

TURKEY'S PIONEERING PSYCHOANALYST: İZEDDİN ŞADAN'S DISQUISITION ON (HOMOSEXUAL) LOVE AS SICKNESS

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Turkey's Pioneering Psychoanalyst: İzzeddin Şadan's Disquisition on (Homosexual) Love as Sickness

_Abstract

İzzeddin Şadan, considered to be among the pioneers of psychoanalysis in Turkey, published a series of essays in 1936 titled "Eros (Aşk) İle Mücadele" ["Strife with Eros (Love)"] in the popular magazine *Yeni Adam*. He hailed these essays as a landmark in the scientific endeavor to objectively lay out the true nature of love. In them, he described love as "a volatile microbe" constituting sickness with its origins in Christianity; however, by inverted logic, he projected the same sickness onto Islam, in particular Sufism, which he disparaged as homosexual debauchery. This article looks at how Şadan's pathologizing of Sufi love of beardless boys as sexual perversion is itself a symptom of pathology, pointing towards a fundamental change in the gendered/modernized/Orientalized subject's relationship with the other and itself.

1_Introduction

İzzeddin Şadan,¹ now an almost forgotten name, was a pioneer of psychoanalysis in Turkey. Born in 1895 as the son of an upscale family in İstanbul, he received his education first at Kumkapı French High School and then at Robert College. He began his medical studies in 1919 at the Imperial Military School of Medicine where he specialized in psychiatry and neurology.² After his graduation in 1925, he was assigned to Toptaşı Asylum in İstanbul. He worked there until 1927 as a psychiatrist before he resigned from his job due to a conflict with the head of the hospital, Mazhar Osman Uzman.³ This incident gave Şadan the long-awaited opportunity to study in France. He learned clinical neurology at the Salpêtrière Hospital and psychiatry at the Villejuif Asylum under the tutelage of Joseph Rogues de Fursac. Following his return from France in 1930, although he was well-versed in the modern methods used in mental health, he could not secure permanent employment in any psychiatric institutions, and instead worked various jobs as a teacher (at Gazi Education Institute, now Gazi University), physician (at Erzurum and Zonguldak State Hospitals), and health inspector (at the Ministry of Education) before retiring in 1963.⁴ In fact, other than the first two years of his career, Şadan did not work clinically with psychiatric patients. As Kutluğhan Soyubol writes, "There is also no sign that Şadan was a practicing psychoanalyst or that any psychiatrist or psychoanalyst claimed to be a disciple or acolyte of him."⁵ Nevertheless, his psychosocial articles, which he wrote for a variety of medical

journals, popular magazines, and nationalist periodicals, “could be regarded as the first original works on psychoanalysis in Turkey.”⁶

In his writings, one of Şadan’s primary concerns was the subject of love. In the popular cultural magazine, *Yeni Adam*, published by his friend İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, Şadan published a series of short essays with the title “Eros (Aşk) İle Mücadele” [“Strife with Eros (Love)”] during the year 1936. Şadan hailed these essays as a unique achievement for he considered them the first scientific attempt in the newly established Turkish Republic to objectively lay out the true nature of love. Contrary to the poets, novelists, and philosophers before him who treated the subject in “a typically traditional manner,” Şadan approached love like a serious medical condition, describing it as “a volatile microbe” constituting sickness “like measles, pneumonia and typhoid.”⁷ He asserted that “In our opinion, love is a sickness. It is a sickness whose course and character is completely stable.”⁸ For this reason, it should be diagnosed and treated in the same way as an illness: by specialized doctors and through rational methods. Şadan’s own scientific methodology to examine love consisted of the following four phases: 1) the inoculation phase (*devri telkih*) where it takes roots, 2) the invasion phase (*devri istila*) where it starts to spread like an endemic virus, 3) the inaction phase (*devri tevakkuf*) where it comes to a halt, and 4) the dissolution phase (*devri inhilal*) where it dissipates. His definition of the manifestations of these phases, as Soyubol also points out, relied “on certain observable physical and behavioral symptoms of the lovers, such as being overjoyed, talking too much, and experiencing melancholia.”⁹ In his later writing, most notably his only book *Birsam-ı Saadet (The Illusion of Happiness)*, Şadan continued speaking on the same theme by increasingly imbuing love with Turkish nationalism and chauvinism.

Although Şadan believed himself to be the first person in Turkey to enunciate the analogy between love and sickness, it was certainly not new to the Western medical discourse. As Şadan also confirms, he indeed borrowed the idea of love as sickness from modern psychiatry: “It is inconceivable for a psychiatrist to view love as an exalted concept. It is an error caused by misunderstanding Freud. Essentially all mental doctors so far have viewed love as a pathological phenomenon. And we are following their lead.”¹⁰ Şadan was original to the extent that he reconsidered a traditional concept in the light of the new language of Western medicine. With the vocabulary he borrowed from psychiatry, he described love as pathology both causing and caused by certain

disorders. This notion of love as pathology was ultimately invested with new values and meanings within the context of politics, history, and nationalism. Most notably, Şadan maintained the dominant psychiatric conception of homosexuality (particularly male love) as pathology, actively prescribing heterosexuality as the norm. His view of homosexuality as a disease was in conformity with, and indeed governed by, his nationalistic aspirations that guided his definitions of health and illness in relation to the social body. In this article, I engage with Şadan's narrative of sickness to identify the Western strands of thought that inform his views on love, pleasure, and sex which are developed and validated by the medical and nationalist narratives of health, normality, and masculinity. Through a symptomatic reading of his essays and one book, my goal is to denaturalize the ethnocentricity of the discourse of gender and sexuality as a critical lens, or, as Joan Wallach Scott has described it, "a useful category of historical analysis," through which to explore how the gendered/modernized/Orientalized subject constitutes its self-knowledge in relation to the Western Other.¹¹

2_ From the Love of Beardless Boy

In the first essay of "Eros (Aşk) İle Mücadele," Şadan provides an overview of the history of love. He argues that the idea of love as sickness originates in Christianity. As he provocatively puts it, "Eros in its form today is an outgrowth of Judaism's adversary Catholicism. It is a disease presented as an aphrodisiac by the beardless, skirted and sterile priests of Jesus whose own sex life could not go beyond crying on the lap of Mary Magdalena."¹² Renouncing it as an impotent religion, Şadan concludes that because of "its strong tendency towards repression" that kills the sex drive, Christianity has a conception of love that is "masochistic."¹³ Contrary to Christianity, Şadan asserts that Muslims do not as actively encourage the repression of the sex drive, but he allows himself to give an exception:

As it inclined towards the same masochistic ideas in Christianity, Islam also became morbid. Among its branches, we can especially note Sufism (*tasavvuf*). It displays a strong tendency towards repression; it encourages mystical and introverted practices such as self-torture, reclusion, and asceticism; and the sex drive, gone awry, shifts its real love object, a woman, to a boy (*mahbub*), and this is where the tragedy starts.¹⁴

Following this comment, Şadan's notion of love as sickness, as Soyubol explains, "directly targets the Sufi understanding of love [...] declaring it to be an inherited sickness in modern Turkish culture."¹⁵ Even though Şadan posits Christianity as the source of

pathology, he projects it onto an internal rival, Sufism, which he disparages as homosexual perversion that stains the otherwise glorious history of Turks. It is “this Boy and Wine Literature,” Şadan writes in another article, “that paralyzed the Turks for six centuries.”¹⁶

What Şadan refers to as “Boy and Wine Literature” is a tradition of Islamic mystical poetry that fuses the genres of *ghazal* (love poetry) and *khamriyya* (wine poetry) in the form of erotic outpourings dedicated to the beauties of youthful boys bearing wine cups. It might seem that the combination of drinking and pederasty presents a perfect occasion for the celebration of epicurean pleasures, since “wine not only brings patrons into contact with servers [...] and loosens boys’ inhibitions, but the invitation to share in the festivities [...] becomes the vehicle of seduction.”¹⁷ However, what is today rendered as boy love — as a prominent trope employed in Islamic mystical literature up to the modern era — served a specific metaphorical purpose for spiritual communion with God. As Shahab Ahmed explains, it was a common practice among Sufis to entangle in ambiguity carnal and divine love based on the belief that “Earthly love — the love for human beauty — is metaphorical love (*ishq-i majazi*), and is the experiential means by which to come to know Real-True Love, or love for/in Real-Truth.”¹⁸ With recourse to the repertoire of Sufi poetry, Shahab shows how the metaphor — often in the worldly form of a beautiful image — served as a bridge to Real-True Love: “a bridge on which one is forever crossing back and forth in the act of meaning-making,” whereby love for the external object-form is transformed into a passionate yearning for God.¹⁹

Although every material object could be elevated to a form of devotion as metaphorical love, as Annemarie Schimmel writes, this was invariably directed at what was conceived to be the ideal beauty of the time: “The handsome boy of fourteen, ‘radiant like the full moon’ [who] soon became the ideal of human beauty [...] praised in later Persian and Turkish poetry.”²⁰ From this understanding of love a distinct practice of homoerotic contemplation was born. Joseph Norment Bell describes this contemplation (*nazar*) as a “prolonged gaze towards an object of great beauty, by ancient convention usually a comely and still beardless youth.”²¹ He further notes that the beautiful youth “was variously held to be an indication of the divine beauty, a vehicle of theophany, a locus of temporary incarnation, or, in the monist or premonist view, an object in which the divine beauty, although inherent in all creatures, is most clearly perceived.”²² For

this reason, the graceful boy was commonly termed in the Sufi parlance *shahid* (witness) since he was thought to be a testimony to the beauty of God and gazing at him was believed to kindle the flames of God's love in the human heart. However, because of its erotic entanglements, *nazar* was a very precarious affair that was only prescribed to advanced Sufis. For others, there was always the threat of falling victim to sin through sensual contact with the young boys. As Dror Ze'evi explains, "In principle no sexual relations were to take place, and the focus of admiration was to be left intact, as an unreachable shore of yearning." However, Sufi rituals such as *sama* and *dhikr*, which often included ecstatic dancing and chanting, "encouraged bodily contact with disciples and initiates and thus facilitated the transition from platonic contemplation of sublime beauty to heavenly sexual intercourse."²³

When mystics transgressed with unlawful sex the permissible limits of *nazar*, it was customarily deemed immoral, sinful, and even heretical. Khaled El-Rouayheb asserts that composing pederastic love poetry was permitted by the majority of Muslim jurists as long as it remained chaste. Nevertheless, when there was sexual activity involved, especially anal intercourse between men (*liwat*), it was perceived as a transgression of Holy Law and charged with "severe corporeal or capital punishment."²⁴ Yet, as El-Rouayheb insists on underlining, "In assessing the gravity of a sexual sin, the mode of intercourse was more important than the genders of the partners."²⁵ In other words, what mattered was the act of illicit penetrative sex and not the sexual choice of the partners. In fact, El-Rouayheb argues that there was no overarching concept of "homosexuality" existed in the Arab-Islamic Middle East before the nineteenth-century, but that a clear distinction was made between different patterns of behavior: expressing passionate love for a boy in verse, for example, was distinguished from committing sodomy with a boy; or sodomy was distinguished from minor transgressions such as kissing, fondling, and non-anal intercourse. The least we can infer from this contention is that there was no overall condemnation (or celebration, for that matter) of homosexual practices in pre-modern Islamic culture simply because it "lacked the concept of homosexuality altogether, and operated instead with a set of concepts each of which pick out some of the acts and actors we might call 'homosexual' but which were simply not seen as instances of one overarching phenomenon."²⁶ According to El-Rouayheb, this situation changed in the nineteenth-century with the adoption of the prudish Victo-

rian attitudes towards sex and the introduction of “the modern, nebulous notion of ‘sexuality’” which ultimately “cemented the emerging view that all forms of passionate attraction to boys were equally signs of ‘sickness’ and ‘depravity.’”²⁷ The sphere of homoerotic male desire was thus inserted into a narrative of sickness.

In *Producing Desire*, Ze’evi’s argument parallels El-Rouayheb’s in claiming that the broad range of sexual practices displayed in pre-modern Ottoman scripts was gradually silenced in the nineteenth-century with the encroachment of European norms. According to Ze’evi, Western travel accounts that described Ottoman homoeroticism as depraved, libidinous, and perverted were particularly effective in changing the Ottoman sexual mores.²⁸ For example, Adolphus Slade, a mid-nineteenth century travelogue, established a fundamental connection between what he perceived to be debauched sexual habits of the Ottomans and their political inadequacy. He described sodomy as “[n]o longer a personal predilection of individuals [...] [but] a disease of the state.”²⁹ Thus the disease discourse, which was constituted by travel literature and circulated by the printing press, was consolidated through the linking of morality and political power. Homoerotic desire was no longer only a mark of loose morals; it was also a manifestation of state weakness. In this way, as Ze’evi argues, a colonial discourse was slowly constituted with “Turks, Arabs, and Orientals [...] presented as beyond the boundaries of ‘moral’ civilization. Governed by sodomy and debauchery, their only law ... [was] social and political domination.”³⁰ In *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards*, Afsaneh Najmabadi presents a similar narrative that traces the transformations in the configurations of gender in Iran. She argues that in the nineteenth-century as Iran’s interactions with Europe intensified (especially through travel), homosociality and homosexuality became a sign of backwardness, and subsequently a source of humiliation and shame for Iranian men. This new conception created a stimulus for “the modernist heterosocialization of culture and heteronormalization of eros and sex.”³¹ Najmabadi believes that the contemporary association of Sufi love with sickness — “as filthy and debased, always marked as pederasty/pedophilia” — should be understood within this context, that is, as a “modernist obsession, arising from the nineteenth-century heterosexualization of love and the consequent modernist embarrassment over what to do with the homoeroticism of Sufi love.”³²

Even though there are some scholars such as Walter Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı who deviate from the usual East-versus-West orientation in their analysis of love and

the beloved in early modern Ottoman and European culture by showing cross-cultural parallels between the two societies,³³ there seems to be a rupture in the modern period bringing sexuality into the domain of politics and deepening, if not creating, fissure in power relations both within the Ottoman Empire and between the Ottoman Empire and Europe. On the domestic level, Selim Kuru illustrates that homoeroticism was used as a form of ridicule in the political field by some nineteenth-century Ottoman intellectuals.³⁴ This, however, was only a prelude to what would soon follow, namely, the complete disappearance of male-to-male love narratives from the eyes of the public. Commenting on this disappearance, Hilmi Yavuz notes, “Although the Ottomans made homosexuality into an almost historical and sexual norm, [...] the Republican ethics kept it outside the public discourse. In the first fifty years of the Republican regime, for example, far from talking about the existence of a homosexual literature, we cannot even see an author openly expressing his homosexual identity.”³⁵ With the emergence of a new narrative form, the novel, the object of love became fixated on women and the nation (on the nationalist spectrum, the nation was often imagined as a woman). And the ideas of love, beauty, pleasure, and desire were reconfigured according to the standards of heteronormative sexuality. Consequently, all these changes in the discourse of gender and sexuality caused, as intimated particularly by Ze’evi’s work, an immense mindshift that brought new epistemological, moral, and psychological challenges for the Ottoman-Turkish subjects who were compelled to make new definitions and establish new terminology while at the same time endeavoring to preserve the integrity of their morals and psyche in the midst of rapid change.

We can see evidence of this mindshift in Şadan’s own “strife” with the concept of love. At the outset of his essay series, he sets himself apart from Freud in matters of sexual drive and eros. According to Soyubol, “Şadan explicitly breaks away from Freud’s formulation of and compliance with the idea of ‘libido as Eros.’ Differently from Freud’s Judeo-Christian notion of eros, which is not exclusively the sex drive, Şadan’s notion of love as inseparable from sexual pleasure and the sex drive is by and large (consciously or unconsciously) predicated on the Sunni Islamic tradition and its discourse on sexuality.”³⁶ While I agree that Şadan’s conception of love (which he equates with eros) is directly related to the sex drive (*cins garizesi*) — although it is not entirely free from ambiguity — I do not think that this conception is informed by the Sunni Islamic tradition. It is, indeed, a very modern interpretation of love. As Kuru

suggests, a critical element that paved the way for the loss of validity of homosexual narratives in the late nineteenth-century was the naturalization of the association of love and sexuality.³⁷ Such an overlapping was no doubt partly conditioned by what El-Rouayheb claimed was the importation of the nebulous notion of (homo)sexuality from the West which eclipsed certain native nuances between different practices and representations of love. Once that happened, love too became a vague and “ill” defined concept which over time lost its spiritual as well as materialistic specificity and came to be associated with reproduction and sexuality. In this respect, Şadan’s essays are a case in point. By identifying homosexual love as sickness, Şadan conflates love with sexual desire and sexual desire with heterosexual activity. In one of his essays, he describes homosexuality in the following way: “Repeating the words of a famous psychoanalyst [Freud?], we can assert that any man who cannot think of a woman as an object of pleasure is a homosexual, yet he is unaware of his homosexuality. This is called ‘homosexualite latente.’”³⁸ Here the implied message is that women are by default the object of male sexual desire and men are by default sexually attracted to women. If there is any deviation from this normative standard, Şadan is tempted to read it as a symptom of neurosis.

Moreover, Şadan’s conflation of love with sex enables him to equate heterosexual masculinity with (physical, political, and religious) superiority. Drawing on the Orientalist association “between sexual habits and the failure of government,”³⁹ Şadan creates a counter narrative by establishing connections between homosexuality, Christianity, and the political impotence of the West. In his first essay, he portrays Christianity as a religion which “is diseased and contracts disease” because of “its strong tendency to extinguish the sex drive.”⁴⁰ In the later essays, he justifies his argument with reference to the alleged impotence of Christ. For example, he states that “Christ’s religion trivialized women’s sexual value and consigned men to compulsory impotence” and continues by writing that it is because Christ himself is “a son who is tied to her mother’s apron strings,” and a “cowardly masochist” “who when slapped in the face instructs to turn the other cheek.”⁴¹ In Şadan’s narrative, Mary is also “no more than a woman who lost her sexual value.”⁴² In like manner, the Roman Catholic Papacy is “a matriarchal institution which aims to destroy the male’s dominance.”⁴³ In these glaringly offensive remarks about Christianity, one point stands out: Şadan employs the same device, sexuality, which was used as a means of political commentary and control

by the Orientalists, to settle scores with the West by presenting them as sexually impotent and politically weak. Against a feeble and “sick” West, he erects a highly sexualized Muslim/Turkish East bolstered by its image as a world conqueror. However, there is one problem with this theory for Şadan: the pederastic history of the Ottoman Empire and its seeming incompatibility with his feelings of superiority. The solution comes in two stages: first Şadan confines this shameful deviance in history to Sufism (as an ascetic practice he differentiates from Sunni Islam which remains pure) and secondly he pathologizes it as homosexuality, tracing its origins to the sickening agent of Christianity. Consequently — psychoanalytically speaking — Sufi homoeroticism functions as the other that bars pleasure, in this case the fantasy of national greatness (and perhaps even world dominance) covertly enjoyed by Şadan. As such, it becomes the unwitting subject of a nostalgic melancholy of a golden age of masculinity, heroism, and conquest to cope with the feeling of loss brought about by the dislocations of rapid modernization and westernization.

3_ To the Love of Nation

In her narrative of the heteronormalization of love and sex in Iran, Najmabadi argues that the weight of humiliation associated with the Sufi homoerotic love was not just the result of a transformation in the organization of space and intersubjective relations, but it was also the sign of “‘another gaze’ [that] entered the scene of desire” and made Iranian men “highly sensitized to the idea that their desire was now under European scrutiny.”⁴⁴ The nexus between gaze and desire is very important to understand the underlying intersections between power, sexuality, and the subjective experience of the self. Within the context of colonial studies, perhaps most famously, Franz Fanon exposes in *Black Skin White Masks* how the white gaze operates on the basis of psychology and race. Cognizant of its unconscious effects, he associates the white gaze with a stifling weight placed upon the colonized subject: “And then the occasion arose when I had to meet the white man’s eyes. An unfamiliar weight burdened me.”⁴⁵ In contrast to the “sincere” Sufi gaze that Amira Mittermaier locates “beyond the either/or” (of the binaries of inner and outer, visible and invisible, body and spirit),⁴⁶ Fanon’s white gaze clearly fixates as a bifurcating force on the black subject’s consciousness: “And already I am being dissected under white eyes, the only real eyes. I am *fixed*. Having adjusted their microtomes, they objectively cut away slices of my reality. I am laid bare.”⁴⁷ It is

in the splitting of the self (and the body) that Fanon puts the concepts of gaze and desire in dialogue with the historical condition of colonial subjects. It is possible to find resonances between the concept of the white gaze and the Orientalist gaze. In *Orientalism*, for example, Edward Said elaborates on the nature of the Orientalist gaze as a characteristically homogenous and omnipotent force on the Oriental subject, forcing it to re-define itself in relation to the Western Other.⁴⁸ In this section, my focus is going to be on shame as the most visible (as invisible) imprint of the Orientalist gaze before I relate it to my reading of Şadan's book *Birsam-ı Saadet*.

Approaching it as primarily an affect, Sara Ahmed writes that shame involves “the double play of exposure and concealment.”⁴⁹ On the one hand, it is experienced as an exposure before another and as such evokes feelings of humiliation, vulnerability, and helplessness. On the other hand, it involves an attempt to hide from this exposure. As Ahmed details, in our efforts to hide from shame, we turn away from the other towards ourselves and blame ourselves, not the other, as the cause of the bad feeling: “In experiences of shame, the ‘bad feeling’ is attributed to oneself, rather than to an object or other [...] In shame, I feel myself to be bad, and hence to expel the badness, I have to expel myself from myself.”⁵⁰ It is in this way — through the internalization of the bad feeling — that the subject develops a sense of self and identity. For this reason, as Silvan S. Tomkins maintains, “In contrast to all other affects, shame is an experience of the self by the self [...] Shame is the most reflexive of affects in that the phenomenological distinction between the subject and object of shame is lost.”⁵¹ Moreover, because shame is a self-conscious feeling, it is experienced as a “torment,” “a sickness with the self,” or “a disease of the spirit.”⁵² It is therefore possible to perceive shame through the lens of the same metaphor of illness as Şadan uses to describe the Sufi love of boys. Then some questions arise: Is Şadan's narrative of sickness a symptom of his self-reflection induced by the gaze of the mirror held up by the Western Other? Is his pathologizing of homosexuality a projection of his own mind, “a mind which is, quite simply, seeking some means of self-expression” which promises relief from the tormenting sickness of shame (which is itself a product of it)?⁵³ Isn't it, after all, the evil eye/I that projects onto others its own malaise, its own disease?⁵⁴

At this point it is important to note that shame is not only a negative feeling associated with affliction and ailment. Various scholars have provided insights into its pro-

ductive potential.⁵⁵ For example, Ahmed writes: “Shame is not a purely negative relation to another: shame is ambivalent.”⁵⁶ This ambivalence pertains to the fact that even though the subject nourishes hatred toward the other who causes shame, it concurrently feels love for the same other who is upheld as an ideal. Therefore, there is a close intimacy between shame and love: “If we feel shame, *we feel shame because we have failed to approximate ‘an ideal’ that has been given to us through the practices of love.* What is exposed in shame is the failure of love, as a failure that in turn exposes or shows our love.”⁵⁷ Within the Orientalist context, it can be argued that under the gaze of the Western Other, the non-Western subject is tied to a constant feeling of shame for failing to live up to the ideal (whether it is in the form of bodies or ideas such as individualism, progress, and democracy). However, if there are others feeling in the same way, then they make a community. As Ahmed states, “In shame, the subject has a bad feeling, but it is transferred upon a group identity of which the subject can be proud.”⁵⁸ In *Group Psychology*, Freud also suggests that love can act as a glue to bind people together under a common identity.⁵⁹ In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson reiterates the same idea when he describes nation as an “imagined political community” inspiring “love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love.”⁶⁰ Drawing on this conceptual foundation, I think we can think of the nation as an imaginary construction which has the potential to supply its citizen-lovers refuge from the internal sickness of shame mediated by love as group identification.

Along these lines, in *Birsam-ı Saadet*, Şadan postulates nationality (*milliyet*) as “the sole therapy” to cure the Turkish people from their neuroses.⁶¹ The book was written later in his life, when Şadan became a passionate nationalist influenced by his circle of friends who had ultra-nationalist orientations.⁶² Therefore, it is “hard not to notice the constitutive effect of the nationalist fervor of the era on Şadan’s understanding of what constitutes a healthy society as well as his own rendering of psychoanalysis that aimed to help the ‘Turks’ overcome their neuroses and reach a level of psychic stability.”⁶³ In the book, Şadan intends to provide a sketch of the historical trajectory of Turkish modernization since the late Ottoman period. However, even though this is the promise, the book is nowhere near so comprehensive. It is instead a highly subjective evaluation of the underlying psychic mechanisms of what Şadan calls “the collective neurosis” of Turkish people that has haunted them since the Westernized reforms of the Tanzimat

era.⁶⁴ With recourse to Bleuler, Şadan locates the origin of this neurosis in the “ambivalence” between “two opposing feelings.”⁶⁵ He writes that for “the normal/healthy person” (*tabii insan*) there is no ambivalence: “Out of the two opposing values, he picks one and sticks to it, and maintains his absolute worldview.” For “the abnormal/unhealthy person” (*gayritabii insan*), though, ambivalence generates sickness as “he cannot unite the opposing values” in a way that eases his mind.⁶⁶ For Şadan, the boy and wine love of Sufism is the most obvious example of this ambivalence complex in the sexual realm. Here there is a man who thinks he is a woman, and as such mistakenly loves the members of his own sex. According to Scott Siraj al-Haqq Kugle, this understanding of same-sex love illustrates modernity’s dimorphic gender consciousness. Steeped in a worldview that divides the world between male and female, Kugle writes, “Muslims mainly oppose homosexuality because they think it amounts to a man giving up masculinity to act like a woman.”⁶⁷ Undoubtedly, this “giving up masculinity” harbors deep-seated fears of emasculation and castration, which deserve further consideration.

Ashis Nandy, discussing the modern politics of gender in India, demonstrates how Western associations of masculinity with “control over public affairs and statecraft” and femininity “with passivity, weakness, dependence, subjugation and absence of masculinity” play an important role in the structuring of colonial psyches.⁶⁸ In relation to the British colonizers, he asserts that while reserving the masculine and paternal role to themselves, they often depicted the Indian subjects as effeminate men and “sought to redeem the Indians’ masculinity [...] in power play and tough politics.”⁶⁹ Indian men were thus compelled to act out their manliness defined within the masculine parameters of the British men: aggression, achievement, control, competition and power. In this way, as Nandy painstakingly shows, “colonialism was not seen as an absolute evil [...] it was a product of one’s own emasculation.”⁴⁸ In his book *The Psychopolitics of the Oriental Father*, Bülent Somay considers the same issues in relation to modern Turkey, reading its process of modernization as an exclusively masculinist response to the assumed loss of virility intertwined with a threat of castration instigated by the Western powers.⁷⁰ This explains why any conception of nation and nationhood in Turkey is ultimately underpinned by an assertion of virility, power, and self-assertion, “organised around and drawing its power from a central signifier, namely, the *phallus*.”⁷¹ Coming back to Şadan, it is possible to think that his equation of Sufism with homosexuality

derives from the same fear of emasculation as he sees any sign of effeminacy in men as a threat to the maintenance of a healthy national body. Mediated by this thought, Şadan occasionally shelters under the wings of the image of a golden age of Turks. For example, he writes: “It is beyond doubt that a man such as Genghis Khan with a natural sexual orientation saved the Turks from the disease of shamanism [...] by setting up ‘the manliest’ military organization in the history of humanity. Afterwards, the integration of Islamic paternalism into the Turkish world resolved all neurotic and sexual disturbances.”⁷² For Şadan, shamanism, like Sufism, represents a lesser form of manhood that stands in the way of the reclamation of the lost phallic power which, as this excerpt shows, appears in the form of an idyllic past of glory.

According to Nandy, there are two major psychological categories employed by the ideology of colonialism to legitimize its presence and ensure its endurance. One of them, which I have already mentioned, is the trope of gender difference. The other one concerns the trope of infantilism. Nandy’s argument is that the colonizer construes the native as a child — primitive, vulnerable, and dependent — who can only be delivered from this deficient condition by the adult Westerner charged with the moral responsibility to “save the child from a state of unrepentant, reprobate sinfulness through proper socialization, and help the child grow towards a Calvinist ideal of adulthood and maturity.”⁷³ In a similar vein, Somay asserts that the Oriental subject is locked “in a permanent semi-infantile state, in the throes of a non-resolved (and irresolvable) Oedipus complex.”⁷⁴ The same line of thinking is reflected in Şadan’s work. He directly externalizes the image of the childlike Orient projected onto him by the Western Other onto homosexuality. Using Freud’s language — though not reflecting the complexity and nuance of his thinking — he construes homosexuality as an atavism, in which the child is fixated at some earlier, primitive phase of development associated with narcissism. He writes that if an individual does not successfully pass through the psychosexual stages, “he will always be predisposed to choose ‘a love object that resembles himself’ [...] This constitutes the core of what we call homosexual and narcissistic (love for one’s self) psychology.”⁷⁵ Şadan also shares with psychoanalytic discourse the view that homosexuality is a regression from oedipal father to pre-oedipal mother, which he regards as highly undesirable: “For his mental well-being, the individual should break this bond [with the mother] and look for his sovereignty [*beka*: a word with nationalist

connotations] in protective, nurturing powers outside the mother.”⁷⁶ Within the discourse of nationalism, homosexuality is thereby converted into a potential threat to national strength not only because it is effeminate, but also because it is infantile/narcissistic. Şadan conveniently displaces the cultural pathology of colonialism/modernity onto the imagined homosexual/Sufi body, reversing the functions of the self and object in a manner reminiscent of Kojin Karatani’s inversion, “constituted in equal parts of ‘blindness and insight.’”⁷⁷

What is interesting, though, is that while vilifying homosexuality as a form of narcissism, Şadan at the same time identifies nationalism as deriving from the same source:

The feeling of nationality is among the most primitive instinctual drives and emerges out of the individual’s narcissistic aspirations. I have already mentioned that every individual goes through a narcissistic phase during his psychosexual development. Narcissism — which is used to indicate self-love — is a source of power and maturity that completely satisfies the ego. Every achievement that elevates the individual feeds narcissism and thus makes the subject happy.⁷⁸

By describing patriotic love as necessarily self-love, Şadan unwittingly reveals that nationalism can only be homosexual — formed exclusively of male homosocial relations. Juliet MacCannell shows that this is in fact a characteristic of the modern symbolic order that she calls the “Regime of the Brother”: a regime that pretends to uphold collectivity and difference but is instead grounded on narcissism, founding “a group of male egos — a fraternity.”⁷⁹ Likewise, Ahmed suggests that despite its conflation with difference, heterosexuality is actually structured “around a fantasy of ‘making likeness’” through reproduction.⁸⁰ Yet, she adds, this is routinely concealed “by the narrative of heterosexuality as love for difference, a concealment which projects sameness onto homosexual love and transforms that very sameness into both perversion and pathology.”⁸¹ Consequently, Şadan’s work illustrates how nationalism represses homosexuality to naturalize itself as *un*-narcissistic and — to use Tom Nairn’s description — as *non*-pathological through the fiction of heterosexual normativity.⁸² In this way, the narcissistic love of the nation, which replaces the love of the beardless boy, functions akin to what Carlo Bonomi has phrased as “mastered visibility” which allows for curbing the visibility provoked by the gaze of the Western Other. The mirror, as Bonomi writes, “permits us to regain some control over our visibility [...] by fixing it to an image.”⁸³ For Şadan, that image was nothing other than the Turkish nation.

4_Conclusion

İzzeddin Şadan undertakes what he believes to be the first scientific study of love in Turkey by approaching the subject through the metaphor of illness. He describes love as a volatile microbe that causes sickness by tracing its origins to Christianity which he characterizes as a sexually repressive and impotent religion. However, by inverted logic, he projects the same sickness onto Islam, in particular Sufi love of beardless boys, which he disparages as pathological deviance that stems from directing the libido away from its real love object, a woman, toward the male youth. For Şadan, the object of male sexual desire can only be a woman and any deviation from this heterosexual standard should be treated as a neurotic symptom which shows itself in the form of “homosexualite latente.” Within the context of the colonial discourse of gender and sexuality, the neurosis of homosexuality has associations with loose morals, political weakness, and inferiority in power. In Şadan’s writings, these associations govern his understanding of love, desire, and sex which he often conflates with each other. Therefore, it is no surprise that Şadan’s disquisition on love gradually turns into a nationalist defense of honor with its heteronormative teleology performing patriotic service. However, this narrative of nationalism is nothing but a sublimated form of narcissism. It seems Şadan turns homosexuality into pathology for the primary purpose of extricating his ego from its shameful position under the imagined gaze of the Western Other, whose modus operandi Nietzsche describes as “a fundamental perversion of the fancy, an ‘evil eye’ on all things” endowed with the power of making ill.⁸⁴

_Acknowledgments

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_Endnotes

¹ There are a number of spelling variations of his first name: “İzzeddin,” “İzeddin,” and “İzzettin” are all used interchangeably in different publications. I choose to use “İzeddin” because there is a funny anecdote (though fictional) attached to it. In his book *Deliler ve Dahiler* (İstanbul: Ötüken, 2018), which offers a fictional account of the life of Marmara Kıraathanesi — the famous gathering place for intellectuals in İstanbul where Şadan regularly went — Mehmed Niyazi explains what

- made Şadan drop one of the double letters “z” from his name: İzzeddin Şadan wrote his name as ‘İzzeddin’ because on his article published in Freud’s journal, *Imago*, his name appeared with one “z” missing (280). Since his article in *Imago* was his one and only accomplishment, Şadan carried the typo error like a badge of honor, as a sign of being “marked” by Freud.
- 2 Betül Yalçınler and Lütfü Hanoğlu, *İç Bahçe: Toptaşı’ndan Bakırköy’e Akıl Hastanesi* (İstanbul: Okyanus Yayın, 2001), 35.
 - 3 İzzettin Şadan, “Hatırat,” in *Bakırköy’de 50 Yıl* (İstanbul: Bakırköy Akıl ve Sinir Hastalıkları Hastanesi, 1977), 133. Mazhar Osman Uzman is regarded as the pioneer of modern psychiatry in Turkey.
 - 4 Yalçınler and Hanoğlu, *İç Bahçe*, 44.
 - 5 Kutluğhan Soyubol, “Turkey Psychoanalyzed, Psychoanalysis Turkified: The Case of İzzettin Şadan,” in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 38.1 (2018), 57–72, here: 59.
 - 6 Hale Uşak-Şahin, “Another Dimension of the Émigré Experience: From Central Europe to the United States via Turkey,” in *After Freud Left: A Century of Psychoanalysis in America*, ed. John Burnham (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 125–153, here: 135.
 - 7 İzzeddin Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” in *Yeni Adam* 110 (1936), 11–12, here: 1 (my translation; hereafter abbreviated as Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” 110).
 - 8 İzzeddin Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” in *Yeni Adam* 121 (1936), 5, 11, here: 5 (my translation; hereafter abbreviated as Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” 121).
 - 9 Soyubol, “Turkey Psychoanalyzed,” 64.
 - 10 Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” 121, 5 (my translation).
 - 11 Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia UP, 1988). See especially the chapter on “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” pp. 28-52.
 - 12 Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” 110, 11 (my translation).
 - 13 Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” 110, 12 (my translation).
 - 14 Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” 110, 12 (my translation).
 - 15 Soyubol, “Turkey Psychoanalyzed,” 64.
 - 16 İzzeddin Şadan, “Aşkın Tarihi,” in *Kara Elmas* (1943), 7–8, here: 8 (my translation).
 - 17 Joseph Allen Boone, *The Homoerotics of Orientalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 54.
 - 18 Shahab Ahmed, *What Is Islam?: The Importance of Being Islamic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 38.
 - 19 Ahmed, *What Is Islam?*, 406. For more on the theme of love in Sufism, see: William Chittick, *Divine Love: Islamic Literature and the Path to God* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013) and “Themes of Love in Islamic Mystical Theology,” in *Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Mystical Perspectives on the Love of God*, ed. Sheelah Trefle Hidden (New York: Palgrave, 2014); Cyrus Ali Zargar, *Sufi Aesthetics: Beauty, Love, and the Human Form in the Writings of Ibn Arabi and Iraqi* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2011); Binyamin Abrahamov, *Divine Love in Islamic Mysticism: The Teachings of al-Ghazali and al-Dabbagh* (London: Routledge, 2003); Scott Kugle, *When Sun Meets Noon: Gender, Eros, and Ecstasy in Urdu Poetry* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016).
 - 20 Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 289. Schimmel explains that since women were largely excluded from homosocial

- male spaces, most mystics “directed their admiration to young boys, disciples, or foreigners, and the books from the Abbasid period abound with love stories of this kind” (289).
- 21 Joseph Norment Bell, *Love Theory in Later Hanbalite Islam* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1979), 139.
- 22 Bell, *Love Theory*, 140.
- 23 Dror Ze’evi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 87.
- 24 Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Before Homosexuality in the Arab-Islamic World, 1500–1800* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 6. However, El-Rouayheb also acknowledges that there was a marked difference between law and its application: “between a ‘practice’ that tolerated homosexuality and a ‘theory’ that condemned it” (155).
- 25 El-Rouayheb, *Before Homosexuality*, 138.
- 26 El-Rouayheb, *Before Homosexuality*, 6.
- 27 El-Rouayheb, *Before Homosexuality*, 159.
- 28 See Ze’evi, *Producing Desire* (especially Chapter 6).
- 29 Ze’evi, *Producing Desire*, 157.
- 30 Ze’evi, *Producing Desire*, 158.
- 31 Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Moustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 148.
- 32 Najmabadi, *Women with Moustaches*, 239.
- 33 Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of the Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).
- 34 Selim Kuru, “Yaşananlar, Söylenenler ve Yazılan: Erkekler Arasında Tutkusal İlişkiler,” in *Cogito* 65–66 (2011), 263–277.
- 35 Hilmi Yavuz’s quotation appears in: “Gay Padişah Olur da Belediye Başkanı Olmaz Mı,” in *Hürriyet Kelebek*, November 25, 2007 (my translation).
- 36 Soyubol, “Turkey Psychoanalyzed,” 61.
- 37 Kuru, “Yaşananlar, Söylenenler,” 265.
- 38 İzzeddin Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” *Yeni Adam* 113 (1936), 5, here: 5 (my translation; hereafter abbreviated as Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele, 113”).
- 39 Ze’evi, *Producing Desire*, 156.
- 40 Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” 110, 12 (my translation).
- 41 Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” 113, 5 (my translation).
- 42 Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” 113, 5 (my translation).
- 43 İzzeddin Şadan, “Eros (Aşk) ile Mücadele,” *Yeni Adam* 114 (1936), 5, here: 5 (my translation).
- 44 Najmabadi, *Women with Moustaches*, 4.
- 45 Franz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks* (London: Pluto Press, 2008), 83.
- 46 Amira Mittermaier, *Dreams That Matter: Egyptian Landscapes of the Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 89.
- 47 Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 87.
- 48 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979).
- 49 Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 105.

- 50 Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics*, 106.
- 51 Silvan S. Tomkins, *Affect, Imagery, Consciousness: The Complete Edition* (New York: Springer, 2008), 359.
- 52 The first two quotations are from Tomkins, *Affect, Imagery*, 359; the last one is from Gershen Kaufman, *The Psychology of Shame: Theory and Treatment of Shame-Based Syndromes* (New York: Springer, 1989), 18.
- 53 Quoted from Elizabeth Phillips, “The Poems: 1824–1835,” in *A Companion to Poe Studies*, ed. Eric W. Carlson (London: Greenwood Press, 1996), 67–88, here: 71.
- 54 The question is a reference to Edgar Allan Poe’s short story “The Tell-Tale Heart,” in *The Portable Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. J. Gerald Kennedy (New York: Penguin, 2006), 187–191.
- 55 Such as: Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*; Elspeth Probyn, *Blush: Faces of Shame* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); Sally R. Munt, *Queer Attachments: The Cultural Politics of Shame* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008).
- 56 Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics*, 105.
- 57 Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics*, 106.
- 58 Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics*, 106.
- 59 Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921), in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Vol. 18 (London: Vintage, 2001).
- 60 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections of the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 141.
- 61 İzzeddin Şadan, *Birsam-ı Saadet* (İstanbul: Işık Dizgievi, 1943), 50–61 (my translation). The last section of the book is entitled “The Feeling of Nationality as the Sole Therapy.” Interestingly, Şadan locates the origin of the idea of nationalism as a therapeutic cure in Freud: “The feeling of nationality, as we have learned from Freud, does not only concern the individual, [...] but is a quality that can free communities from their neuroses” (50). It is not certain where Şadan gets this highly subjective interpretation of Freud’s work, but as Soyubol writes, it is probably from his reading of Freud’s *Group Psychology* (“Turkey Psychoanalyzed,” 66).
- 62 Soyubol, “Turkey Psychoanalyzed,” 67.
- 63 Soyubol, “Turkey Psychoanalyzed,” 67.
- 64 The word “Tanzimat” means “reorder” and “reorganization,” which is used to refer to a time of Westernizing reforms in the Ottoman Empire starting with the proclamation of the 1839 Edict (*Gülhane-i Hattı Hümayünü*).
- 65 Şadan, *Birsam-ı Saadet*, 9 (my translation).
- 66 Şadan, *Birsam-ı Saadet*, 9 (my translation).
- 67 Scott Siraj al-Haqq Kugle, *Homosexuality in Islam: Critical Reflection on Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Muslims* (Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications, 2010), 234.
- 68 Ashis Nandy, “Woman versus Womanliness in India: An Essay in Cultural and Political Psychology,” in *At the Edge of Psychology: Essays in Politics and Culture* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980), 32–46, here: 41.
- 69 Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), 9.
- 70 Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, 10.
- 71 Bülent Somay, *The Psychopolitics of the Oriental Father: Between Omnipotence and Emasculation* (London: Palgrave, 2014), 30.

- 72 Şadan, *Birsam-ı Saadet*, 23.
- 73 Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, 15.
- 74 Somay, *The Psychopolitics*, 75.
- 75 Şadan, *Birsam-ı Saadet*, 22 (my translation).
- 76 Şadan, *Birsam-ı Saadet*, 22 (my translation).
- 77 The quoted phrase belongs to William Haver. See Brett de Bary, “Introduction,” in *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, ed. Brett de Bary (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 1993), 7.
- 78 Şadan, *Birsam-ı Saadet*, 50 (my translation).
- 79 Juliet Flower MacCannell, *The Regime of the Brother: After Patriarchy* (London: Routledge, 1991), 20.
- 80 Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics*, 128.
- 81 Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics*, 128–129.
- 82 Tom Nairn describes nationalism as a “pathology of modern developmental history [...] an inescapable neurosis” (347) in his book *The Breakup of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* (Edinburgh: Common Ground, 2003 [1977]).
- 83 Carlo Bonomi, “Narcissism as Mastered Visibility: The Evil Eye and the Attack of the Disembodied Gaze,” in *International Forum of Psychoanalysis* 19.2 (2010), 110–119, here: 118.
- 84 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Antichrist* (New York: Dover Publications, 2018), 24.