu. U radu se koristi istorijska interpretativna metodologija istraživanja. Kritički se analiziraju i tumače privatizovane javne, kompleksne, homoerotske i multifunkcionalne karakteristike ovih homosocijalnih prostora kao i njihovog širenja i refleksije na osmanske urbane kvartove, na osnovu podataka iz sekundarnih izvora dostupnih u literaturi. Nestajanje dihotomije javno/privatno u ovim prostorima takođe predstavlja primer Fukoovog koncepta heterotopije. U zaključku se konstatuje da ovi tradicionalni prostori i njihove savremene verzije predstavljaju konstruistanost kako rodnih kategorija tako i patrijarhalnih struktura.

Ključne reči: homosocijalnost, homosocijalni prostor, javno/privatno, funkcionalnost, heterotopija

Homosocialité et les espaces homosociaux
dans la société ottomane pré-moderne

Dans ce travail sont étudiées différentes conceptions de l'homosocialité dans des sociétés pré-modernes et modernes, et les manières dont ces conceptions sont politiquement, socialement, culturellement et spatialement construites et transformées à travers l'histoire, particulièrement au cours du processus de modernisation vers le milieu du XIXe siècle. L'objectif du travail est de montrer à partir de l'exemple de deux espaces homosociaux importants – les cafés masculins et les pièces à l'usage des femmes dans les bains turcs – que l'homosocialité se spatialise à travers la disparition de la dichotomie public/privé, ainsi que la construction de la fonctionnalité dans la société ottomane pré-moderne. Ce travail adopte une méthode historique interprétative. Ici sont analysées et interprétées d'un point de vue critique les caractéristiques publiques privatisées, complexes, homoérotiques et multifonctionnelles de ces espaces homosociaux ainsi que leur extension et leur impact sur les quartiers ottomans urbains, à partir des données recueillies dans des sources secondaires disponibles. La disparition de la dichotomie public/privé de ces espaces représente elle aussi un exemple du concept foucaldien d'hétérotopie. On aboutit à la conclusion que ces espaces traditionnels et leurs versions contemporaines démontrent le caractère construit aussi bien des catégories génériques que des structures patriarcales.

Mots clés: homosocialité, espace homosocial, public/privé, fonctionnalité, hétérotopie

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