



# Caricatures of women at the end of the Ottoman Empire

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## Documents

### Caricatures of women at the end of the Ottoman Empire

François GEORGEON

The following reflections were inspired by two images. Both appeared within eleven years of each other in satirical magazines in Istanbul, and they treat the same theme: the way that the citizens of the Ottoman capital city, notably men, looked at women – in this case, “modern” women.<sup>1</sup>

The first image (Fig. 1) is from the satirical magazine *Cem* that took its name from its founder, Cemil Cem. Born in 1882 in Istanbul, he studied at the Franco-Turkish Galatasaray High School, then passed his law degree at the University of Istanbul before taking on diverse diplomatic positions in France and Europe. Having returned to Istanbul in 1910, he began publishing *Cem* in November of that same year. A “political, humoristic and satirical illustrated journal,” according to its French title, it was, like many magazines of its time, published both in Ottoman Turkish and in French. A renowned caricaturist, Cemil Cem was himself the creator of most of the journal’s illustrations. The one that interests us here appeared with his signature in February 1911.<sup>2</sup> It depicts eight figures staring at a woman along with the personal reflections that she inspires in each.

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<sup>1</sup> I use the expression “modern woman” instead of “Westernized woman” because, as we will see later on, the expression was also applied to Russians. On the Ottoman satirical press, see Koloğlu 2005 and Çeviker 1991.

<sup>2</sup> Cem 1989.



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**Fig. 1.** Sketch on a double page, as it appeared in *Cem*, 5, Şubat 1326 [18 February 1911]. Note the author's signature in both French and Ottoman, as it appears at the centre of the image.

Eleven years later, in 1922, we see the same theme treated on the first page of a satirical review entitled *Áyine* [*The Mirror*] (Fig.2). Contrary to Cem’s illustration, this image includes two captions “Facing beauty” and “The meaning of their gazes”. Also, we only see the faces of the characters who remain mute before “beauty”; their expressions and grimaces alone reveal the sentiments they feel. This illustration was the work of a young caricaturist, Ramiz Gökçe. Born in Istanbul in 1900 – belonging thus to the generation after Cem’s – he began illustrating at a very young age and would later become one of the most famous Turkish caricaturists in the republic.<sup>3</sup>



**Fig. 2.** Excerpt from the journal *Áyine*, 39, 17 Ramazan 1340 [28 May 1922], signed Ramiz.

**Captions:** Top: “Facing beauty”. Bottom: “The meaning of their gazes.”

<sup>3</sup> *Áyine* appeared between 1921 and 1923. From Ramiz Gökçe, see Gökçe 1992.

Our analysis of these two images and their relationship to one another will serve to illustrate a phenomenon, well known elsewhere: a comparison of these two studies of people looking at women points to the significant transformations both in female fashion and in the relationship between the sexes that occurred in the short space of a decade.

### **Caricature, the reflection of a troubled decade**

Before we discuss this evolution, certain points must be clarified, in order to understand the meaning of these images and our interest in reading them in relation to one another.

The period that separates the two images in question – just eleven years – seems at first quite short, but in fact, that time span constituted a long, interminable decade for the inhabitants of the Ottoman capital. Let us review the sequence of episodes: three years after the 1908 Young Turk Revolution, an event that had destroyed the autocratic regime of Abdülhamid and brought a glimpse of liberty to the Ottoman Empire and particularly to life in the capital, a more sombre time set in. The Turco-Italian War which broke out in 1911 gave way to the disastrous Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 that directly menaced Istanbul. In 1913, the Young Turk Revolution established a quasi-dictatorial regime prior to the Empire's participation in the First World War the following year, a precipitous engagement from which the Empire would emerge in 1918, defeated, exhausted and reduced to its most simple expression. Controlled by the Allies, then occupied in March 1920, the majority of Istanbul's population lived through difficult times. While the elites of the capital – politicians and high-ranking administrators, Greek, Armenian and Jewish industrialists and traders, wealthy businessmen connected to the black market, affluent White Russians of all kinds – were able to live in a kind of constant social round, the rest of the population, the majority of which was Muslim – impoverished middle classes, immigrants, artisans and working classes – lived in miserable conditions to which were added the humiliation of military defeat and occupation. Beginning in 1922, there were the additional effects of the war for

independence led by Mustafa Kemal in Anatolia. It is thus understandable that the social role and position of women, particularly Muslim women, underwent massive change. Those women who were obliged to take up work began to display freer lifestyles, dressing more simply, using public transportation and visiting public places. This decade of change shook up and transformed life in Istanbul, and this fact is reflected in the evolution of the caricatures we will analyse.

Both periods to which our images belong witnessed a flourishing in the art of satirical print. First appearing in the 1870s, the satirical press was snuffed out during the reign of Abdülhamid (1876-1909), only to undergo an impressive resurgence after the Young Turk Revolution in 1908. Publishing two years after this transition, Cem participated in the cultural momentum of post-revolution liberty, even though this liberty would once again disappear with the events of the Great War. Like the first illustration, the image from 1922 corresponds to a period in which numerous satirical journals were published and circulated. As with the period following the Young Turk Revolution, the art of satirical print thrived after the armistice of 1918, *Âyine* being only one journal among many that existed at the time. However, the context of its production was different from that of *Cem*: this second prosperous period for the satirical press occurred in the shadow of the British and French bayonets that occupied the city of Istanbul, and artists had to strike a delicate balance, just like “serious” journalists, to express themselves, given the limitations imposed by the Allied censorship as well as that of the government of Istanbul. As it was now impossible to address political questions via satire, artists homed in on social problems and the daily life of Istanbul’s inhabitants, in other words, they covered “social subjects.”

Among these subjects, the “woman question” occupied a significant place.<sup>4</sup> This was not new: in the first pages of the satirical journals of the 1870s, a good number of caricatures had represented female fashion and its evolution; the artists, often Armenian, depicted a face-off between female figures in traditional dress and

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<sup>4</sup> Koloğlu 2004.

modern or Westernized women; they also mocked the perplexity of men when confronted with the fashion for crinolines.<sup>5</sup> With the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, women once again became an important topic for humorous magazines: the relative liberty women had suddenly acquired offered scenarios propitious for laughter and mockery. This said, it was nothing comparable to what happened in 1919 when women became an omnipresent object of raillery in practically every satirical journal. Women had become the main theme and primary subject of caricatures presented in satirical publications, with the exception of only one or two titles.<sup>6</sup>

### **She who disturbs the mind of the people...**

Let us look in detail at the first image. It portrays a young woman surrounded by eight male figures each of whom, in his own way, is very interested in her. The young woman, very elegant, stands upright, her shoulders and bust covered by a short tippet or cape that leaves her arms exposed above the elbow. She is wearing a dress or a long black skirt that drapes down to her feet which are adorned with pumps; her throat and neck are covered, she is carrying a fur muff in one hand and a small bag, a kind of reticule, in the other; her hair, cut short, is coiffed up in the back and held together by a simple headscarf, or perhaps it is the hood of her cape. Her waist is slender, evidently tightened by a corset, which gives her silhouette the aspect of an “S”, a form characteristic of Belle Époque fashion that accentuates her curves.

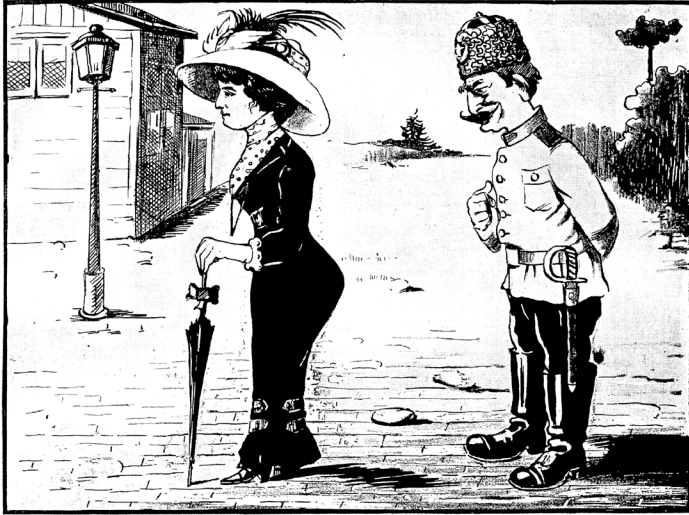
This curvaceous silhouette seems to have particularly disturbed the men of Istanbul, who were accustomed to women wearing ample, full-length clothing that hid the shape of their bodies as much as possible. This attitude emerges in another satirical print (Fig. 3) also published in 1911, in *Karagöz*, a magazine even more popular than *Cem*: it depicts a street scene in which we see an old police officer, seemingly straight out of the Abdülhamid period, who expresses his perplexity after observing the back view of an unfamiliar lady on the streets of Istanbul. He mutters under his breath:

<sup>5</sup> Şeni 1992.

<sup>6</sup> See Georgeon 2013.

— This here is what disturbs the minds of the people<sup>7</sup> ... It's exactly what ought to be forbidden ... However, the law is not so clear on the subject.

[ اسکی زماندن مدور بر پولیسک فکرنجه ]



— کوردکی تخدیش اذهان مو جب مسئلهی . . . اصل یونی منیم ایمل . . . فقط قانونده صراحت یوق . . .

**Fig. 3.** *Karagözü*, No. 294, 20 Rebiülahir 1329 [22 April 1911]. **Caption:** Top: “According to the opinion of a police officer of former times [the period of Abdülhamid]”. Bottom: “This here is what disturbs the minds of the people... It’s exactly what ought to be forbidden ... However, the law is not so clear on the subject.

<sup>7</sup> Tahdiş-i ezhan [To disturb the minds of public opinion]: this is an expression that appears in administrative and political language during the reign of Abdülhamid (1876-1909) relative to journals which were “troubling public opinion”, and was particularly pertinent in the instruction provided to military commanders during the war with Russia, at the moment of the proclamation of martial law in Istanbul in May 1877. When martial law was anew declared in 1909, following the 13 April rebellion, the same expression was invoked against certain publications during the Young Turk period.

To return to the young woman drawn by Cem (Fig. 1), she is seemingly a foreigner, perhaps a Levantine from Pera, the affluent suburb of Istanbul; she is dressed in Parisian style, excepting that it would have been customary to wear a hat during the Belle Époque. One might imagine she is walking on Paris's *Grands Boulevards* if it weren't for the curious figures that surround her. No matter what sort of identity the caricaturist intended for her, the many gazes fixed upon her bear witness to a clear sentiment of alterity: this woman is a stranger to the habitual performance of daily life on the streets of Istanbul.

What sort of gaze do these curious spectators direct at the young woman? Cem places on the left-hand side of his drawing (Fig. 1) three figures who are frankly hostile, even menacing, and who directly express their rancour or hatred of her appearance: reading from top to bottom, a man of a certain age, bearded and with a turban, an old ulema, leans towards the woman and exclaims, "May the Devil take her!" Further down, an old man wearing a fez sighs nostalgically, "Oh, for the old days!" And as for the old woman (bottom left) enveloped in a *charshaf* and traditional veil that she uses to try to cover her mouth, she is even more furious, "May that hussy drop dead!"

On the right, the five male faces express in their contorted expressions and speeches a kind of fascination: top right, an elegant man wearing a fez and moustache and a stylish overcoat, perhaps a lawyer, in any case an *effendi* from Istanbul, cries despairingly: "There you have it, I am head over heels in love with you!" addressing himself directly to the young woman. Bottom right, a man in a turban, another ulema, exclaims: "You see, you have set my head spinning," a humorous allusion to the round turban in which he is decked out. To their left, in the centre of the drawing, a countryman, or more likely, given his accoutrements, an émigré (*muhacir*) from the Balkans, exclaims in patois: "She is thrully deelicious!"<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> In fact, the man is saying "Lokman Hekim says, 'Let's eat her' [Lokman hekümün ye dedüğü]" or "Lokman Hekim counsels that we eat her." Lokman Hekim, whose name is cited in the Koran, is considered in Ottoman tradition to be a

Closer to the lady, a spryly dressed officer, rifle on his shoulder, coiffed with a *kalpak* (fur cap) set jauntily to the side, elegantly smoothes out his moustache, hoping to catch the attention of the young beauty: “How can I let her know that I come from Rumelia?” he asks naïvely. Finally, the last character in the tableau is an elderly man, poorly shaven and bitter seeming, an old Ottoman whom we might imagine living frugally on his modest retirement pension; Cem specifies that he is “one of those who await justice and good conduct,” and gives him a few plaintive words to say, “Am I going to spend the rest of my life waiting?”

There is, in fact, political satire in these last two portraits. Very critical of the Young Turk Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) that dominated Ottoman political life after the 1908 Revolution, Cem seizes the opportunity to poke fun at them. Here, he mocks the pretention and arrogance of the Young Turk officer who hopes to seduce the “modern” woman by boasting of his Rumelian origins, that is to say that he comes from European Turkey; a manner of saying that he is “European” like she is, and more “civilized” than other Ottomans; a way also of presenting himself as heroic, one of the Young Turk heroes who, like Enver and Niyazi “from Rumelia”, rid the Empire of the autocratic Abdülhamid two years earlier. As for the speech of the old Ottoman, it is a direct critique addressed to the Grand Vizir İbrahim Hakkıpaşa: upon assuming his post in January 1910, Hakkıpaşa had promised a policy of “justice and good conduct” (*adl ü ihsan*), specifically regarding the employment of victims of the State, following the Young Turk Revolution and its political reorganization (*tensikat*), a policy that was manifested in severe purges of rank and file government administrators and army officers.<sup>9</sup> Clearly, one year on, our good old Ottoman is still waiting for reparations...

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physician who gives good advice. The expression has become proverbial in Turkish for saying “something delicious.”

<sup>9</sup> İbrahim Hakkıpaşa’s promise to bring “justice and good conduct” had, according to Enver Ziya Karal, “a magical effect” on the public. The historian states that, “Everyone hoped that his personal problems would be resolved at

It is worth noting that in this gallery of portraits presented by Cemil Cem, a diversity of age groups and social standing is represented: from the dashing young officer to the bitter old man, from the émigré or the provincial to the *effendi* from the capital city, the sketch offers an intricate tableau of Istanbul society.

In total, the eight different gazes speak first to the surprise and the trouble these people, almost all men, experience in the presence of the beautiful stranger. One thing is certain, her appearance in public in 1910 is a spectacle that powerfully affects Ottomans, shocking some and fascinating others. However, their reactions remain within the realm of the socially acceptable: there is no ribaldry in their expressions, simply anger or even hatred on one side, admiration and fascination on the other.

### **The body that preoccupies Istanbul...**

Let us skip forward ten years or so. We find ourselves in 1922 facing a new female figure surrounded by particularly expressive faces, but this time they remain mute before “beauty” (Fig. 2). She is a young woman wearing a light dress, slightly low-cut, exposing her arms and legs up to her knees. Her short hair is held up by a headscarf knotted at the nape of the neck.<sup>10</sup> Her earrings, lipstick and high-heeled shoes complete the picture. She walks in an insolent way, a slender cane under her arm, her dress flutters up around her moving body, one might nearly say she is dancing. Less form-fitting than the dress of the woman represented by Cem a dozen years earlier, her outfit is unfettered by any corset and allows much greater freedom of movement. The dominant impression she gives is one of a liberated woman, at least as far as her outfit is concerned.

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the same time as that of the government,” Karal 1996: 121. See also Asım [Us] 1327 [1911]: 5 and İnal 1953: 1767. It is worth noting that the expression “adl ü ihsan” figures in the Koran: “Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives,” (Chapter of the Bees, XVI/90, Sahih international translation). In short, Cem is mocking the promises of the Grand Vizir. On the political purges, see Sohrabi 2011.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Libal 2014; Himam 2019: 146.

But who is this woman? She reminds us irresistibly of the fashionable international women of the same period. Excepting her hairdo: her manner of pulling back her hair is like that of Russian women, specifically the White Russians who arrived with the wave of exiles fleeing the Bolsheviks and who “invaded” Istanbul from 1919. With their liberated ways, still unknown in Istanbul at the time, these women broke the moral codes of behaviour held by Ottoman women, notably by refusing to respect the rule of separation of the sexes in different travelling compartments, whether in the tramways or on the Bosphorus boats, and so they scandalized the authorities, even if most probably to the delight of many men... What supports my hypothesis is the type of coiffure represented in the image, as it was brought to the Ottoman capital by the Russian women and led to the coining of the term “Russian head” (*Rus başı*).<sup>11</sup> Another interpretation would be that while no such extraordinary and alluringly liberated figure really existed in Istanbul, she was simply a figment of the imagination of the artist, meant to represent either a dream or a nightmare, depending on the perspective of the caricaturist. Perhaps the caption suggests this interpretation, for it speaks of “beauty” in a general way, of “beauty” in itself.

In the end, the difference is not so important. What counts are the ways people looked at this “beauty”. Once again, eight figures are sketched with their eyes fixed upon the woman, though this time there are two women and six men. Let us begin with the men. They are each quite excited by the appearance of the young woman. The three on the left are younger than those who see her from behind. We have a fine gallery of male portraits: on the left, from the top down, we see the well-coiffed seducer wearing an impeccable fez, who is checking out the lady with a beguiling smile; the frustrated observer who sticks out his tongue at her; and the lover, slightly lecherous, who blows her a kiss, his lips in the shape of a heart. On the right, just behind the woman, is the police officer who shouldn’t be looking – he is on duty but cannot help a little sideways glance at the young beauty; beneath him, the voyeur, looking over his spectacles who attentively examines the various curves of the

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<sup>11</sup> Toprak 2014.

woman's body from beneath; and finally, the pervert – an ulema wearing a turban! – who blows up her skirt in order to see what is hidden beneath...!

Let us also consider the spectrum of female gazes that the artist took pains to represent, by way of contrast, placing two women in diagonal opposition to one another in the gallery of onlookers. At bottom left, an elderly woman wearing a *charshaf*, her sulky face pulled in a sullen expression – known in Turkish as *asıkt surat* – raises her eyes to see “the beauty.” It is difficult to say if she is hostile, shocked or simply curious. In the upper right-hand corner, we see a new female figure who was absent in the image ten years earlier: the face of a young woman: looking from above at the modern woman, as if from a balcony or a window, she attentively examines the “beauty” walking about the streets below her home. Her own face closely resembles that of the model in the center of the image, and she wears the same hairdo, a scarf holding her hair up on her head. However, it is easy to imagine that her appearance, her dress and her style are different, and that she is much more “clothed”. The artist probably wished to represent a young Turkish woman – at least, this is our hypothesis – curious at seeing a counterpart to herself who is seemingly more modern, more liberated, and perhaps offering a model of femininity.

What is revealed by her curiosity? Surely something different from the spectrum of male gazes depicted in the image. An illustration that appeared in the satirical magazine *Akbaba* in 1923 attributed to the same caricaturist, Ramiz Gökçe, offers a suggestion as to how we might understand this difference.<sup>12</sup> (Fig. 4) In this other illustration by Gökçe, the subject is also the modern woman: if the Turkish man coiffed in a fez is interested solely in the body parts revealed by the woman's dress – her face, décolleté, and bare arms and legs – the Turkish woman (herself muffled up to the neck in dark garments) demonstrates an avid curiosity to see the outfit, hairdo, earrings, necklace, bracelet, dress and shoes of the “beauty”... And we can deduce that this is probably the case for the woman fascinated by the “beauty” in the first of Gökçe's images.

<sup>12</sup> *Akbaba*, 29 November 1923.



**Fig. 4.** *Akbaba*, 103, 29 Rebiülahir 1342 [29 November 1923].  
**Caption:** “The difference in the gaze” Right: “What a man looks at”.  
Left: “What a woman looks at.”

### The decade that rattled...the men of Istanbul

The juxtaposition of these two illustrations suggests multiple ways to read the images at hand.

To begin, let us take the question of representation. In both cases, women are employed by the artist to represent or symbolize the upper classes of urban society. The way in which they are dressed reveals that they are outside, in the streets; henceforward, they possess a place in public space where they can *see* and *looked at*, and above all, they can move and circulate more freely than before – this liberty of movement constitutes an essential element of their social emancipation. In addition, the women are depicted alone, unaccompanied by a male member of their family – husband, brother, cousin – or by an elder woman serving as chaperone, as Ottoman custom would have dictated. Solitary and thus approachable, each woman is, perhaps, easy prey for other men. The comparison of our two central images demonstrates the spectacular evolution in the style

and look of the two women, an evolution that paralleled what was happening also in European fashion. The woman in the first image is much more covered up than the second one, she is immobile, a bit timid, somehow fixed in a static pose, like an icon that one venerates with love (or that one hates). The second woman whose body is freely offered up to the gaze of others, whose throat and legs are not concealed, who is full of movement, striding along, shoulders easeful, waist supple, has no concern for the way people are looking at her. Our reading of the passage of time between the publication of these two images is that in the space of ten years a veritable women's liberation has occurred.

In terms of those who are looking at the women, the stark differences leap off the page. First of all, the men. Cem represents them either as hostile towards the modern woman or utterly conquered by her. Without hesitation and each in his own way, the latter admit the devouring passion that she inspires. But their sentiments are basically platonic, contained within the framework of Ottoman decorum; their responses remain modest, at a distance from this manifestly inaccessible beauty. Their regard stays within the register of love and hate. Ten years later, we are no longer in such familiar and predictable territory with Ramiz: the gazes of the men he illustrates are far from platonic; his men are clearly more daring and more lewd than Cem's from a decade earlier. These are the gazes of aroused men who, "feasting their eyes" on the beauty before them, don't hide their desire. Now they can dream of approaching their prey. Should she, indeed, be of White Russian origin, we know that a certain number of them filled a variety of brothels in Istanbul or performed the role of mistress. What's more, the men who are positioned behind and to the right of the woman in Ramiz's image behave like voyeurs. There exists a term in Ottoman to designate the voyeur, an amusing term named after the inventor of radiography, Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen: the *röntgençi* ("X-ray specialists"). There is good reason to believe this term emerged during the Armistice following the First World War, with the arrival

of the White Russians – yes, them again!<sup>13</sup> These women were said to have started a mode of bathing suits on the Florya Beach in the Marmara Sea near Istanbul, a fashion that had all the men running to take advantage of the exciting and utterly unprecedented spectacle. Up until then, women had entered the water from bathing cabins (*deniz hamamı*) on the Bosphorus, carefully protecting themselves from indiscreet viewers.<sup>14</sup>

A second layer of meaning is revealed in the comparative analysis of these two caricaturists' approaches to their subject. Let us not forget that these men who produced satirical illustrations expected them to amuse their readers – male readers – intending to make them laugh, even if that laughter could be a bit cruel. The satirical press and Ottoman caricaturists solicited the attention of their readers, and it was thanks to this readership that the artists and publishers were enabled to both entertain and to offer social critique. Aside from the political satire contained in certain of his figures, Cem was making fun of the vain hope of the men who pined for a beautiful stranger but who would never have had any chance of conquering her; he himself lived for a long time in Europe and for him, the modern woman was not a discovery as it was for the characters he represented and whose fascination he mocked in his illustrations. As for Ramiz, there was nothing political in his image; even though the magazine *Ayine* outwardly supported the Anatolian resistance movement, all he offers is a pointed satire of these voracious men, practically rutting like stags, their gaze clearly exceeding the limits of Ottoman decorum. The major difference between Cem and Ramiz is also the quasi-nudity of the woman represented by the latter. This representation was far from an isolated case during the period of the Armistice: quite the contrary, by regularly portraying scantily dressed women under the guise of humor, the Ottoman satirical press identified itself as producing “men’s magazines” destined for a strictly male readership. The voyeurs were

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<sup>13</sup> Though the term appears at this time, the phenomenon is evidently much older: Shirine Hamadeh mentions cases of voyeurism in the eighteenth century in the gardens on the shores of the Bosphorus: Hamadeh 2008.

<sup>14</sup> See the Exhibition Catalogue *İstanbul'da Deniz Sefası. İstanbul's Seaside Leisure*, İstanbul, Pera Müzesi, 2018.

not only those depicted in the images, they were also the readers who purchased such magazines and eagerly devoured the caricatures, mirroring the world its artists portrayed. We might recall that the magazine in which Ramiz published his illustration was titled *Âyine* [*The Mirror*], and that the journal aimed to offer a reflection of contemporary society. It is not trivial that the first erotic publication in Ottoman, an illustrated magazine titled *Bin Bir Bûse* [*A thousand and one kisses*], dates from the same period.<sup>15</sup>

There is also, at least in the work of Ramiz, a certain dose of criticism concerning the female temptress. The woman he depicts is caricatured, not merely “Westernized,” she is also a caricature of the “Westernized” woman; in sum, one might say she is “hyper-Westernized,” in the sense that Şerif Mardin employs the term. In his well-known article, Mardin demonstrated how the first novels in Ottoman Turkish caricatured a type of hyper-Westernized man who, out of his desire to appear “civilized” or “Westernized”, largely overshot the mark of his European model, to the point of appearing not only ridiculous but also clearly exceeding the norms acceptable in Ottoman society.<sup>16</sup> At the time of the Armistice, the “Westernized” character became feminine, and it was this woman who was depicted as at once ridiculous and menacing for the established social order. As with many of his contemporaries, Ramiz advocated a well-tempered modernization and not a “hyper-Westernization”, which was nothing more than a bastard version of “indigenous Westernization.” His wit depended on a double social satire, including simultaneously very traditional men and the modern, i.e., excessively modern, woman.

Finally, these two images suggest a third layer of meaning: this is the reading we can uncover today by placing our two images in dialogue. As with the theatre, whose history parallels that of caricature, the satirical press was “putting [something] on stage” in order to “unveil” in all senses of the word. With its images and illustrations, it was saying what could not be said and showing what could not be shown in serious journals, and this is clearly an

<sup>15</sup> Originally published in 1923-1924, this magazine has been re-edited recently by Ömer Türkoglu.

<sup>16</sup> Mardin 1974.

“extra” meaning that arouses our interest. What is the “extra” meaning here? There is first the simply illustrative dimension: our two images expose a phenomenon that was well known elsewhere, the emancipation of women, in this case Turkish women in the years following the 1908 Revolution – that is to say, well before the Kemalist reforms. The images remind us of the rapidity and the scale of the phenomenon. In a short space of time, a long decade that we might say began in 1908, people witnessed in the streets of Istanbul more and more women occupying public space, and they were less and less covered. At a time when the Ottoman cinema was still in its infancy, caricatures in the press drew attention to this movement. Further, these images help us to comprehend the disruption or even trauma that this phenomenon provoked in Istanbul society, notably for Turks. We have observed in these images how social norms disintegrated, as the values and customs that had organized sociability in Istanbul faced a phenomenon of anomie, defined here in a Durkheimian sense according to which individuals lose their bearings and no longer know how to regulate their desires. Overall and importantly, these images demonstrate the importance of writing *a history of the gaze* in Ottoman and Turkish society.<sup>17</sup> Such a history would be all the more pertinent since there exists traditionally in Muslim and Ottoman culture a particularly elaborate discipline of the gaze.

*Translated by Elizabeth CLAIRE*

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