



The Sentimental Education of the Young Ottoman Man: *Âşıkane*

Genç Osmanlı Erkeğinin Duygusal Eğitimi: *Âşıkane*

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ABSTRACT

Mehmet Rauf's 1909 work *Âşıkane* is a gateway to the sentimental education of that period's young, educated Ottoman man. It comprises three stories: "A Dance Competition at Summer Palas" (Summer Palas'ta Bir Müsamere-i Raksîye), "Serap" (Mirage), and "Youth Love" (Garam-ı Şebab). Similar to Mehmet Rauf's previous works, these stories revolve around love and passion. By giving the title *Âşıkane*, Mehmet Rauf has invented the Ottoman equivalent of the concept of sentimental education. The three stories of *Âşıkane* present the position of men in relation to women and the ways in which their position transforms them into "lovers." They are not just in love but are bodies embodying emotions that speak, think, dream, and write about love. These lovers use a language that prioritizes their actions to describe passion and desire. This language exists through desire and is expressed through an implied relationship between desire and youth. Consequently, these lovers demonstrate the relation of sentimental education to that which is spiritual/poetic and bodily while conveying the ways for the youth's sentimental education.

Keywords: Mehmet Rauf, sentimental education, story, Servet-i Fünun, desire

ÖZET

Mehmet Rauf'un 1909 tarihli eseri *Âşıkane*, 19. yüzyıl sonu genç ve eğitilmiş Osmanlı erkeğinin duygusal eğitimine açılan bir kapıdır. Eserde, "Summer Palas'ta Bir Müsamere-i Raksîye", "Serap" ve "Garam-ı Şebab" adlı üç hikâye vardır. Bu hikâyeler, Mehmet Rauf'un pek çok eserinde olduğu gibi aşk ve tutku etrafında döner. Mehmet Rauf eserine *Âşıkane* adını vererek, sadece aşk ve tutku etrafında dönen hikâyeler yazmaz, aynı zamanda duygusal eğitim kavramının Osmanlı Türkçesindeki karşılığını icat eder. *Âşıkane*'yi oluşturan üç kısa hikâye, erkeklerin kadınlar karşısındaki konumlarını ve bu konumlarının onları nasıl "âşık" haline getirdiğini anlatır. Bu şekilde genç erkekler aşk ile kurdukları ilişkide sürekli olarak aktif bir şekilde konumlanır. Aşk onlar için zihinlerinde ve bedenlerinde bir performans dönüşür. Bu performans hali devamlı bir akışkanlığı ve neredeyse bir dans halini çağırıştır. *Âşıkane*'deki genç erkekler sadece âşık değil, aşk hakkında konuşan, düşünen, hayal eden ve yazan, duygularını yazı ile somutlaştırmaya çalışan bedenler ve zihinlerdir. Bu âşıklar tutkuyu ve arzuyu tanımlamak için eylemlerini önceleyen bir dil kullanırlar ve bu dil de arzu aracılığıyla var olur. Sonuç olarak, bu âşıklar duygusal eğitimin ruhsal, şiirsel ve bedensel olanla ilişkisini gösterirken, gençlerin duygusal eğitiminin yollarını da aktarırlar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mehmet Rauf, duygusal eğitim, hikâye, Servet-i Fünun, arzu



GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Edebiyat-ı Cedide (Servet-i Fünun) kuşağı için edebiyatın dili duyularla, duygularla ve düşüncelerle iç içe bir şekilde kuruluyordu. Yazar/şair tabiata tüm duyularını açmış, bu duyular aracılığıyla dünyayı hem gözüyle hem kalbiyle seyreden, gören ve hisseden biri olarak manzaralarla, levhalarla beslenen görsel/işitsel bir dil yaratıyordu. Bu dilin aktarımı için yeni kelimeler, yeni vezinler ve roman, sone gibi yeni edebî türlerle tanışılıyordu. Bu topluluk içinde yer alan Mehmet Rauf, roman, hikâye ve mensur şiir örnekleriyle olduğu kadar dünya edebiyatı hakkında yazdıklarıyla da döneminin önde gelenleri arasındaydı. Eserlerinde musiki gibi bir dil yaratma peşinde olan Mehmet Rauf, kadınları, aşk ve kadın-erkek dünyasını, yazdıklarında tekrar tekrar işlemiştir. O dönemin edebiyatçılarının anılarında onunla ilgili olarak birçok kadınla ilişkide olması, kadınlara tutkuyla bağlanması hatta bundan dolayı kendini öldürme teşebbüsünde bulunması, *Bir Zambak Hikâyesi* (1913) adıyla yazdığı eser sonucu askerlikle ilişkisinin kesilmesi sıklıkla anlatılır. O, bu kuşağın anılarındaki yaramaz “oğlan çocuğudur.” Bu “yaramazlık”, var olan hayatı başka bir düzleme taşıma düşüncesi, onun edebiyatında özellikle kadın-erkek ve aşk ilişkisiyle belirginleşir. Çünkü Mehmet Rauf’ta aşk, hayat için bir yaşam kaynağıdır ve tek bir şekli yoktur: Onun metinlerinde aşkın, iki erkeğin aynı kadına âşık olduğu ya da iki kadının aynı erkeğe âşık olduğu aşk üçgenlerinden tamamen tensel olanlara, platonik olanlardan gönül eğlendirmek için uğranılanlara ve hatta evliliğin sakin sularına uzananlara kadar pek çok çeşidi vardır. Yazar, bu kadar farklı aşk çeşidini eserine yerleştirirken arzuyu da baş köşeye oturtur. Dilini, arzu edilene yönelik bir tasarımla sunmak için duyularını, duygularını, düşüncelerini, imgeleri; çokluk da erotik imgeleri kullanır. Böylece ondaki arzu, karşısındakine yönelirken bedensel ve duygusal bir ihtiyacı karşılayacak şekilde ortaya çıkan bir duygusal eğitime dönüşür ve yazar buna *âşıkane* adını verir.

Mehmet Rauf’ta duygusal eğitimin temelini, genç Osmanlı erkeğinin “uyanışı” oluşturur. Bu uyanışta kelimenin hem uyku ve uykudan uyanış hem de durgun bir halden sıyrılıp harekete geçmek anlamları bir aradadır. *Âşıkane*’de üç hikâyedeki erkek karakterler de bir kadının onlarda yarattığı hisleri bir uyku-uyanıklık durumuyla karşılarlar. İlk hikâyedeki kahraman, hikâyenin sonunda uykuya doğru koşarken, ikinci kahraman göz çevresindeki kırışıkları gördüğünde uykuda geçirdiği yıllara hayıflanır, üçüncü hikâyedeki kahraman da gördüğü kadınla birlikte bir uyanış yaşar. O halde *âşıkane*’nin ilk durağı bu uyanma halidir. Bu hal miskinlik ile hareket arasındaki bir mücadeleden doğar. Bu mücadelede genç Osmanlı erkeği âdet (alışkanlık) ile tesadüf arasında kalmıştır çünkü bunların ikisini de kontrol edemez. Kontrol edemediğinden, âdet ve tesadüf arasında miskinliğe kapılmamak için sürekli hareket halindedir. Bu hareketlilik sadece bedenini değil, zihnini de meşgul eder. Beden oradan oraya koşuştururken zihin de peşinde olunana dair bir düşünceler silsilesi ile onu takip eder. Kahraman, zihnindeki düşünce silsilelerini bir sanat eseri, çoğunlukla da şiir olarak cisimleştirir. Bir tutkuyla onu harekete geçiren kadına dair düşünür, onu takip eder, hayal eder, hayallerini sanat eserine dönüştürür; bu şekilde hem peşinde koştuğu kadını hem de ona dair zihnindeki düşüncelerini şiirde somutlaştırır. Flaubert, Balzac ve Stendhal’in eserlerindeki duygusal eğitimde delikanlılar, kendilerinden büyük kadınlara yönelik aşklarında çoğunlukla isteklerine karşılık bulamazlar

ve bir süre sonra fikir değiştirirler. Ancak *âşıkane*'de bir ısrar vardır. Bu ısrar, aşkın en ufak bir kirlenmişliğiyle vazgeçişe yönelir. Duygusal eğitim, entelektüel dünyada ve sanat ortamında bir mücadele alanının içinde savaşmaktır, *âşıkane* ise bir sanatçı olduğunu çoktan kabul ettirmişlerin harcıdır. Kendisini başka erkeklere rahatça teslim eden kadınlar, genç Osmanlı erkeğinde bir iğrenme duygusu yaratır ki bu da onun âşıkane'sinin bir parçasıdır. Çoğunluğu yabancı ya da gayrimüslim kadınlarla girilen bu evlilik dışı ilişkiler onlara evliliğin kutsal yolunu gösterir. Kahraman, evlilikteki iyiliğe, güzelliğe kendini ikna etmeye çalışsa da bundaki âdetin, rutinin onun ruhunu beslemeyeceğini de itiraf eder. Bu itiraflarda delikanlının "kirlî" kadınlarla tanışabileceği kozmopolit ortamlar ve bu ortamlardaki "serbest kalan sözcükler" in dili de önemlidir.

Bu makalede Mehmet Rauf'un 1909 yılında yayımlanan *Âşıkane* adlı hikâye kitabına odaklanarak yazarın bu kitaba ad olarak seçtiği *âşıkane*'nin 19. yüzyıl sonundaki entelektüel genç Osmanlı erkeğinin duygusal eğitimine karşılık geldiğini, Mehmet Rauf'taki arzunun aşk ile birleştiğinde bedeni de işaret eden bir dil ortaya çıkardığını, bu dilin sadece bedeni değil aynı zamanda bedeninin sahnede bir oyuncu gibi hareketli halini de verdiğini iddia ediyorum.

Introduction

In the second half of the 19th century, a generation of writers mostly born in the early 1870s, working majorly in offices, translation rooms, and the army (Findley, 1980), called themselves Yeni Edebiyat-ı Cedide and are now called Servet-i Fünun. They spent their youth during the reign of Abdulhamid II (Zürcher, 2003, p. 100), a period marked by significant political developments. In 1876, the Kanun-ı Esasi (Constitution) was declared, and the Ottoman Parliament was established, only to be dissolved by the Sultan using the Ottoman–Russian War as an excuse to consolidate all power under his thumb; the Constitution thus was suspended until the declaration of the II Meşrutiyet (Constitutional Monarchy). In contrast to the previous generation of the Tanzimat, who insisted on using a simpler language, which they thought would bring the spoken language closer to that of literature and make the latter more comprehensible, this generation was closely connected to French literature; instead of trying to bring the spoken and written words together, they tried to express themselves in a manner that was embellished with senses and emotions. Consequently, they were called imitators or under French influence (Gökçek, 2019). Literary historians in Turkey have also often placed this period under the heading of *Western-influenced Turkish literature or rejuvenation literature* (Okay, 2009; Budak, 2013; Aktaş, 2013).

For the Edebiyat-ı Cedide generation, a language was constructed through an amalgamation of the senses, emotions, and thoughts. The poets/writers, as individuals who opened all their senses to nature and observed the world through these senses with their eyes and hearts, created a visual–auditory language in the landscapes that was nourished by these landscapes. To communicate this language, new words, new meters, and new genres, such as novels and sonnets, were introduced.

Mehmet Rauf was one of the leading figures of the period, in both his literary works (i.e., novels, short stories, and prose poems) and writings on world literature. He is known for his efforts to create a musical language, his constant use of women-related themes, love, and worlds of men and women in his writings, as well as his frequent presence in the memoirs of literary figures of the period for his several amorous affairs with women, passionate attachment to them, including his suicide attempt as a result of an affair, and dismissal from the military for his pornographic work *Bir Zambak Hikâyesi* (1913, A Tale of the Lily). Thus, Mehmet Rauf was not a well-behaved man; he is the enfant terrible of his generation. This naughtiness, his ideas of moving the existing life to another level, is evident in his literature through the relationships between men and women and the affairs of the heart because for Mehmet Rauf, love is a source of vitality for life. Various forms of love are expressed in his works, such as love triangles of two men falling in love with the same woman or two women falling in love with the same man, those that are purely physical or purely platonic, those for playing the field, and those for resting in the calm waters of marriage. While placing such different forms of love in his works, he also honors desire. To present his language with a design toward desire, he often uses senses, emotions, ideas, and images, particularly erotic ones. Accordingly,

although directed toward the person in front of whom in terms of a physical and an emotional need, the desire in his works is transformed into a sentimental education, and the writer calls this *âşıkane* (which can be translated as “in a way being in love”)¹.

This article argues that *âşıkane*, the namesake of Mehmet Rauf’s 1909 work, is the sentimental education and language of the young Ottoman intellectual at the end of the 19th century. It argues that in Rauf’s work, against the grain of the sensibility of the time, desire combined with love creates a language that signals the body. Moreover, this language not only signals the body but also presents the body in motion, similar to an actor on stage.

Sentimental education² is a heavily explored theme in French literature. For instance, the concept became the title of Gustave Flaubert’s *L’Education sentimentale* (1869). Frédéric Moreau, the young protagonist of this novel, falls in love with an older married woman, Madame Arnoux. In addition to this romance, the novel describes France during the 1848 revolution, including the revolutionaries, world of publishing, and artistic atmosphere, and portrays the French society of the time from various perspectives. Sentimental education is not just the affection a young man feels for an older woman but a part of his education that represents the maturation of his sexual and emotional world, parallel to his intellectual development. As such, a language must be established for these purposes. Similarly, Honore de Balzac’s *Le Lys dans la Vallée* and Stendhal’s *La Rouge et la Noir* seek to transform a young man’s relationship with women into a form of sentimental education in which young men learn about life and love through their encounters with married women who are loyal to their husbands and children. *Le Lys dans la Vallée* was inspired by *L’Education sentimentale*. Paul Bourget, who wrote about sentimental education in Balzac, Stendhal, and Flaubert at the end of the 19th century and who was read and appreciated by Mehmet Rauf and the Ottoman writers of his time, also intensively studied love and its effects on men. Bourget, often the topic of Mehmet Rauf’s works, has been influential in the writer’s merging of love and its effects on humans with a form of inner spirituality in his literature, as he has often stated (Mehmet Rauf, 2008, p. 37).

For Rauf, the basis of sentimental education is the “awakening” of the young Ottoman man. Both meanings of the word are evoked in this awakening; it denotes both the act of waking from sleep and of becoming aware of something. In the three short stories in *Âşıkane*, the male protagonists encounter the feelings a woman creates in them in a state of sleep–wakefulness. The first protagonist falls asleep at the end of the story, the second laments the years he has spent asleep when he sees the crow’s feet around his eyes, and the third wakes up with a woman. The first step of *âşıkane*³ is this state of awakening. However, this state is caused by the struggle between inertia and movement. In this struggle, the young Ottoman man is caught

1 *Âşıkane* comes from the Arabic word *ışk*. The word has got the Persian suffix *-âne*; it means in a manner that befits the lover, amorous.

2 Both *Lily in the Valley* and *Sentimental Education* include a married woman, dedicated to her husband and kids, and focus on a young man’s learning process of life and love.

3 From here on, I use *Âşıkane* with the capitalised *Â* to refer to Rauf’s text and *âşıkane* with the lower-case *â* to refer to sentimental education.

between tradition (habit) and chance because he cannot control either. He is constantly moving because he cannot control it and does not want to be lazy. This movement involves not only his body but also his mind. The body rushes from one place to another, pursuing things and people, whereas the mind follows with a string of thoughts about the pursued. The protagonist materializes this chain of thoughts as a work of art, usually a poem.⁴ He thinks about, pursues, and fantasizes about the woman who has set him in motion. He turns his fantasies into a poem, thereby materializing both the woman he pursues and his thoughts about her.⁵ Flaubert, Balzac, and Stendhal's young men, whose love for older women is often unreciprocated, have a change of heart after a while; however, there is a certain insistence in *âşıkane*. This insistence causes renunciation at the smallest sign of impurity. Sentimental education means fighting within the intellectual world and art arena, whereas *âşıkane* is for those who have already established themselves as artists. Women who easily abandon themselves to other men incur a sense of disgust in the young Ottoman man, and this is part of his *âşıkane*. These extramarital affairs with foreign or non-Muslim women steer them toward holy matrimony.⁶ The protagonist tries to convince himself of the virtues of marriage while admitting that this routine cannot nurture his soul. Cosmopolitan spaces where the young man can meet "soiled" women and the "words set free" (Ertürk, 2011, p. 31) in these spaces are vital to this admission.

Arguing that primarily linguistic phonocentrism has allowed the Turkish novel to emerge as a construct combining the internal narrative voice with the objective external world (Ertürk, 2011, p. 10), Nergis Ertürk points out that at the end of the 19th century, "both thematic and structural reflection on the mediation of literary production through the historical transformation of writing can be seen as a critical element of many works of modern Turkish literature itself" (2011, p. 10). She sees the modern historical determination in Turkish literature "as a function of the transformations of the history of writing" (Ertürk, 2011, p. 10). She argues that language became uncontrollable in the Ottoman state for various reasons, such as the use of printing technology, rapid development of communication, and increased number of translations from other languages. Such a language becomes uncanny, and phonocentric nationalism takes over and tries to control the language that has been continuously liberated through multilingual newspapers. Meanwhile, Recaizade Mahmut Ekrem, who is considered the maestro of Edebiyat-i Cedide, steps out of this nationalist discourse in his *Araba Sevdası* (1896) by exposing the uncanniness of this language (Ertürk, 2011, pp. 107-118). This free flow of language is embodied in Mehmet Rauf's text and constitutes the language of *âşıkane*. At the dance meeting at the Summer Palace Hotel in Tarabya, in his opening pages, he stated, "English mingles with French, German and Greek, occasionally bumping into each other"

4 In "Serap" and "Garam-ı Şebab," the second and third stories in the book, respectively, the protagonists are poets.

5 In "Garam-ı Şebab," Memduh writes a poem of 5,000 stanzas. He also writes poems for the woman he has fallen in love for, who lives in a Boğaz village, where he has come to complete his piece.

6 Gül Mete Yuva mentions Halid Ziya's *Mai ve Siyah* (Blue and Black) as another novel of the period focusing on sentimental education. She reads *Mai ve Siyah* together with Flaubert's *Salombo* and *Emma Bovary*. See (Yuva, 2017).

(Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p.13). This depiction of language, as flying around, accompanying the dance like musical notes, and coming into contact with one another, points to the embodiment of language in *Âşıkane*. In this embodiment, the body accompanies the language, and it is somehow ephemeral, fluid, and in motion. Thus, the uncontrollability of tradition (habit) and change in the protagonist's *âşıkane* is combined with awakening because through this awakening, desire comes into play and saves the protagonist from inertia; both the body and mind then come into action.

The struggle between inertia and movement is challenging; therefore, the protagonist's agency and power are important, and the protagonist's sagacity against the effects of the external world is crucial to the language *âşıkane* creates in relaying the cognitive and affective. Here, I use the affective borrowing of Spinoza's affect/affection, as pointed out by Gilles Deleuze. The external world causes affect/affection in the being. Depending on its intensity, the emotion's power increases or decreases. An instance of experience or idea is not a problem in itself; however, power is lost when it is repeated (Deleuze, 1994, pp. 70-128). A love affair begins with passion and has an upward trajectory, which then suddenly turns downward. In Rauf's text, when emotions are running high, the protagonist can vocalize what is intensifying in his head. Emotion motivates an artistic, spiritual, and physical desire and gives rise to love, which in turn gives rise to intensification. Intensification subsequently shows the loving protagonist's body in motion and gives voice to love by creating a rhythm that adapts what is going on in his head to this movement. Mehmet Rauf relies heavily on the senses and emotions to capture what can be transmitted and expressed. Intensification begins in the sensual mode of the lover's mind at the moment the senses are perceived and before they are transformed into images. Therefore, it is a form of synthesis because desire makes it expressible by bringing it to the level of language. Similarly, desire synthesizes it so that the language that will narrate it becomes an image through passion. Synthesis exists with a driving passion like love for the lover, and each time it transpires, it creates a different life experience. As such, the lover chooses a different way each time to communicate using language. These ways depend on the subject position of the lover, mode of reasoning that leads to his perceptions, and how these perceptions are synthesized in their transformation into images. This is the process by which Mehmet Rauf transforms language in *Âşıkane* into a fluid form like body movements, into an erotic image, thereby transforming the act of writing into a stage. Accordingly, the lover, who represents desire, appears to be in constant motion like an actor on stage. Although phonocentrism attempted to contain the uncanny roaming of language when words were liberated in the 19th century, additional control is required when it narrated love and desire. In this respect, the Ottoman writer was ambivalent in his narration of love and desire. For example, Ezgi Sarıtaş examines Bihruz of *Araba Sevdası* through Kristeva's "abject." According to Kristeva, a narcissistic desire is only possible through the abject. The abject is neither subject nor object; it is the thing that constantly threatens the subject-I because it has been radically excluded from the subject. Precisely, for this reason, it is the precondition of narcissistic essence "[...] Abjection, with a meaning extended to include subjective diachrony, is a precondition of narcissism. Abjection

coexists with narcissism and constantly renders narcissism fragile. A more or less beautiful image that I identify with or admire is based on abjection” (Saritaş, 2020, p. 278). Saritaş thus argues that Bihruz is aware of the artificiality of his object of desire and that he does not reflect the narcissistic desire of a man escaping from a female object of desire (Saritaş, 2020, pp. 282-283). Conversely, Ertürk claims that Ekrem has created an archive that records the phonocentrism and uncanniness of translation, where replacing the metaphors of classical Ottoman poetry with those of French Romantic literature is impossible (2011, p. 108). In this respect, Ekrem’s text points to the possibility of breaking out of the controlling clutches of the 19th century in its depiction of love and desire, whereas Rauf’s text does so through the transformation of sentimental education into *âşıkane* because through his characters, Rauf challenges the imposed conceptualization of sexuality and love of the period. He then creates ambivalence to this in the setting of marriage. It is as if the protagonist’s mind and body believe in completely different things.

Men called Mahbub, the object of desire in classical Ottoman poetry, were replaced by women in the 19th century (Kuru, 2008, pp. 63-277). Men as objects of desire, although still present, became a marginal concept (Sayers, 2013, p. 58) and were often considered deviant from the turn of the 20th century (Karahan-Richardson, 2013; Schick, 2011, pp. 196-216). This orientation toward marriage as an example of the concentration of this desire toward women in literary works through *âşıkane* is seen by Mehmet Rauf as an obstacle to the limitation of the young Ottoman man who has found his existence as such through art. Therefore, he structures the language of the controlled and contained language of love and desire in a rhyming manner because being young also means imagination and its translation into works of art. He uses his approach to love and desire as a critique of Abdulhamid’s reign:

He cursed with hatred and enmity the very sluggish and inferior people who, with such a careless and disdainful resignation, surrendered to their executioners not only the right to happiness, but also the right to life, and who could then go on living and find a reason for pleasure, a right to benefit; Indeed, he admitted that the reason why this oppression could come about was because this people could live without desire or ambition in this life, because of this *poverty of the soul*; so this brutal dictatorship, fed by the contemptible inertia of the people, was infallible and legitimate. (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 44)

Oppression and restriction in any form creates misery, which is unacceptable to *aşıkane*. In this respect, Rauf constructs the love and desire of the young Ottoman man against the sexuality and love imposed by the authorities, and he turns this language into an erotic scene. Thus, the young man oscillates between passion and disgust and between inertia and movement in the face of desire and love.

1. Sentimental *Âşıkane*

Âşıkane is Mehmet Rauf’s second collection of short stories. This collection tells a poet’s

love for an older woman and their brief relationship, a conversation between two men about women, and a man's thoughts about his wife and aging when he meets a younger woman on a ferry. In these stories, the male protagonists deal with their *âşıkane* with an attitude against desire and love, which society wants to limit through marriage, and thus create a discourse that includes the body. Beginning with the first story, this discourse is realized through the embodiment of language that accompanies the dance in which the bodies are in motion. The young man is in a constant chase with his mind and body, which is achieved through fluidity, even a "confluence" caused by this fluidity:

Valse had never seen such a play of the dead, and just as there was a state of endurance and ordeal in those who danced in the middle, there was also a state of suspicion in those who stood on the sidelines. In front of the buffet door, in the middle of the edge formed by the two doors of the hall, one leading to the terrace and the other to the other hall of the hotel, there was a crowd of bright-haired heads looking over each other's shoulders; and dazzling white shirts crushed each other between the shiny collars of evening dresses and dinner jackets. The stampede would spread out to the edges as it moved away from the doors, squeeze in among the old ladies sitting on the chairs there, gather at the bottom of the poles, squeeze and squeeze. (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 26)

The three short stories are entitled "Summer Palas'ta Bir Müsamere-i Rakısiye" (1901, A Dance in the Summer Palace), "Serap" (1909, Mirage), and "Garam-ı Şebab" (1896, Young Love). The titles of these three short stories immediately struck us by a sense of fluidity and a state of liminality: Dance is a form of fluid movement, mirage is a form of liminality between reality and illusion, and youth and passion evoke both. The last short story is the first to be written in chronological order and tells the story of a man who falls in love with an older woman. This love is entirely platonic.⁷

The first short story is the second in the order in which it was written and deals with two men's conversations about women, their unreliability, and pointlessness of marriage. The second short story is the last to be written in 1908, after the second proclamation of the Constitution. It focuses on marriage and old age and tells the story of a married man who realizes that even the newly won freedom cannot replace the years that have passed.

The three states of love, namely, exasperation, anxiety, and intoxication, bring together the young protagonist's spiritual and physical growth, that is, the culmination of his sentimental education under the aegis of *âşıkane*.

The protagonist of the first story, who observes the dance and dancers in the dance hall, mostly sees obscenity; he encounters abject, and thus, the hall becomes a mirror for him. He

7 Years later when Mehmet Rauf wanted to write a sequel to this short story, Halid Ziya had said that he did not find it appropriate to continue writing about a forbidden love; thus, Mehmet Rauf gave it up. See (Mehmet Rauf, 2008).

then moves to the second stage, a bridge, which is “Serap,” and after crossing this bridge, he reaches transcendence through the purity of a puppy love. These three stages are the phases of *âşıkane*. In these phases, the young man materializes his experiences and thoughts through language and transforms them into an image. Meanwhile, his body wants to blow with the wind instead of creating a series of constantly repeated movements:

Between beauty and splendour, I was weak in the face of fierce passions to live away from the ugliness and vulgarity of life. I was brought up with an extraordinary delicacy of feeling, a height of ambition. The raging majesty of those endless seas, the lovingly pure blue of those pure skies, the shimmering radiance of those dark blue depths, the majestic, wild, snow-covered hills that rebelled against those lofty realms and offered their bosom, the savagely smeared majesty among the clouds and smoke, how volcanoes boiled in my breast! ... Faced with these landscapes, when I found myself in other realms with the earnest naivety of an innocent youth, a small thing would bring me back to my sluggish life. I cried out, if I was created with a tired passion for the most beautiful of beauties, was it my fault? (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p.104)

Movement as such can become performance. Performance is used here similar to how Deleuze uses it. In his famous example of swimming in relation to education, Deleuze observes that if learning to swim was all about repeating a movement, it could be done on the sand. Repeated swimming movements on the sand do not give a person the ability to swim in the sea because they must adapt to the waves and their movement in the sea, which is only possible through difference (Deleuze, 1994, pp. 28-70). Mehmet Rauf’s young man also wants to experience his desires not through repeated movements but through fluid differences. Accordingly, he becomes a lover who embodies a series of experiences. This lover is not only someone who is aware of the uncanny in the free movement of language but also a poet who wants to take his experience within this freedom and who tries to express it aesthetically. In this respect, emotion becomes an experience in different degrees and intensities.

The two male protagonists of “Summer Palace’ta Bir Müsamere-i Raksiye” have given up hope in love and women. They have tasted their share of physical pleasure and are angry at women’s ambitions. However, they also argue that marriage is a relationship that destroys desire. When one of them is betrayed by a woman he likes, he launches into a monolog about how women are just pieces of flesh and objects of physical gratification. He makes a distinction between naive young girls and the women in the salon:

So, my friend, since then there’s no love for me, only affairs... You know what I do to satisfy my need for love... On Friday and Sunday evenings I jump into a boat and go to Göksu... There I find a certain poetry in the women, who radiate desire from a distance, perhaps because they are closed, perhaps because under their veils they are indescribable, distant and unattainable. [...] We must have fun, and the primary means of doing so is to love four or five loves at the same time. (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 19-20)

At the end of the story, the protagonist states that he just wants to sleep. The idea of marriage that suddenly occurs to him plays a role in this desire to sleep: “Was marriage something more than finding a woman willing to take care of us while we were sick?” (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 31).

When the women he met at the Summer Palace reminded him of the love he had had with other women, his physical movements slow down, and this rise and fall of his emotions make him feel exhausted. His exhaustion is also caused by the relationships he has had with women in whom he sees his narcissism and who remind him of his *abject*. The recreation areas, which symbolize the modernized 19th century Ottoman life, and the women in burqas, whom he can only see from a distance, are necessary for him to regain strength and fall down again; hence, he wanders around in these recreation activities, theaters, and balls. This excursion is different from Benjamin’s flaneur, who was created by the modern city of the 19th century. The flaneur is an image hunter, chasing traces in the ruins of the modern city. He seeks to capture in the present what has been lost in the past (Buck-Morss, 1999).

On the contrary, Rauf’s lover travels everywhere with the image of a woman he has created. This mental image is important to him: He is one of the beautiful and delicate souls created by the nature of fire; even if he is unable to find a suitable woman to love, his heart was full of love and passion with the need for a woman to be loved. Although this bliss was not as high and deep as his ambitions, he did not stay away from loving with a feverish enthusiasm and desire and burning with the fire of not being loved as much as he wants. Anyway, his existence and dream are like this, that is, there cannot be a moment of his life that he did not love with fire and passion (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 40).

In the second short story, “Serap,” the lover also experiences a decline in his emotions. This story explores the experience of a married young man who is attracted to a young woman he has seen on a ferry; through this attraction, his memory of meeting his wife and their first act of love; and his realization of his own aging. Old age makes him aware of his spiritual apathy and makes him think of all the physical desires he has never experienced:

Today, it has become impossible for me to think about the women whom I used to not even have the courage or the need to imagine without poetry, from a perspective without lust, a most abominable lust; the scenes of love that come to my mind as soon as I see the women are not the poetic romances, meetings under pine trees in moonlit nights, and some such childish madness that used to form the foundation of my soul. (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 72)

A continuous sense of running exists around here, and not only the *corps/body* but also the mind accompanies this motion. As he runs, he also reflects on what he is running for. The man who “had to give up the joys of life for years to meet the demands of married life” chases a woman he met on the ferry and remembers his youth, comes home, and asks his sick wife: “Tell me what happened to you, grandmother” (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 63). This man, who calls his wife Granny, is confronted with the idea of illness and fear of death and reflects on

his now lost sexuality in the wrinkles he sees on his wife's face.⁸

In the last story, a young poet has a platonic love for an older woman whom he often meets. This love occurs on a village on the straits, where he seeks peace and quiet. He has come to this village to complete his magnum opus, his poem: "I was a slave to all beauties, I was addicted to all beauties; I was dependent on all beauties, I was bewitched by all beauties; all sublime, all sublime, this constant desire would kill me, it would bring me to life; I would not meet anything beautiful lest my heart should tend to feel blue, I would first dream of a body with the vision of loving beauty. I would embellish it so much that all my imagination, all my vision would be exhausted" (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 106). His mind is occupied by numerous images, so he is exhausted by these visions. However, the visions also give him the strength and energy he needs for his art.

All three short stories show us the relationship between love and sexuality that an intellectual man establishes. Moreover, as soon as these male protagonists begin to think about themselves, not only their bodies but also their minds are set in motion, and the language they construct to express this movement becomes a stage on which thoughts and emotions parade because for them, love is an entity, a life force, and a form of existence. However, the union of love also extinguishes the flame of love, and love loses one of its fundamental building blocks.

In the final short story, "Garam-ı Şebab," Mehmet Rauf introduces a type that will recur in his later works. In a version of Don Juan, when the poet Memduh watches the house of the woman with whom he is in love, piano notes from Mozart's Don Juan pour out of the house (Mehmet Rauf, 2021, p. 171).⁹

The meeting between Memduh and the woman listening to Don Juan's melodies is not a coincidence, and their love is ignited by these melodies. When he wants to combine love and music in his rhythmic language, the young Ottoman opts for the uninhibited Don Juan. Don Juan gives his desire to several women and refuses to commit; indeed, Mozart's Don Juan is "the direct narration of amoral eroticism through music" (Kristeva, 1983, pp. 191-208). Music and going from one woman to another drives him to a life of excess. When he desires and conquers a woman, he feels lazy and sleepy, just like the characters in *Âşıkane*. His soul needs constant movement (Kristeva, 1983, p. 198). From the very beginning of the story, Memduh creates a mental image of an imaginary lover, the woman he thinks he will marry, even before he meets the woman he will fall in love with. In this respect, the artist's imagination began to occupy his mind with an image from the very beginning:

The woman was a pure and smiling spirit who flew around in all my dreams, whom

8 Freud calls this death drive. See (Freud, 1957)

9 In many of Mehmet Rauf's works, lovers are seen. Among these lovers, those who stand out with their exchanges of knowledge are in *Paris'te* (1898, In Paris), *Bekârlar Arasında* (1899, Among the Bachelors), *Necmi* (1897), *Pera Palas'ta Bir İzdivaç* (1897, A Marriage in Pera Palas), *Hasancık* (1914, Little Hasan), and *Pervaneler Gibi* (1920, Like Moths). In all these works, young men come together to exchange knowledge about women and love as in "Summer Palace'te Bir Müsamere-i Raksiye" and "Serap."

I only embodied when, in the innocence of youth, I contemplated marriage, when I imagined my wife in the miraculous delicacy of feelings; I hated others as I hated everything ugly; I used to hate them, these mean relationships, dirty loyalties, this misery, these evils. Beautiful ... Well, just to admire her beauty ... But I had not met a woman worthy of my touch. I was looking for sublime, heroic, noble, exquisite women. (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 105)

When Memduh begins to think about marrying this woman, she puts an end to it because she has only inspired his art. She may not be considered a mother like the woman in “Serap”; however, this woman, who left her children and husband for the man she fell in love with, becomes a “sister” to him:

Miserable, she acted as if she wanted to flee, not stay. Suddenly she started for the door. Then she turned to me, looked at me for a long time with tear-stained eyes, said, “Come,” and kissed me on the forehead: Thank you, brother, she murmured (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 148).

2. Two Languages of Love

Writers who tend to primarily narrate the emotional aspect of love turn to the key element of literature, the image, to depict its sexual aspect. In Mehmet Rauf’s works, images are a reflection of physical desire and create a new language. As mentioned earlier, a language that is oriented toward action and movement is constructed. In *Âşıkane*, the writer uses two kinds of language to narrate the physical and the spiritual. The first is on the imagery level and the second on the perception level. Both are synthesized with desire and produce a language of action, which in turn creates intensification. As such, language acquires a performative quality. Movement replaces the fixity between the identical. Similar to Deleuze’s construction of a philosophy based on difference rather than similarity, in which drama creates difference under logos (Deleuze: 1994, pp. 24-65), dance creates drama in Rauf’s *âşıkane*. In the book, dance exists on a moving stage in spaces created by the protagonist’s language for fluidity. The protagonist in “Serap” narrates the oppression he claims to have experienced during the Abdulhamid period, which robbed him of his many whims and desires, by presenting a youthful life that causes separation in language at the imaginary and perceptual levels. Although the last short story in the collection, “Garam-ı Şebab,” narrates the youth of the character, in the first and second stories, youth is presented as only one of the periods of life. Thus, a link is established between youth and *âşıkane*. The life of a young man and his adolescence, adulthood, and aging form a timeline that encompasses the entire book. In the chronological composition of the book, youth comes last, adolescence and the subsequent despair of adulthood come first, and marriage and aging come second. In this composition, the author uses youth as an intersection point between the stages of life.

In “Serap,” which is this intersection, both the youth and aging of the narrator-protagonist are present. He also meets a woman who reminds him of his adventures with women and is

influenced by her. This encounter reminds him of the different possibilities in his life. Indeed, it is significant that the encounter takes place on a ferry on the sea. This fluid movement also moves his mind, and potentials rush into his head. The relationship between movement and inertia becomes a struggle with the potentials contained in desire. The ferry on the sea becomes a bridge for the struggle between the two stories and a sphere of potential for the intensifications in both stories because it is at the site of these intensifications that the struggle arises. Intensification rejects the fixed and creates a flow, a being, which makes it possible to connect between singularities by bringing many of them together (Deleuze, 1994, pp. 70-128).

“Serap” thus represents what is repeatable because the adolescence in the last story and the experience and despair with women in the first are synthesized. Moreover, these repetitions are joined by the despair he feels over the affair he had with an older woman in his youth and the physical pleasure he can experience with many other women. In this story, the protagonist’s encounter with the young woman on the ferry and the singularized and different states of experience that this young woman makes him feel are all gathered in a flow in the present (Deleuze, 1994, pp. 70-128). The flow begins with encountering the woman because it reminds him of his earlier encounter with his wife, which had made his life boring and monotonous and caused aging. This reminiscence leads to the descriptive intensification.

The intensification arrives at the repeatable, that is, the narrative of passion and the narrative of youth at the fluidity of singular experiences. In the book, the narrator-protagonist uses watching/observing as a method. The relationship between observation and language is similar to the expression of *âşıkane* through the relationship between the body and language in theater. Observation is the means between what is thought and what is expressed and between what exists and how it is perceived by the observer. As such, it is the intersection point between the line of thought and life. This structure also has a temporal dimension: time becomes concrete in the space where what happens in the protagonist’s mind and what is observed come together, and *this moment* is captured as an ephemeral image in the act of observation and turns to stone. The final pages of the first short story are devoted entirely to this observation, which takes up half the volume: “And now all this crowd gave him a feeling of the ruins of Pompeii, all of which had now turned to stone, and he felt like a visitor after twenty centuries, and he found this dance destructive and terrifying” (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 30).

What turns this ephemeral image into *stone* is dance. Dance is like a theater stage, where seeing and hearing come together and body and language meet in repetition. As the narrator-protagonist watches the waltz, in which music and body come together and the body gains fluidity in movement, he continues to think about love and women. The body movements concretize the presence of the music. Accordingly, when the sensations are turned into “stone,” the thoughts about women and the body take on an erotic dimension. A *moment* for language that is marked by *embrace* is created through observation from a conversation about love, cheating, and bodily pleasure toward dancing the waltz:

The dance had created quite a heat, everyone was whirling around, besides the old women sitting in the chairs on the side, there were also some old men. He suddenly realised that the salon had become more crowded and that everyone had joined in. The doorways were filled with handsome young men and women and their mothers and fathers. There were also couples who couldn't resist the movement of the dance and joined in; our hero looked at them in awe. (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 30)¹⁰

Here, the sensual elements correspond to that which is pictorial and the physical to that which is perceptual because as far as they are observable, they create a space of meanings and associations. Love is what a discourse is based on but cannot be grasped; it is always ephemeral in motion. It disappears and suddenly reappears; however, its intensity can only be imagined. Even in this mode of thought, when it is tried to be expressed in language, it does not gain concreteness and always falls into the realm of images. It thus leads to a ripple in both thought and feeling. Such encounters carry the meaning into a rhythmic dimension. This rhythmic construction, which can often be seen in Mehmet Rauf's work, and the resulting intensifications are made possible precisely by their ability to create this *moment*. Subsequently, in the second short story, such intensification is a result of a coincidence.

In "Serap," the chance encounter on the ferry takes place through what is visible behind the opening and closing curtains. When the protagonist sees the woman, he finds her unfamiliarity exciting. The once open, once closed curtain and the ferry in the middle of the sea have the same function as the waltz in the first short story because they represent the sensual and pictorial, thereby transforming chance into encounter. The curtain and the half-seen woman remind the protagonist of his first meeting with his wife, again on a ferry, and their subsequent marriage, thereby creating the verbal. However, when he is narrating his youth and, through this narration, what the oppressive regime has done to his soul and body, the protagonist remembers his past, thus creating what belongs to the pictorial. The memory of his first meeting with his wife on the ferry sets the contemplation process in motion:

He saw her for the first time at a ferry terminal; he had arrived on a ferry from another terminal further away and this lady, with two other ladies beside her, was about to board the ferry from the pier, and the beautiful body in the hot embrace of this black burqa had attracted and enchanted him, and as she passed him, enveloping him in a cloud of scent, her languid walk, her beautiful airs and her courage had so affected him that when he had to disembark, he had stayed behind and delayed to see her again, and they had almost disembarked side by side; When he came to the bridge, after this inevitable togetherness of a short time, he was drunk, in a fever; and again his heart burned and ached, his hand went to his pen with the

10 In Mehmet Rauf's *Karanfil ve Yasemin* (Carnation and Jasmine), published in 1924, a similar waltz scene is depicted whereby the protagonist is mesmerized by the crowd of people dancing in an *âşıkane* fashion. Such analogous portrayals in different works present a pattern related to *âşıkane* in the writing of Mehmet Rauf that underlines his consistent pursuit in theme and style.

thought of those feverish few days in imaginary and wanting amour, he worked until the evening, during all his business his soul was in painful, morbid desire and excitement; when he saw her again on his way back on the ferry, buying his ticket, he was so excited that he barely held himself together not to cry and wail; This encounter had made him unbearably happy; and once again the ladies passed in front of him, wreathed in seductive perfumes, leaving him drunk with intentions and boarding the ferry; and he looked for a suitable place from where he could see them as much as possible, and sat where he could see them in the women's section, while the people coming in and out of the ferry divided the curtain between them. (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, pp. 45-46)

This long sentence, which recounts the protagonist's first chance encounter with his (future) wife, is followed by a direct description of the protagonist's body and gestures. A moment atomized in this way opens up in a fluid way to intensification. Following the successive gestures, the body creates a path toward the verbal, which leads to intensifications. After the gestures, the eyes are suddenly aware of the one in front of them, the gestures are stopped, and the physical is transcended, initiating the verbal:

As a first act, with the preoccupation and smiling recognition of a manner known as customary, he opened up *Stamboul* and folding it over skimmed through the lead article. Then, in another well-known act, he turned the pages, and just as he was about to look at the "Theatre and Concerts" section, a young and attractive woman sitting in front of him suddenly caught his attention and admiration, and attracted him in such a way that he had to ignore the newspaper, and he unnoticably closed the newspaper, put it aside, and began to observe and think about this woman. (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 34)

The opening and closing of the curtain and the ferry on the sea increase the repetition and level of intensity. The woman reminds the protagonist of love, his youth, and his sexuality. He married his wife because he had slept with her. A desired woman reminds him of the desire he once had for another woman and brings his past youth into the present. However, the fact that the woman in front of him is inaccessible also reminds him of how he was unable to experience desire in the way he wanted to. At the end of the story, he feels that he has aged and is upset because he believes that desire, the source of life, has been lost. Thus, the beautiful woman he meets on the ferry not only awakens a new excitement in him but also reminds him of his past desires, which were not sufficiently developed at the time. He now thinks that it is too late for all these experiences and that they will eventually turn into bodies that have turned to *stone*. The title of the short story, "serap" (mirage), also supports this process. Mirage is a line that shuttles back and forth in between existence and nonexistence, remembering and yearning, and imagination and reality, just like how the short story begins with a coincidence on the ferry.

In the third short story, "Garam-ı Şebab," the intensification is established by the protagonist's

wanderings in the village and observations of the landscape. The narrator, a well-traveled poet, has come to the village to complete his magnum opus. The narrative begins with his disembarkation from a train carriage, flashbacks to the landscapes he has passed, and thoughts on the train before his arrival. Thus, the story begins with a fluid movement. In both this journey of arrival and his later wanderings through the village, women and amorous adventures parallel the protagonist's thoughts and the landscapes he observes. Smells, sounds, and other beauties of nature intoxicate him (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 106). The natural landscapes inspire him with thoughts of erotic embraces and shy and seductive airs. Nature appears to move from one state to another. The grass shaken by the wind, which carries ephemeral scents and sounds, functions as the waltz in the first short story and the opening and closing of the curtain and the ferry in the middle of the sea in the second one. These repetitions bring together what is pictorial and what is sensual. The poems that the poet Memduh¹¹ writes for his beloved, his walks as the embodied existence of the senses, what he has heard about the woman who is the topic in village conversations and the thoughts that this evokes by association, and the fact that he never learns her name during their relationship, all indicate what belongs to the realm of images. Walking mobilizes the landscape, and in such a contemplation, verbal expression and imagery come together and are synthesized, creating an intensification:

In the midst of beauty and splendour, I was weak against the strong desire to live far away from the ugliness and banality of life. I was brought up with great sensitivity and high-mindedness. The tempestuous majesty of those endless seas, the pure, amorous blue of those skies, the successive sparkles of those sea depths, the snowy, wild and magnificent hills, rebelling against the sublime worlds, bearing their breast with clouds and smoke, were volcanoes boiling in my breast with their terrible splendour! With the serious naive tendencies of youth towards these landscapes, I found myself in other realms, and the smallest things brought me back to my sluggish life. Was it my fault that I was born with a tired attachment to the most marvellous of beauties, I cried out, in these calm horizons, in the breast of these indigo-coloured wavy seas, surrounded by high mountains covered with clouds, what was this fog of beauty that finally gnawed at me everywhere? (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 104)

In each of the three short stories, observation has different positionality. In the first story, the narrator-protagonist observes the dancers from a distant, elevated perspective. In the second, the act of watching takes place at eye level. In the third, watching is part of a moving perspective such as the landscapes pass by the window of the train carriage. However, all three share the fluidity of observation through a sense of movement. The lack of a fixed positionality

11 Mehmet Rauf uses the name Memduh in his *Verven* (1897) as well. In that story, the character amorously follows a woman who smells of verven (vervain) perfume. The sense of smell is also added to Memduh's wandering about in "Garam-ı Şebab"; thus, the sense of fluidity is continued. However, in this storyline, the Memduh character decides in the last minute to not meet with his subject of love and sublimates his feelings instead. By doing so, his sentimental education is completed. This choice fulfils the moral codes of the era as recommended by Halit Ziya, while following the *âşıkane* line of Mehmet Rauf's vocabulary.

is represented in the first short story by the narrator's eyes wandering over the people in the drawing room:

The woman who looked contentedly at a bridegroom-like young man who had asked her daughter to waltz, noticed that he was bored and gave short answers to her questions, but continued to talk to him; anything could be a topic of conversation for this woman, she gave an opinion on anyone who caught her eye by focusing on someone through the stemmed glasses in her hand, and the way she expressed these opinions could turn them into questions. Pointing to the two moustachioed Englishmen who were dancing with the two English girls with red hair, red faces and beautiful strange eyes, she said, "How fun it is to watch the English dance?" "You know who waltzes the best, that little gentleman ... What do you say to him?" and showed a young man waltzing with a red-haired woman in a yellow dress, whose eyes were outlined in a circle that looked as black as if they had been bruised by a bite. "The gentleman dancing with the Countess... he is a good friend of mine," he said, giving his name. But it was an American woman who really caught his attention, who, although she had only been in Istanbul for a week, was attracting the astonished glances of everyone, including the women. She was dancing with a tall and handsome young man in a serious and formal manner. There was an expression of kissable astonishment in her eyes, a reproachful smile over her slender long neck, over her thin white bosom, which could be said to have been born of the shy coquettishness of a youthful look and the naivety of a child's gaze. (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 27)

In the second short story, gazes are established in the way the narrator-protagonist arranges his position in relation to the movement of the curtains:

And now, in the hut, watching with the most bitter waves of ambition and desire this exquisite and exceptional Greek beauty, who still possessed and bewitched him with her passionate eyes, he began to remember, with his eyes closed, all the events of his past, from the first meeting with this girl to the marriage, when he saw the young and beautiful image of his wife of ten years, half happy with the loving memory of this image filled with poetry (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 46).

In the third story, there is a flow of landscape with the character's long walks:

It was early evening when I boarded the train; the sun was high in the sky, ready to set, and a rain cloud was moving over Izmit; the sea was calm, motionless and sunny; During the whole journey I saw the fresh landscapes flying fast, the scattered country women with their headscarves on the country roads, among the greens and flowers, on the waves of the meadows, in the gardens of the mansions, the children running, laughing and shouting with the fast rage of the train, the colourful groups of men and women gathered on the slopes, the officials giving signals with their

flags, the cars that one could sometimes meet behind the trenches, and above all I saw the houses, scenes, trees that played with a fast and crazy movement; I saw these flights that drugged the mind; they awakened such things in me! The gloomy rains of winter, the colourless days, the starless skies help me to become a prisoner of these things, of these beauties of the landscape. (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, p. 106)

The fact that everything is in flow and this flow is supported by images and movements indeed refers to a becoming rather than an end. When Rauf constructs this state of being in the novel through a rhytmical language, he frequently uses the conjunction “ve” (and) and the exclamation “ah.” The battle between the “-dir” (is), which indicates certainty, the verb “to be,” which denotes completion, and the conjunction “and” indicating fluidity, which Deleuze and Guattari point at in their *A Thousand Plateaus*, turns into to the strife between chance and tradition in this text (Deleuze and Guattari, 2019). Indeed, “ve” and “ah” have taken a significant place in all three short stories. “Ve” is the young man’s resistance against the sluggishness and fixity of his *âşıkane*, whereas “ah” stands against the period’s insistence on marriage. The conjunction “ve” is predominant in the text, beginning with the first story. Paragraphs with the “ve” had no subject; when used as such, it recounts the opposite of what comes before it: “And I admit that you dance these quite well...” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2019); “And what could give more grief than a love lived as the lives of skinny kids?” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2019, p. 14).¹²

Moreover, “ve” and “ah” are used most frequently in the second story, which sits in the middle. The frequent use is logical because this story is a bridge between the stories that precede and follow it. Moreover, it is a site in which “ve” and “ah” clash and collide, with the former denoting motion and the latter stagnation.

In the three short stories, the comparison between what is perceived and what is part of the image serves to create a rhythmic sense of movement. As the stories turn into a rhythmic dance before our eyes, words transcend their function as mere carriers of meaning and take on a fluid form. Accordingly, rhythm acquires a double function, manifesting both as sensual and as part

12 The conjunction “ve” is used in the work in the following pages: 14, 22, 30, 40, 42, 44, 46, 53, 57, 59,60,66, 67, 70, 71, 72, 85, 87, 90, 93, 94, 98, 100, 101, and 148.

Just like the preposition “ki,” this word reflects the changes in society and the difference of opinions in literature. Classical Ottoman prose does not rely on the Arabic “ve” while using the Persian “ü” and “vü.” Conversely, the national literature refuses “ve” altogether as part of its pro-West ideology and dismissal of the past (Yuva, 2017, p. 157).

The use of the conjunction “ve” is not only particular to Mehmet Rauf but is a symbol of the Edebiyat-ı Cedide group of which he is part, and it provides a good ammunition for their opponents who ridiculed them in the media outlets of the period: “And gentlemen! And now and I have become decadent. And, yes and from this minute on I and will and start my duty” (*Malumat*, volume. 177, 21 March 1899).

“And” has a special place in the style of Flaubert, one of the writers admired by Rauf. Proust argues that “and” creates a pause in the rhythm and breaks the tableaux into two in Flaubert: “Flaubert does not use ‘and’ where it could be used. This is the model and cut of many a unique sentence [...] Conversely, he uses ‘and’ where no one would think of using it. He seems to be showing that the other side of the tableaux will connect and the wave will be recreated” (qtd. in Yuva, 2017, p. 158).

of the imagery in the space where the two come together. Everything is in a constant dance:

There was such a flirtatious volatility in her smile that it had an intoxicating effect on me, like the flow of music from dance to dance. We strolled, sometimes singing slowly, sometimes going through anthologies of poetry, sometimes immersing ourselves in criticism and curiosity. She had such a sweet voice, she showed such skill in singing the most difficult compositions, which indicated that she had received artistic training in music; the beauties in her manners when she sang, the tones in her voice, the expressions on her face, her eyes, sometimes languid, sometimes thoughtful, sometimes filled with desire in horizons of fantasy, everything about her evoked a different enchantment. Truly, this innocent relationship had inaudible aromas, sublime spirituality, but the passion of youth stirred me like trapped, pressurised steam. (Mehmet Rauf, 2020, pp. 141-142)

As shown here, the author creates rhythm in the language through the repeated use of the word “sometimes,” through the listing of the woman’s actions and facial expressions and through the character’s interpretation of them. This is prevalent throughout the novel. In the descriptions, there is a flow toward the desire to communicate with her: “I was choking on the euphoria of dispersing with my whole being, mixing with her, being only her with the euphoria of dispersing with my whole being, mixing with her, being just her” (Mehmet Rauf, 2021, p. 143).¹³

Conclusion

Mehmet Rauf defines the sentimental education of the Ottoman intellectual of the 19th century as *âşıkane*. In his collection of short stories directly titled *âşıkane*, he depicts the emergence of sentimental education through men in love and their action-oriented discourse. In this discourse of sentimental education, the lover’s desire is located in a space where what is perceived and its possibility of expression is located to express the lover’s passion. The language synthesized in this space is as fluid as it is performative. It is in this fluidity, in a time and space where experience and lifelines meet and where each meeting creates a difference and repetition, that the presence of the intensification that is established in *the moment* makes what is expressed as a form of imagery. In these three short stories, the author always finds

13 In Mehmet Rauf’s *Son Emel* (Last Wish), we can see how he has intensified this volatility and tried to transform words into notes. In this novel, he creates a symphony-like structure to express the mental states of individuals running toward their final wishes. To this end, he frequently uses abruptly interrupted sentences; we see meaning is created by jumping from one sentence to another in such manner and by repeated words in consecutive paragraphs. Long sentences are buttressed by sentences beginning with “ki” (that), and the narration gains a rhythm by the use of each “ki” sentence and the frequently used word *bütün* (all/whole). *Son Emel* turns narration into a musical form, which, in return, reflects the state of mind of the characters in the stories. Similar sentence structures and expressions are used for similar states of mind. Thus, *all* these stories come together as a *whole* to form a symphony, the musical narration of the *last wish*. The opening of the short story “Telafi” (Amends) in this book, for instance, attests to this (p. 27). The walk of these women is depicted by the fluidity and rhythm of a dance.

a way to compare the relationship between the pictorial and the sensual. This encounter is sentimental education itself, the *âşıkane*.

The existence of love and passion in the individual and its expression compares the relationship between what is present and what is desired to be present. In this context, the bodily and spiritual/poetic desire come together and create a sphere of potentials beyond mere desire. Accordingly, the pictorial and sensual are synthesized and open up to become a whole. Coincidentally, “whole” is one of the words Mehmet Rauf uses most often in his literature. Wholeness is a combination of the sensual and pictorial. If we were to read this as woman and man, given that the writer and his protagonists are men, the sensual corresponds to the masculine and the visual to the feminine. As intensifications are established through observation and movement, whether it is the curtains or walking, an amalgamation is achieved that refers to both the physical and ideational. This dynamic points to a performativity that makes life a constant adventure, where as soon as union becomes possible, despair takes over.

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