

# Evaluative Language in Academic Discourse: Euphemisms vs. Dysphemisms in ANDREWS' & KALPAKLI'S *The Age of Beloveds* (2005) as a case in point<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

In this article, I am concerned with certain aspects of the language use in ANDREWS and KALPAKLI'S *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (2005). More specifically, I show how the authors tend to use distinct sets of words to describe a particular kind of practice depending on whether it occurs in the Ottoman Empire or in some western European city, even though they claim that the practices are equivalent. Typically, the practice in question involves an adult male, a young dependent boy, a sexual act between the two, and some kind of payment for the boy. This kind of practice is more often than not referred to in terms of *activities of love* when it occurs in the Ottoman Empire, but in terms of *sexual debauchery* involving *boy prostitutes* when it takes place in some western European city. Thus, in the article, in which I draw on certain insights from Critical Discourse Analysis (see, e.g., REISIGL and WODAK 2001), I show, by means of several quotations, that the vocabulary used to describe the practices is quite frequently euphemistic when the Ottoman Empire is concerned and correspondingly dysphemistic when cities in Western Europe are concerned. The subtitle of the work represents an exception to this pattern.

I conclude the article by pointing out two issues that might shed some light on the authors' choice of words.

*Keywords:* evaluative language in academic discourse, euphemism, dysphemism, Ottoman lyric poetry, Ottoman Turkish language, early-modern cultural studies

## 1. Introduction

Like modern Turkish, Ottoman Turkish is a grammatically gender-neutral language. Translating Ottoman Turkish into a language such as English, we will have to look at the context to find out how to render, for example, the third-person singular personal pronoun, *o(l)*—with 'he', 'she', or 'it'. The same holds, of course, for third-person singular verb forms. Occasionally, however, the context may be ambiguous too. A case in point are instances of Ottoman lyric poetry—a cover term for panegyric, sufi and love poetry written in Ottoman Turkish, inspired by the Persian and Arabic traditions, from the thirteenth to the nineteenth

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century.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, in love poems, the authors of which were predominantly men, it is not always clear whether the object of the poet's (typically unrequited) love is a male or a female. The excerpts below from two poems by Nedîm (ca. 1690-1730) illustrate this point even though they do not involve third-person singular forms. In the excerpt in (1), the gender-ambiguity is expressed explicitly, and in (2) the reference to the Friday prayer suggests that the referent is a male, since only men could attend Friday prayer at the time.<sup>3</sup>

- (1) *Kız oğlan nazı nazın, şeh-levend avazı avazın*  
 Your capriciousness is the capriciousness of a virgin, your voice is the voice of a young man  
*Belâsın ben de bilmem kız mısın oğlan mısın kâfir*  
 You are trouble, I do not even know whether you are a girl or a boy, you infidel
- (2) *İzin alıp cum'a namazına diye maderden*  
 Get thy mother's leave, pretending 'tis for Friday's holy prayer,  
*Bir gün uğrulayalım çarh-ı sitemperverden*  
 And we'll filch a day, my darling, from the cruel-hearted sphere.  
*Dolaşıp iskeleye doğru nihan yollardan*  
 We shall slip through quiet streets to the landing-stage, my dear.  
*Gidelim serv-i revanım, yürü Sa'd-âbâd'e.*  
 Let us go to Sa'd-âbâd, waving cypress, let us go.

Poems such as these may be interpreted in several ways. First, in cases where the referent is male, he may simply represent a woman, since honourable women were not portrayed in this way in the relevant time period (ANDREWS and KALPAKLI 2005: 43). On this interpretation, the focus of the poet's attention is a female. Second, the referent may not represent a human being at all, but God (see, e.g., BANARLI 2001, I: 68-69). From this perspective, the object of the poet's longing is the unification with God. A third possibility is to take the poem at "face value", in which case the referent indeed is a young boy. On this interpretation, the poem represents a male's declaration of his love, or desire, or both, for what may be considered to be another male. This is the interpretation that ANDREWS and KALPAKLI take as their point of departure for their monograph *The Age of Beloveds. Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (2005). Thus, in *The Age of Beloveds*, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI eventually become concerned with a particular "historical instance of [the] practice" of "love" (op. cit., 8) that typically

2 The golden age in Ottoman lyric poetry is taken to be the sixteenth century, though, represented by two of the three perhaps most appreciated poets—Fuzûlî (ca. 1500-1556) and Bâkî (ca. 1526-1600). A third revered poet is Nedîm (ca. 1690-1730) (see, e.g., GIBB 1958-1967, and ANDREWS and KALPAKLI 2005).

3 The English translation in (1) is mine. My aim is to illustrate the occasional ambiguity of the referent's gender. I cannot possibly do justice to Nedîm's poetry. The English translation in (2) is from GIBB (1967, IV: 44-45). The term *Sa'd-âbâd* 'the Home of Felicity' was coined in the Tulip Period (1718-1730) and refers to the picnic park at the (then) sultan's summer-palace in the valley of the Sweet Waters of Europe (ibid. and Redhouse 2011).

involves an adult male, a young, dependent, and subordinate boy, a sexual act between the two, and some kind of payment for the boy.

ANDREWS and KALPAKLI set out emphasizing that the similarities between the Ottomans and the Europeans by far outnumbered the differences when it comes to such practices in the time period under consideration (cf., e.g., 23). As I will show in this article, however, ANDREWS' and KALPAKLI's vocabulary does not reflect these similarities. On the contrary, two distinct vocabularies tend to be used, depending on whether the practice in question occurs in the Ottoman Empire and involves Ottoman subjects, or takes place in some western European city and involves European subjects. Specifically, with respect to each other, the expressions used to refer to Ottomans and the Ottoman Empire are typically euphemistic, whereas those used to refer to Europeans and Europe are typically dysphemistic. A case in point is where what is described in terms of *activities of love* when it is manifested in the Ottoman Empire is characterized as *sexual debauchery* involving *boy prostitutes* when it is instantiated in Europe (see ANDREWS and KALPAKLI 2005: 70). I will return to this in section 5.

The article is structured as follows. In section 2, I present the work under consideration in more detail, focusing on how the authors emphasize that the phenomena they describe in the two cultures are similar. In section 3, I make some clarifications, *inter alia*, with respect to my aims with this article. Section 4 is devoted to the definitions I apply of 'evaluative' language, 'euphemism', and 'dysphemism'. In section 5, I provide examples of the authors' use of distinct vocabularies for Western Europe and the Ottoman Empire. In section 6, I draw a parallel between ANDREWS and KALPAKLI's use of words and a strategy familiar from Critical Discourse Analysis (cf., e.g., REISIGL and WODAK 2001)—namely, *othering*. In section 7, I point out two issues that ANDREWS and KALPAKLI bring forth themselves and which may shed light on their choice of words. I sum up the article in section 8 and point out some implications of this kind of language use.

## 2. On *The Age of Beloveds* and the authors' stated goals

In this section, I will present the work under consideration in a bit more detail, focusing on the authors' stated goals and how they emphasize that the phenomena under consideration in the two cultures are similar and equivalent. The latter is important, for in section 5 I will show that these similarities are not reflected in ANDREWS' and KALPAKLI's choice of words.

In *The Age of Beloveds*, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI are concerned with "certain social and cultural phenomena" as they were instantiated in urban centers of the Ottoman Empire and in western European cities, such as Venice, Florence, Rome and London, from the late fifteenth through the early seventeenth century. The authors coin the term *the Age of Beloveds* to refer to this time period, which is typically labelled *the early-modern period* or *the late Renaissance* as far as Europe is concerned (op. cit., 22-23). This Age of Beloveds was "an age of love and sexual activity" where "[b]eloveds of every sort abounded" and where "[l]ove was everywhere, from attachments to beloveds of the most noble and romantic sort, to the momentary quenching of desire in the arms of cheap prostitutes and the furtive groping and rubbing of young men, to the coquetries of cultured courtesans and

beautiful boys who entertained the great and powerful and modeled desire for the greatest artists of the age”.

ANDREWS and KALPAKLI explicitly express that one of their goals is to show that, as regards sexual activity during the age of beloveds, the similarities between the Ottomans and the Europeans by far outnumbered the differences. Consider, for example, the following excerpt (op. cit., 20).

“[W]e believe that we can point to significant indications that, in some respects, there were in the sixteenth century *only surface differences* (my emphasis, S.S.A.) between Ottoman society, in which male elites publicly expressed their attractions to young men, and Venetian society, in which elite men paraded their attractions to famous courtesans. The differences, we will argue, lie for the most part in what was allowed to *show* rather than in what was *done* (original emphasis); that is, it is mostly a matter of how one is able to talk about things”.

Furthermore,

“[a]s we will try to show, *many of the same things were happening; similarities abounded* that transcended cultural and religious differences, often making them seem no more significant than the cultural and religious differences between Protestants and Catholics in traditionally European communities” (op. cit., 23, my emphasis).

Another example is the authors’ statement following this quotation from BRAUDEL (1995, I: 14): “I retain the firm conviction that the Turkish Mediterranean lived and breathed with the Christian, and that the whole sea shared a common destiny, a heavy one indeed, with identical problems and general trends if not identical consequences”. Here, the authors make the following statement:

“We share BRAUDEL’s conviction and intend to present evidence in favour of it” (ANDREWS and KALPAKLI 2005: 25).

They point out that although, in the last forty years, “acceptance of the interrelatedness of Europeans and Ottomans in areas such as trade, economics, monetary trends, and even agriculture has become almost commonplace (...) the assumption has remained that culture is a different matter” (ibid.). The authors, then, want to show that the Ottomans and western Europeans were *culturally* interrelated too.

In the following quotation, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI (2005: 27) are more specific when it comes to what cultural aspect they will concentrate on. Their work is an attempt at introducing the beautiful young male “beloved (...) not as a stranger representing the deviant lusts of some past or distant Oriental “others”, but as a beloved of his age as familiar in his androgynous charm to the palazzi of Venice and Florence or the great houses of England as he was to the gardens and *köşks* (kiosks) of Istanbul.”<sup>4</sup>

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4 *Kiosk* is ANDREWS and KALPAKLI’s translation of *köşk*, but as pointed out by a reviewer, a better translation in this context is, perhaps, *pavilion*.

My next example to illustrate the authors' aim at highlighting similarities is the following, from the end of the Introduction chapter. Here, the authors state that they "are suggesting that there are informative and interesting commonalities to social and intellectual life in the Mediterranean world that extend far into Europe and the Middle East and transcend perceived cultural and religious boundaries" (op. cit., 30).

Furthermore, in their book, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI want to bring forward "some suggestive examples indicating that the Age of Beloveds was, not just an Ottoman, or Eastern, or Islamic phenomenon, but evident as a cultural phenomenon in late-Renaissance Europe as well" (op. cit., 18).

In short, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI want to move away from the particularism that has dominated the discourse on the Ottomans and their history and instead focus on what the Ottomans had in common with other peoples and cultures at the time (op. cit., 24-25). In this connection, the authors refer to "the inability of European scholarship to account meaningfully for the Ottomans" (op. cit., 25). For, the time period under examination was "a zone of convergence in which Ottoman and European thoughts and behaviors were *remarkably similar*" (op. cit., 26, my emphasis).

Another example to show how the authors argue that the phenomena they discuss are similar, is this. Discussing the shortcomings associated with the labels we use to refer to certain periods of time, the authors write that we then often "exclude the activities of other people in other places at other times even when they seem to be *doing and thinking the same things*" (op. cit., 24, my emphasis).

ANDREWS' and KALPAKLI's goal is "to suggest a framework (or a number of possible frameworks) in which early-modern Ottoman and European literatures and their social contexts can be thought about and talked about together". They hope that they, with their book, will "encourage people with an interest in Europe to take the Ottomans into account, to ignore the particularisms and exclusivities projected by Middle East specialists, to use translations as a window into Ottoman culture, and to contemplate comparative and cooperative studies" (op. cit., 28).

As I have already anticipated, and as I will show in section 5, ANDREWS' and KALPAKLI's vocabulary does not always reflect these similarities.

### 3. Clarifications

Now, some clarifications must be made. First, when applied to refer to a situation involving a sexual act between an adult male and a dependent boy, expressions such as *love*, *lover* and *beloved* are highly euphemistic, at least from the perspective of how the law is enforced in modern-day Norway, for example.<sup>5</sup> My concern here, however, is *not* to look at how the practice is described from a modern-day perspective. My concern is to look at how the practice is described when taking place in the Ottoman Empire, from the perspective of how it is described when occurring in some western European city, and *vice versa*. In other

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5 Also, with respect to the title of the work—*The Age of Beloveds*—one question is this: From whose perspective was the time period under consideration, the sixteenth century, the *beloveds'* age—from the boys' own perspective, or from someone else's?

words, I compare the two vocabularies *with each other*, not with the vocabulary that is used when the practice occurs today in a country such as Norway.<sup>6</sup>

Second, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI (2005: 23) do point out that their topic is associated with terminological challenges. On one occasion, for example, they state that, despite all the evident cultural similarities between the Ottomans and the Europeans, and in trying to show them, “all our conventions of naming work against us. We cannot presume to start talking about the Ottomans as though they were just another European power or about Ottoman culture as though it were just another aspect of European culture.” As the subsequent sentence shows, however, the challenges they have in mind are not the same as my concerns are in this article: “It would jar any scholar (ourselves included) to talk about *Renaissance Istanbul*.” It is for this reason that the authors invent their own period, “the Age of Beloveds (approximately the middle of the fifteenth century through the first two decades or so of the seventeenth), thereby capturing certain social, cultural, political, and economic phenomena that occurred during that time in a geographic area that covers a greater Europe including England on one end and the Ottoman Empire on the other” (op. cit., 23-24).

On another occasion, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI (2005: 24) also point out that words such as *homoerotic* and *sexuality* are words that belong to discourses that did not exist in the period under consideration. Again, however, such terminological issues are not of the kind I am having in mind in this article. My concern is that two sets of expressions are used to refer to what is claimed to be one and the same thing—one set for the Ottoman Empire, and one for Europe.

Finally, I wish to point out that my concern in this article is not to contest ANDREWS’ and KALPAKLI’s view(s). My concern is to show that they apply two distinct vocabularies to describe one and the same phenomenon—one typically euphemistic for the Ottoman Empire and one correspondingly dysphemistic for Europe—and that they, thereby, are committing to one group of social actors—Europeans, in this case—exactly the same injustice as they are accusing “Westerners” (op. cit., 66), including (European) “historians past and present” (op. cit., 10) of having done and of still doing to the Ottomans.

#### 4. Definitions: ‘Evaluative’ language, ‘euphemism’, and ‘dysphemism’

In this section, I will define what I mean by ‘evaluative language’, ‘euphemism’, and ‘dysphemism’. First, I follow THOMPSON and HUNSTON (2000: 5) in taking ‘evaluation’ to be the “expression of the speaker or writer’s attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about”. Entities, of course,

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6 It is worth pointing out, though, that there are two sets of words here that largely correspond—namely, that which is used in *The Age of Beloveds* to refer to the practice when it occurs in the western European cities, and that which is applied to the practice when it takes place in a country like Norway today. From this perspective, terms such as *rape* and *assault* in this context should not be considered dysphemisms, but *orthophemisms*—the neutral, standard expressions (cf., e.g., ALLAN and BURRIDGE 2006: 31-40) for a given concept. Again, however, my concern here is not to take a modern, Norwegian perspective but to look at the terms applied to the two cultures *with respect to each other*.

are expressed by nominal groups, whereas propositions are expressed by clauses (op. cit. 3). (Most of the examples I will provide in section 5 involve evaluation of entities.) Furthermore, the speaker's or writer's attitude "may relate to certainty or obligation or desirability or any of a number of other sets of values" (op. cit. 5).

I am not suggesting that evaluative language *per se* is negative, not even in academic discourse. Rather, I share THOMPSON and HUNSTON's view when they state that the expression of the speaker's or writer's opinion is a natural and "important feature of language" (op. cit. 2). Moreover, in academic writing, evaluative language is used, for example, "in order to organise discourse, to construct and maintain relations between the writer and the reader" (MAURANEN and BONDI 2003, 270), so, of course, I use evaluative language myself in this article. My concern here, however, is to present a case in which *two distinct sets* of evaluations are used to represent what is said to be *one type* of practice, depending only on whether the practice in question occurs in the Ottoman Empire or in some western European city. I will also briefly point out some implications of this kind of language use.

THOMPSON and HUNSTON (2000: 20) indirectly touch upon the notions of euphemism and dysphemism as well when they argue that, contrary to our evaluation of certainty, which is "an essential part of any proposition", our evaluation of "goodness or desirability ... is construed as an accidental quality of the entity that need not be expressed in referring to it: the use of an overtly evaluative label (e.g. *fleabag* as opposed to *cat*) is felt to be a marked choice that adds an optional overlay of emotion to the basic referential meaning." Both euphemisms and dysphemisms are marked choices, labels that contribute meanings in addition to the basic one. In THOMPSON and HUNSTON's example, 'fleabag' is a dysphemism for 'cat'.

As stated by BURKHARDT (2010: 362), "[d]ysphemisms as well as euphemisms are semantic means of evaluation and, therefore, not intended to reflect a given reality in a psychologically neutral way."

As regards 'euphemism', I take as my point of departure ALLAN and BURRIDGE's (1991: 11) definition, which is given as follows:

"A euphemism is used as an alternative to a dispreferred expression, in order to avoid possible loss of face: either one's own face or, through giving offense, that of the audience, or of some third party."

A similar definition is given in Longman's *Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2001: 466), where a euphemism is taken to be

"a polite word or expression that you use instead of a more direct one to avoid shocking or upsetting someone".

As I will return to in section 7, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI in the preface to their monograph explicitly express their anxiety of giving offence (ANDREWS and KALPAKLI 2005: ix). To anticipate, they write, for example, that almost all of their respondents, having read all or parts of the manuscript, made comments such as the following: "There are people who will be very upset by this...".

BURKHARDT (2010: 357) distinguishes between, *inter alia*, religious or magical, and social euphemisms, where the latter subtype is used "to show regard for the feelings or imagination of others by glossing over unpleasant or indecent features of the objects referred

to.” He points out that euphemisms are also sometimes used “to calm the speaker’s own conscience”. Furthermore, discussing various types of lexical euphemisms, that is, euphemisms where “the palliative meaning is carried by just one word or phrase”—as opposed to syntactic euphemisms, in which “the whole sentence is in a way infected” (op. cit., 358)—BURKHARDT writes that, in some cases, “[u]npleasant matters may even be euphemized by their opposite” (op. cit., 360). His examples include cases in which war is called *peace* and torture *love*. As BURKHARDT points out (op. cit., 360-361), this kind of euphemization is one of the underlying principles of ORWELL’s “Doublethink” and “Newspeak” from the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

In connection with the term euphemism, the notion of a word’s *connotations* is also important. Words have connotations (cf., e.g., LYONS 1977), that is, they may trigger certain associations in the listeners’ mind. In some cases, a word’s connotations may explain why a euphemism is used in its stead. LEECH (1974: 15-18) distinguishes between *connotative meaning*—“the “real-world” experience one associates with an expression”—and *affective meaning*, which is related to “the personal feelings of the speaker”.

DUDA (2011: 3, 7-8) argues that both euphemisms and dysphemisms are “concealing mechanisms” that language users employ when they, for some reason, do not want to use straightforward, or neutral remarks. Thus, euphemisms are used when the speaker wants to avoid mentioning anything that could be perceived as “offensive, vulgar, disgusting or too straightforward”. Referring to MCARTHUR (1992: 387), PEI and GAYNOR (1954: 68-69) and DANESI (2000: 89), she defines a euphemism as “a word or an expression which is delicate and inoffensive and is used to replace or cover a term that seems to be either taboo, too harsh or simply inappropriate for a given conversational exchange” and as “the substitution of a more pleasant or less direct word for an unpleasant or distasteful one.”

As far as dysphemism is concerned, ALLAN and BURRIDGE (1991: 26) define it as “an expression with connotations that are offensive either about the denotatum or to the audience, or both, and it is substituted for a neutral or euphemistic expression for just that reason”.

It has been pointed out in the literature (see, e.g., KRÖLL 1984) that the distinction between euphemism and dysphemism is not always clear-cut. Since this does not appear to pertain to the case at hand, I will not discuss this any further. Another point made in the literature is that, what is considered euphemistic or dysphemistic varies over time and between cultures (see, e.g. CHAMIZO DOMÍNGUES and SÁNCHEZ BENEDITO 2005). Since ANDREWS and KALPAKLI do not explicitly or concretely bring up this topic, I will not do so either.

Discussing euphemisms and dysphemisms, DUDA (2011: 8) states that after the topic of death, “the second most deeply enrooted tabooed topic of today seems to be the sphere of sexual activity.” This appears to be relevant from the point of view of the present article and leads me to the next section.

## 5. The evidence

In this section, I will provide examples of how ANDREWS and KALPAKLI (2005) tend to use two sets of vocabularies to refer to a given practice depending only on whether it occurs in



the Ottoman Empire and involves Ottomans, or takes place somewhere in Europe and involves Europeans. I will show that, compared with each other, the vocabulary is typically euphemistic when the Ottoman Empire is concerned and correspondingly dysphemistic when Europe is concerned. Unless otherwise noted, the emphasis in the quotations is mine.

My first example is from the Introduction chapter. As their point of departure for this chapter, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI take a story about Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror (r. 1451-1481) and Lukas Notaras found in the Byzantine Greek Doukas's history of the fall of Constantinople. What intrigues ANDREWS and KALPAKLI about this story is the extent to which it is about "love, and honor, and sexual behavior" (op. cit., 1). However, "[a]s Doukas tells it, when Constantinople fell and the youthful Mehmet (he was only twenty-one at the time) entered in triumph, he thought to offer Notaras a position as leader of the Greek community in the now Turkish city. But, when he demanded Notaras's handsome youngest son, supposedly to be used sexually to sate the sultan's perverted lusts, Notaras refused, and the merciless Mehmet had Notaras, as well as his older son and son-in-law, executed. Doukas's account polarizes the protagonists and attributes value to both sides by contrasting the love (for a son, for honor) of the Notaras family to the lust (purely sexual desire and abnormal desire at that) of the sultan" (op. cit., 2). In an attempt to create some balance in this story by taking an Ottoman perspective, the authors next "fictionalize Doukas's fiction in a way that also accounts for what Sultan Mehmet might have been thinking had such an encounter actually occurred" (ibid.). The resulting story, told in ANDREWS' and KALPAKLI's way, is, "among other things, a story about love and the ways in which such an apparently universal human emotion can be the source of profound misunderstanding" (op. cit., 8).

In this fictionalized fiction, the authors not only take an Ottoman perspective, but also the perspective of the powerful part in the context. They "assume the best about the sultan's thinking" (op. cit., 9). From the young boy's point of view, for example, to describe the sultan's intentions in terms of *love* is euphemistic. The same holds for the reference to the little boy in this context as a *beloved*, as is done on the same page. Thus, against the background of the fictionalized story, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI set out investigating "some very intriguing beloveds and Ottoman beloveds first among them" (op. cit., 8). In the book, the authors will talk about "love" in the time period from the late fifteenth through the early seventeenth century, "beginning with love among the Ottomans" (op. cit. 9). Again, questions worth asking are, if, at all, that which is described in this case could in any meaningful way be termed *love*, and, if so, from whose perspective.

ANDREWS' and KALPAKLI's language is different when they discuss, for example, Athens. In Athens, "the expression of power included *sexual dominance* over women, *prostitutes*, slaves, children, and younger males but was not limited to the arena of sex. It also included a high level of *violence* (institutionalized as torture), patriarchal structures of civic government, and imperial ambitions to forcibly *dominate* outsiders" (op. cit., 13). With respect to expressions such as *sexual dominance*, *violence*, and *prostitutes*, which are used about Athens, expressions such as *love* and *beloveds*, which are applied to the Ottoman Empire, are euphemistic. Discussing Athens, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI do not "assume the best about" anyone's intentions, contrary to what they did for the sultan in their reference to the Ottoman Empire.

Another example is the following. With respect to European matters, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI point out that

”[a] large body of research indicates that, in the ancient world, sex was thought of as *a (penetrative) thing that men did to others*—women, boys, slaves/servants—who *were* (or ought to be) *socially inferior*. It was not thought about separately from other relations of *dominance* and *submission*” (op. cit., 13).

Again, as compared with the expressions *a (penetrative) thing that men did to others* and *someone who was socially inferior*, which are applied to Europe, the corresponding expressions *love* and *beloveds*, which are used about the Ottoman Empire, are euphemistic.

Here is another example of how the authors refer to the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the Ottomans produced

“a subculture of *love* that most often explored relationships between *lovers* and *beloveds* of the same (male) gender, relationships in which *power disparities were natural*—that is, circumstantial (related, e.g., to age or life stage or social position) or, as the Ottomans might say, determined by fate—rather than enforced by social contracts and roles. (...) the *lover* may be a sultan and the *beloved* a slave or the *lover* a man and the *beloved* a boy (...)” (op. cit., 21).

In the Ottoman Empire, *power disparities were natural*, while in Europe, one party is *socially inferior* with respect to another.

Another example of expressions used about the Ottoman Empire is the following. Discussing Laṭīfī, an Ottoman “littérateur and biographer of poets”, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI write that he

“includes among the condensed but verbally florid descriptions of palaces, mosques, parks, and people three sections on *the beloveds of the city*” (op. cit., 32).

At a later stage, such “beloveds” are referred to as *public beauties* (op. cit., 34). Again, compared with the term *prostitutes*, which was applied to Athens above, the expressions applied to the Ottoman Empire, *public beauties* and *beloveds of the city*, are euphemistic. Similarly, with respect to *public beauties* and *beloveds of the city*, the term *prostitutes* is dysphemistic.

Another example that illustrates ANDREWS’ and KALPAKLI’s use of two sets of expressions is this. Having introduced the readers to elements of Ottoman art prose and poetry, the authors

“hope that a few impressions will stand out above the unfamiliar rhetoric. These include the image of a society, a society of cultural elites at least, in which *a host of beloveds was the center of erotic focus* and of an active life of *gatherings for pleasure and entertainment*; a society in which the beloved was ambiguously gendered on the surface with a strong bias toward the masculine; and an erotic discourse in which the actual character of *sexual attractions* and relations is as much understood as expressed openly” (op. cit., 37).

As compared with formulations involving *prostitutes* and *sexual domination and submission*, which are used to refer to Europe, expressions such as *a host of beloveds was the cen-*

*ter of erotic focus* and *gatherings for pleasure and entertainment*, which are used to refer to the Ottoman Empire, are euphemistic. As regards the quotation above concerning the Ottoman Empire, questions worth asking, again, are the following: From whose perspective were the gatherings referred to, *for pleasure and entertainment*, and from whose perspective did the activities at issue involve *sexual attraction*?

Summing up a little, we have seen that, in addition to being euphemistic, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI more often than not seem to take the perspective of the adult male when the Ottoman Empire is concerned.

Let me continue with the examples. Recall *prostitutes* from the quotation referring to European matters above and consider this excerpt, referring to the Ottoman Empire. (Note that the authors do not quote Latifi here but use their own expressions.)

“When it comes to talking about *the lower classes of beloveds—beloveds who are in it for both love and money or one or the other—*Latifi is rather more specific” (op. cit., 39).

With respect to *prostitutes*, the construction *beloveds who are in it for both love and money or one or the other*, is euphemistic.

With respect to who the “beloveds” actually were, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI write that some were “shop boys”, and as a case in point, they refer to one who was “most likely a tailor’s young apprentice” (op. cit., 39). Furthermore, most of “the publicly recognized beloveds” came “from the artisan, shopkeeping, and lower-level religious classes” (op. cit., 41). Other examples are “a (theology) student, a merchant’s son, a clog-maker’s son, a cloak-maker’s son, the son of a muezzin (a caller to prayer), the son of a Qur’ān reciter, a silk merchant (or, as in every case in which a trade is mentioned, an apprentice) (...): all in all, a good cross section of the boys one would find working in the bazaar or business section of an Ottoman city” (op. cit., 41-42). “Others seem to have operated on the level of the “honored courtesans” of Italy, accepting expensive gifts and favors in return for some level of erotic relationship. Still others *were clearly for sale and exchanged sexual favors for money or were associated with occupations—entertainment, primarily—that implied sexual availability*” (op. cit., 49). Again, in relation to expressions such as *to be a prostitute*, which is used in reference to Europe, formulations such as *to be clearly for sale and exchange sexual favors for money or to be associated with occupations—entertainment, primarily—that implies sexual availability* and *to be a publicly recognized beloved*, which are used in reference to the Ottoman Empire, are euphemistic.

Next, compare two quotations—one regarding the Ottoman Empire and the other concerning Venice—about the level of protectiveness of women in early-modern times. First, discussing what groups of women were in public view in the Ottoman Empire, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI write that these included

“the daughters of the lower classes and slaves, who had to work to earn a living; (...) entertainers, whose morality was always suspect; to women who were forced into *outright prostitution*” (op. cit., 43).

The term *outright* is used here, as if to warn the reader of the word that is to follow. In comparison, the authors are not so indirect, or discrete, when Venice is portrayed. Thus, in Venice,

“[e]ven the women who did appear in public—*other than prostitutes, of course*—were veiled and wrapped from head to toe (...)” (op. cit., 53).

The next quotations I will compare concern references to real sexual violence in Europe and the Ottoman Empire, where ‘real’ is opposed to the symbolic violence represented in literature. ANDREWS and KALPAKLI (2005: 256-257) write that sexual violence was widespread in both Europe and the Ottoman Empire. However, while terms used to refer to Europe include *forced sodomy, sexually exploited, prostitution, rape, victims, gang rapes, mutilations, victimized by prostitution*, and *rapist*, the expressions applied to the Ottoman Empire are more attenuated or, less explicit, and include *violent acts against both women and boys* and *not to be safe from assault*. Thus, the following quotation concerns Europe. (Note that the authors do not quote ROCKE or RUGGIERO, but refer to them.)

“ROCKE [1996: 162-164] also points out that it is unlikely that court records accurately reflect the frequency of *forced sodomy* since it was common for young adolescents to be employed as apprentices or servants and to be *sexually exploited* by their employers, whom the boys would be reluctant to accuse.

“RUGGIERO [1985: 89-108] points out that, in Venice, the *sexual exploitation of women in prostitution* was so widespread that heterosexual *rape* was customarily addressed with relatively mild punishments except in the case of child victims. *Rape* of a prostitute was not considered a crime, and the literature touching on courtesan culture is full of accounts of famous *gang rapes* and *mutilations* organized as vengeance on uncooperative professional beloveds by rejected or disappointed lovers. For women already *victimized by prostitution*, mutilation of the face threatened them with loss of livelihood, *gang rape* with uncontrolled exposure to disfiguring and deadly sexually transmitted diseases. The *rape* of young women of marriageable age was treated as trivial, and punishment was often foregone if the *rapist* agreed to marry his *victim*. As for England, Simon Forman’s casebooks<sup>7</sup> are full of accounts of *female servants made pregnant by their masters*” (ANDREWS and KALPAKLI 2005: 257).

As regards the Ottoman Empire, the authors write that

“[t]here are a significant number of court records that refer to *violent acts against both women and boys*” (op. cit., 258),

and, having presented one excerpt from such a court record, they present an excerpt from another with the following introductory words:

“Nor were women safe from assault” (ibid.).

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<sup>7</sup> Accounts referred to in ROWSE (1974: 205).

With respect to the expressions used to refer to Europe, including *forced sodomy*, *sexual exploitation of women in prostitution*, and *gang rapes*, the expressions used to refer to similar matters in the Ottoman Empire, such as *violent acts against women and boys* and *not to be safe from assault*, are euphemistic.

Furthermore, discussing the status of female slaves among Ottoman Muslims, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI argue that, “[f]emale slaves owned by men were *considered to be sexually available to their owners*” and that, “[f]emale slaves owned by women were not sexually available to their owners’ husbands by law. There are indications that some *female slaves were employed as prostitutes* by women acting as slave dealers who would set up short-term “sales” of the women, after which the slaves would be returned to their former owners” (op. cit., 47). ANDREWS and KALPAKLI also refer to data showing that, “female slaves owned by men were less often freed, presumably because *some were the concubines of their owners*”. Furthermore, “it seems likely that at least a few among [the manumitted] slave women were left to fend for themselves and *engaged in prostitution* as a means of support” (ibid.).

Again, with respect to the expressions used to refer to European issues, including *servants sexually exploited by their employers*, *sexual exploitation of women in prostitution*, and *female servants made pregnant by their masters*, the formulations used to refer to the Ottoman Empire, including *female slaves were considered to be sexually available to their owners*, *female slaves were employed as prostitutes* and *female slaves were the concubines of their owners*, are euphemistic. With respect to the expression *to sexually exploit in prostitution*, applied to Europe, the expression *to employ as a prostitute*, used about the Ottoman Empire, is euphemistic. The same holds for the following pairs of expressions: *to be sexually exploited by one’s employer*, applied to Europe, versus *to be considered to be sexually available to one’s owner* and *to be the concubine of one’s owner*, applied to the Ottoman Empire; and *to be victimized by prostitution*, applied to Europe, versus *to engage in prostitution*, applied to the Ottoman Empire. With respect to each other, the expressions used are euphemistic when the Ottoman Empire is at issue, and correspondingly dysphemistic when Europe is concerned.

We have seen some examples of it already, but there are more examples in which ANDREWS and KALPAKLI are explicit and concrete when talking about Europe, and vague, general, and/or attenuated when talking about the Ottoman Empire. Consider the excerpt below, in which we find *sexual behaviours*, a general term that includes positive kinds of activities, applied to the Ottoman Empire and *prostitution*, an exclusively negative word, applied to Venice.

“[M]any of the *sexual behaviours* common in places where most of the people were Muslims are not sanctioned by Islam and should not be thought of as Islamic, any more than the early-modern culture of *prostitution* in Venice should be considered Christian” (op. cit., 17).

In the quotation above, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI refer to Venice in the early-modern period in terms of *a culture of prostitution*. As far as the Ottoman Empire in the same period is concerned, the authors use the expression *a culture of beloveds* (op. cit., 18). In relation to each other, these expressions are, of course, dysphemistic and euphemistic, respectively. Thus,

“the efflorescence of Ottoman power and culture during the long sixteenth century to some degree manifested itself as the *Age of Beloveds*, an age in which a host of young men became focal points, not only for the desire of powerful officeholders and talented artists, but also for lavish entertainments and a rich literature of love. The thrust of this book will be, not only to point out how *this culture of beloveds* (...)” (op. cit., 18).

Furthermore,

“among the Ottomans, famous *beloveds* were catalogued in verse, city by city. They were *the centerpieces of brilliant entertainments*, the stuff of gossip and tale, the *companions* of powerful, wealthy, and learned men. In their image, the traditional high-culture love song, the *gazel*, was rescued from a sterile Persianizing classicism and given new life in Ottoman Turkish. Poetry, poets and parties flourished in a prosperous elite society” (op. cit., 27).

Needless to say, with respect to expressions we have seen used to refer to Europe—*forced sodomy*, *prostitutes* and *prostitution*, *victims* and *rapists*, *sexual exploitation*, *sexual violence*, *dominance*, *submission*, and *gang rapes*—the expressions used about the Ottoman Empire, including *beloveds* as *centerpieces of brilliant entertainments* and as *companions*, are euphemistic.

Another example is this. Discussing a work by the Ottoman “courtier, historian, and littérateur” Mustafa ‘Ali of Gallipoli in which he describes wine taverns, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI refer to some of the activities that are going on in such taverns in terms of *activities of love* (op. cit., 70). When English so-called “molly houses” are described, on the other hand, the expression *sexual debauchery* is used (ibid.). With respect to each other, of course, the former expression is euphemistic while the latter is dysphemistic. The first quotation below regards wine taverns in the Ottoman Empire.

“Their drinking is seen as social, occasional, and associated with literary pursuits and the *activities of love* as scripted by poetry. (...) After the manner of sots and drunkards, they consider it a religious duty to set aside each Friday evening for *intercourse with women*, every Saturday night for (beardless) youths and feast day eves for young (male) slaves” (op. cit., 70).

Although “‘Ali’s description of late-sixteenth-century Ottoman tavern life” is—according to ANDREWS and KALPAKLI—“strikingly similar to Alan BRAY’s<sup>8</sup> description of the seventeenth-century English “molly house””, distinct expressions are used. Specifically, in such molly houses, “men of many classes gathered to drink and meet with *boy prostitutes*”, and “it was the *sexual debauchery* of such establishments that attracted the most outside attention” (ibid.).

Needless to say, in relation to *sexual debauchery*, which is applied to the English molly houses, *activities of love*, which is applied to the Ottoman wine taverns, is euphemistic. Similarly, in relation to *activities of love*, *sexual debauchery* is dysphemistic. These distinct vocabularies do not correspond with the authors’ claim in this connection, that what Alan

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8 Refers to BRAY (1982).

BRAY says about the English molly houses “is precisely what we see in the sociability of the Ottoman tavern” (ibid., 70).

A similar non-correspondence can be seen in the following example. Having referred to the Ottomans in terms of *a thriving culture of love* and *a beloveds culture* (op. cit., 57), ANDREWS and KALPAKLI write that “[c]onditions in Europe and the western Mediterranean world were similar in ways that seem to have transcended differences in religion and government” and that, “[i]n every case, across all sorts of boundaries, similar conditions appear to have produced similar outcomes” (ibid.). All the same, Florence is described in terms of *a notoriously homoerotic culture* and England during Elizabeth in terms of *the robust sexuality of society*. I provide the whole paragraph below.

“As we will see, the Ottomans were by no means alone in supporting *a thriving culture of love*. Conditions in Europe and the western Mediterranean world were similar in ways that seem to have transcended differences in religion and government. *The beloveds culture* of Istanbul and other Ottoman urban centers has its counterparts, for example, in the culture of courtesans in Venice, in *the notoriously homoerotic culture* of Florence, in *the robust sexuality of society* in Elizabethan England. In every case, across all sorts of boundaries, similar conditions appear to have produced similar outcomes” (op. cit., 57).

As we can see, even though the outcomes were similar, the expressions that ANDREWS and KALPAKLI use to refer to them, are not.

In the next quotations I will compare, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI discuss literary works of fiction. As far as European literature is concerned, the authors are at one point concerned with the myth of Jove and Ganymede. Expressions they use include *abduction, rape, pedophilia, an immensely powerful male exerting sexual dominance over a (...) boy, to satisfy sexually, a boy's sexual submission, violence* and *pedophilic sexual relations* (op. cit., 259). Expressions used in references to two anecdotes by the Ottoman Ġazālī, on the other hand, include *buying boys, coercing boys, to win one's beloved with money, to get what one desires while the boy is unconscious, a beautiful boy, and they pulled down his trousers and had their way with him* (op. cit., 257). With respect to the former set of words, the latter set, applied to Ġazālī's anecdotes, is euphemistic. Likewise, in relation to the second set of words, the first is dysphemistic. The first quotation below is that concerning the myth of Jove and Ganymede.

“First, the Ganymede tale is most simply the story of *abduction* and *rape*. Second, it is traditionally *pedophilic* in that it tells of an *immensely powerful male* (a god, a ruler of gods at that) *exerting sexual dominance over a mortal boy*. Third, insofar as Ganymede is granted immortality and a job as cupbearer to Jove in return for *sexually satisfying* the god, the notion that *a boy's sexual submission* can have very practical rewards is affirmed. We should note here that the “reward” obscures the *intrinsic violence* inhering in both the mythology and the practicalities of *pedophilic sexual relations*” (op. cit., 259).

Contrast this with the following quotation regarding Ġazālī's anecdotes. (Note that the authors themselves refer to the anecdotes as humorous.)

“Among the Ottomans, our old friend Gazali’s *Repeller of Sorrows*<sup>9</sup> has a number of *humorous anecdotes* about *buying boys*, *coercing boys*, and outright raping boys. For example, in one story, an old lecher, unable to *win his beloved* of the moment *with money*, took the boy to a gathering and plied him with cup after cup of wine, in the end *getting what he desired while the boy was unconscious*. In another story, a beautiful boy drank so much at a gathering that he passed out. When the rest of the revelers saw him in this state, they *pulled down his trousers and had their way with him*” (op. cit., 257).

With respect to the expressions *to rape* and *to exert sexual dominance over*, which are used in connection with the Ganymedes tale, the expressions *to coerce*, *to buy*, *to win one’s beloved*, *to get what one desires*, and *to have one’s way with*, used to refer to Ġazālī’s anecdotes, are euphemistic. The same holds for the following pair of expressions: *pedophilic sexual relations*, applied to the Ganymedes tale, versus *buying boys* and *coercing boys*, applied to Ġazālī’s anecdotes.

Occasionally, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI use similar expressions to refer to the two cultures. One example is a passage where they discuss how the power relations between the “lover” and the “beloved” are typically reversed in Ottoman lyric poetry. Thus, “[t]he actual situation is reversed, and the relatively weak and powerless boy is portrayed as dominating and tormenting the older, stronger man. This seems very much like a rhetorical attempt to even out the power disparity and inject some mutuality into what was more properly *a rape* or *a contemplation of rape*” (op. cit., 266). The quotations I have given previously in this section, however, reflect the general tendency.

## 6. A special case of *othering*?

The phenomenon I have demonstrated above calls to mind a strategy which, within frameworks associated with Critical Discourse Analysis (see, e.g., FAIRCLOUGH 1989), for example, is called *othering*—representing the ‘other’ as alien and fundamentally different from ‘us’ (cf., e.g., VEZOVIK 2013). However, *othering* is typically discussed in terms of “positive self- and negative other representation” (REISIGL & WODAK 2001). In the present case, we seem to be dealing with the opposite—namely, negative self- and positive other representation, at least based on the assumption that the authors identify themselves with the western European subjects, and not the Ottoman ones.<sup>10</sup> Quotations such as the follow-

9 *Repeller of Sorrows* refers to the work *Dāfi’ü l-ġumūm ve-rāfi’ü l-humūm* [Repeller of sorrows and removers of cares], which Ġazālī wrote when he attended the court of Prince Korkut (1467-1513) and which is “the first and most famous of the sixteenth-century prose works about sex” (ANDREWS and KALPAKLI 2005: 130-131).

10 A note is in order when it comes to the use of ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ in this context. I have associated the Ottoman subjects with ‘positive’ here due to the nature of the connotations of the words used to describe them; *love* being a case in point. I take it to be uncontroversial that the connotations of *love* are positive while those of *rape* are negative. It should be problematized, though, to what extent it is a positive thing—for an Ottoman boy, as in the case at hand—to be portrayed as experiencing the practice one is involved in, or being subjected to, as ‘love’. From one perspective, referring to the



ing, from the introduction chapter, suggest that this assumption is correct: “the Ottomans and *our Greco-Roman ancestors*” (ANDREWS and KALPAKLI 2005: 20, my emphasis).

Occasionally, ANDREWS’ and KALPAKLI’s negative self- and positive other-representation is made explicit, such as in the excerpt below. The excerpt follows a detailed account, based on several different sources, of a wide variety of sexual activities in Venice, Florence and London, and precedes an account of related phenomena in Istanbul.

“It has been a long-standing practice in Europe and the lands of Christendom to portray the early-modern Muslim East as a hotbed of sexual license, although, as our scanty survey indicates, *it would be difficult to imagine sexual activity anywhere exceeding in variety and intensity that of Christian Europe during the same period*” (op. cit., 129).

Indeed, discussing the use of euphemisms and dysphemisms, ALLAN and BURRIDGE (2006: 49-53) write that euphemisms are typically “linked with the speaker’s point of view”, whereas dysphemisms are linked “with some other view”, and that, thus, this creates “an *us* versus *them* situation.” Discussing the use of euphemisms versus dysphemisms in political language, represented by a text sample concerning Iraq in 2004, BURKHARDT (2010: 361) points out that, “a euphemism will often correspond to a dysphemism which is used to refer to quite the same objects, kinds of actions or groups of persons on the enemy’s side.” In the present case, the effect of the language use *is* indeed an *us* versus *them* situation, but in reverse, in the sense that the euphemisms are applied to *them*, whereas the dysphemisms are applied to *us*, again from ANDREWS’ and KALPAKLI’s perspective.

With regard to the question of what we should call the phenomenon I have illustrated in section 2 and 5, I will leave that for future research.

## 7. Why two distinct vocabularies?

In section 2, I showed how ANDREWS and KALPAKLI argue that the phenomena they discuss for Europe and the Ottoman Empire are similar. In section 5, however, I showed that these similarities were not reflected in the authors’ choice of words. Specifically, I showed that, typically, two sets of expressions were used—one euphemistic for the Ottoman Empire and Ottoman subjects, and one correspondingly dysphemistic for Europe and European subjects. The question now is why the authors choose distinct sets of words to refer to one and the same phenomenon, depending only on whether it occurs in the Ottoman Empire and involves Ottomans, or takes place somewhere in Europe and involves Europeans.

I will not speculate much on the reasons behind the authors’ choice of words. I will rather confine myself to pointing out two issues that may shed some light on the matter and which ANDREWS and KALPAKLI bring to the fore themselves—namely, the anxiety of giving offence, as expressed in the preface, and the, in the authors’ opinion, unfair treatment of

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practice as *rape* rather than *love* is positive, in the sense that the dependent, subordinate party is thereby equipped with a certain amount of self-esteem and given recognition. However, since I will not be concerned with what is ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ in this context, but rather with the nature of the two vocabularies with respect to each other, I will not discuss this issue any further.

Ottomans in western academic, particularly historical discourse up until now. In the subsequent paragraphs I will look at these issues in more detail. Unless otherwise noted, the emphasis in the quotations is mine.

In the preface to *The Age of Beloveds*, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI make the following statement.

“Our experience is that every book makes its author(s) anxious, yet *this book has produced a degree of anxiety new to us*. Not only is the subject matter intrinsically fraught with the danger of misunderstanding or *giving offence*, but our treatment of it is risky as well. (...) *Our anxiety was increased* when almost everyone who read all or a part of the manuscript said something like: “*There are people who will be very upset by this...*” Our resolve was increased by the fact that none of these readers said that they themselves were upset or offended by it.”

The authors do not explicitly express *who* will be upset and by *what*. One of the purposes of using euphemisms, however, is to avoid giving offence (cf., e.g., ALLAN and BURRIDGE 2001, referred to in section 4), to the audience or some third party. Since the authors do not normally use euphemisms when western European subjects are represented, it appears that those who will be upset are somehow associated with the Ottoman Empire.

The idea that those who will be upset are associated with the Ottoman Empire is supported by a certain literary device that the authors occasionally use and which I will exemplify below. Specifically, when a phenomenon *x* is discussed for the Ottoman Empire, the reader is more often than not reminded that *x* does not mean that the Ottomans were, for example, “cruder” or “more depraved” (ANDREWS and KALPAKLI 2005: 257-258) than the Europeans. As far as I have seen, there are no corresponding reminders when *x* is discussed for some western European city. For example, having discussed a particular anecdote by the Ottoman poet Ġazālī, also referred to in section 5 above, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI (2005: 257-258) point out the following:

“We need to be clear here that Ġazālī’s is a work of pornography. Because we are not discussing it in the context of European pornography of the same period, it may give the impression that the Ottomans were somehow cruder, more depraved, or more explicit in talking about sexual matters than Europeans. *This is most emphatically not the case.*”

Similarly, having discussed the fact that there were few “beloved women” in the “age of beloveds”, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI emphasize the following.

“*It is important to note*, however, that this general societal attitude toward female sexuality and the restrictions instituted to keep it under control *are not strictly Ottoman or Islamic phenomena*; they were *common in the same period to much of Christian Europe as well*. Our tendency is to assume that the Europeans of the sixteenth century were much like we are today and that Muslims were quite different. *This is an illusion as mistaken as it might be comforting to our prejudices*” (op. cit., 43).

My third and final example is also referred to in section 5 above. Thus, the reader is to draw no parallels between certain sexual behaviours, on the one hand, and Islam, on the other.

“[M]any of the sexual behaviours common in places where most of the people were Muslims *are not sanctioned by Islam and should not be thought of as Islamic*, any more than the early-modern culture of prostitution in Venice should be considered Christian” (op. cit., 17).

As far as I can see, we are not reminded in a similar way when “negative” aspects of Europe are discussed.

Let me continue with the authors’ explicitly expressed anxiety of giving offence. Based on the quotations I will provide, it appears that the upsetting topic is associated with sex and/or love between men.

Having discussed how sexual relations between men have been looked upon throughout the Middle Ages and the early modern period, and pointing out a change in the seventeenth century, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI write the following about “where we are today, Turks and non-Turks, looking back on the Ottomans of the long sixteenth century and their love poetry” (op. cit., 16):

“There is a huge difference between thinking, “My body, like everyone else’s, is urging me to do things that my society (and my God) forbids,” and thinking, “My mind is subject to desires that expert knowledge tells me normal, mentally healthy people do not have.” Put in the simplest possible terms, pre-modern and early-modern thinking was more like the first statement, and modern thinking, including our own, is more like the second” (op. cit., 15).

Furthermore, discussing how not to read Ottoman poetry,<sup>11</sup> ANDREWS and KALPAKLI point to a 1968 book titled *Divan şiiirinde sapık sevgi* [Perverted love in *divan*<sup>12</sup> poetry] by the journalist İsmet Zeki Eyuboğlu (ANDREWS and KALPAKLI 2005: 18). The authors write that the book title “is suggestive of reasons why this first book on the subject was also just about the last” and that the book itself is “partly a study of and partly a polemic on the (moral) reasons why Ottoman *divan* poetry should not be considered an important part of Turkish literature and does not deserve its respected place in school curricula” (ibid.). Furthermore, “perverted love in this case means men having erotic relations with (young) men” and “Eyuboğlu is correct in saying that such relations were fashionable among the Ottoman elites, that they were an inextricable part of the poetry, and that this aspect of Ottoman poetry and poetic life has been suppressed by scholars” (op. cit., 18-19). ANDREWS and KALPAKLI’s goal, then, is to do something about this problem.

Now, let me turn to the second issue that may shed light on ANDREWS’ and KALPAKLI’s choice of words—namely, their explicitly expressed wish to do justice to the Ottomans in western academic discourse. They argue, for example, that, as a consequence of how particularly European “historians past and present” have written and are writing about

11 The title of the section is *Reading (and Not Reading) Ottoman Love Poetry* (cf., op. cit., 18).

12 *Divan* = Ottoman high-culture.

aspects of the Ottoman Empire, “the Ottomans begin to seem quite alien to us: better at things that more barbaric people are better at (war) and less good at things that civilized people, even very foreign civilized people, do (culture)” (op. cit., 10). From reading just a little, they argue, one could get the impression, for example, that “the Ottomans were singularly uninventive in expressing their own desires in art, finding it sufficient merely to drag the corpse of Persian desire about and occasionally stimulate a few twitches and a pale semblance of life in it by injecting a bit of the latest poetic fad from the East.” This impression is “old, venerable, and often expressed”, a persisting “misapprehension” (ibid.).

On another occasion, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI refer to “the many ways in which *non-Ottomans have misrepresented Ottoman sexuality*” (op. cit., 9) and also point out Europeans’ “*long history of attempts to portray Muslims as morally inferior*” (op. cit., 2).

Furthermore, against the background of Eyuboğlu’s 1968 book on the Ottomans’ “perverted love”, referred to above, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI argue that, “[t]he modern world”, which is “dominated by Western scientific notions” (op. cit., 19), is to blame for the fact that the aspect of Ottoman poetry and poetic life related to “men having erotic relations with (young) men” (op. cit., 18) “has been suppressed by scholars”. In other words, to the extent that “men having erotic relations with (young) men” has been considered “perverted” (op. cit., 18) in modern-day Turkey, Western academia is at least partly to blame.

Furthermore, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI argue that, “Turkish scholars have been sensitive to the fact that Westerners have for many years enjoyed their own unacceptable desires by projecting them on the Orient and then reencountering them at a safe distance in stories, gossip, and even the respectable garb of social science” (op. cit., 19). Similarly, according to ANDREWS and KALPAKLI,

“[i]t is an error to assume that Ottomans were ignorant of Europeans and the way they lived or, for that matter, that Europeans then were *as ignorant of the Ottomans as well-educated Westerners are now*” (op. cit., 66).

Thus, in the preface to their work, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI invite the readers to “look at the Ottomans from a new perspective” and express their hope that their study “will bring the Ottomans into discussions from which they have been absent and that it will serve as a springboard from which a more profound examination of Ottoman culture will emerge” (op. cit., ix). Furthermore, with their work they want to introduce the young, beautiful male Ottoman beloved, “not as a stranger representing the deviant lusts of some past or distant Oriental “others,” but as a beloved of his age as familiar in his androgynous charm to the palazzi of Venice and Florence or the great houses of England as he was to the gardens and *köşks* (kiosks) of Istanbul” (op. cit., 27).

My final example of the second issue that may shed light on ANDREWS’ and KALPAKLI’s choice of words, is a passage in which they warn against traps we might fall into, such as, for example, Orientalism:

“Our attention might be caught by things that some people in a group do because they seem exotic or interesting to us, and we may come to characterize them by what strikes us about them. Once we begin to characterize and generalize in this way, we might also begin to define ourselves, our positive values and ideals, in

contrast to what we imagine about those others who behave differently, and, in the end, we might come to think of them as morally, culturally, or intellectually inferior. Because these traps are as dangerous to scholars as to anyone else, the descriptions or representations of scholars have often been used in the service of projects to dominate, control, exploit, and reject groups seen as different, inferior or unworthy. For this reason, contemporary scholars have become quite wary of such traps. They have written extensively about how we have fallen into them in the past and have invented a vocabulary for the task, words such as *racism*, *essentialism*, *idealism*, and *Orientalism*” (op. cit., 9, original emphasis).

In light of such quotations, the use of two distinct vocabularies—one euphemistic for the Ottoman Empire and one dysphemistic for Europe—looks like an attempt at compensating for past misrepresentation and racism.

Although ANDREWS and KALPAKLI state on page 10 of their book that they “do not intend to spend many more words defending Ottoman poetry” and that they will “avoid defending anything” (op. cit., 10) in the rest of the book, it appears that this is precisely what they are trying to do.

In some everyday social situations, taking pains not to offend other people and trying to compensate for previous injustice may be good things to do. To what extent or, whether at all, making such considerations is the task of researchers, however, is a different question. Besides, in the present case, such measures have come at a price. This leads me to the final section.

## 8. Summary and outlook

In this article, I have been concerned with a special case of evaluative language use in academic discourse. More specifically, I have shown how, in ANDREWS and KALPAKLI’s *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (2005), two distinct vocabularies tend to be used to refer to similar phenomena, depending only on whether the phenomena at issue are manifested in the Ottoman Empire and involve Ottomans, or are instantiated somewhere in Europe and involve Europeans. With respect to each other, the expressions are typically euphemistic when the Ottoman Empire and Ottomans are concerned, and correspondingly dysphemistic when Europe and Europeans are concerned.

In section 5, I demonstrated ANDREWS’ and KALPAKLI’s use of words by means of several quotations. In one case, what was referred to as *activities of love* when it took place in Ottoman wine taverns, was referred to as *sexual debauchery* involving *boy prostitutes* when it took place in so-called “molly houses” in England.

In section 7, I mentioned that ANDREWS’ and KALPAKLI’s language use has come at a cost. Specifically, by using language the way they do, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI are subjecting one group of social actors—Europeans, in this case—to exactly the same injustice as they are accusing “Westerners” (op. cit., 19, 66), “non-Ottomans” (op. cit., 9), European “historians past and present” (op. cit., 10), and the likes, of having done to the Ottomans. In other words, they are falling into the same trap as they are warning others of

falling into (see, ANDREWS and KALPAKLI 2005: 9)—namely, that of misrepresenting social actors.

Furthermore, in the present case, the language use also has certain implications. In the case mentioned above, for example, in which a phenomenon is called *activities of love* when the Ottoman Empire is described but *sexual debauchery* involving *boy prostitutes* when England is portrayed, it is implied that Ottoman “beloveds” and European “beloveds”—which included servants, slaves, prostitutes, young boys, etc.—experienced one and the same practice quite radically differently from each other.

In section 5, I also demonstrated how ANDREWS and KALPAKLI occasionally take different perspectives when describing a given phenomenon in the two cultures. For example, in the case of the events taking place in the Ottoman wine taverns, from whose perspective are the events *activities of love*? Would a subordinate, dependent boy, for example, consider them to be *activities of love*? And, likewise, from whose perspective are the events in the molly-houses *sexual debauchery*?

Whether or not one endorses ANDREWS’ and KALPAKLI’s language use in the present case, it is worth noting that, applying euphemisms and dysphemisms may, as BURKHARDT (2010: 369) points out, involve violating up to three Gricean maxims—namely, that of Quantity (“Make your contribution as informative as is required”), Quality (“Do not say what you believe to be false”) and Manner (“Avoid obscurity of expression”). Moreover, in its extreme manifestation, ORWELL warned about such language use in terms of “Double-think” and “Newspeak” in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

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