

Toplum ve Bilim

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Two barbers in Beyoğlu: Two types of narrative and two forms of masculinity

GÜL ÖZSAN

This article based upon in-depth interviews with two brothers who have been working as barbers in Beyoğlu, the cultural center of Istanbul, since the 1960s examines their ways of narrating their life stories. The main argument of the article is that men's different types of narratives correspond to different forms of masculinity. These two barbers display quite different forms of masculinity through their narratives. The main characteristics of what might perhaps be called hegemonic "masculinity" are found in the narrative constructed by the elder brother, Tarık Bey. He places himself into the center of his narrative as an ambitious man with a

capacity to impress others and talks about "facts of life" and events avoiding anecdotes and stories as much as possible. He tends to make generalizations and present explanations about "life" and focuses upon his ambitions and attempts to achieve them. His brother, Hasan Bey, is particularly keen on talking about everything in the form of stories rather than focusing upon his achievements. Interestingly, he never appears to be a central or even active subject in these stories dominated by women. Another axis of the article is the way these two men relate to a famous movie star, Türkân Şoray, who also appears to be a recurring theme in their narratives. Hasan Bey focuses upon how he has been impressed by Türkân Şoray, whom he has always followed not as a distant figure, but rather like a family member whose life and achievements can be told in anecdotes full of emotional attachment. Tarık Bey, on the contrary, maintains a distance between himself as a viewer and Türkân Şoray, who appears to be admired as a "woman" and to be "envied" as a star.

Keywords: Beyoğlu, barbers, gender identities, family history, masculinity, men's narratives, movie star, audience-star relations.