

**GENDER, ETHNICITY
AND THE NATION-STATE:
ANATOLIA AND ITS NEIGHBORING REGIONS**



**Hrant Dink Memorial Workshop 2009
Proceedings**

Edited by
Leyla Keough

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The Hrant Dink Memorial Workshops were initiated in 2008 by a group of academics at Sabancı University. Focusing on a different theme each year, the Workshop Series in memory of Hrant Dink seek to encourage interdisciplinary academic dialogue across borders.

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Hrant Dink Memorial Workshop 2009 “Gender, Ethnicity, and the Nation-State: Anatolia and Its Neighboring Regions in the Twentieth Century,” which took place at Tütün Deposu (Tobacco Warehouse) in Tophane, Istanbul between May 21 and 24, 2009, was organized by Sabancı University in collaboration with the International Hrant Dink Foundation and Anadolu Kültür, with the generous support of the Chrest Foundation, the Open Society Institute, Sabancı University, and Anadolu Kültür. The organizing committee consisted of Akşin Somel, Ayşe Kadioğlu, Ayşe Gül Altınay, Fikret Adanır, Hülya Adak, Işık Özel, Lanfranco Aceti, Leyla Keough and Nedim Nomer; and the workshop assistants were Fulya Kama, Şeyda İşler, Ezgi Güner and Mert İzcan.

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The Spring 2010 issue of New Perspectives on Turkey (no.42) published a special dossier titled “Gender, Ethnicity and the Nation-State,” which includes the longer versions of the presentations by Marc Nichanian, Nerina Weiss, Setenay Nil Doğan, Serkan Delice, as well as a commentary by Arlene Avakian and an introduction by Hülya Adak and Ayşe Gül Altınay.

*Dedicated to Dicle Koğacıoğlu (1972-2009)
who made significant contributions to the workshop
as well as to the lives of many participants*

We miss her...

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Editor's Introduction

The following papers represent the proceedings of the Second Annual Hrant Dink Memorial Workshop, "Gender, Ethnicity, and the Nation-State: Anatolia and its Neighboring Regions" which took place at the Tütün Deposu in Istanbul, Turkey on 21 – 24 May 2009.

This workshop is part of a series of annual workshops organized by Sabancı University in memory of Hrant Dink under the general theme of "Frameworks of Diversity, Modalities of Interaction." The 20th century has witnessed hot and cold wars, resulting in physical and imagined borders that have separated peoples, worldviews and historical processes. Yet, it has also been a period of coexistence, dialogue and exchange. Drawing on Hrant Dink's legacy of highlighting existing human connections and imagining new ones, the Hrant Dink Memorial Workshops seek to initiate and encourage interdisciplinary dialogue among scholars, activists, and artists working on Anatolia and its neighboring regions. The goal of the series is to foster mutual understanding and cooperation among individuals, groups and societies, which otherwise may not have a chance to do so. The workshops are organized around themes that help explore untold or silenced stories as well as obscured structures of empathy, interaction, and interdependence.

The 2009 organizing committee (Akşin Somel, Ayşe Kadioğlu, Ayşe Gül Altınay, Fikret Adanır, Hülya Adak, Işık Özel, Lanfranco Aceti, Nedim Nomer and myself) chose the subject of gender, ethnicity and the nation-state for several reasons. Gender and ethnicity have been key categories of differentiation and conflict in nationalisms and nation-states, interacting with each other in multiple ways. Furthermore, constructions and transformations of gender and ethnicity in and beyond nation-states have shaped Anatolia and its neighboring regions in the 20th century. Drawing on Hrant Dink's legacy of exploring our "shared" histories, as well as our shared present and future, we sought to move beyond familiar nationalist narratives. Our aim was to encourage a debate on the contexts of differentiation and potentials for unification along gender and ethnic lines in this region as a whole.

To do this, we gathered together over 40 scholars, activists, and artists from a variety of disciplines and countries, including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, France, the United States, as well as Turkey. These scholars took up gender, ethnicity and the nation-state in historical and contemporary studies of Armenian, Abkhaz, Kurdish,

Turkish, Circassian, Cretan and other identities in the geographies of Anatolia, the Middle East, the Balkans, and the Caucasus. Represented in this collection of proceedings are papers from the first panel of the workshop through its last panel three days later, organized thematically. To begin, Arlene Avakian, Hourig Attarian, and Arpine Konyalian Grenier discuss gendered narratives and poetic testimonials of memory, loss, and survival. In a compelling statement on feminism, ethnicity, and trans/nationalism, Neery Melkonian presents us with the work of an array of Armenian women artists. Next, covering “Gender, Ethnicity, and History” Hülya Adak examines Halide Edib’s perspective on ethnicity, gender, and violence, while Ayşe Gül Altınay unravels layers of gendered silencing and Karin Karakaşlı provocatively suggests a new language for old histories. Then, Nazan Maksudyan and Metin Yüksel examine the ethnic and gendered dimensions of education and nationalism in the Ottoman and Turkish states respectively. Elif Ekin Akşit, as discussant, comments on these and other papers on the panel “Educating and ‘Civilizing’ the Nation.” In the series of pieces on “Gender and Ethnicity: the Balkans and Anatolia,” Nerina Weiss explores gender and belonging in a Kurdish community and Setenay Nil Doğan discusses the myth of “Circassian Beauty,” while Sophia Koufopoulou reports from the Island of Cunda and Milena Davidovic offers a view from Kosovo. We then have a set of essays on gender and ethnicity in Caucasia and Anatolia. Shanazarian considers these topics in the context of the Karabakh War; Rita Kuznetsova and Igor Kuznetsov illuminate Armenian, Ahiska, Turkish and Abkhaz identities; and Akram Khamseh examines gender among Kurdish and Persian college students. Lale Yalçın-Heckmann provides an incisive and instructive discussion of these last three papers. We conclude the proceedings on the topic of “Gender, Ethnicity, and Sexuality” with two fascinating and very insightful analyses: Ayşe Kadioğlu on representations of sexuality in Edgar Hilsenrath’s “Fairy Tale” and Eser Selen on modernity and patriarchy in “Ugly Humanling” [Çirkin İnsan Yavrusu].

In all, the workshop provided a venue for a vibrant dialogue on gender identity, cultural diversity and equality in Turkey. 2009’s workshop also formed a launching pad for several scholarly collaborations. One such collaboration is the Spring 2010 special edition of *New Perspectives on Turkey* where Marc Nichanian, Nerina Weiss, and Setenay Nil Doğan, offer longer versions of their presentations. Hülya Adak and Ayşe Gül Altınay introduce this special edition and dedicate it to the memory of Dicle Koğacioğlu, a stellar scholar and dear friend to many at the workshop, who presented a sophisticated paper there on “Knowledge and Political Community in Discourses of Honor Crimes,” and who we sadly lost just a few months later.

On a personal note, I was honored to be a part of this workshop, to edit these proceedings, and to participate in and be witness to an emergent language for this important conversation. Hrant Dink was one of the first to lay the groundwork for this dialogue – for this bridge for us to stand upon. I am convinced that this workshop reinforced this bridge beneath our feet, creating a sound platform for us to feel, think, and express ourselves across geographic as well as categorical boundaries.

Leyla Keough
May 2010

Part I Memories and Testimonies

Part I Memories and Testimonies

Powerful Silences: Becoming a Survivor Through the Construction of Story ¹

Arlene Voski Avakian²

I have lived with my grandmother, Elmas Tutuian's story of survival from the genocide for more than 50 years. I have heard this story as one of victimization, survival, and resistance to both Turkish genocide and Armenian patriarchal culture. I now also see it as a narrative/performance through which she constructed herself as a survivor, healing herself through it from the trauma of genocide. Elmas Tutuian's story did not change. What changed was my understanding of it.

Stories such as Elmas Tutuian's have provided crucial testimonies of events suppressed by dominant histories for both historians and members of oppressed groups. Along with bearing witness, these narratives also function to make meaning and to shape the post-trauma lives of both the narrator and the post-catastrophe world. They become part of the survival of individuals and groups, in defiance of genocide and its deniers. This paper analyzes her story from a psychological and textual perspective, addressing as well the interaction between the teller and the hearer.

The outlines of Elmas Tutuian's story are familiar. Her idyllic life with my grandfather, Arakel and their three children ended when he was conscripted into the Turkish army and never heard from him again. Then Elmas and her children, along with seven other relatives, were exiled from their home in Kastamonu in Anatolia to a small village. After a short time, Turkish gendarmes took her son Ashot away. Leaving her two other children in the care of relatives, Elmas walked to where the gendarmes said they were taking Ashot. When she found him, she walked to Kastamonu and enlisted the help of the police commissioner who arranged to get Ashot and her other children and relatives out of exile. In a few years, she was able to contact a nephew in Iran, who sent money for their passage to the United States where they began a new life.

The most obvious interpretation of this testimony is one that follows the pattern of a wonderful life before the genocide, disrupted by calamity, and resolved by emigration from the site of the trauma. However, an analysis of the story from

¹ The full text of this article can be found in: *Socialist Studies: The Journal of the Society for Socialist Studies*, V 2 (2), Fall 2006, 45-56.

² Professor of Gender Studies, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

the perspective of a narrative reveals a structure that positions the climax not in her emigration to the United States, but in Elmas' resistance to the Turks and getting her son back. Using the narrative device of dialogue and rich detail, her testimony also counters genocide denial.

At the age of 92, sixty-four years after the events took place, and with a failing short-term memory, she told me again what happened when the gendarmes came for Ashot.

He said, I am taking this boy.

Where are you going to take him?

They are collecting the boys.

I said, this boy's father is a soldier, you are not taking this boy. He is my boy. I won't give him to you. He is mine. He is mine.

He said, he is not yours.

I said, he is mine. He is mine and I won't give him to you. Understand this. He is mine.

And we were screaming in Turkish.

I won't give him. This boy is mine, I said, and his father is a soldier, I said. Soldier, do you understand?

I am going to take him.

You can't, I said. I won't give him, I screamed. I won't give him. You can't, I said. Who are you to take this boy, I said?

He screamed at me.

I won't give him. Do you understand?

Then he said, you are doing too much.

I said, *you* are doing too much. Do you understand? You cannot take this boy. No, I said. He is mine. I won't give him to you. Understand this, I said, if there is a god in heaven this boy will not stay with you. . . . Day and night, I said, I will pray that the English come – already when you say English the Turk trembles – and take your child from your wife's hands and you will know what I am feeling. Do you understand? Night and day I will pray if there is a god, he will come and do that. If there is no god, do what you want. But I will not give my son, understand that. . . . Take me with him.

Finally, the gendarmes told her that they would return for all of them the next day. When they left with Ashot, the men who had been watching the interaction told her that the gendarmes had no intention of coming back for the family.

The bulk of the rest of the narrative is about how Elmas braved the mountains at night to get to where the gendarmes had told her they were taking her son and walked for three days to Kastamonu. The narrative when she gets to the police commissioner's house is interspersed with dialogue but is mostly told in highly descriptive detail.

It was early Friday morning. He had just come downstairs to wash up. It is in front of my eyes now. He said please come in, in Turkish. The rest of the family was upstairs. I closed the police commissioner's door and opened my face.

Oh my, Elmas, where did you come from. What has happened?

I said, they took my Ashot.

People upstairs noticed that there were two people talking. His wife looked down from upstairs. Oh my, Madam Elmas, she said. Come upstairs.

I cried. They took my Ashot. I am crying.

The police commissioner came and said, don't cry. I'll see what's what.

I said, if I don't cry, tell me what it is I have to do to save him. I have to save him.

Tutuian puts the hearer at the scene. The gendarmes have voices as does she. They have a heated interchange. The police commissioner has a house with an upstairs and a family who knows Tutuian, even call her Madam Elmas. She goes to see him early on a Friday morning. He is engaged in his morning ablutions. She created a narrative we can believe because the characters in it are real people going about their lives, in their houses, talking to each other and to the narrator with an immediacy that counters denial.

I also read this narrative as one that transforms my grandmother from a victim into a survivor. Building on feminist theory about trauma and work on genocide and holocaust narratives, Flora A. Keshgegian argues that merely remembering suffering and trauma does not transform it. To go beyond victimization the victim must identify instances of resistance and agency. "Remembering resistance enables resilience, the ability of human being to go on living" (122). The narrative tension of Tutuian's story is provided by resistance to oppression with the climax in getting her son back and the rest of her family out of exile.

Tutuian's performance of this narrative, I would argue, also healed her trauma. Analyzing the use of stories from a therapeutic perspective, psychologists White and Epston, posit that stories give coherence to lives. Using Foucault's concept of a dominant narrative, they argue that psychological problems occur when there is a discrepancy between lived experience and the dominant narrative. Their patients' constructions of alternative stories, "enable them to perform new meanings, bringing with them desired possibilities . . ." (15) Quoting the work of anthropologist Bruner, they argue that the telling of life stories is performance.

It is in the performance of an expression that we re-experience it, re-live, re-create, re-tell, re-construct, and re-fashion our culture. The performance does not release a pre-existing meaning that lies dormant in the text . . . Rather the performance itself is constitutive (12).

It is through these stories and these performances, White and Epston maintain, that people "re-authorize" their lives³ (13).

Elmas Tutuian re-authored herself through her story of saving her son and surviving the genocide. She presents herself throughout the story as someone who defies submission, did what needed to be done, and did so without fear. Both her resistance to the Turks, and her performance of this narrative lifted her out of victimization. She became a survivor—a person with agency. While she is helped by others, she reiterates throughout that she is responsible for her son and that she and he both have rights. To the gendarmes she says, "He is my son. You cannot take him. He is mine." And even to the police commissioner she repeatedly says, "I have to save Ashot. I have to save him."

In addition to her defiance of the gendarmes, Tutuian also overcame Armenian patriarchal gender norms. She was not raised to take care of herself outside of the domestic sphere even in ordinary circumstances and, within the home, male dominance prevailed. While Elmas did not discuss her upbringing as a girl, she did say she had very little education and her marriage was arranged to a man whom she thought was too old for her. Yet, her story is one of taking enormous risks alone and standing up to men, those who literally had the power of life and death over her and her family. Elmas Tutuian re-storied herself as someone who could not be told what to do, could not be dominated, and was not afraid of behaving in a manner that could have resulted in her imprisonment, even in her death.

When I became a feminist I delighted in this story, but when I first heard it in 1953 when I was a young teenager, I wished she had not told it to me. Being ethnic was not interesting even in my Middle Eastern neighborhood in New York City. I was desperate to do whatever I could to reshape my family. I did not want to hear what my grandmother told me, and when she sat back at the end of her tale and said "Yavroos,⁴ now I want you to tell the world" I had no intention of telling anyone. I had

³ Arthur W. Frank also addresses the central significance in restorying for people who develop chronic illnesses in *The Wounded Storyteller: Body, Illness and Ethics* (1995).

heard this story merely as one of Armenians as a despised minority, and tried to do what I could to forget it, and in some ways that was easy. Like many other families of survivors no one else in either my immediate or extended family talked about the genocide, and no one in the larger culture acknowledged it or even that Armenians existed. But my grandmother's story would not go away. It lay in my psyche, waiting it seemed, until I was ready to look at it again. That time came in the 1970's when I was deeply involved in the women's movement. Repulsed by theories of women as unable to resist a totalizing patriarchy, I realized that even in her extreme circumstances, my grandmother did not allow herself to be victimized and that she may have been my first model of a strong woman. I learned, too, about the utter complexity of women's lives since it was also my grandmother who taught me bitter lessons about male preference. When I heard her story again, I heard not only what had been done to her but also how she resisted, survived, saved her family, and defied the Turks.

That reading stayed with me for another twenty years. I learned more about the Armenian genocide, other genocides and their psychological aftermaths, undertook research on Armenian American women, lectured and ran groups in the Armenian American community, and wrote my memoir, *Lion Woman's Legacy*, with my grandmother's story as a major theme. But it would be years again before I realized that despite knowing all that I did about the genocide, I had accepted my grandmother's story at face value. That realization came to me suddenly during a discussion with a colleague about the various methods employed by the Turkish government to kill masses of people and attempts to destroy a culture. I suddenly became aware that my grandmother's story was a limited version of what she must have witnessed. She did not tell me about what she must have seen or known about what was happening around her. Elmas Tutuian told the story of a woman saving her son and the rest of her family. What purpose did her choices serve?

Literary scholar Tina Campt argues that what is not said is as important as what is said. "Certain silences in the in the narratives of Afro-Germans can . . . be read paradoxically as 'loud' articulations and forms of indirect speech that reveal important levels of submerged meanings." (17). Silences then, "speak" (18). Rather than pathologizing these silences, Campt argues that these elisions were one way Afro-Germans negotiated the contradictions of being Germans by birth, but aliens by race—the "other within."

Tutuian's silences, once noticed, become very loud indeed. Mass killing during genocides are often public events serving to terrorize and intimidate the targeted populations, and Turkey was no exception. Elmas and her family were the last to leave Kastamonu, a city in which more than 13,000 Armenians lived. What did she hear about the fate of her neighbors? The first time she told me her story, I remember her saying that they were lucky since the gendarme that took them to the interior was a kind man. What was the standard by which she judged his behavior?

⁴ An Armenian term of endearment.

Elmas' story does not focus on the horrors of the genocide. The narrative she constructs is of a woman who confronts her oppressors, manages to outwit them, and saves her family. Through her story of survival, she faces down victimization. She constructed strong walls around the pain of the horror she experienced by focusing on her courage and triumph. She made meaning of her experience through her particular version of the genocide, and as James Young argues, all stories are not only valid, but they change the post-genocide world by making their particular sense of it.

My grandmother first told me her story after ritualistically preparing me to hear it. She charged me with telling the world about a genocide that was and continues to be denied. As much as I ran from it, tried to deny it, repress it, her story changed me. Her choice to tell me about her refusal to accept Turks' authority over her impacted my own sense of agency, as a woman and as an ethnic minority. In a variety of ways, since my second hearing of Elmas' story, I have been "telling the world" about the Armenian genocide. And the more I become my own agent and a resister of oppression, the more her story grows and lives in me.

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lifelines: matrilineal narratives, memory and identity

Hourig Attarian¹

Working with autobiographical art-based methodologies has led me to an exploration, through narrative inquiry, of the life stories of mothers, daughters and granddaughters. My research looks at matrilineal autobiographical narratives as they appear in the contexts of family stories and memories. The term matrilineal is taken here in a broader sense, not a strict biological one. Anchored in the blurred genre of life story, autobiography and autoethnography, my work is informed by the feminist scholarship of Ruth Behar, Helene Cixous, Lorri Nielson, Edith Sizoo, and Liz Stanley among others. My self-study traces the stories of a collective of five women of a common Armenian heritage, who represent various generational, homeland, and diasporic portraits and experiences.

My writing is also about the exploration of pain. Charting the narratives of my participants and myself, inevitably meant dealing with stories of inherited exile, dispossession, loss, trauma, and survival. We all carry the burden of being descendants of genocide survivors that has left deep scars, which we still collectively and individually struggle to reconcile. The re-construction and re-telling of our generational matrilineal autobiographical narratives is also an attempt at healing and coming to terms with the often indescribable experiences of our grandparents' or great grandparents' generation. In exploring these narratives, I engage in self-reflexivity as we construct, re-construct, re-present our narratives and their impact on our constructions and negotiations of self and identity.

I use the family album metaphor as a foundation for my narrative framework and weave together my research participants' and my autobiographical reconstructions through the intertwined stories of memory, trauma, and displacement. The self-reflexive nature of our multilayered autobiographical narratives reconnects our selves with our pasts. Within a diasporic frame, I use the narratives as interpretive tools to explore the effects of multigenerational diasporic experiences on constructions of identity and agency.

The act of narrating, telling, and re-telling the stories of our life experiences carries a deep interpretative stance. We consciously refine and redefine our identities

¹ Hourig Attarian completed her PhD at the Faculty of Education, McGill University.

through storying ourselves, since it is an essential way of understanding ourselves, our actions and reactions within a historical and social context. Taking Clandinin and Connelly's perspective that "narrative thinking is a key form of experience and a key way of writing and thinking about it" (2000: 18), I see the stories I narrate and retell as "ways of expressing and building personal identity and agency" (Squire, Andrews and Tamboukou 2008: 6).

In our self-reflexive process as researchers, translation is a pervasive metaphor we engage with. Apart from the literal juggling between languages and worldviews we encounter in our daily lives, the challenge lies in finding a language to describe our experiences without fragmentation. As Eva Hoffman writes "it's only when I retell my whole story, back to the beginning onward, in one language, that I can reconcile the voices within me with each other; it is only then that the person who judges the voices and tells the stories begins to emerge" (1990: 272). I live in translation often as an (immigrant) (diasporan) woman, who aspires to change, create, learn, teach. In so many instances, the language I speak is a foreign "other," even in my own community.

"Mother/tongue" signifies for me both speaking with the tongue of the mother and speaking to the tongue of the mother. I have felt that sometimes there is a dichotomy between the two. Certainly, for a long time, I have also faced the dilemma of keeping my loyalty to both, while being careful at the same time not to lose my autobiographical voice in the process. My own mother tongue, Armenian, which is also my first language, lies solidly at the cornerstone of my identity. Yet, I also inhabit a duality of self and voice manifested in the two lived languages in my life, English and Armenian. My *self* that is the sum of my lived experiences in Armenian, is revealed through my *voice*, which often theorizes these experiences in English. This convenient duality, while helping me craft my autobiography, often create a certain detachment in its process, to name and word the experience.

Mother tongue is *մայրենի լեզու* [*mayreni lezou*] in Armenian; [*lezou*] is tongue and [*mayreni*] is an adjectival form of mother, signifying an ancestral, inherited, transmitted aspect. Most often, *լեզու* [*lezou*] is dropped and we only use *մայրենի* [*mayreni*] to signify the concept of mother tongue, the marker of one's identity. In addition, even though in Armenian "homeland" is *հայրենիք* [*hayrenik'*], literally "fatherland", yet we also use *մայրենի երկիր* [*mayreni yerkir*] or *մայրենի հող* [*mayreni hogh*], literally "mother country/land" to signify it. In the same vein, the symbol of the homeland, appearing in myriad artistic and literary forms over the centuries, is Mother Armenia/ *Մայր Հայաստան* [*Mayr Hayastan*].

My reflections on the *mayreni*, apart from making that strong link between the matrilineal narratives of my family and my own maternal-mother tongue of my lived experiences, conceptually led me to another insight on how I voice my self in my autobiography.

In Armenian "autobiography" can be both *ինքնակենսագրություն* [*ink'nakensagroutian*] and *ինքնակենսապատում* [*ink'nakensapatoum*]. While the former is "writing the life of the self", in a literal translation of the word "autobiography"; the second word translates as "telling the story of the life of the self." This is a concept I inhabit easily, with its resonance of life history/story. Telling the story of the life of my self is giving birth to my voice and is about writing myself as a woman. The concept of the mother/tongue, my new found *մայրենի* [*mayreni*], thus becomes a holistic approach to look at both perspectives of speaking with and to the tongue of the mother as complimentary positionalities, rather than dichotomous ones. This is how the stories of mothers, daughters and granddaughters I recount become an attempt to heal, to come to terms with the memories of loss and dispossession that are strewn across the matrilineal lifepath of my family.

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Heritage Like Money Then: Exaptation at the Margins, Risk to Reward Where the Word Meets Itself

Arpine Konyalian Grener¹

To have been colonized by the Eastern for some six hundred years, to have helped shape the Eastern only to be dismantled and dispersed by it, dispersed into land (in turn) colonized by the Western. What is identity then? What is and towards whom does one feel loyalty?

*meaning to dream to lost object to gaze
theme of human so unlikely but corpse still
baring mother seed on a still point = confusion*

I am an Armenian-American from Beirut, Lebanon where a variety of religions, languages and nationalities coexist(ed) in a rare mixture of oriental simultaneity and occidental individualism. I have no mother tongue as my mother tongue has lost me. I implode within this loss, seeking the chaos sustaining the world of languages with a voice that has the body and place of an absent body, after a derivative of the past whereby the new would occur, time and history abolished because of what escapes or survives the disintegration of experience.

As the daughter of orphaned parents, I experience identity like a self consuming artifact that hopes to deliver cross-cultural connections as it curates itself, the curating hopefully endorsing the commonality of being human as a continuous and inclusive enterprise rather than a dichotomous or hierarchical one, the longing to connect just because we're human overshadowing the politic of the human.

*the sun declares a bright zero and you gatekeeper
rapture around the bars around you
a father's house lacking threshold*

big huge eyes

balancing the need for obscurity
against the need for validity

¹ Research scientist and poet.

These huge eyes face a contingency much like that faced by a 'word' meeting itself on the page or out of someone's vocal chords. Celebrating this contingency without augmenting or being paralyzed by it is what shapes identity. One keeps the eyes open to the past, shares its glory and shame because, as human, one is the beneficiary of both. Hence identity's pluralistic nature --

*sliding down a story you know
of counter and inter questions*

*a multi part message
in mime format*

a happening on pavement I pleasure in

When the pluralistic nature of identity is denied, the ensuing hegemonic monolith exacerbates the distance between cultures, creates pressure, anger, tragedies, scapegoat. To create homogeneity is to avoid risk, while risk is the very essence of life. No erasure will provide, as when it comes to humanity, one man's carnal is another's spiritual, outer is inner, light is dark, profane is sacred. Doubt, debate, disagreement and dissension expand and contract, overlay and mold. Side by side, near to far, parallel or implied, identities evolve as perception works with vision, consciousness and memory, connections develop, and the mutuality thereof reshapes the historical and the collective.
the last colony's eradicated

sing do not recite

*the pull of the sun endorses heart
liturgy alternates the hour
the conditional stills*

*inward and outward the techne
between being and charity
parrhesic in nature*

I had never met a Turk until I was 40 years old, then I wrote about her. Lale was her name, and one day she told me how she had silenced herself when an Armenian gas station attendant in Northern California asked her if she was Armenian, having seen her vehicle license plate, arac, her last name. That hollow feeling again. Ah the titular! The archness and brickness of categories! They validate and collapse. Turkish American Ozlem Ozgur's painting titled, Silence is different from Arab American Nida Sinnokrot's documentary, Palestine Blues, and different from New York-based Renee Nikita's Sarcophagus. Yet all relate to each other because of the human.

Because this therefore that is ongoing, who what where when why how regardless. As I contextualize my self and the other, I am reminded that there are

no protagonists, antagonists or narrators, only participants. That is where poetic engagement occurs with ethics, politics, spirituality, and aesthetics. It is apocalyptic in nature, it is also a natural state of being, the Heisenberg Principle and maya, Higgs' neutral non-zero and maya. Like dim sum, a weekend gathering of kindred folk tasting a little something to touch the heart, to your heart's content, like mezza. Identity belongs to such open-ended evolutionary terrain of ethnic, cultural and socio-political identities melting away the insistence, the maximizing and minimizing, re-forming mindsets through a humanizing that focuses on the impermanence and insignificance of all things human, all things except the need to connect, just because --

*memory feeds a hydraulic limb
fact to symbol gyrate*

do I need an interface?

*pieces of human that I am
software software please*

*touch this heart perk
this essential*

Identity, like money, is utilized then. Commemoration is needed no more. We are response able, after responsible choices, not after burden or fault or blame or praise. We have no 'truth' but a place to stand, a place of grace we give ourselves. We have power, elastic and interwoven. Then again, how do we come in? Lucifer, bringer of light, enlighten us to merge what is scholarly with what is literally with what is human. Lawrence Lessig's Remix. Otherwise, ceremony after ceremony's carried out to no avail, everyday distraction from pain. We huddle and mimic, a people, a person, a country, a nation, with no connection, no vision but that of stagnation and preservation. Preservation of what, pray!

*at times captured on canvas or film
alliterating our moans*

*because we wished to make a point in our minds
about staves from Turkish knives
and gold*

These challenges seemed insurmountable to the Armenian for centuries. No one could hear us the way we needed to be heard. We also could not hear ourselves. I left Beirut because I wanted to get away from not being heard, and from the bourgeoisie. What good is an affluent society when all it does is perpetuate more of the same, more consumption, more ethnically-cemented organizations that cannot historically and presently define a future in which we exist, not as we have existed, but differently, not through futile outbursts, but passionate about curating ourselves vis-a-vis the rest of the world for years to come. I once called myself an amorphous glob of pitch, other times, confused Jerusalem. I addressed Armenian

identity as a web in space of triangles reaching out against themselves. I would have liked that to be a dance instead, Armenians dancing with pieces of identity, going forward, exapting. No caricatures of self, false labor, asthmatic, titles all around --

well documented wet

*where the railing matched horizon and I wept
because I saw it*

*I saw those well documented Sundays
rising for rehearsal to a prelude*

*the missing crack ditched somewhere
hardwood and dry rot and later*

*bungled into a statement about
the homeless the hungry*

and I a thorn in your lap

*an empty lap that's all
an accident so –*

I ran away to the pines

*after a new found hammock's tune
dim under light and guarded so*

*it only pokes when you un-camp
an equivalent*

And so it is with a well documented wetness. One runs away to the pines, after a new found hammock's tune because a shameful complicity is enacted when lack of identity further presses reality into signification. As an Armenian American poet, I attempt to undo this process by constructing (not describing) a space at the edge of meaning whereby identity is released back to its neutral non-zero field. So, what is given stands ground, prevails, no solving or re-solving or dis-solving but revelations - complementary or dissonant, outer and inner, polluted or pure. We have a choice to rename re-pair re-use our heritage without adhering to it. We are both artist and canvas, I say, heeding the plasticity and exuberance of intentionality.

We, naked, rigid, confused, hurting, shamed and ashamed, insecure, but not weak. We, haunted by ourselves, feeling singular at all points in history, detached and attached to an ancestry. We have consumed lack, cushioned in a foundation of lack, mostly living in others' lands while seeking our land, speaking others' languages while boasting about our own. Is the Genocide our unheimlich we are accustomed to, or has it somehow activated the possibility of a new identity that represses the old to

express the new? Here, I am reminded of the FOXP2 language gene in humans, birds, and some other animals. The gene is said to be activated in order to repress certain other genes so as to develop sound, song, language. Shall we look for that new song, that new language?

Identity is never given, received or attained. It just is. We cannot survive it. While mutually exclusive states create conflict, opening hearts and minds to explore shared and intersecting pasts reconciles Ranciere's perception of 'the regime of perception in society' with Soltau's 'stitches.' Purity at large, parts missing, interfaces, iterative and locative. Lesions come from visions too, and lesions have visions. Greatcoat where are you, with a telling enchantée, I nod at you. For as one experiences the opaqueness of reality, one moves further into the realm of its antennae. Dualities do not alter the possibility of harmony there. Does absence increase presence? Is union unveiled by separation?

*it was a gun – a day – an ana baba gun day
because of some dissertation to connect
to break down signs that do not
at the same time help build
rehab retail*

simulations

*theory we all are amado mio
they left we stayed*

*where lines meet a corner delivers notion
facing dawn to salute its jet black
thought reversed in the heart*

*my lens against your compassion
so many pieces the color of self*

l'histoire de retrouvailles

*things like that don't just happen dearest
ana baba family & relatives all*

*a yes and no for a nation
under passage*

gunlar ve gunlar the road

bill me for the need

*combing combing
re membering*

our backs to the street

What transforms us will always be the expression of feeling and not the intellectualization of it, the remembering of our power and limitations, our diversities and commonalities, subsequently and increasingly losing identity to a pure, raw, abstract, hyper-identity of sorts, and I, barefoot by the tracks of a multicultural wind. And where does wind come from? *Hawa* = wind = love in Arabic, and *Yahwa* = God = He loves.

Here's a fluidity of culture, a site of conscience, an event, *cherchent, changent*, Bergson's *souvenir du present*. What we really want, that something new, at the edge. We human expats, nomads, exapting, without con ceit con coct con jecture con cording cordance, hearing listening responding con templative, con vivencia. Identity and authenticity dwell within this uncertainty which is not historically conditioned.

you and me computationally irreducible
the sun's epinoia I am glad to tell
the kings the queens blanked

Here is exaptation = expanded adaptation, an evolutionary concept, quality and generosity driven. It heralds evolving through adapting but also through active and conscious will and effort. "All unions are fake until they are constructed", said Homi Bhabha. One inhabits and celebrates one's strange-ness without the singularity of the short lived 'i', the person, the nation, the word, the electron destined for chaos. Here is receptive elegance, swirls and layers of Milosz Forman's 'floating platform', an otherwise unknown but hopeful future modulating over trans-national territories, driven but not bound by history and heritage. Logos that binds, gathers, relates without entrapment, moving onward, taking the ghosts of other possibilities along. A translation is occurring at the moment of enunciation as the 'word' meets itself, a re-articulation or negotiation has been made at the edges of meaning, difference has been embraced. Uncertainty is operative, so is solidarity.

Then there is hope. It is the hope of the witness whose integrity is integral to generating hope, hope to make the river newly. No more plaster for cracks, no fuss, no silence, no stutters either. Celan reads, "... *There are roses in the house .. where they beat my father and mother to death: what bloomed there, what blooms there?*"

Part II Gender, Ethnicity and History

Part II Gender, Ethnicity and History

A Valediction to the “Interdiction of Mourning” of World War I; or, Walking with Halide Edib through Ambiguous Terrains beyond the Catastrophic Divide Hülya Adak¹

The denial of the events of 1915-1916 by the Turkish state and by Turkish society, entailed, according to some scholars, the “interdiction of mourning” the victims. Marc Nichanian locates the same problematic in relation to the pogroms of 1895 and 1909: “before the genocidal violence swept over the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire during World War I, collective murder imposed on the collective psyche of the victims a generalized interdiction of mourning.” (Nichanian, “Catastrophic Mourning,” 99-100) The destruction of the “archive” of documents relating to World War I to conceal the activities of the Special Organization and the Committee of Union and Progress, renders history, according to Marc Nichanian, “perfectly powerless” as a discipline. (Nichanian, *Writers*; 14, Needless to add, not all documents have been destroyed, see Akçam, 179) As history is robbed of facts, the only “fact” that remains is “archival destruction.” Following Nichanian’s sophisticated argument that the “will to exterminate” entails not only massacring but destroying archives, obliterating memory, and interdicting mourning of the victims, I would like to proffer a different possibility for “(Turkish) history” that challenges the “hierarchization” of the “archive” and provides space for “collective mourning,” i.e. the possibility of transcending “national mourning.” An often-overlooked discursive space which could provide resources for scholars working on World War I, is what I would like to coin “public archives” of auto/biographical and fictional narratives. Literature (both auto/biographical and fictional sources) could serve history in two ways: first, crudely as historical evidence (or possibly “fact” or as alternative sources of “memory”), and second, as texts exploring sites of *unfulfilled* possibility and desire (utopia).

By questioning the assumption that all or most of Ottoman-Turkish testimonies serve as documents supporting the “Republican defensive narrative,” we will be able to analyze how these texts criticize the massacres, deportations, and forced conversions between 1910-1924, creating possibilities of mourning the victims of 1915-1916. In this article, I will argue that Halide Edib’s *Memoirs of* and *The Turkish Ordeal: Being the further memoirs of Halidé Edib* exemplify texts which, albeit contradictions and inconsistencies (affirming and challenging the “Republican defensive narrative”), provide space for “collective mourning.” Halide Edib’s

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biography illustrates many moments of resistance despite her proximity to Unionist circles and despite her role as national propagandist and soldier in the immediate aftermath of World War I.

Life Histories and Texts challenging the Republican Narrative: Halide Edib (1908-1928)

Halide Edib's life history and work illustrate that analyzing historical persons as biographical protagonists entails more complexity than an alliance with a side in the "perpetrator/victim" divide which only essentializes Turks/Muslims as perpetrators, those close to Unionist circles or even nationalists in opposition to the CUP as criminals/murderers, and dismisses historical complexity and change, the possibility of agency and resistance, and the possibilities of *writing* against (if not directly acting against) military and para-military violence.

As one of the first Muslim graduates of the American College for Girls, Halide Edib profited immensely from the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, becoming a journalist, social activist, and novelist. Embracing Turanism, Edib took part in the literary and cultural clubs known as Türk Yurdu (Turkish Homeland); and the pan-Turanistic organizations Türk Ocakları (Turkish Hearths) founded in 1911. (Adak, "Epic," x) Her literary, political and social work, the success of her novels, particularly Yeni Turan [New Turan] (1913) which proposed a utopia for the Unionists, brought her closer to Unionist leaders. According to a multitude of sources, Halide Edib is undeniably a nationalist siding with the Unionists between 1908-1913, but falling out of favor with Unionist policies with the advent of World War I. Despite her disagreement with Unionist policies, in 1916, she was engaged in educational work in Syria together with Cemal Paşa.

Between 1919-1922, Halide Edib acted as journalist, writer, editor, and war reporter to the national army under Mustafa Kemal. Her nationalism is delineated as a threat to the Allied Forces in an article in the New York Times published on March 20, 1920: The name of Halide Edib appears next after Mustafa Kemal and Rauf Bey, as Edib is described to be "the most prominent woman leader among the Turkish Nationalists" and "the best-known speaker and organizer in the Nationalist movement." Her ability to organize and address mass meetings is praised as causing the Turks to be "so inflamed [...] against alleged plans for the dismemberment of the country that the allied High Commissioners forbade further meetings." The British press describes her as "a firebrand and a dangerous agitator." ("Turk Nationalists," 1920)

But even if Edib were, in the words of M. Zekeria, "the soul of the Turkish Nationalist movement," "an ever-burning volcano, throwing flames of patriotism around her, stirring and stimulating revolt and enthusiasm in her readers and hearers," (Zekeria, 1922) does this type of "national sentiment" entail direct complicity in the Catastrophe? Armenian accounts of the 1920s respond in the affirmative. Only contemporary discussions of Halide Edib's biography have addressed her complicated and somewhat paradoxical stance regarding the

Catastrophe. For instance, in 2008, in the roundtable discussion entitled "Different Approaches to Halide Edib," Sima Aprahamian captures Edib in two contradictory moments. (Aprahamian, 2008) The first instance involves the turkification of Armenian orphans in the Aintoura orphanage, which Aprahamian infers from the caption of a photograph in The Lions of Marash by Stanley E. Kerr which reads "Halide Edib becomes directress of the orphanage for Armenian children." (Aprahamian, 2008) The second moment that Aprahamian captures is Halide Edib refusing to shake hands with Bahaettin Şakir whom she considers "a butcher." (The reference is from Falih Rifki Atay, Zeytindağı [Olive Mountain], 1981) Even though Sima Aprahamian's presentation begins by problematizing Edib's work and her stance in the Catastrophe, it ends by affirming that her novels Yeni Turan and Ateşten Gömlek monolithically embrace turkish nationalism advocated by the Young Turks (in the former novel) and the nationalist army (regarding the latter novel). (Aprahamian, 2008) Regarding Edib's involvement in the Aintoura orphanage, I personally believe more historical research is ahead of us to reach a conclusion as to Edib's particular role and mission. Armenian sources claim Edib was indubitably complicit in converting Armenian orphans, (Parseghian, 2006) Turkish sources (particularly male writers such as Yahya Kemal) mock Edib's "educational activities" altogether in Syria, depicting such activity as a waste of resources, wealth and energy rather than a conscious effort of "conversion" (and delineating this activity as only serving the purpose of confirming Cemal Paşa's military authority in Syria) (Kemal, 37); and lastly, Edib herself questions Cemal Paşa's "conversion policies" in Aintoura in her autobiographical account. According to Edib's Memoirs, Cemal Paşa's argument for "converting" Armenian orphanages was "lack of resources." Cemal Paşa claimed that he could have only filled Muslim orphanages with Muslim children but that, in the absence of places to put Armenian children in Armenian orphanages in Syria, he saved their lives by placing them in Muslim orphanages. Edib is quite disappointed and exclaims: "I will have nothing to do with such an orphanage." (Edib, Memoirs, 429) In sum, gathering further sources on Aintoura would contribute to drawing a more accurate portrait of Edib's activities in Syria.

In this paper, I would like to point out more resistance points in Halide Edib's biography and work than have been previously acknowledged without drawing a "black or white" portrait of her regarding 1915-1916. (See also Adak, "Ötekileştiremediğimiz," and Adak, "The protracted purging.") She is a historical figure in-between direct complicity in the massacres of Armenians and unquestionable resistance to it. On the one hand, she criticizes Talat Paşa's political stance in inflicting violence on the Ottoman Armenians, and libels Bahaettin Şakir a "murderer;" on the other, she collaborates with Cemal Paşa in Syria. Did she believe Cemal Paşa to be innocent of war crimes? Did she believe "conversion of Armenian orphans" to be innocuous in comparison to mass murder? Ergo, did she resist the latter and perhaps contribute to the former? Did she change her mind entirely regarding the Armenian deportations/massacres in the post-1916 period? Did her position as "propagandist" during the Greco-Turkish war blind her to the violent past of World War I? As a bilingual writer writing simultaneously in turkish and english and being published in Turkey, England, the United States, and India, did she write differently to different reading groups?

According to national sources, in March 1915, Halide Edib attended the meeting of “Bilgi Derneği” [Science Society], (Kemal, 32) organized by Talat Paşa to discuss strategies of defense if the battle of Dardanelles ended in defeat and the Allied armies entered Anatolia. Turkish intellectuals feared this defeat would incite the Greeks and Armenians of the Ottoman Empire against the Ottoman Army. (Kemal, 33) The meeting polarized into two camps fighting over feasible modes of action, the Unionists and those in the Unionist opposition who still considered themselves Turkists (Türkçü). According to Yahya Kemal’s account, this was not the first occasion when Halide Edib defined herself in the oppositional group to the Unionists. In that particular meeting, Yahya Kemal reports that the severe intellectual disagreement between Halide Edib and Ağaoğlu Ahmet culminated with Ağaoğlu shouting in a rather loud tone at Halide Edib that nobody who was not a Unionist could be a Turkist. (Kemal, 34) Further, Yahya Kemal reports that each time he socialized with Halide Edib, she was being followed by the Merkez-i Umumi. Kemal surmised that this was because of her intimate relationship with Armenians and Americans, speculating that she was probably not at all liked by the government. (Kemal, 37; Zekeria)

If her stance against militarism became ambiguous in the 1920s, this did not affect the opening section of *Ateşten Gömlek* which narrates how the foundational national myth of Turkey was founded upon “collective amnesia” regarding the Catastrophe and how in order to believe in the nation and fight in the national struggle of Turkey, one had to coerce oneself into forgetting and obliterating the violent past. In the excerpt below, the narrator is making reference particularly to the massacres of 1915-1916.

[...] I see that we did this not for others, but for ourselves. [...] Publications in French or English, let alone Europe, could not be published if it were to our praise. [...] When we told the world that they had committed worse crimes than the ones they threw at our faces as mistakes, murder, etc., we felt that the entire world had heard us and that it had thought us right. [...] Maybe the best part of this profoundly childish propaganda was this. In order to suffer the pains of the Independence Struggle, [...] initially, we needed to start from believing in ourselves. (Edib, *Ateşten Gömlek*, 15-17)

Reading the first chapter of *Ateşten Gömlek*, I cannot refrain from posing the following question: What foundational myth could be more cognizant of its self-construction?

After the “irrevocable split” from Mustafa Kemal in 1925, due mostly to Kemal’s establishment of a single-party regime, the closing of the opposition party (to which Halide Edib and her husband Dr. Adnan belonged), and the failure of the newly-assembled government to grant women political suffrage, which hindered Edib herself from being involved in politics, (Adak, “Epic,” 13) Edib and Dr. Adnan lived in exile for roughly 14 years. Both *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal* were written in exile, the first volume narrating Edib’s childhood, underscoring reminiscences of the “multi-ethnic, multi-religious character of the empire (1886-1910), and the different

phases of Turkish nationalism (1912-1918).” (Adak, “Epic,” 14) The second volume narrates the Independence Struggle (1919-1922) foreshadowing the early years of the Republic. *Memoirs of Halide Edib*, published in New York and London in 1926 and the second volume, entitled *The Turkish Ordeal: Being the further memoirs of Halide Edib*, was published two years later by the same house.

In the Turkish context, with few exceptions, these texts were not necessarily dealt with in their complex depiction of World War I and the tragic events of “1915-1916.” The issue of language posed a problem here. *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal* were translated into Turkish by Halide Edib herself as *Mor Salkımlı Ev* [The Wisteria-Covered House] in 1963, and *Türk’ün Ateşle İmtihanı* [The Turk’s Ordeal with Fire] in 1962. Turkish readers inquiring into some of the resistance points offered by Edib were to be disappointed since, in the Turkish version of *Memoirs*, i.e. *Mor Salkımlı Ev*, the chapter entitled “The World War, 1914-1916” was condensed to such an extent that the discussion of the causes of World War I and the CUP decision to enter the war, the discussion of academic works published in Europe giving European accounts of 1915-1916, and Edib’s own lecture against the massacres in 1915-1916 were entirely omitted.

Toward witnessing/inscribing 1915-1916 as “event”: Testifying to the “factuality of the fact.”

Edib’s most blatant expression of resistance is the speech she delivered in 1916 in the *Türk Ocağı* where she equated “national economics”—nationalizing the wealth of Empire, transferring wealth of the victims of the massacres in order to create a Turkish and Kurdish bourgeoisie—with the “Armenian question” and “bloodshed:”

In 1916 I spoke to a very large audience, mostly Unionists, in the *Türk Ojak* on the Armenian question and national economics. [...] I spoke with conviction against blood shed, which I believed would hurt those who indulge in it more than it hurt their victims. There were some seven hundred present. (Edib, *Memoirs*, 387; See also Kemal, “Siyasi,” 36)

Edib narrates how Unionists were quite disappointed in her speech and that as protest, they stopped paying visits to her house, and proposed to Talat Paşa that Edib be punished. The former refused. (Edib, *Memoirs*, 388) In Halide Edib’s private conversations with Talat Paşa, she seems to continue her tone of harsh criticism as she notes her surprise at Talat Paşa’s politeness: “[he] kept up his friendliness to the last” even “when I was bitterly criticizing his personal politics and the policy of his party.” (Edib, *Memoirs*, 349)

But perhaps the passage that articulates most emphatically not only the “factuality of the fact” but the “suffering” of the victims, the certainty of the identification of the “perpetrators” as the Unionists and Talat Paşa-as-lead in particular, and the fact that “it” (the event) is infinitely, indescribably “immoral” is the monologue of Talat Paşa uttered in response to Halide Edib’s criticism of the Armenian deportations and massacres:

There are two factors which lead man to the extermination of his kind: the principles advocated by the idealists, and the material interest which the consequences of doing so afford certain classes.

The idealists are the more dangerous, for one is obliged to respect them even if one cannot agree with them. Talaat was of that kind. I saw Talat very rarely after the Armenian deportations. I remember well one day when he nearly lost his temper in discussing the question and said in a severe tone: "Look here, Halide Hanım. I have a heart as good as yours, and it keeps me awake at night to think of the human suffering. But that is a personal thing, and I am here on this earth to think of my people and not of my sensibilities. If a Macedonian or Armenian leader gets the chance and the excuse he never neglects it. There was an equal number of Turks and Moslems massacred during the Balkan war, yet the world kept a criminal silence. I have the conviction that as long as a nation does the best for its own interests, and succeeds, the world admires it and thinks it moral. I am ready to die for what I have done, and I know that I shall die for it. (Edib, *Memoirs*, 387)

From the very first sentence, it is very clear that we are talking about "extermination," and that even if we are talking about "idealists," the narrator, the readers ("we"), etc. cannot "agree with them." Already, we are in disagreement with Talat Paşa and those who "exterminate" their kind. Already, Talat Paşa "nearly lost his temper," lost control, displaying "severity in tone," and already we are in the zone beyond "rationality" and reason. In this domineering tone, Talat Paşa attempts (and perhaps quite "unconvincingly") to persuade Halide Edib and thereby, "us," the readers that "he has a heart as good as "ours" and a "conscience" which "keeps him awake at night" thinking of the "human suffering." I think it is rather significant that Talat Paşa himself has admitted to "the human suffering" as undeniable, inescapable, and concrete fact. The Macedonian or Armenian leader never got the opportunities that Talat Paşa himself enjoyed to execute "it," the "happening," the "event," the confirmation of the "massacres" since the numbers of these "massacres" (of the Armenians) equal those of the Turks and Moslems during the Balkan War. "It" was done out of "national interests," selfishly, egoistically, and "immorally." It is only if there is victory in war, then can the nation convince the world (with the discourse of the superior, the conqueror, the glorious) that it is "moral." Here Talat Paşa seems to have mapped out what Benjamin will call "history," or the document of the victors. (Benjamin, 221) Till then, till the ultimate "lie" of morality can be disclosed, "we," like the European powers during the Balkan Wars, must keep a "criminal silence." Crushed under the weight of his crimes, Talat Paşa acknowledges he is ready to die for "it" and knows that he will die for "it." (And, in the last line of this passage, Edib admits that in 1922, Talat Paşa is assassinated by an Armenian for "it.") In the absence of documents which prove Unionist complicity in the events of 1915-1916, this passage can serve as a concise supplement.

From "national monument" to literature beyond the "genocidal divide":

*The two months from September to November 1916, were to me the most painful during the war. I was in utter despair; the great calamity and hopeless misery which overwhelmed my country seemed to be everlasting. The war seemed endless and human suffering unlimited. I was unable to write a line, and if there had been a monastic life for women in Islam I should have entered it without hesitation. (Edib, *Memoirs*, 431)*

If studied as "monuments," as texts in their own right, and in their own complexities, not all Turkish egodocuments serve the "seamless" Turkish public archive of "non-event." Rather, they serve as "mausoleums" for the losses on the Turkish side and also on the Armenian, Kurdish, Greek sides. I am not necessarily talking about a plethora of egodocuments, I might be referring to a minority of texts which include Halide Edib's *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal*. By witnessing and inscribing the Catastrophe-as-event, exhibiting the "will to annihilate" on the part of the perpetrators, criticizing modes of worshipping "national heroes," and challenging political pan-Turanism, *Memoirs* (in particular) manifests multiple points of resistance to the "Republican narrative of defensiveness." Edib's own inability to write or represent the horror she witnessed in 1915-1916 (refer to the quotation above) echoes Zabel Essayan's delineation of the Catastrophe as "infinitely indescribable, undefinable, and incomprehensible." (Nichanian, "Catastrophic Mourning," 115) The infinity of the Catastrophe leads a prolific writer such as Edib to drop the pen for a period of two years (1916-1917). Edib and Essayan meet where language ends.

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Unraveling Layers of Gendered Silencing: Converted Armenian Survivors of 1915

Ayşe Gül Altınay¹

An unknown number of Armenians (some as babies or small children) survived the deportations and massacres of 1915 as adopted daughters and sons of Muslim families. Fewer others became wives and, in exceptional cases, husbands. While some of these survivors (particularly young men) re-united with their families or relatives in later years, or were taken into orphanages by missionaries and relief workers, many others lived the rest of their lives as “Muslims,” taking on Turkish, Kurdish, or Arabic names.

In recent years, the stories of these survivors have become publicly visible through memoirs, novels, and historical works in Turkey.² This new visibility raises questions about the absence of this particular group of survivors in Armenian, Turkish, Kurdish, as well as international scholarly and popular histories of the Armenian genocide.³ Simply put, the stories of these survivors have been silenced by all historiographies, either in the form of total erasure or of serious trivialization.⁴ This presentation explores the layers of gendered silencing on converted Armenians since 1915.⁵

Why is it that the vast body of the literature on the deportations and massacres of Armenians in 1915 has been so silent about converted Armenian survivors? One can identify three possible reasons for this silence: 1) patriarchal thinking; 2) the prevalence of ethnicist/racist understandings of the nation; 3) the politics of “genocide recognition” vs. “genocide denial.”

Layers of Silencing

The same year that Cynthia Enloe was publishing her insightful analysis that “nationalism has typically sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized

¹ Altınay and Çetin 2009, Atnur 2005, Başyurt 2006, Can 1991, Çetin 2004 and 2008, Karakişla 1999, Oran 2005, Özbay 2003, Palalı 2005, Şafak 2006 and 2007, Yalçın 2005, Özdem 2007, Tekin 2008.

² For an important contribution to the history of Armenian conversion into Islam before 1915, see Deringil 2009.

³ For a discussion of silencing through “total erasure” and “trivialization,” see Trouillot 1995.

⁴ This presentation is based on our joint work with Yektan Türkyılmaz. For a longer and more detailed discussion, see Altınay and Türkyılmaz 2011.

⁵ This presentation of silencing through “total erasure” and “trivialization,” see Trouillot 1995.

humiliation, and masculinized hope” (Enloe 1989:44), a feminist Armenian scholar, Eliz Sanasarian was problematizing the gendered nature of the scholarship on the Armenian genocide: “Despite a wealth of literature on the Armenian genocide,” she wrote, “little research has been done on women who made up the mass of the deportees. The significance of gender differences in the genocidal process has been neither empirically conceptualized nor systematically analyzed” (Sanasarian 1989:449). According to Sanasarian, Armenian women are not only absent in the genocide literature, but also in post-genocide analyses of Armenian life. The forced marriages of women survivors with strangers (sometimes in the form of “mail-order brides”) and the gendered sufferings of women in those marriages and elsewhere have been understudied in Armenian scholarship.⁶

Not taking women’s experiences seriously, the scholarship on the Armenian catastrophe of 1915 typically treats women as undifferentiated victims, as opposed to historical actors. Women (as well as children) are defined through the “men” who “own” them. In both Turkish and Armenian, the term that is most frequently used for women without a man to claim them is “sahipsiz/anter” (both terms translate literally as “without an owner”). Not surprisingly, women are often discussed in the same sentence as “property” and are often defined as either “our women” or “their women,” underscoring the construction of women as commodity (under patriarchal ownership).

In this framework, “women and children” often fall under the same category, resonating with Cynthia Enloe’s (1990) critique of militarized discourses of national honour that place “womenandchildren” (as one entity) under the custody of men. In patriarchal worldview, “womenandchildren” are passive beings in need of male protection and guidance, without which they become “sahipsiz/anter” (one who is without an owner).

Sanasarian argues that the hegemonic silence in Armenian scholarship on the converted women Armenian survivors of genocide is a silence marked by patriarchal assumptions (also see Tachjian 2009). The silence in Turkish nationalist historiography can also be explained partially by the patriarchal approach to women and nation that Sanasarian identifies. When national identity is constructed around patrilineage, the background of women as mothers or wives lose their significance. From this perspective, the sahipsiz Armenian women become “our” women through marriage and Islamization.

Yet, a much stronger reason in the Turkish silence is likely to be general policy of silencing 1915 altogether. As Müge Göçek (2006) argues, what marks the Turkish nationalist narrative is its “defensiveness,” which means that all production of knowledge on 1915 becomes fixated on negating Armenian claims of genocide.

⁶ For recent works on the workings of gender in the genocidal process, see Miller and Miller 1993; Smith 1994; Sarafian 2001; Derderian 2005; Tachjian 2009; It is interesting to note that the main source for the growing Armenian scholarship on Islamized Armenians is the book *My Grandmother* by Fethiye Çetin (along with other examples of this literature in Turkey). See Peroomian 2008; Melkonyan 2010.

This general policy has played itself out in the background of the hegemonic nationalist narrative that constructs the Turkish nation as a primordial, homogeneous entity defined through Turkishness and Sunni Islam. Until recently, the discussion of any “difference” from the Turkish-Sunni-Muslim norm had been silenced in various degrees. In this background, voicing Armenian heritage or affinity would have been considered risky. Therefore, it is possible to argue that ethnicist (and at times racist) state nationalism is the major source of the silence on Armenian converts in Turkish historiography. Not surprisingly, it is with the advance of what Müge Göçek (2006) calls the “postnationalist critical narrative” regarding 1915 that the silence on Armenian grandparents is being broken.

Armenian scholarship has suffered from ethnicist (and at times racist) nationalism as well. Vahakn Dadrian, for instance, writes extensively about the “cultural and subcultural components of massacre,” using such phrases as “a typical, traditional Turkish massacre” (Dadrian 2004 [1995]:159). Throughout the literature, it is commonplace to read references to the “Turkish genocide of the Armenians and the Nazi Genocide of the Jews.”⁷ Not only do such references identify the Ottoman State as a “Turkish state,” but they also place the blame on an “ethnic/national group” identified as “Turkish” (while putting the blame of the Holocaust on a party/ideology). This primordialist nationalist framework shares its basic assumptions with orthodox Turkish nationalism.

This perspective has made it difficult to conduct research on converted Armenian survivors also because such research necessitates looking into the Muslim “rescuers” of surviving Armenians (at least in some of the cases), as well as their Muslim adopted fathers or husbands. When combined with the hegemonic politics of genocide recognition, these difficulties may have prevented researchers from approaching this issue altogether. Discussing the difficulties of doing research on “rescuers,” Sanasarian argues that “the continuous official denial of the 1915 genocide blurs the lines between past and present and prevents the healing process of bleeding wounds to even begin. This political decision deeply impacts on the researchers’ work. An Armenian scholar raising the issue might invite condemnation from the diaspora and other scholars for giving too much importance to the few Turks at the expense of the million-and-a-half massacred Armenians” (Sanasarian 1989:458).⁸

What Sanasarian does not mention here is the pressure to consider the converted Armenian women (and children) survivors of the deportations and massacres as part of the “million-and-a-half massacred.” Because “genocide” is defined through the eradication of “a nation as such,” the women and children who

⁷ Peter Balakian (2003:xviii) quotes Professor Lipstadt of Emory University for having written: “genocide – whether that of the Turks against Armenians, or the Nazis against Jews.” Balakian himself uses similar terminology in a 2005 newspaper article: “the Turkish extermination of the Armenians and the Nazi extermination of the Jews” (Boston Globe, December 4, 2005). Another example is Leo Kuper’s (1986) chapter titled “The Turkish Genocide of the Armenians.”

⁸ One notable exception to this gap in the literature is Richard Hovannisian’s (1992) study on “altruism” based on the oral history narratives of survivors in California.

stay behind as Muslim converts appear as good as “dead.” Indeed, in many accounts, they are openly discussed as symbols of the “eradication” or “disappearance” of the Armenian nation.

“...tens of thousands of women were abducted into harems or Muslim families, and tens of thousands of children were taken into families and converted to Islam, and in this manner of forced conversion another segment of the Armenian population was eradicated.” (Balakian 2003:180)

This closure, defined by the framework of “genocide,” has prevented researchers from expressing curiosity regarding the particular stories of converted women and children survivors.

I should add a disclaimer here: I am not arguing that forced adoption of children or forced conversions are not “genocidal policies”; they are. What I am trying to problematize in this presentation is the disinterest in the lives and stories of these survivors because they are regarded as part of the “eradicated nation.” These survivors are eradicated once again through this silence.

For Turkish historiography, too, the politics of genocide recognition/denial has been central to the analysis of 1915 and its survivors. One of the main characteristics of the Turkish nationalist historiography of 1915 is its claim that the Ottoman government could not be held responsible for the deaths of Armenians (who mostly died of epidemics, climatic conditions, or the attacks of bandits on the road). Similarly, a recent work on the fate of converted Armenian women and children by historian İbrahim Ethem Atnur is built around the argument that while conversion of some Armenian women and children into Islam was a historical fact, the Ottoman state was not practicing a systematic policy of assimilation. Instead, he tries to show that the Ottoman government was taking painstaking measures to prevent such assimilation: “It is unthinkable that the Ottoman Government was engaged in a general assimilation by marrying *sahipsiz* girls and women” (Atnur 2005:74); “A government that had as its aim the Islamization of all orphan Armenian children would not have given these children to missionaries or to Armenian-controlled orphanages, as in the case of Şam [Damascus]” (Atnur 2005-67). Atnur’s “defense” against the thesis of “assimilation” reveals an anxiety that the issue of converted Armenians contributes to claims that *tehcir* was a genocidal act. Indeed, Article 2 of the United Nations Convention of Genocide refers in paragraph (e) to the forcible transfer of children from the group to another group as a genocidal act.

Conclusion

Various sources put the number of converted Armenian survivors at 200,000, although there is no way of verifying the exact number. If this number is accurate, we would be talking about several million Muslims in Turkey being in some way affiliated (as children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and so on) with converted Armenian survivors. Yet, sheer numbers are not enough to disturb deep nationalist silences. Under the weight of patriarchal and nationalist approaches that have been defined

in the dichotomy of “genocide recognition” vs. “genocide denial,” the stories of the converted women and children survivors of the massacres of 1915 have been buried in deep silence for almost 90 years.

What are the dynamics behind the recent upsurge in the popular and academic literature on these survivors? One can argue that Turkey has been going through a major transformation in the past decade. From militarism to homophobia, violence against women to rights of religious and ethnic minorities, a number of “taboo” issues have become dynamic sites of academic and political debate. More specifically, the advance of what Göçek calls “post-nationalist critical narratives” in regard to the Armenian deportations and massacres has significantly enlarged and enriched the debate on 1915.⁹

The growing feminist critique of patriarchal structures and mindsets, and its significant contribution to “taking women’s lives seriously,” as well as the growing interest in questions of “identity” in general, have contributed to opening a space for exploring the fate of converted Armenian women and children.¹⁰ The positive effects of reforms connected to the EU accession process in allowing expanded scope for the freedom of conscience and expression, and the temporal distance between the survivors and those who are voicing their experiences (mostly grandchildren) are additional factors behind this recent upsurge of interest.

Yet, this increasing interest in the stories of converted survivors is also marked by growing “anxieties” over the nature of “national identity.” For instance, Erhan Başyurt, a journalist who has written a book titled *Ermeni Evlatlıklar: Saklı Kalmış Hayatlar* (Armenian Adoptees: Hidden Lives, 2006), on the one hand, emphasizes the “human aspect” of the issue, while simultaneously dedicating a significant portion of his book to an analysis of “hidden Armenians” in “terrorist organizations” such as PKK and TIKKO. İrfan Palalı published his book (on his converted grandmother) in the form of a “novel,” changing people’s names in order to address the familial anxieties over the public unsilencing of his grandmother’s story. These anxieties have taken more tragic forms, most notably the assassination of Hrant Dink in 2007.

One could argue that Turkey is struggling with what Paul Gilroy calls “postcolonial melancholia”, in the form of what I would call “postnational melancholia” marked by the loss of a fantasy of homogeneity and omnipotence. In such situations,

⁹ For the earliest examples of the alternative narrative on 1915, see Akçam 1992 and 1999. Since 2000, besides the proliferation of books (including many translated works) on 1915, the interviews given by historians such as Halil Berktaş in Turkish newspapers and periodicals (see Düzel’s interview with Halil Berktaş, *Radikal*, Oct. 9, 2000; also Berktaş 2004), the organization of a multitude of conferences and lecture series including the groundbreaking conference, “Ottoman Armenians during the demise of the Empire: Responsible Scholarship and Issues of Democracy” have contributed significantly to enabling interactions between scholars and non-academics and the process of making cutting-edge scholarship on World War I publicly accessible. In December 2008, a group of scholars announced the website under the heading “I apologize,” in an attempt to collect signatures from citizens of Turkey apologizing for the Catastrophe of 1915 and empathizing with the pain of our Armenian brothers and sisters.” In the scope of one year, despite defamation campaigns against the website, 30, 474 people publicly apologized (see www.ozurdiliyoruz.com) .

¹⁰ It is quite telling that the most radical works in this growing field have been written by woman writers (Fethiye Çetin and Elif Şafak).

Gilroy argues, “racist violence provides an easy means to ‘purify’ and rehomogenize the nation” (Gilroy 2005:102). Postcolonial or postnational melancholia are not unique to Britain or Turkey, according to Arjun Appadurai, “fear of small numbers” is a global condition, exacerbated by globalization itself: “Minorities in a globalizing world, are a constant reminder of the incompleteness of national purity” and “of the betrayal of the classical national project” (Appadurai 2006:43). In other words, we are all living under the specter of postnational melancholia.

But how about melancholic possibilities? I want to agree with David Kazanjian and David Eng that there are political possibilities in melancholic engagements with the history and the present. In their inspiring volume, *Loss*, they write: “While mourning abandons lost objects by laying their histories to rest, melancholia’s continued and open relation to the past finally allows us to gain new perspectives on and new understandings of lost objects” (Eng and Kazanjian 2003:4).

The stories of Armenian converts who have spent their lives in Muslim families or Muslim towns open up the Pandora’s box of national identity and prompt new and difficult questions: Who belongs to the nation? Who is an “Armenian” and who is a “Turk”? Whose lineage matters? Who is considered a “survivor”? Whether the recent “coming out”¹¹ of this particular group of survivors will contribute to melancholic hope, creating new possibilities for mourning and reconciliation or will further ignite growing nationalist anxieties continues to be a critical question facing Turkey today.

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¹¹ I would like to thank Halide Velioglu for this formulation.

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A Feminism that is Often Accented, Sometimes Whispers, Even Stutters:

Neery Melkonian¹

My talk today is extracted from a book and (hopefully a) curatorial project which I'm working on that deals with Armenian women artists who lived/worked transnationally during the last 100 years. In uttering this thought alone I find myself already in trouble and troubled: Why such an undertaking when there isn't even an article on the topic? How to approach the subject without repeating the exclusionary models of art historical canons, to which in some ways the project is a response? Why this timeframe and these artists? And who needs such a project anyway?!

While I can spend the next 20 minutes justifying my undertaking I have instead opted to briefly introduce you to these women and their art because this yet to be charted terrain provides some answers or clues and traces of muted (art) histories. By outlining such a discursive space, I am attempting to sketch a cultural geography that proposes a temporal and spatial reconfiguration which remains outside conventional (art) historical genealogies. In this disjointed artistic territory things are at once foreign and familiar, near and far. In this country for art - without a flag or an anthem, nor state or private institutional support - meaning is mediated in-between nations, ethnicities and languages. Yet somehow the inhabitants of this estranged universe manage to take us on detours and give us breaks from paralysis caused when people and cultures do not neatly fit in linear configurations or progression.

Older than Arshile Gorky by almost 20 years Armen Ohanian was born in 1887 in an Armenian populated Iranian village near Baku where she received a



¹ Independent critic/curator based in New York City

² All images are from the personal archives of the author who thanks the artists and other lenders for their generosity.

Russian education. After surviving a pogrom, during which she lost her father and family wealth, Ohanian ended her one year marriage to a nationalist Persian-Armenian and forged a remarkable career as a dancer on the stages of cosmopolitan centers like Istanbul, Tehran, Smyrna (Izmir), Cairo, Moscow, Paris, London, and Mexico City.² By applying the ‘free dance’ methods of Isadora Duncan she created her own choreographies to Persian music and transformed into a modern art form a practice that was until then confined to the private space of the harem.

Around the same time Gorky was plotting ways to reinvent himself in America, a group of affluent New York businessmen formed Near East Relief (NER). As the first international philanthropic organization, en par with pro Christian-Armenian US foreign policy at the time, NER launched a brilliant campaign and raised millions to save what became to be known as the “Starving Armenians” - who were often portrayed as women. As the body postures of the young women within these photographs suggest,



routines in NER orphanages demanded the kind of discipline, regiment and order often associated with life in factories. Be it through education, vocational training, sports, or religious practice it seems obedience, productivity and servitude were desirable qualities prescribed to this generation as well as specific ideals of womanhood.

As Lerna Ekmekchioglou’s research indicates, in 1915 Armenian women of Constantinople also mobilized to assist those who survived the catastrophe. Part of their efforts included a publication called Hye Geen (Armenian Woman) which appeared regularly for almost thirty years. The publication had male contributors as well and offered a strong regional circulation that also reached to communities in the West such as Boston and New

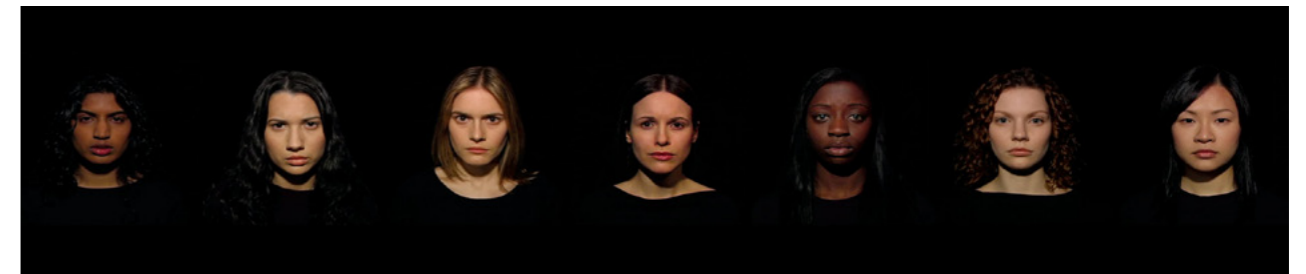


York. An illustration from one of their issues exemplifies, however, that Armenian feminism was intertwined with nationalism to promote European and patriarchic ideals of modernity.

One of the groundbreaking projects that NER got involved in was the co-production of a Hollywood film that brought to the large screen the story of Aurora Mardiganian, a young woman who had survived the massacres and came to America through missionary efforts. Echoing the American geopolitical leanings of those days, the film portrayed Aurora in a context that perpetuated an ideology of the good Christian versus the evil Muslim. Because of an injury acquired during the making of the film, followed by exhaustion and a nervous-breakdown, Aurora could not attend the various premieres of “Ravished Armenia” that took place in major American cities and was instead substituted with several look a-likes.

Like the 1930s disappearance of a complete copy of this full length feature film – only a ten minute-clip of which has survived – the story of Aurora was forgotten till the 1997 appearance of a book on the making of the film. At the 2007 Istanbul Biennale, she also became the subject for an artistic collaboration between Atom Egoyan and Kutlug Ataman as they joined efforts to “rescue” the stories of many Auroras from the perils of denied histories.

Egoyan’s multi-video installation utilizes seven contemporary women from diverse ethnic/racial backgrounds to substitute the NER look-a-likes. Ataman’s piece focuses on a fragmented conversation his and his family’s Turkish nanny who, while looking at family photographs, has difficulties revealing or remembering her decades-long hidden ethnic-Armenian identity. Among other things, these works attempt the un-muting of silences imposed by various kinds of regimes including the breakup of the Ottoman empire, the Hollywood film industry, the nation state of Turkey and Armenian nationalism which has remained ambivalent to this day towards the multiple forms of violence experienced by Aurora who died in poverty and depression in Los Angeles - home of the largest Armenian community in the Diaspora.





Born in CT in 1912, to affluent immigrant parents from Turkey, Elizabeth Tashjian studied art at the New York Academy of Design and was an accomplished classical musician. At some point she re-invented herself or allowed herself to be branded as the 'Nut Lady' by claiming that nuts were originated in Armenia! In the 1970s she turned her family mansion into a road side Nut Museum, where she would frequently dress in Ottoman costumes and give walking tours to visitors. Considered as an Outsider artist, she enjoyed a fleeting celebrity status by attracting the attention of the popular talk show Johnny Carson and the New Yorker magazine . Despite all this, however, she died penniless after the authorities confiscated all her belongings and institutionalized her a few years ago. A neighboring art historian who befriended her and saved some of her works, currently housed at a college in CT where he teaches, is writing a book arguing that Tashjian was the first American feminist performance artist, before the category was invented or branded by the New York art world.



When it comes to the canons of modern art history or the radar of the mainstream international art world, however, Gorky remains to this day the leading Armenian representative. While in hindsight this is understandable since abstraction expressionism was a product of high or international modernism, that is to say rendering invisible particularities especially the kind that look or sound stranger than the accepted norms of foreignness. Here I'm referring to partial citizenship, the type that obliges one to disguise his/her identity like Gorky and many of his contemporaries did. But to keep Gorky as the token Armenian artist for nearly a century is indicative of blind spots within the art world establishment, which in essence do not operate all too differently from other mechanisms of denial or forgetfulness. 'Minor' cultures often fall between the cracks or are kept in the shadows of not only mainstream currents of thought but also of the supposed alternatives of Multiculturalism and Post Colonialism.



Despite such erasures, however, Armenian women artists continue to make singular contributions. As if cartographers of a new kind, they dot a Diasporic Cluster, perpetually in flux and out of the boundaries of conventional mappings.

The Lebanese-Armenian painter Seta Manoukian's early works reveal the confinement she felt as a woman artist in 1960s Beirut, where her expectations could not be met by the predominantly middle class cultural values that surrounded her. After pursuing a degree in fine arts at the academy of Rome, where she was introduced to politics through Italian cinema, Manoukian returned to a different Beirut. She sensed and depicted the tensions that came to tear the country apart as symbolized by the tilted perspectives or unstable grounds of her compositions from this period. Manoukian also took part in the Palestinian struggle and when her life was threatened she moved to southern California. There, her compositions began to reflect the imbalances she was experiencing as an immigrant woman - represented by figures turned upside down or placed in suspension (Image 13c). In time Manoukian realizes that the kind of balance she had been searching for throughout her life is obtainable not through political or artistic 'isms' but through Buddhist practice. For several years, her paintings were the outcome of daily meditations - where the horizontal and vertical figures of her former compositions are now reduced to interconnected or indistinguishable presences that seem to float in a void. Now, she has chosen to live rather than practice her art and was ordained as a Buddhist nun four years ago.



America's takeover as aesthetic tastemaker during the Cold War era was not dissimilar to the hegemony of Europe's Orientalist worldview found abundantly in academic paintings of the 19th century. Los Angeles based Iranian-Armenian contemporary artist Abelina Galoustian utilizes some of the iconic works from that period to reverse/subvert their gendered contexts by substituting in her compositions the subordinate roles assigned to women to men. Her substitutes are also contemporary women, often family members. Needless to say, the artist was subject to criticism, both from her ethnic community and academic peers.

The kinds of exclusions described above form a pattern over-time that seems like an endless cycle of barriers. But as one self taught artist, Ani Kupelian's fifteen foot high, one-ton iron-gate on-wheels epitomizes such barriers are universal and move in multiple directions. While posing as an insurmountable obstacle, this cold construction also offers the possibility of a passage, even if not knowing what's on the other side.



For Linda Ganjian a passage entails re-routing the form and function of Oriental carpets. By utilizing unconventional materials, her detailed works give new meaning to childhood memories and fantasies that once formed the playful patterns of the ground she grew up on. Her carpets bring attention to places, traditions or things lost, like an ancient alphabet.





Utilizing soap, wax, and invented materials, the mixed-media installations of French born Frederique Nalbandian often set a stage where the process of dematerialization and (re)materialization of objects take place during the course of an exhibition. Alluding to what remains in the aftermath of a catastrophe she makes the disappearance of a model and its imperfect reproduction visible. Her resurrections mark wear and tear, traces and fractures. But the loss and trauma to which these objects are subjected also seem to convey that forgetfulness is part of humanity's everydayness.



For the Berlin-based multi-media artist Silvina der Megerdichian, remembering entails building a wall in a public space, one side of which holds flowers and the other side of which marks the names of political prisoners who disappeared during a brutal regime in Argentina where she was born and raised.



Video artist and photographer Jean Marie Casbarian's work is steeped in memory and identity. Her Armenian and German parents' outlandish stories from the old country serve as fragments and shards to be mined, but always remain with tremendous gaps. Her works become exercise in trying to remember something that cannot possibly be remembered; thus they turn into attempts to inventing personal mythologies or fictions that desperately search for some kind of proof of being.



Working in various media, conceptual artist Nina Katchadourian combines investigative practices with a more elusive or poetic logic. Her approach frequently involves deliberate attempts to observe, scrutinize, order, and disorder her surroundings. For instance, she re-imagines geographies by meticulously dissecting maps. Her interventionist relationship with the natural world reveal insights gained through misunderstanding. Linguistic systems and mistranslations also fascinate this American artist born to a Swedish-Finnish mother and a Turkish-Armenian father.



In the post-soviet space of Armenia, women artists are questioning their position in society while also attempting to re-position their work in a historically male-dominated art scene. During the last several years, official or former art histories are also being examined critically by a younger generation of writers and thinkers who are tackling with an in-flux of postcolonial and feminist theories imported from the West and the former Soviet East. While Arevik Arevshatyan's earlier work spoke of domestic violence or loss of innocence, her recent paintings focus on the unchanging or stagnant predicament of women in Armenia despite appearances that might suggest otherwise. Video and performance artist Kara Matsakanyan, who was the only female member of a late Soviet



artist collective in Yerevan called "Third Floor" uses or references her body to put forth powerful commentaries about a consumerism that threatens individuality. Last, but not least, in an attempt to un-mute a site's memory Asdghig Melkonyan re-enacts the effects of global economies and the construction boom that not only dispossesses old Yerevan but also makes a native-citizen feel like a refugee.



By extending a fragmentary account of the contributions made by the artists discussed throughout these proceedings I have reversed the phenomenon of cultural space-less-ness. Due to historical discontinuities and cultural ruptures a considerable number of Armenian women artists during the last 100 years have expressed themselves in ways that are suspicious of orthodoxies, be it Western or Eastern. Belonging neither just to a nation-state nor to only an ethnic community, these artists often operate from transnational positions that need to be examined on their own terms. They each mediate multiple cultural identities and navigate through multi-localities or languages that do not neatly fit within dominant or minority (art) historical accounts or curatorial practices. This may partially explain their absence-presence within representational spaces. Often recalling the status of partial citizens, not only have these artists' works not been exhibited under one roof anywhere, many of them do not even know of each others' existence.



Given such discrepancies it was not surprising, but nevertheless puzzling, that the consensus among students at the summer school for curators in Yerevan -- who participated in a workshop this author offered in 2005 on Global Feminism's Others and Contemporary Art -- seemed to be that feminism has not arrived to Armenia yet. My response was: Armenian feminism through art is often accented, sometimes she whispers, even stutters. To be able to hear her one needs to recognize the failures, or turn down the volume of master narratives, from within and without.

IMAGE CREDITS:

- Page 41:** Armen Ohanian, photo courtesy of Artsvi Bakhchinyan and Vartan Matiossian, authors of *The Dancer of Shamakha*, Yerevan, 2007.
- Page 42:** Alexandropol orphanage, photo courtesy of Near East Foundation; A page from Hye Geen publication, photo courtesy of Lerna Ekmekçioğlu;
- Page 43&44:** Poster of the film *Ravished Armenia*, 1919; Video stills from Atom Egoyan and Kutlug Ataman *Auroras/Testimony*, 2007; Elizabeth Tashjian on the *Tonight Show* with one of her nut sculptures, 1981; Elizabeth Tashjian at her Victorian home and Nut Museum in Connecticut, 1972; Arshile Gorky, *Self Portrait with Mother*, 1926-42, National Gallery, DC.; Aram Jibilian, *(Un) Making of an Icon*, digital, c-print, 28"x 24", 2007;
- Page 45:** Seta Manoukian, *La Fete Rose*, 48"x68", 1986; Seta Manoukian, *I'll Be Calm*, 1990; Abelina Galoustian, *Purchasing of Slaves*, (based on Stanislas von Chlebowski painting, 1879), acrylic and oil on canvas, 5'x6', 2002; Ani Kupelian, *Trespass*, 457x244x76cm, steel, tile, wood, 1993-1995; Linda Ganjian, *Avestan*, detail, painted, scored and glued paper, 2006;
- Page 46:** Frederique Nalbandian, *Croche Pieds*, soap, pigment, 90 cm, 2003; Silvina der Megerdichian with Marula Di Como, *Siempreviva*, detail from an outdoor installation, 7mx3.20 m, Berlin, 2006; Jean Marie Casbarian, *The Color of Liquid*, hand-made loom, hospital sheets, trough, red dye, video projection 10-minute loop / silent, 2002; Nina Katchadourian, *Sorted Books: Shark Journals*, C-prints, each 12.5 x 19 inches, 2001; Arevik Arevshatyan, *Belt of Faithfulness*, a belt, kitchen utensils, 1995; Arevik Arevshatyan, *Woman with Flower*, 2004.
- Page 47:** Photo of *Third Floor* artist collective, with Kara Matsakanyan, Yerevan, 1987; Kara Matsakanyan, *Self-Healing*, photo from performance, 2001; Asdghig Melkonyan, *Bag*, photo from performance, 2005.

Old History, New Language

Karin Karakaşlı¹

Everything started with an uneven and lumpy 'A' letter written on the wall: My first declaration to the world that I want to leave a trace as a child. Inside the house my grandmother would show me other signs of A and B's. "What's this grandma?" "It's Armenian." There I was left totally confused and fascinated with two labyrinths of alphabets that looked like ciphers and two languages, both rivaling with each other for being my mother tongue; one for home and one for the street. Sometimes I would confuse them and create my unique language in a single question: "Bu inç e?"; meaning "What is this?"; 'bu' in Turkish, 'inç e' in Armenian.

Literature is a living organism; thus what I wrote always had an impact on my personal life. When I got a prize for my first collection of short stories, a tall man came to the ceremony to congratulate me. His name was Hrant Dink, owner of a bookstore at that time, full of extraordinary enthusiasm to share the joy of an Armenian girl he didn't know at all. It was also this man who convinced me months later to be part of the first Turkish-Armenian newspaper Agos in Turkey. "This is not a job offer" he said, "I will enlarge your world;" A bold statement with figurative meaning that I ponder a lot nowadays.

At Agos I became confronted with the Armenian language because Hrant Dink was sure that I could be a columnist of Armenian pages at the age of 23 even though my Armenian language ability was at primary school level. And guess what happened? I did it. However, succeeding in one lesson, brought the next. There was no graduation. So, there came the lesson of Armenian Issue. Not only the newspaper itself, but also Hrant Dink personally was something unusual. To Armenians in Turkey who have lived as a closed community for decades, he proposed an other way: to open up oneself to the large Turkish society in order both to share institutional and historical problems imposed by State policy and also the huge Armenian cultural heritage.

Hrant's sincere style of discourse led to a series of confessions and debates. When he told of his childhood spent in Armenian Children Camp in Tuzla – a camp the children had built themselves that was confiscated years later by the State, all of a

¹ Writer and poet

sudden this issue ceased to be a cold legal matter of minority foundations, but turned a the painful story of an Armenian man still carrying the protest of the little boy within his soul. This personification humanized the Armenian Issue in Turkey, giving a voice to the silenced ones since the April 24th, 1915 when 220 Armenian intellectuals were taken away from their homes and forced to a march to no return to Çankırı; an actual sign of the limitless pain and suffering to follow for the Armenians as a whole nation.

In the street, these bold expressions found their echo as form of questioning in the wider Turkish society. This was actually what Hrant Dink wished as an outcome: That people ask themselves questions. He also established his own discourse on various questions that he posed in the coming years in the form of influential publications and as speeches. To Turkey he would say: “When a State uproots its citizens, largely defenseless women and children, to unknown and never-ending paths, with which quality of being a human can we explain our desperate struggle to find the suitable word of naming this situation? If we cannot condemn it altogether before trying to decide whether to name it genocide or deportation, which single part of human honor can we save with our preferences?” To the Armenian Diaspora he asked: “What is your priority? The forced recognition of genocide imposed upon Turkey or the democratization process, which inevitably brings this country closer to coming to terms with history as well?”

“The actual name of ethics is empathy” he declared and embodied this empathy in person, turning it to an ethics in practice. While he became an alternative model of being Armenian in Turkey, taking responsibility for both. He broke taboos, dared to develop a unique discourse about the Armenian issue as an Armenian of Turkey. When he published an article in Agos claiming that Sabiha Gokcen, the adopted daughter of Atatürk, might be of Armenian origin and had relatives in Armenia, he thought that it could be an opportunity to speak about 1915 not only from the perspective of the ones we lost, but the ones who survived, who are still alive and living as converts to Islam. Two weeks later on February 21st, Hürriyet, the biggest daily paper of Turkey, carried the story to its headline: ‘Is she Sabiha Gökçen or Hatun Sebilciyan?’ The next day, the Turkish Military Chief of Staff’s office issued a strongly worded statement:

It is unacceptable to qualify a claim, which is published in an abusive discourse against national sentiments and values, as ‘news making.’ These days, when we are in need of very strong national solidarity, the majority of our people understand the purpose of such news stories that are against our national integrity, solidarity and national values and follow these publications with concern.

It was actually we at Agos who had to follow the coming publications with concern when a strong anti-campaign started against Hrant Dink in the media, supported by demonstrations by ultra-nationalists and followed by legal actions against him that made him to a vulnerable target by accusing him of insulting Turkish identity. Taken his life-long struggle of true dialogue, you can easily imagine the pain

he suffered under this unjust and intolerable accusation.

Since we lost him, I have had, unfortunately, more than enough time to think about the power of words, which was also the reason of his murder. This is the underlying theme of this paper. Finding a new language for an old history, for the present we live in and for the future to come is now more than a necessity of being a writer. It is the meaning of my life. Hrant Dink himself has turned to a leitmotiv of my life. Inspired by his discourse, I would call this new language a poetic political language starting with the awareness that the Armenian Issue is not solely the problem of Armenian people, but rather an impasse for all of Turkey. This new understanding inevitably leads to a joint effort to overcome it. What I mean by healing is not at all reconciliation in the political sense. It is something much more human and deep; a way of deserving to live the present time in its own being, without the burden of guilt and the suffering of the past and the anxiety of an uncertain future.

By calling it a poetic political discourse, it becomes possible to underline the autonomy of each individual and while simultaneously undermining stereotypes caused by generalizations such as “Turks” and “Armenians.” The poetic part gives a depth to the political side which is no longer experienced as short-term politics bound to national interests, bargains, and conjunctures, but rather (as political science wishes it to be) a route to revealing the truth of societies. Of course this change also brings out nationalist reaction, which tries to revive the usual prejudices through nationalist propaganda. This ‘male’ language based on war and enmity in service of the patriarchy reveals interesting facts seen from the gender perspective. A new language would indicate another approach completely – one that respects values and attitudes traditionally associated with the female sex.

Another important quality of this new language is its continuous formation that we all witness and go through. The more intolerant and more dissatisfied public opinion becomes with rote answers to sincere curiosity, the more deeply rooted the new language . This language immediately finds resonance in the “opposite” direction, thus opening wide holes in the castle walls of enmity and reshaping both collective memory and a vision for a joint future. This we have best witnessed by the highly debated “I apologize” campaign of Turkish intellectuals with the following declaration: “My conscience does not accept the insensitivity showed to and the denial of the Great Catastrophe that the Ottoman Armenians were subjected to in 1915. I reject this injustice and for my share, I empathize with the feelings and pain of my Armenian brothers and sisters. I apologize to them.”

30 thousand people signed these lines. It also led to a “Thank you” campaign by Armenian intellectuals of Diaspora shaking the walls of stiffness. Whether the term apologize is appropriate or who will forgive whom for what can long be debated. Some are discontent with the concept of Great Catastrophe, while others see it as a veiled expression of Genocide. Thus for some this initiative only serves State policy. However, as a pupil of Hrant Dink, I have to see and reveal other details that are relevant. To me, the wave it caused tells a lot about the nerve it touched. Yes, these words touched because they were unexpected. There is this unique ‘I’ and

‘for my share’ components which provide a new formulation of individualism and collectivism where only separate ‘I’s form a new kind of ‘we’ reaching the ‘other’ represented and reproduced as the potential enemy and as the threat to Turkish identity. For me, this distinctive quality of the lines was a key turning point for undermining old versions of expression. This was actually the tone and speechless speech during Hrant Dink’s funeral when hundred thousands marched together in solidarity. The masses assembled to honor of him on January 23 can be read as an outbreak against all the silenced injustice that was inherited generation after generation. The fact that Hrant Dink’s murder is also connected to the Ergenekon legal case, which, despite all the speculations and clumsiness of trials, seems to be a major historical confrontation, is also striking. Now that a vicious cycle has completed the span, the public opinion is weary of repetitions. At least I hope so.

In the Western world, we have a huge pile of testimonials, which serves as catharsis for victims. This at least provided a sense of purification when all the suffering was exhaled and heard. However, the unique conditions of taboo prevented Armenians in Turkey from a similar kind of sharing. As fate would have it, this long silence was broken and, interestingly enough, not by an Armenian, but by a Turkish lawyer Fethiye Çetin. I had the chance to witness the creation of her book *My Grandmother* telling the story of her own grandmother starting her life as Heranuş and living as Seher and only confiding in her granddaughter about her Armenian origin when she is over ninety years old. Fethiye Çetin transformed this intense experience to an unforgettable narration. Thus this is both the story of a grandmother and also her grandchild, tortured by the memories when what she learns does not fit what she knew. “For my grandmother it was a great relief to talk about the past, and so it is for Turks. Silence must be broken because it damages everybody” she later said, “The pain caused by the silence, and by the history books in schools that depict Armenians as enemies. The ‘enemy’ can be in your family and can therefore never be the enemy.”

There is no such thing as coincidence. Shortly before I was preparing this paper I was asked to review Markus Zusak’s *The Book Thief*. In this book, the book thief is Liesel Meminger, a foster child growing up in Munich. She steals her first book, *The Gravedigger’s Handbook*, at the gravesite of her brother, and when she is taught to read by her foster father, a love affair with books and words begins. As Hitler uses words to destroy, Liesel uses words to bring herself back to life. When Liesel’s foster family takes in Max Vandenburg – a young Jewish man – and hides him in their basemen, again, it’s the sharing of words and stories that bond Liesel and Max. Together they paint the pages of Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* to get white pages and illustrate their own books. *The Book Thief* questions the role of literature in life with a protest by grieving Liesel:

The words. Why did they have to exist? Without them, there wouldn’t be any of this. Without words, the Führer was nothing. There would be no limping prisoners, no need for consolation or wordy tricks to make us feel better. What good were the words? She said it audibly now, to the orange-lit room. “What good are the words?”

So I was left alone with words and turmoil of conflicting emotions. Language does not only express but also shapes us. That is indeed both the power and the danger of it depending upon the purpose to which it is put. After so many years, I found that the wise soul in my childhood had the best formulation after all: the question of “Bu inç e?” Capitulating to sheer anger, producing hate would be a betrayal yet another murder. Only with this did I learn how difficult yet inevitable it was to be one and the same with your words. This gave them their special power. Otherwise they would be utterances only, easy to tell and easier to forget.

There is still a huge debt to pay on my part. How I wish to be able to write a book sanctifying the power of words in service to the creation of heaven in times of hell. How I wish to be able to just let you feel the breeze of Hrant Dink’s soul right here and right now through these words. Because he gave me not only Armenian or Turkish to pour my words into, but also this new poetic-political language of understanding each other and expressing oneself. Therefore I tried not only to speak about this language but also to speak in this language today. I hope that I could manage and that he likes it.

Part III Educating and “Civilizing” the Nation

Part III Educating and “Civilizing” the Nation

Visual Representations of Protestant Missionary Achievement in the Late Ottoman Empire: The Discourse of Civility and Before-and-After Photographs

Nazan Maksudyan¹

In this paper, I discuss the use of visual representations or photographic descriptions by the missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) as proofs of their proselytizing efforts in the Ottoman Empire. I will argue that bodily conditions of people and their physical surroundings were reconceived and reconceptualized by missionaries as material representations and mirrors of religious and moral progress. This was usually done in the genre of before-and-after photographs: One criticizing or pitying the former “wretchedness” of people and the other appraising how they progressed. Assuming that sincere belief, or for that matter conversion, is a difficult matter to prove with evidence, these visual representations or descriptions were useful tools to convince the world of believers and benevolent contributors that these people were genuinely civilized into good Christians and were leading a Christian life.

The main material of this paper is an interesting section of the *Missionary Herald*, one of the most widely circulated Board publications: “For Young People.” Starting in 1879, each monthly issue included a brief illustrated article designed for “young people”, not young children or adults. In a short time, it was concluded that “Young People” department met a real demand and that these articles were widely read. Many of them were copied into the magazines and religious papers in the United States and in Great Britain. Moreover, they were compiled in two books, one in 1885 and the other in 1897, as a collection under the name of *Mission Stories in Many Lands: A Book for Young People*. They were purchased for Sunday School libraries and also used by Mission Circles and Young People’s Societies of Christian Endeavor. With their illustrations and touching stories, they became one of the Board’s main conversion advertisement outlets.

Many of these stories followed three different but connected lines of direction. The first formula was to focus on the misery of people and life in general in the Orient. This group of articles not only focused on and told stories of those in real destitution, such as lepers, the orphaned, starved, and sick, they also interpreted the bodies or dwellings of regular people within this general picture of misery. Therefore, on the one hand, missionaries targeted those who were genuinely physically deprived and, on the other, healthy people’s bodies, dress, cleanliness, grooming were also problematized, together with their dwellings, villages and even interpersonal

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relations. All these were presented as deformed or undeveloped in the Ottoman Empire and the missionaries defined their role as fixing these as much as they could. Protestant missionary indoctrination through sermons, school education and medical care was to reform people and places, both materially and spiritually, into "good-looking" and Christian entities.

In these ways, therefore, both human bodies and people's living environments were treated as representations of the internalization of Christian teachings. The message was clear: Those who met with some form of Protestant influence were miraculously leaving their old habits behind and were in a sense reborn. It is, in fact, telling that the missionaries positioned themselves as quasi-physicians: they were there to heal not only real diseases and deprivations, but also the social and spiritual ills of the people. A third type of article was purportedly anthropological/sociological pieces on various ethnicities of the Empire, such as Kurds, Armenians, Greeks, Yezidees, Albanians and so on. In these, one finds Orientalist descriptions of traditional costumes, cuisine, and national character. These were pieces with many photographs, which acted in a precise way to establish specific stereotypes and markers of inferiority, both of the people and of their homelands. However, it is necessary to underline that photographs expressed distinctions between "Oriental peoples" and missionaries also from an ambivalent point of view: As agents of "a superior culture", they most often envisioned their subjects as objects of inferiority but also fascination (Hight & Sampson 2004: 1).

By the mid-nineteenth century, when photography was introduced to the Ottoman Empire, missionaries started to use it as a way to authenticate their experiences in distant parts of the world and to establish "a visual impression of 'heathenism' more dramatic than could be achieved with the written word." (Lawson 2005: 256). Next to tourists, painters, artists, art historians, and journalists, missionaries were also part of a large group of photographers in the Empire. From early on, the mission stations tried to acquire the necessary equipment and know-how to take and print photographs (Landau 2004: 103). By the late nineteenth century, photography became an established part of different forms of fieldwork, including Christian ministry.

The discourse of before-and-after was always omnipresent in missionary literature. It conveyed an image of accomplishment on the part of the missionaries and a promise of remarkable alteration on the part of the targets. It is apparent that the American Board adopted a resolute Puritan equation of its particular Christianity with civilization and paved the way for the reproduction of the discourse equating the stagnant East with ignorant and unenlightened peoples. Most local customs and traditions were interpreted as evil and degenerate forms of religiosity and the cure was to introduce them to true Christianity. Therefore, the discourse of educating and reforming the heathens by the messengers of civilization and Christianity was very strong. As Makdisi highlights, missionary "writing on 'the' heathen and their routine denigration of foreign cultures and their determination to restructure them" was remarkably similar to colonial powers' projects, thus, made them vulnerable to the accusation of cultural imperialism (Makdisi 2008: 9).

The relationship between conversion and visual representation was a strong one in which photographs operated as complex discursive objects of power and culture (Hight & Sampson, 2004: 2-3). Even if there were positive models in the

host communities, the pictures of those whose physical features in terms of dress, cleanliness, or posture were dramatically inferior, potentially hostile, or disruptive were used in the "before narrative" in order to justify the value of Protestant missions. In this respect, the "progressivist" tendencies, claiming that societies and peoples would eventually progress from a backward state of existence to modernity, from barbarism to civility, shaped the missionary discourse. Different ethnic groups in Anatolia were assumed to be at earlier stages of a teleological march toward civilization. From within this ideological framework, the function and value of photographs of Christian converts was primarily attached to their meaning as documents of progress as a historical process (Erdogdu 2004: 119). Photography was instrumentalized for disciplinary purposes: It was a record of the converted subjects (Roberts 2007: 176).

The missionaries used photos as part of their "advertisement strategy". Photographs reinforced the difference of the "other" and therefore the need for missions as assimilating and evangelizing forces. In that sense, the missionaries depended on the ability of the photographs to convey "a sense of mission to the viewer who responded with increased prayer and increased giving." (Williams, 2003: 88). The logic behind the usage of visual material was, without a doubt, to illustrate how miracles can come true through evangelicalism. As determined apostles of their missionary societies back home, they had to put forward proof of the reclamation of freedom for a long-enlashed Eastern Christianity, proof of spiritual conquest of the people and proof of evangelization. Yet, American missionaries in the Ottoman Empire were never really successful in converting the people, their narratives lacked both adequately serious quantitative proof of conversion and also heroic conversion stories.

Thus, the missionaries relied on the bodies and physical surroundings of the people to prove some success. Substantial changes in the living conditions and customs of the people, "social progress" as it was presented, was the main indicator of conversion. Western styles of dress, hairdressing, physical decorum, altered postures and looks and hygiene were treated as signifiers of Protestant faith, piety, and virtue that native peoples came to embrace. Inner beliefs, after all, could not be seen, shown or advertised. To put it more sharply, although social change was presented as the spillover effect of proselytizing, in fact it was the essence of conversion itself. People were, in effect, converted into a certain definition of "civilization" (with its tangible definitions of cleanliness, neatness, nutrition, hygiene, home, family life, order, and child-rearing) rather than into an abstract religion. Since spiritual state of existence was invisible, conversion was practically reduced to retouchings in the material state of existence. It was "a process of self-fashioning modeled by the dictates of the missionaries" (Williams, 2003: 92), nominal or professing Christians, as missionaries called them, supposedly moved forward along the evolutionary path to civility. Formulaic conversion anecdotes published alongside visual material, such as photographs, engravings and drawings (often depicting situations before and after conversion) within the reports and articles that appeared in the *Missionary Herald* served as proof of achievement in the field. They needed such proof to legitimate the continuing flow of funds. When there was no visual to display certain people and places, the missionaries relied on their literary skills and provided very detailed descriptions, touching upon every single physical feature. The visual qualities of the articles in the "For Young People" section mirror the missionaries' understanding of

the propagandistic power of photographs when placed alongside personal testimony. They were used as tools to tangibly confirm that evangelical activity had yielded widespread cultural and spiritual transformation. What I suggest in this paper is that since there was no spiritual x-ray to be sure of people's beliefs, the missionaries needed to give visibility to true Christianity: They had to devise solid, concrete proofs of inner belief that one can see, smell and touch. Therefore, ironically, true faith, which the Protestants praised without concession, was actually reduced to a set of material, observable traits. In this sense, even if the Protestant missionaries were fanatically opposed to idolatry or any form of outward-centered signs of belief, their utmost praise of the external appearance of the Christians was not very different from what these nominally faithful did before them.

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ⁱ Photography came to the Empire immediately after its invention in 1839. The first known photograph is of Rais al-Tin Palace, in Alexandria, taken on 7 November 1839. A few days earlier, there was a news item in the official gazette on the invention. The subsequent development of photography can be seen as a part of various European influences in that period, which included concerts, fashion shops, street lighting and postage stamps (Landau, 2004: 101-104).

Training Kurdish Men and Women in Turkey: Mobile Village Courses for Men and Women in the ‘Eastern Provinces’¹

Metin Yüksel²

Each word in the title of this study The Mobile Village Courses for Men and Women in the ‘Eastern Provinces’ points to a characteristic of the Turkish nation-state. Education was perceived by Republican elites as a significant tool for the modernization and ideological indoctrination of the masses in Turkey (Akşit 2005, Yeşil 2003, Yüksel 2007). Therefore, a rich range of educational projects were put into practice. The use of mobile methods was one such practice. However, the use of methods of mobility was by no means limited to mobile courses. As can be seen in the case of mobile preachers (gezici vaizler)³ that functioned between 1948 and 1965 (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı: 1999, 478-480), the mobile gendermarie (seyyar jandarma)⁴ and mobile courses for tribes and the organization of the teachers of mobile tribes⁵, mobility was an effective and efficient method of controlling the otherwise inaccessible population of the countryside. In addition to the words “mobile” and “courses”, village is also an important term in my title. As Asım Karaömerlioğlu demonstrates, peasantist discourse and practices were one of the crucial characteristics of the Kemalist elites during the early decades of the Turkish Republic (2006). “Men and women” refers to the gendered character of the state's approach to the rural countryside which was embodied in the fact that tailoring courses were organized for women, while men were trained in ironworking and carpentry courses. Finally, “eastern provinces” refers to one of the ways in which the state perceived the predominantly Kurdish provinces in the guise of an issue of regional backwardness, rather than recognizing Kurdishness of the issue (Yeğen 2006).

Inspired also by the question of tracing a historical trajectory of the relationship between the state and Kurdish women in Turkey from the 1920s up to the present (especially considering the last two decades' increasing number of

¹ I am thankful to Dr. Elif Akşit (the discussant of my panel) and Dr. Mezher Yüksel for their comments. This paper is a ‘by product’ of my dissertation research that was supported by a fellowship granted by the American Research Institute in Turkey.

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³ T.C. Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, Gezici Vaizlerin Vazife ve Salahiyetleri Hakkında Talimatname, Fon Kodu: 51.0.0.0, Yer No: 4.37.5, 31.12.1950.

⁴ T. C. Başvekalet Muamelat Müdürlüğü, Sayı: 8159, Fon Kodu: 30. 18.1.2, Yer No: 4.36.6, 19/6/1929; T. C. Başvekalet Kararlar Dairesi Müdürlüğü, Karar Sayısı: 2/7220, Fon Kodu: 030.18.1.2, Yer No: 78.71.11, 11/8/1937.

⁵ It seems that the latter two projects remained only on paper as a proposal: T. C. Başvekalet Kararlar Müdürlüğü, Sayı: 15177, Fon Kodu: 030.18.01.02, Yer No: 40.75.16, 23/10/1933; T. C. Başvekalet Muamelat Müdürlüğü, Sayı: 14432, Fon Kodu: 030.18.1.2, Yer No: 36.38.14, 23/5/1933; T. C. Başvekalet Kararlar Müdürlüğü, Sayı: 5/765, Fon Kodu: 030.10, Yer No: 143.24.10, 10/9/1933.

projects oriented to Kurdish girls and women, such as ÇATOMs, Baba Beni Okula Göneder campaigns), this study also aims to challenge the common argument that is found in both academic and non-academic works, which generalize and commonly refer to 1926 (the acceptance of Swiss Civil Code), 1930 (the right to vote and to be elected in local elections) and 1934 (the right to vote and to be elected in general elections) as the revolutionary years in the history of women's emancipation in modern Turkey. A careful look at the available sources makes it clear that before the reforms on women's status in Turkey, the state elites aimed to assimilate Kurdish women. The earliest documentation of this is the Plan on the Reformation of the East (Şark Islahat Planı). Dated September 24, 1925, this report attached particular significance to the education of Kurdish girls and women and Turkish language instruction (Bayrak 1993, 487; Bayrak 2009). The subsequent project oriented to Kurdish girls is the opening of a Girls' Art Institute in Elaziz (Elaziz Kız Sanat Enstitüsü) in 1937 (Yeşil 2003, Türkyılmaz 2009, Avar 1986). The report prepared by the 4th Inspectorate General upon the occasion of the opening of this school strikingly reveals not only the approach of the Kemalist elites to the role of women in nationalist indoctrination but also, and even more importantly, the straightforward way in which they take Kurdish women as special targets and addressees for the assimilation of future generations of Kurds into Turkishness.⁶ Like the Şark Islahat Planı, this report also attaches extreme importance to the Turkish language instruction. One of the eight conditions listed in this report for the admission of girls into Girls' Art Institute in Elaziz, is as follows:

In addition to having the above-mentioned qualities, preferably to have been speaking mountain Turkish in their homes and villages so far, and to be amongst village girls who have not been able to find the possibility to learn the state Turkish.⁷

These documents and projects show the following: the commonly repeated generalizations regarding ‘women's emancipation’ in modern Turkey are not valid from the point of view of Kurdish women's experiences.

As in policies oriented to Kurdish women, in investments realized in the “east” for its “development”, the implicit and/or explicit goal has been assimilation into Turkishness. A shining substantiation of this argument is the following words of the 4th Inspectorate General, Abdullah Alpdoğan, in the meeting of Inspectorate Generals held on December 7-22, 1936: “...as to the taking root of the feeling of Turkishness, I find it very useful to build schools, dispensaries, hospitals” (Koçak 2003, 255). The “East” had a particular meaning in Republican modernization. National elites did not recognize the Kurdishness of the Kurdish question (Yeğen 1996, Yeğen 2006) and they viewed the “Eastern question” as a “question of security” (Yıldız 2001, 259), an

⁶ Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi, Dahiliye Vekaleti, Fon Kodu: 030. 10, Yer No: 72. 470. 2, 1/9/1937.

⁷ In the Kemalist modernization project the issue of the instruction of the Turkish language to Kurdish women in schools plays a crucial role (Akşit 2005, 147).

For another interesting document by the Minister of Interior Şükrü Kaya about the education of the boys and girls of Dersim, see Hür (2009).

For an interesting talk that touches upon the issue of mother tongue, in the 4th National Education Council held in 1949, see T. C. Maarif Vekaleti (1949, 282-283).

observation that is strikingly demonstrated by the fact that the Kurdish regions were under martial law and ruled by inspectorate generals throughout the early decades of the Republic and also from the 1980s through the early 2000s.

The original reason underlying the current interest in Mobile Village Courses specifically in the “East”, however, is an official document, which takes the “mobile village courses in the east” as a special topic of interest. This document is about the allocation of resources for the mobile village courses in “Eastern Anatolia” and Edirne.⁸ The second document, which I discovered after the Workshop, is a 120-page report comprising the evaluations of the performances of “women's mobile courses in the East”.⁹ The difference of the “Eastern provinces” from other provinces in terms of the distribution of the Mobile Village Courses is also confirmed by some academic studies from the 1960s to the beginning of the 1980s:

It is seen that there is an imbalance in the distribution of these courses throughout the country. It is understood from a village research conducted in 1966 that in the undeveloped and eastern provinces compared to the west few courses are offered (Mutlu 1967, 88). This imbalance of distribution has also been identified in the later studies (Geray 1978, 365). The picture is no different in the academic year of 1980-1981 (Çobanoğlu 1981, 9).

All these considerations have led to this current examination of Mobile Village Courses for men and women specifically in the “East”. Another study (Yüksel 2007) has been inspiring for this study to define “East” is defined on the basis of linguistic criteria, which is one of the several characteristics that render the “East” special (Yüksel 2007). The 11 provinces (Ağrı, Bingöl, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Hakkari, Mardin, Muş, Siirt, Tunceli, Urfa and Van) where “more than 50 percent of the population speaks Kurdish” (Yüksel 2007) are taken as the focus of this study.

The main source we have regarding these courses is statistical data provided by the Turkish Institute of Statistics. However, there is a gap between 1953 and 1960. We also have the publications of the Ministry of National Education. In the complete version of this research, some findings gathered by the method of oral history and the local press are also included. These unofficial sources are crucial not only because they are utilized simply to ‘supplement’ the officially recorded data but also and more importantly, they are used to confirm the validity and reliability of the official sources. At this point, I should refer to Faik Akçay who was a primary school teacher in a village by the official name of Yığinkaya (the unofficial name is Azgur) in Bitlis from September 1967 to June 1969. He also contributed to the local press such as *Bitlis Birlik and Kalkınan Tatvan*.¹⁰

⁸ T. C. Başbakanlık Muamelat Umum Müdürlüğü, Fon Kodu: 30.18.1.2, Yer No: 120.64.1, Karar Sayısı 3/9780, 11/08/1949.

⁹ BCA, Dosya: 5. Büro, Fon Kodu: 490.1.0.0, Yer No: 1060.1072.1, 23/09/1948.

¹⁰ I met with Faik Akçay Hoca after my talk at the Workshop. I am thankful to him for sharing with me his memories of living in Bitlis as a teacher and writings in the two local papers there.

The Mobile Village Courses started in 1938. They took place from six to eight months. Graduates received a certificate. While women's courses focused on instruction in sewing, embroidery, childcare, and house keeping; courses for men focused on teaching how to make or repair iron or wooden tools used in the house or village.¹¹ In some of the Eastern provinces, these courses started around the mid-1940s; they were subsequently opened in other provinces as well. The information provided is the number of courses, students (and their age groups and educational backgrounds), graduates, and teachers; until 1960, we also have the budget allocated for these courses. In 1960, the stable versions of these courses were also initiated. The most striking observation about these mobile courses is that the number of women's courses is far higher than that of men's.

The period covered here extends from their start in the East until 1974. Table 1 and Table 2 present the proportion of the data on the East to that of the rest of the country. The same big difference between the number of men's and women's courses all over the country is similarly striking in the East as well. Nevertheless, there is a considerable difference between men's courses in the East in proportion to the country as a whole (455 out of 2561) as compared to women's courses in proportion to the country as a whole (1506 out of 13171).

Table 1: Village Women's Mobile Courses

MOBILE COURSES FOR VILLAGE WOMEN, 1945-1953; 1960-1974					
	Courses	Students	Graduates	Teachers	Illiterate
East	1506	27724	18186	1554	6426
Turkey	13171	297379	231144	13475	25025
Percentage	11.43%	9.32%	7.87%	11.53%	25.68%

Table 2: Mobile Ironworking-Carpentry Courses

MOBILE IRONWORKING-CARPENTRY COURSES, 1947-1953; 1960-1974					
	Courses	Students	Graduates	Teachers	Illiterate
East	455	5750	5040	751	445
Turkey	2561	39530	36255	4485	871
Percentage	17.77%	14.55%	13.90%	16.74%	51.09%

Tables 3 and 4, extracted from Tables 1 and 2, show literacy rates of men and women in both the East and Turkey. These proportions demonstrate that literacy was a major factor in determining participation in these courses. As was mentioned above, until 1960-1961, all participants were at least graduates of "people's schools" (*millet mektepleri or ulus okulları*). Hence, they had basic literacy in Turkish. If we suppose that somebody who is literate in Turkish can also speak Turkish, then we can

¹¹ For the curricula of the mobile courses see the followings: T. C. Maarif Vekilliği, Köy Kadınları Gezici Kursları Müfredat Programı (Ankara: Maarif Matbaası, 1942), T. C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, Gezici Köy Demirciliği ve Marangozluğu Kursu Yönetmeliği (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1949).

say that until 1960-1961 (with the exception of the period between 1953 and 1960), all attendees spoke Turkish. (From 1961 onward, there is also the category of "illiterate" in the educational backgrounds of students.) In other words, these courses probably did not reach the only-Kurdish speakers until 1960-1961.

Table 3: Illiteracy Rates among the Attendees of

Mobile Village Courses in the East

GENDER AND ILLITERACY IN THE EAST			
	Illiterate	Participants	Percentage
Men	445	5750	7.74%
Women	6426	27724	23.18%

Table 4: Illiteracy Rates for the Attendees of

Mobile Village Courses in Turkey

GENDER AND ILLITERACY IN TURKEY			
	Illiterate	Participants	Percentage
Men	871	39530	2.20%
Women	25025	297379	8.42%

One of the aims of this research is to contribute to women's historiography in Turkey in general and Kurdish women's historiography in particular. A work in progress, it holds still far from definitive conclusions. Nevertheless, based on the discussion around the primary and secondary sources presented so far, it seems possible to argue that the education of Kurdish women and the instruction of Turkish language have been two of fundamental goals underlying the educational projects of the state in Kurdish regions. Whether it was in the form of knowing (which seems to have mostly been the case with the Mobile Courses) or not knowing (see the report above), the ability to speak the Turkish language has been a significant factor in participating in the state's educational projects in the East. As a tentative conclusion, hence, it seems possible to argue that from their start until 1953 and in the year of 1960-1961, mobile courses could not reach Kurdish men and women who did not speak Turkish and who resided in the villages of the East.

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Educating and “Civilizing” the Nation: Missionaries of Nationalism

Elif Ekin Akşit¹

“Highlighting existing human connections and imagining new ones across physical and imagined borders,” the emphasis of the present conference, necessitates questioning the means of education to this end, primarily in counties influenced by colonialism as well as the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. In fact, “national security and upbringing have long been identified in the context of the mission of education from the nineteenth century onwards” (Stoler 1995, 108). In this pursuit, I will elaborate upon the papers in this panel: Nazan Maksudyan’s “Physical Expressions of Winning Hearts and Minds: Missionary Aspirations over Children’s Bodies in the Late Ottoman Period;” Zeynep Türkyılmaz’s “White Women’s Burden: Educating the “Mountain Flowers” of Dersim;” and Metin Yüksel’s “Training Kurdish Men and Women in Turkey: Mobile Village Courses in the “Eastern Provinces.”

The intersection of gender, education and ethnicity that these presentations point to deserves special attention and there is a growing literature on this subject in Turkey. However, politics and education are still evaluated in a limited context, even while the history of education is heavily emphasized in departments of education. Political science departments look down upon the subject as they see this combination as a part of Faculty of Education curriculum, which they rightly criticize for being apolitical and non-philosophical (Büyükdüvenci 1995).

A major area that needs further elaboration in the most political depths of histories of education is that of missionary education. The missionary schools in the Ottoman Empire and their various reflections in the Republican era need to incorporate Ottoman-Muslim-Turkish mainstream histories of education with those of different religions and nationalities in the empire. While missionary schools aimed to attract non-Muslim populations (as their appeal to Muslims was strictly regulated), the Republican schools took over some of the methods of these schools. The resemblance between the stories Nazan Maksudyan and Zeynep Türkyılmaz have told in this session, the former of the late Ottoman Armenian children educated by American missionaries and the latter of early republican Kurdish girls educated by Sıdıka Avar (the alleged missionary teacher of the Girls’ Institutes), reveal some of these resemblances. They also reveal that the stories that come out of missionary education and its derivations point to the importance of gender in histories of education. For example, the practice of photographing the students at their starting

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date and after they were “shaped” by missionary schools in the late Ottoman empire (Maksudyan, this volume) and Eastern Girls’ Institutes (Türkyılmaz, this volume) have been one of most visible traumas in girls’ education. I have observed during my interviews with the latter how terrible these students have felt about this photographing experience (Akşit 2005).

Maksudyan concentrates on resistance in her study of the foster-daughters who were institutionalized as unpaid maids (2008, 49). Young women and girls reacted to bodily pressures in bodily ways: escape and suicide. Türkyılmaz also focuses on resistance. In Türkyılmaz’ essay this resistance is embodied in Zarife versus Sabiha Gökçen. Resistance is also a strong theme in Özlem Şahin’s (1999) oral historical work with Eastern women who were forcefully migrated to the West in the early Turkish Republican era. (The underground medrasas mentioned in the longer version of Yüksel’s paper are also an example to this resistance).

The evaluation of this resistance in going beyond discourses of state security is a troublesome road. Agamben (1998), by taking this discourse to its extreme and demonstrating how the experience of the concentration camp is the founding principle of these discourses, also opens the way to new forms of imagination. This imaginative approach feeds from the writings and critique of Foucault. Ann Laura Stoler (1995), for example, examines volume one of *History of Sexuality (The Will to Knowledge, 1984)* and questions the failure of students of colonialism to connect race-sexuality and education in her *Race and the Education of Desire*. Drawing on Foucault’s little-known 1976 *College de France lectures*, Stoler challenges Foucault’s tunnel vision of the West and his marginalization of empire. She addresses Foucault’s treatment of biopower and “racisms of the state.” Stoler argues that a history of European nineteenth-century sexuality is also a history of race and education. In her view, the treatment of children, or “cultivating bourgeois bodies” is a way to uncover this connection. Racism emerges within a sexual discourse in Foucault. Stoler too elaborates on the connection between racism and education in a variety of levels where education is not limited with schools.

Racism is an important axis in all of the presentations in our session, “Educating and “Civilizing” the Nation.” “The civilizing mission of the nineteenth century” (Stoler 1995, 108) evolved from the evangelist aims to create ideal Christians (Wollons 2009, Maksudyan, this volume) to the Turkification of the Kurdish population in the twentieth century. Education is a very productive arena to search for connections between politics and women in the face of such policies (Çağlayan 2007). Sıdıka Avar’s autobiography (1986), like Halide Edip’s (Adivar 2000, 2005), present both how this mission was realized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and how women, even within nationalist projects of education, manipulated racist politics in turn.

As one of the first Muslim girls to attend an American college, Edip’s description of the mixed attempts to “identify” if orphans are Muslims or Armenians to “protect” them, points to one of the most important topics of “the civilizing mission:” orphanage. Halide Edip relates these stories, and through her being a

student of the American college, develops a systematic unifying approach towards Turks and Armenians, which crystallizes in her narratives of Turkish and Armenian mothers more than Turkish and Armenian orphans. The session “Ottoman Women Writers: Zabel Yesayan & Halide Edip on Gender, Ethnicity and Violence” and İpek Çalışlar’s presentation on “The Armenian Question in Halide Edip’s Writings” have reflected on these insights deeply.

Halide Edip’s autobiographical writing is a product of a nationalist, but it carries new keys to the deconstruction of nationalism. The illusive gap between personal histories and the narrative of the nation and the wounds that it creates can be, at least partially, addressed with methods like oral history, of which Türkyılmaz makes use. Alternative stories can be found in readers’ letters in the analysis of journals as well. A critical analyses of these sources help us to refuse the mainstream politician’s power to define our status via history in our selective remembering. Thus, while a crippled form of history competes with a high regard for history in Turkey, women that have nourished these myths can also demystify Turkish history, drawing the limits of a shared wound rather than creating new enemies.

Oral histories guide our way to the collection of orphan girls not only for missionary schools, but also the Girls’ Institutes. The demand for orphan girls in schools was completed by a demand for them by state officials’, and mostly high-ranking soldiers’ families. This demand had an ambiguous agenda, it was at first unclear whether these girls were to be adopted or employed as household labor, and as—formal or informal—adoption was a socially accepted way of obtaining unpaid labor, the ambiguity remained a part of the adopted girls’ lives. The demand for orphan girls for their openness to being shaped has been revealed in several presentations in this conference. One of the most moving stories was told by Ferhunde Özbay (discussant to “Gender, Ethnicity and History”). Her heroine was “either Armenian or Kurdish,” but it did not matter, she was known by the day of the week she was brought in, Tuesday. That was her whole identity. Özlem Şahin (1999, 42) tells similar stories of orphan girls collected after the 1838 Dersim events. One of her interviewees, Altun Dağlı told that there was a great demand for adopting orphan girls. People adopted good looking girls “as a favor to these girls who were cold and tired,” but, according to the girls’ close relatives “they stole them” from their relatives. Some families were also willing to leave their daughters to state officials to save them, even though they knew that they were going to be used as household labor.

The state too adopted orphan girls in a sense. The predecessors of the Girls’ Institutes, the Industrial Schools were also formed with an orphan group (Akşit 2005). The transformation of the state towards a modern, central, controlling one was accomplished through such social projects (Özbek 2005). Come the twentieth century, Türkyılmaz refers to a “maternal colonialism,” acted out by Avar, derived from the missionary experiences with indigenous populations in North America and Australia that includes practices of child removal, and forced boarding school. In these two cases of settler colonialism, white women were excluded from the masculine terrain of the more conventional forms and policies of colonial domination

and women defied their invisibility by claiming their own exclusive colonial space defined around mothering. Based on their accepted capacity to nurture, educate and show compassion, these women claimed that they were not only entitled but also obliged to partake in the civilizing project of these savage and under-developed peoples by teaching them how to speak, act, clean, and also procreate (Türkyılmaz, this volume). In the Ottoman case, by criticizing Turkish women's “enslaved” conditions, they justified Western colonial expansion, and just like Sıdıka Avar did in the following century, Western missionary women privileged themselves (Arat 2000, 12, 24). According to nineteenth-century missionary texts, the filthy and brutal lives led by women slaves was not unique to the Muslims (Arat 2000, 114). Avar's missionary label comes from the fact that in the 1920's “she (Avar) worked at American College for Girls” (Türkyılmaz, this volume). Avar, in her memoirs, described her suffering, and how she “went through trials and tribulations and sacrificed in a way that is very reminiscent of the American missionaries” (Türkyılmaz, this volume). Just like Avar was both a subject and a practitioner of missionary techniques, the mission of civilization was not only shaped by the “missionaries” but also the students, orphans, and whoever surrounded them (Wollons 2009). “The institute as a “civilizing factory,”” (Türkyılmaz, this volume) while employing maternal discourses, assumed the lack of agency on the part of young women. Yet some of the women graduates of the Eastern Girls Institutes, for example, went on to the Village Institutes, and they were the core group that established continuity between different forms of educational practices as well as between different historical periods. In other words, this group managed the passage to the village and constituted the unacknowledged but founding ferment of the Village Institutes (Akşit 2005, Yeşil 2003).

This group also developed a very specific discourse against assimilation (Akşit 2009). The processes through which Kurdish girls and women were educated in Turkish officially started in 1925 with a report composed after the Sheikh Said Revolt with an assumption that the regions that they resided were originally Turkish and were on the edge of being assimilated into Kurdishness (Yüksel, this volume). The report hoped to ensure girls' demand for schools while establishing perfect girls' schools. This way, Kurdish speaking for Kurds settled in a scattered way in some parts of the provinces to the west of Euphrates was banned. This task was accomplished through the case of mobile schools/preachers/gendermarie as a manifestation of biopolitics, and bodies were regulated across physical borders (Yüksel, this volume).

This discourse was a part of a larger one that aimed to Turkify the whole country and that delegated the civilizing mission to women on different levels. Motherhood was not only a tool for “white” women like Avar, but also a tool of nationalization for all educated women throughout the country. This “generation of young women” was to especially be active in the East. However, like the group that was transferred to the Village Institutes, their resistance was also stronger. However, like in the example of Rewşen Bedirkhan, the indication that the first duty of women is undoubtedly motherhood and cookery in their homes was internalized (Yüksel, this volume) and the order of things in a household indicated more than goods: just as the American Missionaries who taught Armenian students how an ideal universe was symbolized in the ideal house (Maksudyan, this volume), the house became the symbol of civilization (Akşit 2005).

Education as an arena where the house was reinvented opens up a new area for the analysis of the much-discussed public and the private spheres in the history of Modern Turkey (Akşit 2010). With Maksudyan's, Özbay's, Türkyılmaz's (this volume) and Şahin's (1999) narration of the stories that belonged to the students that realized this ideal, it also becomes obvious how differences in ethnicity were swallowed by the creation of a state induced private sphere house. Questioning the connection between state discourses, education and the private sphere is a necessary part of acknowledging, imagining and realizing the stories that cherish multi-ethnic wisdom as well as women's knowledge, stories that are locked in this sphere.

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Part IV Gender and Ethnicity: The Balkans and Anatolia

Part IV Gender and Ethnicity: The Balkans and Anatolia

When spheres collapse: conflict, gender and perceptions of belonging in a Kurdish Community

Nerina Weiss¹

In areas like Turkey, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean, society has traditionally been thought of as being two fixed and complementary gendered spheres: Women are associated with the inside, the private, and family, whereas men are associated with the outside, the public, and a wider political activity (Dubisch 1986, Nelson 1974). These gender associations and their allocation to different spaces have rarely been questioned (Delaney 1991) and the domestic/public dichotomy has been taken as a “description of social reality, rather than as a cultural statement masking relations which is highly problematic and expressed ideologically” (Rapp 1979).

Joseph (1986) argues that the political/male and domestic/female domains are not separate entities – on the contrary, these spheres may overlap, intertwine and become one. Especially in a conflict area such as the Kurdish case from Eastern Turkey presented here, politics has become an integral part of domesticity. I want to go even a bit further and argue that gendered spheres do not necessarily coincide with perceptions of inside and outside. This inside/outside dichotomy, rather than being associated with men and women, is associated with the Kurdish community versus the Turkish State. In the meeting with the military and the police, the boundaries separating inside from outside are violated and transgressed. As so often in conflict situations, these transgressions are highly gendered and sexualized.

In the following, I will present four women I have encountered during my fieldwork among pro-Kurdish activists in Eastern Turkey. These women use different strategies to negotiate gendered boundaries, as well as to protect themselves, their dignity and their families. They very creatively play on a variety of ideologies and discourses, as they switch between nationalist codes of honor and marxist inspired discourses of gender equality. These women do so mostly without breaking the social and political codes of ‘modest conduct’. But what happens, if women challenge the social order, when they transform these models and blurr the boundaries between them? Former female guerrilla fighters might enjoy high status and respect in their society as long as they act as an *erkek-kadin* (in Turkish, “man-woman”). Single and dedicated to their political party, they are considered different and beyond other women. Thus, conflict arises when such women chose to marry.

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Ayse

Within the Kurdish party, gender equality and women's emancipation was a goal, sexuality, however, was heavily controlled and restricted. Like other young unmarried girls, Ayse was politically active within this party setting. She joined meetings, lectures and discussions; and participated in public events such as Women's Day, Mothers' Day, Newroz and hunger strikes. But Ayse also visited the surrounding villages in small groups of both men and women. There they educated people in political ideology and human and women's rights and collected signatures for different petitions.² These activities continued often until late in the evening, the lack of transport and bad roads made staying over night inevitable some times.

Ayse's parents, both sympathetic to the Kurdish movement, were uneasy and afraid. Ayşe had become active in the mid 1990s, the hottest years of the Kurdish-Turkish conflict. Her mother specified: "I told her: Sen erkeksin. Sana güveniyorum. (You are a man and I trust you) Nobody can do you any harm. But I am afraid of the soldiers – beware of the soldiers!"

Ayşe's parents knew that Ayşe was an erkek, an (honorary) male, who enjoyed the respect of her companions and the local population. Her ascribed identity as male would hinder any immoral behaviour within her community. Danger was coming from outside: The Turkish soldiers were aware of the moral code of behaviour, but consciously broke it. They did not respect the local perceptions of right and wrong, they polluted, destroyed and broke the social order of things.

While Ayse later joined the guerrilla movement, most other girls resigned from their political activities in order to get married and become children.

Fatma

One winter night, Fatma witnessed her husband's arrest. He had been active for some years. When the soldiers came, she asked them to wait until they got properly dressed. She was persuaded to let in a female soldier in the meantime. Fatma, dressed in her night gown, opened the door. Masked soldiers stormed in and forced her husband to get dressed while they beat him. Fatma herself was not allowed to cover herself properly or to retreat, but had to stand at the entrance, exposing her body to the gaze of foreign men.

In her account of that night, Fatma equates the violence against her husband with the violence against herself. While he was constantly beaten, her body was exposed in a way that was shameful and humiliating for her. The soldiers took away her husband, leaving her with no information on where to find him, or what would happen to him. She was left alone with two small children and pregnant with yet a new baby.

² During my fieldwork these petitions aimed at protesting against the jail conditions of Abdullah Öcalan.

Together with a female relative, she set off to follow her husband's traces. She learned that he and other prisoners had been brought to a hospital, where a doctor was to examine their tortured bodies and then "confirm" that no torture had taken place. The hospital was heavily guarded and the prisoners shielded. To pass by the guards, Fatma pretended to be in premature labour. Screaming and seemingly in pain, she approached the prisoners. A pretended faint distracted the guards and she managed to catch her husband's eyes and share a nonverbal communication with him, before he was dragged off and a doctor came to her support. She was calmer – her husband was alive and according to the circumstances well. Fatma's husband was sentenced to several years of prison and visiting him turned out to be a nightmare. She was strip-searched often by male guards and recalls her relief each time a female guard intervened and took over the search. Fatma chose to be active and subversive. Despite the danger of being caught and the humiliating strip-searches, she managed to smuggle letters in and out of the prison. Hiding them in the windings of her newborn baby was just one method she used.

Fatma is by no means exceptional. A high percentage of women had signed petitions against the jail conditions of Abdullah Öcalan. The Turkish security forces knew this. During the time of my fieldwork, police forces had picked out some women in the villages, mostly mothers of younger children, and escorted them to police stations outside the villages. There, the women were questioned and told to stay away from further party activity. It was clear to all involved that there had been no need to question the women at the police station. Pulling them out of their social surroundings was seen as a deliberate act of intimidation and transgression of moral codes, a situation a woman would rather not end up in. In many interviews these women therefore expressed their unease about this near contact with the Turkish security forces. Several women refused to sign new petitions and were reluctant to meet visiting party members in the hope to escape further police harassment. They retreated from political activity – and thus redrew the boundaries of inside and outside.

Zehra

Zehra had joined the guerrilla as a teenager and had spent years in the mountains and in prison. Upon return to her community, she enjoyed a high social status full of respect and prestige. People did not always like her (in fact, many disliked her), but everybody respected her. Zehra's opinion was always asked and considered. She moved around freely and could spend her leisure time with unrelated males, without raising any suspicions or bad rumours. I went on a walk with X, and his fiancée called. She became jealous when she learned that he was on a walk with a woman. X, however, - without thinking, calmed her down and said: 'Don't worry. You don't even have to think about it. She is not a real woman. She is an erkek-kadın, a man-woman, so you don't have to bother about her.' How does the notion of erkek (man) differ from the notion of erkek-kadın (man-woman)? Being a man, or like a man in Ayşe's case, a woman has the bravery and knowledge of a man. She has accomplished the male characteristics of bravery and self control. A man-woman on the other hand has transgressed gendered boundaries

by imitating men in stature or behaviour, without having internalized the necessary (positive) characteristics of a men (Hassanpour 2001). Such definition does not necessarily address issues of sexuality or a-sexuality. Zehra herself, however, saw her status as an erkek-kadin incompatible with marriage. The asexualization of women, who had transgressed gendered boundaries and entered male “territory” is also a common feature of times of social change. Feminist researchers have argued that social changes mostly have been designed from a male point of view, where the women have formed the other, (Beauvoir and Parshley 1997) who had to be controlled and categorized. (Solheim 1998) When thus women appropriated new (public) space and challenged traditionally male domains, the female body has often been asexualized, masculinised and purified (Bordo 1990, Solheim 1998).

To conclude

When I returned to this Kurdish town two years later, in 2008, things were unchanged for most of the female guerrilla fighters. They did not see any possibility of getting married in the near future. Their reluctance was further strengthened through Zehra, who had transgressed, once again, the boundaries of socially expected conduct. Zehra has married an active member of the local DTP (Demokratik Toplum Partisi) and had given birth to her first baby. The way back to a “normal” life as a woman – marrying and being a mother – had not been an easy one, though. As soon as the news of their engagement had become public, Zehra became a persona non grata. She was accused of being a spy and working for the military; according to rumours, Zehra had been expelled from both cadre and party membership. Dethroned, as she herself described her position, and torn from her status and prestige, she married. Very few people attended the wedding. Those who did, Zehra bitterly observed, came for the sake of her husband, not of herself.

As Zehra had broken with her former social position and transgressed the boundaries of the hegemonic discourse once again, she was completely banned from the social and political arena. Time will show, if this expulsion was a temporal one and in which form Zehra might become political active in the future.

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Circassian Beauty: A Myth in Turkey

Setenay Nil Doğan¹

In 2006, a book titled “Being a Gypsy in Turkey” gave a list of artists and politicians who were originally Roma.² Among the list was Türkan Şoray, who is considered the Sultana of the Turkish cinema since the 1960s and until then considered a typical Turkish woman (Büker 2002:158). A month later, Şoray rejected the claim that she was Roma and declared that she was Circassian and that her beauty made her Circassian origins obvious.³

While announcing her ethnic origins, Sultana deployed a notion of beauty with reference to a well-known “Circassian Beauty” -- a historical image of idealized feminine aesthetic that has been attributed to the women of the Caucasus for centuries. Circassian Beauty is an Orientalist figure that finds its place in both European literature and art and Turkish popular culture. This presentation will focus on Circassian beauty as an item on the agenda of Circassian diaspora nationalists. I use the image of the Circassian Beauty as a heuristic tool to explore the gendered relationships between the Circassian diaspora in Turkey, host community and other geographies.

Circassian Beauty

The image of the Circassian Beauty can be found as early as the 17th century European art, but consolidated in Europe in the 18th century when Circassia became part of European knowledge due to the perpetual conflicts of Circassians with Russia. Hence, knowledge on Circassia intertwined with the construct of Circassian Beauty that was associated with female availability (see for instance Diderot and D’Alambert 1778, 105). In the “Circassian Beauty” Orientalism and the theme of whiteness as a racial category intertwined (Bendyshe 1865, 269).

The construct of Circassian Beauty emerged also through commodification processes in 19th century Europe (Schick 2004, 36-37). Circassian Beauty took its place in the commercialization of entertainment. A brochure announcing the opening of Barnum’s American Museum of Living Curiosities in London promised “a marvelous assemblage of strangest human beings and a world of oddest and most

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² See “Çingeneler Kitap Sayfalarına Girdi,” Sabah, 14 September 2006, <<http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2006/09/14/gny/gny119-20060914-200.html>> (17 April 2009).

³ See “Ben Bir Kabartay Çerkezi’yim,” Sabah 16 October 2006, <<http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2006/10/16/gny/gny115-20061016-200.html>> (20 March 2008).

amazing physical exceptions.” Among the last of the mysterious Aztecs, the tiniest and prettiest dwarfs, and most enormous fat folk were the celebrated beauties of Circassia (Schick 2004, 110). In this, Orientalism, scientific racism, commodification, and an interest in geography as a mechanism of imperial knowledge production all contributed to the idea of Circassian Beauty in the European imagination.

The image of Circassian Beauty is also related to the historical fact that throughout the 19th century Circassians had comprised the human stock of the Ottoman slave market (Erdem 2004, 80). Circassians were traditionally regarded as the most-preferred slaves by the ruling elite (Erdem 1996, 61). Yet, even as the practice of Circassian slavery and involuntary marriage decreased (in theory) since the end of the 19th century, the idea of Circassian Beauty remained alive and Circassian Beauty is the theme of several poems and classical Turkish songs⁴; the image also appeared in other musical genres.

In 1999, Songül Aktürk, also known as Sultana and of Circassian descent, and the first woman MC⁵ in Turkish Rap Music, produced an album called Circassian Girl (Sultana 2000). Her song Kuşu Kalkmaz [Your Bird Can't Fly] was the first rap song banned by Radio and Television Supreme Council. The song is about a man who cheats on his wife, batters his wife who was “sold in exchange for gold.” It is ironic that this banned song was sung by a Circassian woman using the name of Sultana just like Türkan Şoray. Through Sultana, the “Circassian Beauty,” until then defined by the Orientalist gaze and contemporary popular and folk culture artifacts, gained her own voice.

Circassian Beauty on the Agenda of Diaspora Nationalists

Interestingly, Circassian Beauty was celebrated and commodified in Europe and Ottoman Empire during the time when Caucasus had been the target of an expanding Russia. Hence, the image of Circassian Beauty has always been related to the Circassian nationalist agenda among Circassian diaspora--the fall of the nation pertained to the fall of its women.

In 1914, Mehmet Fetgeri Şoenü (1890-1931), a Circassian intellectual, wrote an article called “Circassian Women in Ottoman Social Life” (Şoenü 2007). This article aimed to reply Celal Nuri, an Ottoman intellectual who, as Fetgeri claimed, regarded Circassian women as one of the reasons of the decline of the Ottoman Empire. Fetgeri explored the implications of the existence of Circassian women in Turkish society:

I wonder if the girls of this high nation have become only the tools of entertainment for the Turks. ...[I wonder if] They caused social disintegration of the Turks. ...Never... It is probable that Turks took these girls as a tool of entertainment, but they fulfilled their educational duties –maybe unconsciously; thus they ensured the beautification of the spiritual purity and physical appearance of the Turks. ...Circassian girls did not harm

⁴ Such as “Kız sen Geldin Çerkeşten,” and “Çerkez Kızı” by Selahattin İnal.

⁵ MC means master of ceremony in rap music.

the Turks in terms of civilization and development; on the opposite, they changed their nation towards beauty and maturity. ...[Even if that is not true], who is responsible for that? For that, one should look ...at Turkish social life and Turkishness (Şoenü 2007, 17-18).

For Fetgeri, it was the Circassian nation that was harmed by these practices. Hence the problem of slavery and the practice of human sale were seen as issues of nationalism by the Circassian diaspora of the Ottoman era. These same themes became significant for the second generation of Circassian nationalists that emerged after the mid-1960s. Cemil Kanuko's poem in 1976 employed themes of forced marriage and human sale:

Far away...
 ...Circassian girl is in the arm of the foreigner
 Circassian girl, the mother of the future
 The father of her child should be Circassian
 In the spring of her life
 Circassian girl was 19 years old
 When she was sold shamefully
 ...Another signature of dissolution
 It is sad but its reflection is true
 ...The master is on the mirror of shame (Kanuko 1976, 38).

Hence for Circassian diaspora nationalists, the problem of slavery and involuntary marriage in exchange for money was not only a problem of human rights; rather, it was a national problem since the way Circassian community “mixed with the foreigners” was seen as a route to assimilation.

For Circassian diaspora nationalists in Turkey today, “Circassian Beauty” has two facets: it is an image that makes them simultaneously proud and ashamed. On the one hand, difference from the other ethnic groups in Turkey is celebrated, as İzzet explained:

But despite all, Circassian girl as a spouse is different. ...Especially when we look at the society within which we live. ...The general structure of Circassian girl, her sense of responsibility in the family, her support of her husband, her ability in forming a family... With these qualities, she is not similar to any of the ethnic groups, there are 25-26 ethnic groups in Turkey, she is different.⁶

The image becomes more than simply an ideal type of beauty and femininity, it becomes a construct through which Circassians in Turkey situate themselves in the host community. As Şener states, the idea of Circassian Beauty plays a significant role for the Circassians in Turkey:

⁶ İzzet, interview by author, 10 February 2008, Ankara.

I think that the appearance of Circassians in popular culture as on good terms with the establishment and the state is partly due to Circassian girls. But when we think about it, it is not much to be proud of according to me. [Çok da yüz ağartıcı bir şey değil bence.]⁷

Through the construct of Circassian Beauty, Circassian diaspora nationalists are able to situate their nation in the Ottoman history, in the palace, harems, and ruling elites' households.

On the other hand the construct of Circassian Beauty is generally narrated in terms of a national mistake by the diaspora nationalists. Especially those over 60 years old who were born in Anatolia explore the mistake and their own reactions. Nezih, for instance, explains his experience of Circassian Beauty:

Our Circassians survived a full drama of selling their daughters. ...7 or 8 people, some religious people at our house were discussing the issue. My uncle was a good imam there and he said that "who will marry whom is written on the receipt. Saying that I gave [my daughter] to the Turk or else is against Islam." ...It was 1958 or 1959. I asked whether I could ask a question. ...I asked whether God was a Turk. That was the question. ...I told them that there were at least 20 Circassian girls in this village and no bride who was Turkish. ...I said that among these 20 Circassian girls there was not anyone who married a bachelor. ...The price was 3000 liras back then, it was the price of the girls. ...I said that among these girls, there was none who was not raped by the sons of her husband. I asked them whether God was acting so partially. [Allah bu kadar mı yanlış davranıyor dedim.] ...This is a naked truth, and we survived that as a very degenerated and a very dirty reality. This did not get erased easily. This is why the Turks have stigmatized us that Circassians are selling their girls. Well, it is true.⁸

In both of the discourses, the construct of Circassian beauty is an integral part of the relationships of the Circassians with the host community and peoples of Turkey.

Conclusion

The existing studies on diaspora with a focus on gender have revealed that the way the nation and the diaspora are interlocked is shaped by particular gender ideologies, constructions and relations (Yeoh and Willis 1999). Diasporic identities and belonging are contested, forged, negotiated and reaffirmed through and alongside gender (Siu 2005). I argue that the image of Circassian Beauty is a contested image through which Circassians in Turkey, as an ethnic group in Turkey, relate to the peoples of Turkey and other geographies and vice versa. It is a historical category, which is crucial for diaspora to locate itself vis-à-vis and through the homeland, host community and other geographies such as Europe.

⁷ Şener, interview by author, 18 June 2008, İstanbul.

⁸ Nezih, interview by author, 17-18 August 2007, İstanbul.

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“Biz de Avrupalı(yız)”and the swirling Dervish Father : Cundali Giritli women and the politics of Turkishness Sophia Koufopoulou¹

This presentation describes and explores the different manifestations of Muslim-Cretan identity, especially as they are expressed by Muslim-Cretan women participants in a continuing field research project on the small island of Cunda in the northwestern Aegean Sea, off the coast of Ayvalık, part of Balıkesir Province in Turkey.

This paper investigates how an ethnic group in Turkey can still identify themselves as Cretans and simultaneously integrate into the Turkish majority. My fieldwork convinces me that the existence of an ethnic identity does not contradict or undermine a claim to national identity. Quite the opposite, elements of Turkish national identity such as modernization ideologies and the policies of Atatürk and his followers were applauded by Muslim-Cretans as a “natural” part of their Cretan heritage. In this process, the role of the Muslim-Cretan women of Cunda as symbolic carriers of the mother-tongue was significant and crucial to the perpetual reformulation and reconnection between a symbolic past and an equally symbolic present. Equally significant is the role of Muslim-Cretan men as symbolic successors of their Karaman origins, carried through the patrilineal system of kinship that recognized and demanded Turkishness. Despite the fact that the intermarriage between Turkish men and Christian Cretan women has been challenged recently by various historians (Adiyek 2005) as the solemn explanation of the Muslim-Cretans’ origin, it remains the dominant discourse on origins in Cundali people narratives.

The key argument in this paper is that an ethnic group is not always a minority, in the sense of a group that has constantly been oppressed by a mainstream majority. An ethnic group, as in the case of Kritiki/es of Cunda, could be disadvantaged, but at the same time could be empowered in certain social situations in relation to neighboring communities because of their collaboration with mainstream elites.

The Cundali Kritiki/es (Cretan in greek) are a rare case of a Grecophone community who came to Turkey between 1925-1926, as a result of the exchange

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of populations between Greece and Turkey. Their inability to speak the Turkish language and their distinctive lifestyle became an initial obstacle to their acceptance in their new social and cultural landscapes. According to their narratives, they were labeled “gavur fidan”(unfaithful stem), especially by their new co-villagers, the Midili people, and they were treated accordingly. The Midillili are exchanged people who were relocated from the island of Lesbos (Midilli), and arrived in Cunda before the Kritiki/es. Because of their later arrival, all of the first generation Kritiki/es people that I interviewed stated whom they felt discriminated against by the Midillili, who had obtained the best houses of Cunda as well as the most fertile olive groves. Aside from this silent dispute which later, in certain circumstances, became vocal, there were other reasons that this first contact was difficult:

When we arrived, the locals were waiting for us with welcoming music – but it was a strange, wild music. They had big drums [daoulia] and we, the children, were frightened. We had never seen daoulia or heard these sounds before. We knew only the music of the lyra [fiddle] and ‘mandolino’” (Ismet Teyze, informant from Cunda).

Despite the external and landscape similarities between Crete and Cunda, the latter was still viewed as a strange and rather alien place by the forcibly exchanged Kritiki/es. One particular complaint among the first generation of Kritiki/es concerned the differences in climate. Quarantine periods were adopted by both the Greek and Turkish governments as a precaution against major infectious diseases. As a result the Kritiki/es had to stay in a packed building for a certain time. Meanwhile the Midillili had already settled in the best houses of the community. The communication between the Midillili and Kritiki/es was limited because of the inability of the majority, especially the Kritikes women - with a few exceptions - to speak Ottoman Turkish. The communication channels were left to a few educated Kritiki who spoke both languages.

The Midili people who were relocated to Cunda came primarily from rural communities (such as Komi and Sigri), fairly isolated from urban cosmopolitan centers such as the town of Mytilene. In contrast, the Kritiki/es people came from mixed urban and rural backgrounds. The majority of Cundali Haniiali were coming from the rural surrounding communities of the city of Hania and the majority of Cundali Rethymnos Kritiki/es were coming from the town of Rethymnos. By abandoning their rural identity, Kritiki/es transformed their past through nostalgia to an urban cosmopolitan one (Koufopoulou 2007). This difference of backgrounds (rural versus urban) was pointed out in almost all of our conversations by the Kritiki/es, who I interviewed.

The different lifestyles of these two groups had in their respective communities of origin were starkly in contrast to each other. They had different dress codes, such as local dress codes for men and significantly different clothing styles for women. Kritikes women were dressed more closely to a European dress code [they proudly declared that their mothers very rarely wore pece (the face veil) and kara-carsaf (a black full body covering)], and later when Ataturk passed the 1934 Law prohibiting these garments, Kritiki/es immediately adopted the changes. Kritikes

used the ambiguity of the law regarding female code-dressing to impose a dress code that was associated with Crete. At the same time, the different musical and dance traditions, as well as different eating and drinking habits, all elements of material and non-material cultural backgrounds, became points of collective competitive behavior between the two groups.

Midili people were empowered by their knowledge of Ottoman Turkish and they were accepted by the surrounding local (yerli) communities and the newly-founded Turkish authorities. Kritiki and Kritikes were labeled gavur fidan, not only by Midili people, but also by local (yerli) people and sometimes the Turkish authorities, because of their inability to speak Ottoman Turkish.

On the other hand, Kritiki/es responded to this label by creating their own labels, some of which still exist, such as xeni (strangers), koylu, (peasants, which is horiates in Greek), or kaba (rude). Despite the official prohibition by the Turkish State of publicly speaking the Cretan language, Kritiki and Kritikes continued to speak their language, while insisting that their children learn the official modern Turkish language. Their language even became an asset when they were needed by the Turkish state to show their credentials as loyal Turkish citizens. Their language also was an asset in the formal or informal trade between the Cundali community and the Lesbos Greek people (Koufopoulou-Papageorgiou 1997).

Kritiki/es, despite the maltreatment that they experienced by their surrounding communities or by some of the policies of the Turkish state, became strong supporters of every modernization and westernization effort of the Turkish State. Women especially applauded every reform that Ataturk and his followers instituted, including female voting rights, educational access for women, and women having opportunities to train for professional jobs. Even in the 1940s in Cunda, there were Kritikes women entrepreneurs. During my fieldwork in the 1990s, Kritikes were even applauding Ozal's modernizing efforts, or what they perceived as Westernization efforts. As very proud homemakers in various female gatherings, they displayed their pride for their Cretan culinary traditions, associating their cuisine with the emphasis that western nutritionists placed on the Mediterranean diet. Their Cretan light recipes became another symbol of their Western identities.

In this overall framework of total acceptance of every effort towards the westernization of Turkey, statements such as “Biz de Avrupali(yiz)” (“We are Europeans too”), which was started by Kritikes in their effort to justify their support to the Turkish initiatives to join the European Community, move from a political statement based on a specific political ideology to a “natural” kind of justification. This “naturalization” of a political position transforms the ethnic to national and is used again to empower their ethnic position with a simultaneous effort to integrate and unify their “otherness” within the Turkish context. During my 18-year long study of this specific community, every effort towards the westernization of Turkey has been applauded by the local community and especially by women. The community itself has been through major transformations in the name of uncritical acceptance of modernization.

The appearance of a Dervish statue, at the end of the 20th century, in front of the Muslim-Cretans quarantine station as a welcome gesture of the fatherland to the newcomers on behalf of the local mayor, created a much more complicated puzzle for the investigation of local Cretan identity. The above statue was installed by the local Mayor Tufekci, along with a door and a water fountain as symbolic elements of Giritli identity. Ahmet Tufekci supports the idea that the Turkish fathers who married Cretan women came from Karaman. The mayor himself, Cundali, with a Midilli father and a Kritikia mother, used his personal Turkish nationalistic agenda to Turkify the existing Cundali-Kritiki-Turkish inhabitants of the island. The strongly-developed economic relationships between the local business and Greek business communities and the inevitable cultural networks between Cundali and Greeks that derived from various economic transactions, including most importantly the tourism sector, was perceived in some Turkish circles as a threat to the Turkish and most importantly to the Muslim identity of the local Cretan people. At the same time, this external threat was supported by the admiration that various Turkish intellectuals but “bad muslims”(Killoran 1998) had for Cunda, its unique architecture and its “exotic” people. Moreover, historical studies started to question the patrilineal descent and suggest that a lot of the Kritiki/es were converts from Christianity to Islam. In the broader Turkish national scene, the debate between the secularists and the Islamic fundamentalists was growing. For all of these reasons, the need for a Muslim-Turkish symbol to support the Turkish and Muslim origins of local Cretans was stronger than ever. The locals accepted uncritically this symbol. According to them, first because they felt pride from the existence of such a symbol because finally their existence was officially accepted in a public stand and also it served them as a shield against the “gavur fidan” label.

The Muslim-Cretans in Cunda are a representative example of how an ethnic group perpetually uses the myths of its heritage, recreates and rationalizes them in its continuous struggle to find an elevated position in a society that supports the homogenization of culture. On behalf of Cundali Kritikis women there is an admiration towards the original Istanbul people and the original Izmir people where there is more a dislike towards other ethnicities. That admiration derives from the belief that their urban lifestyle is closer to theirs rather than anybody else. Also the Turkish cities as well as major cities in Crete are part of a Cosmopolitan past, (a mixture of Western and Ottoman elements), which has been used as a strategy of building an elevated status of locality. The key concept of modernization in Turkey initiated by Ataturk and his descendants finds the Muslim-Cretans of Cunda not only agreeable but also helps them to justify their Cretan lifestyles by admonishing the old koylu (peasant) way. This empowerment that Ataturk’s modernization ideologies and policies gave to Kritikis of Cunda was disrupted by the polyester semazen heykeli. A symbol which appeared in the context of making Turkish Islam public or Turki-Islamize public (Gole 2006) a process that has affected the Turkish Society over the last 15 years, and is a reminder that their Fathers were not only Turks but most importantly, faithful Muslims. Unfortunately, the polyester semazen heykeli when they first installed it, swung and almost launched rather than whirled, as a result instead of being a whirling dervish it transformed into a Swirling dervish...

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Gender and Ethnicity: the Case of Kosovo

Milena Davidovic¹

The series "Women's identities" (Savic 2001) comprises a dozen of books concerning memories of women and their search for identity during socialism in former Yugoslavia. The aim of the series was to record, in a systematic way, the personal histories of women who lived under socialism, in order to understand women's position in this kind of society. A new archive of women's life stories was created -- life stories that served as a new source for histories, which official historiography has avoided. These stories detail key historical events as women experienced them, and how these events affected their lives.

The first request for a unity of all the Albanians in Kosovo was proclaimed in 1878 under the leadership of the organization The Prizrenska league. Prizrenska league did not demand a state of its own, but only autonomy within the Ottoman Empire. Ottomans withdrew from the Balkans after the Balkan wars of 1912-1913. From that time to self-proclaimed independence of Kosovo in February 2008, a number of wars have been waged in this region. Women were not only silent witnesses and victims in those wars, but also actors for social change. In this paper, I point out the relationship existing between gender and ethnicity, during the creation of new socio-economic, cultural, and value systems in the new nation-states. Based upon several studies of women's life stories (oral histories), this paper deals with problems of gender emancipation in two different periods (Kaestli 2001, Malesevic 2004). First, I analyze the problems and experiences of women in after 1945 and during the introduction of socialism in Kosovo, the participation of women in key historical events, the impact of these events in their lives and how this time has been seen from a woman's perspective. Second, I analyze the collapse of socialism and explosion of nationalism, the 1991-1995 wars, and the formation of independent states. In the former period, different forms of discrimination were abolished including the one towards women and minorities. The question that remains is why nationalism prevailed over all other values, even over emancipation of women.

I will concentrate on the gender-marked story of one woman, which shows how women's enthusiasm opens new possibilities simply - by love - which is the

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only way to come into a different world. This story is an “insider’s” account about Albanian and Serbian relations and the creation of a new social order. This new social order has helped create a new state. It is a life story of the women that reveals, like some modern scanner, the social, economic, political, and cultural relations through the whole 20th century, including even the beginning of the 21st one. The life of Didara Dukadjini-Djordjevic is a short review of a great period in Kosovo and Yugoslav society. Her biography is the incarnation, the picture of one epoch from beginning to end. Against her will, she removes her veil, as a symbol of her women’s role in the culture and tradition in society, in which she has grown up. Didara Dukadjini was born in 1930 in Prizren, Kosovo, in a rich family of an Islamized aristocracy. Her mother was the daughter of a Bey. Her father named her Didara, a word is Persian by origin, meaning eyes that see the good in everything”. Turkish, Albanian, and Serbian were spoken in her childhood home. Didara’s father, with the agreement of the older brother decided that his daughter would take off the veil. No one asked her about it. As she tells it:

Father’s decision came to me as the worst punishment. I was in shock, astonished, without power to oppose, to ask something, when he told me that he gave his promise to the Party that his daughter would not veil. I cried all night. I could not imagine a more terrible situation than the one in which my own father put me. I was seventeen; I wanted to be married, not to be different from my peers. I felt weak and powerless; it felt like my father was forcing me to go naked on the street, forcing me to prostitution. I thought I would never survive this shame (Malesevic 2004, 39-40, my translation).

But after she took off her veil, Didara went forward and became the prototype of women of a new age and new values, which a new society was forging and demanding mass education, political and cultural emancipation of women, and abolition of all forms of discrimination, especially against women and national minorities. Each project from program documents, which the Party had asked to be realized, Didara saw and accepted as deeply personalized goals of her own life and living reality. Everything that she did was pioneering, the first attempt by anyone in the milieu in which she lived. She did not have predecessors to learn from their examples and mistakes. She always strictly followed the proclamation and programs of new society and state in which she lived. She lived constantly ahead of the times that surrounded her: she was first to take off the veil, first to continue the education, first to access to national mixed marriage, first to go to be active in a political life, the first campaigner and struggler for women’s emancipation and an active player of political change.

She refused an arranged marriage, which her father tried to organize. She wanted romantic, real love, from the bottom of her heart. She chose a Serb, political activist, communist – proletarian in a real sense of that word. Immediately, her father responded with a besa – he proclaimed that, in the future, for the family, she is dead! She was forbidden to come into her parent’s house ever again. No one in the wider family was to ever meet her or mention her name. At the same time, her mother-in-law did not want an Albanian daughter in law either.

But her husband was not a typical Balkan man. As she put it: “He did not give a penny that we had different nationalities, he was communist and he lived in accordance with what he believed in. There was no place for any nationalism in his world; he did not know what it was” (Malesevic 2004, 163, my translation). Her husband insisted that she continuously educates herself, he helped her to develop herself all the time.

She lives in harmony with the model of the “new women,” the liberated women, in the difficult time after the Second World War, which changed the fate of Yugoslavs, but especially Kosovo’s women. Didara became a model, indicator, cursor - showing by her own example that such a new, liberated women is possible. From a schoolteacher in a little town at the border with Albania, she reached the highest political positions in Kosovo, becoming Kosovo deputy in Yugoslav Parliament.

As time passes, however, it becomes increasingly clear that the shift made from traditional women role to the modern, liberated role of women is more the exception than the rule. The gap between the proclaimed ideals and everyday life in society became more and more evident, and somehow even bigger, more insidious, perfidious, false and prudish. While the arrival of a new social order – a mass accession of women to public roles – was demanded and promised, what resulted was the passive presence of a few women, whose presence was supposed to be a proof of “realized gender equality”. Didara remained aware of the fact that real emancipation had not happened because no one was seriously interested in changing the overall system of patriarchal rule over everyday life. What does she say about her experience being a woman in politics, a professional politician?

I quickly noticed – that women generally were allocated to the subordinate jobs, and that high policy departments were lead by men. One had to understand how the whole system was set up in that way. I personally did not have higher ambitions, because already where I found myself was more than I ever thought I can realize, but as a women I was disappointed to know that women in politics in general are in the minority positions. They were not at the places where decisions were made. When Josip Broz Tito, the President of Yugoslavia, came to visit Kosovo at the end of the sixties, my responsibility was to accompany his wife Jovanka Broz. In that time I held a political position! I was the President of Kosovo Province Women Conference Organization, the highest women organization. When the U.S. Secretary of State, McNamara came, it was my obligation to host his wife. So, as the president of the Kosovo Women Organization, I was assigned the task to meet high guest’s wife while he was together with other men, occupied with important state affairs. Personally, I was honored to enjoy the companionship of Jovanka Broz and Ms. McNamara, taking them on a tour of the historic heritage of Prizren and talking to them about the problems of women in Yugoslavia. The thing is that I received this duty as a professional politician. This clearly shows how women were limited in the prevention of their participation in high politics. Women who wanted to participate in high political function, had to be brilliant, and very capable, so much so that it was not possible to bypass them. I have not been so brilliant, and personally I felt

satisfied with my position, but the fact is that men, even with a very average knowledge and skills, could much more easily reach a higher position than women”(Malesevic 2004:161, my translation).

At the beginning of eighties, the crisis in Kosovo grew deeper. The level of unemployment was the highest not only in the country, but also in Europe. This is why ethnic tensions grew. Serbs could not accept the fact that Albanians were a majority and thus had a legal advantage in employment. At the same time, the number of unemployed Albanians with university degrees was growing rapidly. Albanian nationalism was beginning to be openly expressed in 1981 with a demand for Kosovo to gain the status of a republic within Yugoslavia. With the federal Constitution, every republic could separate and be an independent state – just what happened later, of course.

In public life, discussion of nationalism has started to be practiced equally on Serbian and Albanian sides. The leading public discussions were connected to questions such as: who was settled first in Kosovo – Albanians or Serbs? Who holds advantages in economics and politics? Who is exploited by whom? Who is a minority in Kosovo considering it within the whole Serbia as a Republic – Serbs who were living in Kosovo itself or Kosovo Albanians counted within the whole population in the Republic of Serbia? There is growing number of Kosovo Albanians believing that Albania is a promised land of justice and equality. Kosovo Serbs believe that demography is the problem: the high level of Albanian birth rate is planned against them (Zdravkovic 2005,149-198). Thousands of Serbs left Kosovo because they were afraid of the Albanian majority and separatism. Albanians who were working abroad, so-called “gastarbeiter” or foreign workers were buying Serbian houses, land and property, even paying extremely high prices. In Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, media were introducing hate speech and huge anti-Albanian campaign.

In Belgrade, a new communist leader, Slobodan Milosevic, took power. He organized mass mobilization of the Serb population to gain support for the new solutions to solving the Kosovo problem. His idea was to take away the autonomy of Kosovo changing a constitutional position of Kosovo within Serbia, but at any price, and in any way, including violence.

So at the end Didara could say:

My country, that I was building up and accepted as my own country – disappeared before Yugoslavia was broken in the wars that came in 1991. I lost my base, my feeling of security: everywhere where I appeared, I felt like an alien, like “foreign body”, a newcomer. It was like epidemic: a nationalistic virus infected everyone. Communism lost its historic battle. And instead of it only nationalisms were offered. Vi, “mixed” people, from mixed marriages, with mixed identities and nationalities, we became everywhere undesirable person, *persona non grata*”(Malesevic 2004,173-174, my translation, my italics).

Even Didara’s husband, who never was a nationalist, being in that time a pensioner, held sympathy for Milosevic’s politics, some time at the beginning of his power, She met with difficulties during the political, value, and cultural disintegration of the country and the system that were the source of her life’s safety and the sense of her life. All that she invested in her whole life, became “regressive and anachronous, old-fashioned”: a mixed marriage, her Kosovo-Albanian’s-Yugoslav identity, in which there was no place for nationalism. However, she lives with a hope, as her name says it – her “eyes see only that which is beautiful”. She still believes that her grandchildren will come to visit Kosovo as the country, which will again become a gathering place, not a place of division.

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**Part V
Gender and Ethnicity:
Caucasia and Anatolia**

Part V Gender and Ethnicity: Caucasia and Anatolia

“Why divide the nation into men and women?”: A Case Study of Shushanik

Nona Shahnazarian¹

Among the half dozen of violent post-Soviet ethnic-territorial conflicts, Nagorno-Karabakh has been the most unruly and intractable. The interethnic war resulted from the emergence of the independent de facto republic of Nagorno-Karabakh, which previously was part of Soviet Azerbaijan. Fusing narratives obtained from interviews and life stories of the Karabakh movement activists and ordinary people who experienced the war, I attempt to embed different post-war rhetoric into relevant political and social contexts.

This research examines the intersection between ethnicity and gender involved in the national-patriotic rhetoric surrounding the Karabakh war (1991-1994). The study is based on eight months of fieldwork in the district of Martuni in Karabakh in 2000-2001, and on additional trips in August 2003 and September 2004. The research was also supported by more recent fieldwork in Karabakh in June 2005, July 2006, June 2007, and June 2008.

The transgression of gender roles

Women in the Karabakh war took on multiple roles. While the war has changed the social structure of the community toward traditionalization, some women were able (or even forced) to acquire new, non-traditional female roles, which were justified under the discourse of the nation. According to some data, 100 women were involved in Karabakh war in a direct way, 17 of them were killed and 16 of them became disabled. The question is, why have some women chosen fighting as a life strategy in this male-dominated neo-traditional community? Did national ideas affect their chosen gender identities? What kinds of reactions are engendered by a non-stereotypical female demeanor? To answer these questions, in this paper, I undertake a case study of one female fighter, named Shushanik (b. 1961). At the moment of interview she was divorced and had two adult daughters and two grandchildren. She divorced her husband some years before the war. Shushanik had received a secondary education. She arrived in Nagorno-Karabakh Republic from Armenia at the beginning of the war and served as a director of a battalion's medical

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service until 2004. She has also fought in the ground-attack battalion of L and took part in the majority of combat operations as a nurse.²

Shushanik listed patriotism as a major stimulus for choosing a military career. Her choice was largely influenced by the nationalistic discourse adopted by her community and family.

Shushanik's patriotic attitude originated in her childhood, when she heard her grandfather's memories of Armenian-Turkish conflict and the following massacre in 1915. It is a common Armenian tradition for grandparents to tell their grandchildren stories about the horrors of Armenian Yeghern (genocide, ethnic cleansing). These narratives have helped form a deeply nationalized Armenian sentiment of suffering and pain. The patriotic education at schools and the annual nationwide ritual procession to the Tzitzernakabert hill on April 24th, the day of the Armenian genocide by Ottoman Turkey, supports the maintenance of these painful historical memories and patriotism among the younger generations. These memories then are activated when events such as the Karabakh war or drastic political changes such as the break-up of the Soviet Union occur. The situation was aggravated by Shushanik's (and among women in a similar position) deep personal crisis: Conflict with the traditional patriarchal ways and traditional attitudes towards women, and women's economic insecurity compared to men.

Shushanik's first appearance among the soldiers was tainted the male perception of a woman as a sexual object: "I came up into the booth where only men were sitting. It is clear what happened with them—woman in front of them. I sobered them with my hard look." Her aspiration to fight evoked a disdainful attitude among the men. In their view she was trying to do work unsuited for a woman.

The war experience proved Shushanik fearless and capable of fighting. According to many informants, women's presence in war was an essential resource for the maintenance of fighting spirit in battles as well as for volunteer recruitment:

The N-operation has ended up and we have come back. We were told that everybody who wishes could head out to participate in another battle at S. One of the first who expressed willingness to go was I. When I stepped forward, the men felt uncomfortable that I, a female, was not afraid... That's why they can't stay either... Men had to step forward. Commanders used this powerful means in all possible ways. The General called the subordinates and arranged to deliver me at the front line: she is fearless, she will withstand. She is a woman and her presence will bring shame upon men. Men will behave differently in the presence of a female.³

² In order to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the research participants, the real names of the battles are not stated here.

³ Interviews took place in Armenian and translations are my own.

Here is an obvious link to the traditional masculine code of honor widespread in the entire Caucasus. Shushanik was aware that her very presence in the war would challenge men otherwise reluctant to observe the masculine code to its extreme limits.

Apparently, transgression of conventional relationships between the sexes had taken place. However, an essentialized thinking about gender roles was still maintained. The soldiers perceived Shushanik as a comrade in arms rather than a female. During the actual wartime, in accordance with the fighting spirit, equality between men and women and the women's comradeship with men was accentuated. However, after the war, the patriarchal ideology prevailed again and Shushanik's love affair with a commander was emphasized more than her superior bravery and fighting spirit. Thus, her merits as a fighter were diminished at the expense of her traditionally perceived female role of being a man's lover. This observation comes from my conversations with Shushanik's comrades in arms.

The situation of extreme emotional tension and constant risk and danger and the imagination of the nation as a horizontal brotherhood fighting for the nation's survival, allowed for unusual male-female relationships and inversion of roles. At a deeper level of gender ideology, however, Shushanik's femaleness was not accepted: in order to fight, she had to be perceived as a man. Like many other women-warriors whom I interviewed, this national battle became, for her, a "romantic" meaning of life.

Post bellum

Upon the end of the war the situation returned to normal little by little. Pre-war social relations were restored, reflecting upon the women-warriors' positions and status. Sometimes their social assessment shifted radically. Unconventional female behavior that was permissible and even welcomed during the war became unacceptable at least in private discourse. This was painfully experienced by Shushanik. A partial recognition for women was gained: Immediately after the war, newspaper articles devoted to her were published. In 2002, she was awarded a medal for bravery. Yet, the assault squad commander of the group in which she served, confessed: "I think she deserves a higher award. I would expect a 'War Cross' award as minimum." Dissatisfaction and disappointment showed in about every single utterance by Shushanik. A fragment from her letter to me says: "I want to leave all of this and go back to Armenia. I wasn't given a rank ... I have a sense that ... everything I did... nobody needs it..."

When people are asked about Shushanik, they answer that she was a mistress of a glorious commander. In the best scenario, some women uncertainly added that she served as a nurse in the army and pulled out wounded soldiers from the front lines. As Shushanik told me, a little boy who met her on his way to the kindergarten, asked his mom with delight: "This is Shushanik, mom, isn't she?"

Men reacted ambiguously to my stories about Shushanik's deeds. One of them, a 23 year-old, didn't want to admit to any of Shushanik's merits, bravery, and heroism, except of that "She was an ordinary regimental nurse like many other women. She made decisions about nothing, and nothing depended on her."

In the postwar rhetoric, one finds openly sexist discourses. I have frequently come across traditional arguments, according to which the participation of women in war was always controlled by men and had an exclusively auxiliary character. Along with this, women who had not refuse their traditional social roles, were highly acknowledged and honored. The war has been rationalized through a normative gendered perspective, so that the image of combat and a defender of the Fatherland are usually described in masculine terms, while the rare instances of female fulfillment of these roles are perceived as a challenge to male authority and dominance. Women's war experiences that were equal to those of men could demythologize the image of the nation's "defenders" as solely men. By denying women's merits in battle, men unconsciously or consciously, protected the foundation of male power and superiority. Ethnic wars and national movements in this sense are thus the field for gender contestation, in as much as the discourses behind these movements protect, distribute, and redistribute gender-related power relations (among many other forms of power relations).

In ordinary mass consciousness, women who violate the gender order are considered dangerous "upstarts." They can swear and drink like men (and together with men); they are called by the highest praises tyghamard-kyneg (dialectal, which literally means man-woman); that is, they are partially included in the male society. But therein lies the rejection of these women too: on the one hand, they are denied their female subjectivity because they are considered as one of the men; and, on the other hand, they are not fully qualified members of the male community.

In such cases, women pay a heavy a price for the "honor" of being accepted into a "male brotherhood." From an erotic object and the role of a caregiver socially recognized and protected by traditional culture, she turns into a non-systemic semi-component. Here we deal with a dual marginalization of women: In her traditional role, woman is bound to home and marginalized by domesticity; but counteracting the marginality and domesticity by fighting side-by-side with men still does not give her the coveted social status of equality. On the contrary, such counteracting of the patriarchy actually marginalizes her even further. This marginalization, as evident from the case of Shushanik, occurs both at a personal and a collective cultural and social level.

In the postwar society of Karabakh, the renewal of older, patriarchal models of communal relationships became an optimal strategy for resistance and victory. The ideology of the "moral economy of the village" (Scott 1976) and the reinstatement of the philosophy of "back to village" (Luman 2000) and extended family values was supported by the extreme economic circumstances, and as such, became the primary formula for survival. The transgression of gender roles was another, opposite strategy through which all resources were mobilized for the victory. Within this latter model,

new gender practices emerged, yet paradoxically served to reinforce the practices and ideologies of male domination.

Under extreme war conditions women-soldiers were tolerated, only to be denounced again after the war. Thus, the history of Shushanik is an important manifestation of the weak attempts accompanying war and postwar communities to revise the established gender order. Viewing the work of women through the prism of masculine values greatly impedes the organization of a serious feminist movement in the region. In this sense, nation-building—a process, which has been resumed in Karabakh with newfound strength in the aftermath of socialism—is accompanied by conflict at the intersection of ethnicity and gender. This conflict is reflected very clearly in the statement of Zhanna Galstyan, adviser to the President of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic on cultural issues: in response to my question about what she thinks of women's solidarity in the region, Galstyan, with poorly concealed indignation, replied with another question: "Why divide the nation into men and women?"

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“(Gendered) Unwritten Culture”: Turkish Armenians, Ahiska Turks, Abkhaz

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Our presentation is devoted to three local cases that should illustrate the complexity and inter-linkages of gender, ethnicity and nationalism in societies that typologically contrast, but that are historically close: the Hamshen Armenians who left Turkish Pontus for Caucasus, the Ahiska Turks who originated from Caucasus, and the Abkhaz, who are suggested to be the indigenous Caucasian people.

The first one is the Armenians from Ottoman Trabzon vilayet (Pontus). Since 1980s, one of the authors did his fieldwork among their descendants who have settled at Northern Black Sea Coast, i.e. in Krasnodar Krai and Abkhazia. In 1860s, the first Armenians came from Turkish Pontus to the Russian Black Sea Coast, but their migration went on and was especially intensive after tragic events of 1915-16. Today the total number of their descendants is about 170-180 thousand (Kuznetsov 1995:20-5). Their cultural heritage contains many features which are characteristic of their previous homeland in Pontus, such as: baking of special bread from corn (lazut), unique folk textile technology, kemence festivals and improvisations in mani.

Recently, for some reason, Pontic Armenians used in their naming several common Armenian female personal names for men and vice versa, cf.: female Zadig occurs as middle-aged mens' name and male Aršaluys rarely, among the oldest women. There is also another gender “curiosity”: a Standard Armenian tła(n) ‘children (male and female),’ or even ‘a young girl’ in some Hamshen villages has transformed to dāten ‘a boy’ and ‘a youngster.’ Yet the most interesting is how a kinship terminology functions among them. It is well-known that Standard Armenian uses a set of terms, naming different stages of closeness between relatives in order to direct and collateral lines should be made out, rather than patri- and matriline. This kind of type of kinship terminology has been already defined as “an English” or “descriptive” in old-fashioned 19th century ethnographies. In contrast to this situation Turkish terminology is usually referred to so-called “an Arabic” type that is much more rich in terms, focusing on all four descent lines: a father, a father's brother and a mother's brother are terminologically distinguished and so on.

The case of Hamshen Armenians demonstrates that under certain conditions people may combine terminologies of both types, ad hoc selecting them and

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adding a lack of terms in local Armenian dialect with extra words from Turkish. For instance, they give *horkurešti* only for a father's sister's daughter, then Turkish *yeğın* labels 'father's sister's son,' as well as they use both *k'ini* and *kayınçı* to name correspondingly a wife's sister and her brother. Moreover, common Armenian *azgagan* 'relatives' sometimes means 'agnates' among them, while *xəsum* (< Turkish *hısım*) supplements and serves as a word for 'cognates.' In addition, if a researcher tried to collect local terms, describing possible behavioral pattern in kinship and gender of only of Armenian origin, it would be only one part of actual picture that is much more complex.

Our second case is based on the results of field studies among the Ahiska Turks in different Russian regions (Kuznetsov 2007). With help from this case, we can explain how extreme conditions of in-/out-migration might result in above-mentioned "curiosities" among the Armenians from Pontus. The Ahiska Turks have been twice deported, initially by Stalinist authorities from their homeland in Georgia, i.e. the Ahiska region (< Georgian *acalice* 'a new fortress') and then by post-Soviet nationalist radicals from Central Asia. The overall number of Ahiska Turks in Russia today is approximately 80,000.

Relations among family and relatives play a key role in the formation of social networks among Ahiska Turks (Tomlinson 2002). When describing the degree of kinship, the maximum number of terms for all four branches of kinship are used (direct kinship of the female and male lineage as well as collateral kinship on both sides), which corresponds to the so-called Arab-type kinship system.

Above all, family and relative networks provide moral and material support. If someone in the family is grieving, it is essential that members of the community express their condolences, that they pay a visit and are supportive. If, for instance, a person was not present at the funeral, they are then obliged to visit all the members of the bereaved family. It is through relatives that people try to find work and accommodation and get registered. Someone who does not have citizenship and is not registered, for example, in Krasnodar Krai, does not have the legal right to travel beyond the territory in which he is living. They only travel short distances at their own risk. However, their naturalised relatives can come to them from Russian regions and other states. The dispersion of relatives is the problem they mention most.

The ongoing struggle against such kind of official restrictions and the other troubles from outside for the possibilities of relatives settling together led to the development of various patterns of settlement. The first one is a mixture from a number of dispersed Turkish groups within one huge multi-ethnically or mostly Russian populated area, for instance, some Krasnodar and Rostov settlements. In terms of gender, the above mentioned pattern is "blind" and does not demonstrate any interesting aspects: each spontaneously aggregated families (or even their fragments) is usually centered on the most important male person (for instance, a father, a husband,). On the other hand, a different pattern of settlement occurred when and where relatives were able to stay together (for instance, in Voronezh Oblast). This second pattern breaks patrilocality. Here, many matrilineal linkages

have been founded (for instance, sisters' families settling down with their brothers and vice versa). We can see how despite the traditional patriarchy relations within a household and extended family, the Ahiska Turks try to count kin descent both on patri- and matrilineal, selecting relatives to reunite. To all appearances such shifts are impossible to explain as simple results of Stalinist deportations or as more recent changes. Some data illustrate that practice like this had taken place yet in Georgia.

This bilateral strategy, as we argue, helps to increase the chances of maintaining the unity of the group of exiles at the new place. It is caused by extreme conditions in which the new settlement grows and may be a characteristic of other societies in similar conditions. In contrast to this situation (for instance if a rural community has already existed), it is necessary to keep the traditional order (patrilineal kin descent). In Voronezh Oblast, people focused on actual (synchronous) ties of relationship that support solidarity for the group, whereas in old and stable villages they might be guided with (re)constructed (diachronous) ties in the form of family genealogies.

These kinds of transformations in the locality where Ahiska Turks live correspond to other changes here in their leadership. Today, there are many respected women leaders of families, as well as older women who have a special gift. It must be said that these women are also usually readers of the al-Quran. In addition, there is an attempt to form a 'women's council' of women activists from high-ranking jobs (former Soviet intelligentsia). Yet all Ahiska formal leaders and nationalist ideologists are men!

The Abkhaz of Lidzava village are our final case. It is based on the result of participant observation conducted by both authors regularly every summer since 1985 including throughout the war years, and irregularly, before 1985. Lidzava (in Abkhazian *Ldzaa*) is a village located in Gagra district, Abkhazia, and populated by approximately 2,000 people. Rita Kuznetsova (Mamasakhlisi) is native born of the village. This part of our paper discusses the effects of nationalism on the conditions of women's life, especially how they present themselves, and particularly how they dress.

"Traditional" Abkhaz society is considered patriarchal, patrilineal and patrilocal. Yet, in reality, the status of Abkhaz woman was contradictory. On the one hand, the situation of woman worsened under the influence of written law, first Muslim, then Orthodox Christian, and finally under the Tsarist Empire. During this time, Abkhaz became a more autonomous nation with a complicated social hierarchy. They copied a very hierarchical model of gender relationships from their neighbors. "The state feminism" of the Soviet period (Aivazova 2001:46) enforced such contradictions as it formally destroyed the inequality of women but turned women, according to Stalin, into "the greatest female labor reserve of the working class" (Smirnova 1955:155), that was necessary for social construction (collectivization, planning economics, totalitarian society). However, while in the West and in Russia, emancipation for women meant not only the admission to fields that did not break the traditional notion of femininity (such as writers or actresses), but her being

accepted into the strictly male activities (such as politics or business). This did not happen in Abkhazia. With increased education among the Abkhaz women, “gender asymmetry” grew.

Abkhaz nationalist ideology is a more modern phenomenon, even in comparison with Russia. Modern Abkhaz fight for their ancestral lands they lost and autonomous political status). Despite the notions imposed by men, during the Georgian-Abkhazian war in 1992/93, some women were able to bring to life the image of ancient “Amazons”. After the war women began to join NGOs: “The Sisters of Mercy Union” (1995), “AZhA”, “Mothers for Peace Movement” (1997), and “Mramza” (2001). On the other hand the solidarity with the whole “Abkhaz people,” meaning men, remained stronger than women’s will to receive independence within Abkhaz society.

During the years after the war, the closing of the Russian-Georgian border lead to the hypertrophied roles of women in the economy of Abkhaz society. In fact the outside blockade made it impossible for Abkhaz men to move out of Abkhazia. Their wives and sisters became the main traders and migrants to Russia. The following fact can tell the scale of this phenomenon. During the “tangerine season” (late autumn, when the tangerine harvest is exported to Russia for sale), the total number of citizens (women and children) that crossed the border on “Psou” post and returned daily reached 12,000. It means that all females of Abkhazia went to Russia every 4-5 days to earn money and returned to their husbands! (Zurab Margania, chief of the Abkhaz border patrol, personal communications).

For the majority of families of Lidzava, the female trade became the main source of income. Nowadays, women continue to run such “business” (take fruits and vegetables for sale outside Abkhazia and bring Russian goods in); they run the house and work on the plot of land attached to their house, make up the body of teachers in the only Lidzava school and the whole body of traders in 4-5 food stores and the only café in Lidzava. They also work in the remaining hotels. But, there are no women in the central and local government. Except for Manana Ardzinba, the daughter of ex-president of Abkhazia [one of the joint owners of “Boxwood Grove” (Samshitovaia Rosh’ia) health resort] there are no women among the owners of the stores and health resorts.

This longing for emancipation held back by the frames of male society is compensated by women in their appearance. During the colonial period, gender differences in Abkhaz dressing were less obvious than in European and Russian people. There were wide pants in Abkhazian “traditional” female costume, similar with male ones in design. The cut of the female shoes was identical to male ones. Hiding breasts under corsets lead to another diffusion of the difference between men and women. Today it is considered that Abkhaz women must not smoke. Nevertheless, for no obvious reason there are several old women (not many, 1-2) in every village including Lidzava that do smoke and are not to blame.

Female shirt-dress and wide pants became underwear instead of upper clothes at the end of 19th century. They were replaced by the skirt under the pressure of Russian (European) fashion in the beginning of the 20th century while the traditional sleeveless shirts were worn under the dresses as a bodice. Dress of Circassian type was adopted to the European tastes and became a light coat (Malia and Akaba 1982, 82-3, 85, 98). By the end of 1960s, the fabric clothes replaced the homemade and the tailor-made ones. The elder sisters of one of the article’s authors, who were 18-20 years old during that time, bought their clothes from illegal merchants followed fashion magazines.

On the other hand, a new conservatism appeared in clothes. In 1980s when the above-mentioned author wore jeans, her female neighbors came to her mother to complain and insisted she must not wear trousers: “She is no man”. Loose hair was forbidden for another reason: Abkhaz women wear their hair loose when they mourn the dead. While before the war of 1992/93, only the brave girls could afford to wear trousers in Lidzava, today it is a normal sight. One can see extremely short skirts and shorts everywhere (none except for children wore them before), open shirts and flimsy dresses. Another ban that became so necessary that it was not even spoken of – wearing a bra– was broken. Today girls do not feel ashamed to go out without it. The after-war generation of girls and young women pointedly use decorative makeup. Even the mourning dress became more like black evening dress. During the summer of 2001, the authors observed young women who mourned over their brother who died young. In such situations, the strictest rule works for the relatives of the deceased person, his mother wears mourning dress for the rest of her life. These women wore trousers and rather bold revealing shirts. They did not give up their makeup (another violation). Their explanation of this behavior was “If we could have our brother back with mourning dress, we would wear it for the rest of our lives.”

Despite the economical difficulties and isolation caused by blockade of 1990s and attempt of Abkhaz male society to return to “traditional” way of life, there is no turning back in female fashion. One can notice that emancipation in dressing became even stronger. On the other hand the majority of women do not accept sex without marriage, although their appearance may often lead in the wrong direction (Kuznetsova 2003).

In sum, we have attempted to examine some ways in which different kinds of societies developed under changing conditions. Our attention has focused upon what happened to local “traditional” gender order, which was influenced with new nationalist discourse and politics from the outside, resulting in forced migrations, ethnic conflicts and ethnic cleansing. One of subjects of this dramatic cultural construction, the Pontic (Hamshen) Armenians have remained traces of former gender transformation for decades. The further victims of the process, Ahiska Turks, are characterized by the unexpected high and important social position of their women. Finally, despite the fact that Abkhaz women have already gained quite economic independence as well as superficial freedom, their social roles have remained unnoticed and unwritten yet.

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A study on the diversity of gender role stereotypes in two ethnic groups of Iranian college students

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Culture is a key element in the formation of identity positions of all kinds. It is usually conceptualized as a constellation of shared meanings that grow out of different aspects of life and provide a common lens for perceiving and structuring reality for its members (Squire 2000:56). Cultures are not considered to be the fixed properties of stable groups. They are something that is cultivated, made or done. Sapir defines culture as "What a society does and thinks" (Sapir 1921:218). The term 'ethnic group' generally refers to a group that shares a common subculture and language (Hyde 1996:214). Gender is another key social formation that includes social, institutional, symbolic and ideological elements. Gender is lived and experienced differently depending on one's ethnicity, nationality, and sexuality (Miller and Scholnick 2000:193). Gender- role stereotypes are conceptualized as a set of shared cultural or sub-cultural beliefs about males and female behaviors, personality traits, and other attributes (Hyde 1996:76). Gender stereotypes affect how women and men think of themselves and how they evaluate their behaviors and behaviors of others. Stereotypes exert control over people (Brannon 2002:172).

Iranian culture has a very diverse and heterogeneous population with over ten separate and distinct ethnic groups, each with their own values, languages, customs and traditions. The Kurds are an ethnic group who are indigenous mostly to some western regions of Iran. The Kurds are ethnically related to other Iranian people, they speak Kurdish and Indo-European language of the Iranian branch. They constitute approximately 7% of Iran's overall population. They live with more or less their own system of values, customs and traditions. Kurdish culture may be considered as a minority as compared with the mainstream of national life. Kurdish women like other minorities, have at least a dual minority status. They are confronted with a set of social and cultural values from their own ethnic group on the one hand, and from their exposure to a mainstream of dominant culture of Iran on the other. In Iran, we are usually confronted with pluralistic cultural formations within which minority culture can be sustained (Khamseh2007, 129). The aim of the present preliminary study was to test the hypothesis of whether Kurdish and non-Kurdish cultures make similar distinctions between what is considered as masculinity and femininity and how ethnicity influences female and male gender role stereotypes.

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Method

Our population in the present study was all of the first grade students including all major areas of three universities from Tehran, the capital city of Iran, and one university in the of Kurdistan province. The data were gathered from 30 Kurdish female students, 31 Persian female students, 40 Kurdish male students and 39 Persian male students (N= 140). All of the students randomly selected from that defined population. The age range of the group was 18-35. The mean of the age was 19.89 years (SD= 7.07). There were no significant differences between two ethnic groups (Kurdish vs. non-Kurdish) regarding age, educational level and socio-economic status. We used two questionnaires in this study: The first questionnaire was the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI)-Persian Form. Sandra Bem constructed a test to measure femininity and masculinity. It consists of 60 adjective phrases. Respondents are asked to indicate, for each, how well it describes them on a scale from 1 (never or almost never true) to 7 (always or almost always true). Of the 60 adjectives, 20 are stereotypically feminine, 20 are stereotypically masculine, and 20 are neutral, that is, not gender typed. Once the test has been taken, people are given two scores: a masculinity score and a femininity score. The androgynous people should be high in masculinity and high in femininity. Bem defines "high" as being above the median. The median on each of these scales is generally about 4.9. A feminine person is one whose scores are high on femininity but low on masculinity. Similarly, a masculine person has scores high on masculinity scale but low on the femininity scale. Finally people whose scores are low on both feminine and masculine scale are called "undifferentiated." Therefore, having taken the BSRI, an individual can be placed in one of the four categories: masculine, feminine, androgynous, or undifferentiated (Bem 1974:162). In the Persian version of BSRI, we added six adjectives (traits) to BSRI-60. These traits have been selected based on a primary study in Iranian culture. These six traits are: 1) tolerance (patience); 2) an active role in maintaining family ties; 3) presenting family identity; 4) an active role in creating family plan; 5) talkativeness; 6) passion. This inventory was found to have adequate validity and reliability. Studies in psychometric properties of BSRI-Persian Form indicate the internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha for men and women are 0.67 and 0.75, respectively) and concurrent validity for women and men are 0.75 and 0.95, respectively. The studies of test-retest reliability show a strong correlation between measures: 0.81 for women and 0.91 for men. The second questionnaire was a general demographic questionnaire consists of the personal information and socioeconomic status of the participants. This questionnaire also consisted of the questions about positive or negative evaluation of masculinity and femininity from the perspective of each ethnic group. Participants evaluated femininity and masculinity traits according to their cultures.

Results

Scores of Persian and Kurdish female and male students are shown in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Scores on BSRI-Persian for Persian and Kurdish female students (N= 61)

Variables	Persian	Kurdish	Statistical tests for comparison
	M (SD) (N= 31)	M (SD) (N= 30)	
Femininity	4.9 (.47)	5.25 (.56)	tdf=59= 1.67*
Masculinity	4.54 (.88)	4.7 (.93)	tdf=59= 0.69

* P< .05

Table 2. Scores on BSRI-Persian for Persian and Kurdish male students (N= 79)

Variables	Persian	Kurdish	Statistical tests for comparison
	M (SD) (N= 39)	M (SD) (N= 40)	
Femininity	4.7 (.59)	4.3 (.76)	tdf=59= -2.5*
Masculinity	4.6 (.73)	4.9 (.83)	tdf=59= 0.62

* P< .05

As table 1 and 2 show, there are significant differences between Kurdish and Persian female and male students regarding the femininity means scores ($t=1.67$, $df=59$, $P<.05$), ($t= - 2.5$, $df= 77$, $P<.05$) respectively. According to four different gender roles, there are no significant differences between Kurdish and Persian female students regarding four categories of gender roles. In male students, there are significant differences in four different gender role stereotypes between two ethnic groups. For example Persian male students have more feminine traits than Kurdish (17.07% vs. 4.87%) and Persian ethnic groups of male students are more androgynous than Kurdish (21.95% vs. 9.75%). Results indicate that there are significant differences between Kurdish and Persian women and men students according to positive and negative evaluation of femininity and masculinity in general ($c_2= 10.1$, $df= 3$, $P< .01$, ($c_2=8.11$, $df=3$, $P< .04$, respectively). Kurdish and Persian women and men evaluate masculinity more positive than femininity (66.67% vs. 56.71% and 96.77% vs. 67.74%, respectively). Therefore the two ethnic groups have more negative attitude towards femininity.

Discussion

Perhaps the most impressive part of this study is the similarity of two groups regarding masculinity. This finding is consistent with Connell's suggestion that masculinity cannot be understood locally and requires analysis on a global scale (Connell 2002:109). We found important diversities as well as uniformity of gender role stereotypes in these two groups as a minority and mainstream culture in Iran. We are aware that this is a preliminary study with definite limitations. But the findings are more or less consistent with some basic theoretical orientations. However, the dynamics of relationships are often more complex than the stereotypes would suggest. As Judith Hubback a writer and analytical psychologist suggests we must take differences into account not with the aim of over-emphasizing them, but

with sole purpose of seeing what contribution each sex (and ethnicity) can make to the common culture (Hubback 1957:83). Culture, itself, without the diversities and the subcultures, does not have any meaning. We are nothing without the other. Responsibility to the other is critical as we need to struggle for life. We agree with Hemmings and Treacher that when a sense of self can be bolstered through the denigration of others, it brings the shame upon oneself and others. Feminine and masculine traits have always been thought of as polar opposites in the history. It is time to consider them as a unity and interdependent. We need to envision a cultural ideal of interconnection between femininity and masculinity, and recognize that much desired masculinity traits (e.g. independence) is gendered and a cultural construct, which fails to acknowledge that feminine traits (e.g. dependency), as key to “independence” and masculinity traits (Hemmings and Treacher 2006:3).

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Discussant comments on papers by N. Shahnazarian, R. and I. Kuznetsov and A. Khamseh

Lale Yalçın-Heckmann¹

Nona Shahnazarian looks at the puzzle of gender roles during war times and their retreat to the traditional roles in the postwar situation. She provides yet another example of the well-known cycle of incorporating women into the national struggle and armed conflict through use of nationalist ideology. This strategic use of nationalist and patriotic ideology and discourse allows women to occupy new spaces, be physically next to men even if under ‘normal’ circumstances this is not socially accepted. The incorporation of women into this struggle creates a socially and ideologically opportune moment for women to challenge existing traditional roles; nevertheless, the boundaries of these possible challenges are still pre-given. Gender roles are nevertheless defined on the premise of sexual honor and within honor codes. The moment women are seen as not only as honorable sisters, mothers or daughters, but as sexually active co-fighters, as we know also from other military movements, they run the risk of losing the honor of being a co-fighter and in defense of the nation, but could be easily labeled as the ‘prostitutes of war’, as lovers of male fighters.

The case described by Nona seems to fit this pattern: Shushanik was first highly esteemed for her braveness and as the honorable sister and even symbol of the nation and homeland for which men need to be motivated to defend (after all, not all men are all aggressive and they need to be motivated to kill the enemy as well). Yet the moment she decided to have an emotional and sexual relationship with one of the fighters, i.e. the commander, she was then re-labeled as being only ‘one of the women,’ nothing special or noteworthy, primarily the lover of the commander. (Here one could pose the question of class and status as being important in this labeling: I wonder if Shushanik had been the lover of a regular soldier and not of the commander, whether she would have lost more of her reputation and status? Or whether she would have lost her reputation, if she had been married to the commander?)

At a more general level, one could raise some issues about the extent of modernization, the nature of militarily induced social and political change and the nature of patriarchy. I would like to raise the following questions concerning Nona’s case study and would like her to comment on:

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1. Could we say that the kind of patriarchal value system she defines is a heritage of the Soviet kind of modernist project; where women were encouraged to take societal roles as long as it fit the socialist project, but it was primarily a very controlled and from the top-down guided type of 'emancipation' and 'modernization'?

2. To what degree did women of only certain socially vulnerable backgrounds and of certain classes joined the armed struggle in Karabakh in the particular way Nona describes? In other words, how far was this kind of direct involvement in the armed struggle a matter of class and social status? More specifically, would women who were not in a socially precarious situation, e.g. those who were married and lived lives in so-called 'normal' families, join the military struggle at the front?

3. Finally, the story of Shushanik Nona tells us apparently is integrated also into a broader nationalist discourse. I know of similar stories about women heroes of war, published as books and stories in Azerbaijan. Hence, the question I would like to raise is, even if Nona offers us a biographic story, to what degree is this story nationally and politically shaped? To what degree is it a private biography and narrative or a biography and narrative produced for nationalist consumption and imaginations? After all, apparently Shushanik's story has been told already many times, hence my question is rather a methodological one: could we say that what Shushanik and her compatriots narrate are in fact not biographies of persons or of gendered persons, but rather of publics and politics?

Rita Kuznetsova and Igor Kuznetsov's paper has the ambitious goal of presenting three case studies of Hemsin Armenians, Ahiska Turks and the Abkhaz and talk about their 'gendered unwritten culture'. The aim, as expressed in the title, is hence to bring back gender into analysis and also to cope with the unwritten nature of the culture of these peoples. The authors cover a substantially long historical period for these groups; therefore maintaining a consistent analysis of each historical period is partly problematic. For instance the Soviet era developments for the Hemsin Armenians are less covered than their pre-Soviet experiences. Furthermore the kind of gendered experiences of deportation and flight involved in the Hemsin Armenians' case could have been explored much more. The authors discuss kinship terminology and the assumed adaptation of this terminology to what they call Turkish-Arab typology after deportation. The limited space given to this kinship terminological analysis makes it hard, however, to follow its relevance for gender issues.

The first two cases of Hemsin Armenians and Ahiska Turks involve significant forced deportation experiences. The authors apparently want to relate this experience to kinship typological changes; however, the material they offer is too limited for convincing us about when these typological changes have occurred, whether after the deportation or before. Other changes they mention, especially in relation to the change of patrilocal residence after deportation, also needs to be assessed more carefully; bilateral kinship residence pattern exists throughout Turkic

cultures and it is difficult to see for this reader, how this is only related to deportation. The first two cases dealt with by the authors are in fact full of many ethnographic details, which call for further exploration and analysis. I was fascinated, for instance, to read about the extensive transnational links of the Ahiska Turks. How and why they activate these links instead of the neighborhood relations during life cycle rituals cries for some explanation: could it be that life cycle rituals have become the only occasions for keeping kinship relations and that these relations are economically vital in insecure post-Soviet economies? The first two cases therefore are rich in material, but the details are not explored enough in order for the reader to grasp the gendered dimension.

The third case the authors describe has a different quality, as the source of information and the length of observation time are much deeper than the first cases. The information comes from Rita Kuznetsova's home village in Abkhazia, and the effects of Soviet period on this locality are much better covered. It is especially important to see Soviet state sponsored feminism being mentioned in this case. Through access to education, women attained a higher status in the society but apparently this reduced their chances of finding suitable marriage partners in the locality. It would have been good to know whether these women had to migrate to urban centers for finding suitable partners, for instance.

In this case study, the authors give some examples of the kind of professional roles women have taken on during the socialist and post-Soviet period; that they took part in the Abkhaz-Georgian war or that they are now the primary bread winners for their families by carrying out trade in informal economy. Some changes in their dress styles are also reported. Although the authors aim for discussing how nationalism changed and changes the conditions of women's lives, the reader is left with the need to find out more about each case, in order to have a clear image of whether it was modernization, nationalism, deportation or urbanization which made the most difference in changing gender roles. I am aware that this may be an unfair critique; but the density of information about the three cases and the missing links between the comparative aspects urge me to plea for expanding each case and at the same time focusing more on certain historical periods as a possible way of better highlighting the arguments of this paper.

The third contribution of this session by Akhram Khamseh comes from a different scientific tradition than the first authors and also from this discussant. It seems to be a clear argument from the results of a psychological study among university students from Kurdish and Persian backgrounds in Tehran. I have hardly anything to say about the methodology and the findings but could perhaps add a few ideas for considering in the analytical discussion. Khamseh seems to use the difference in cultural background, ethnic identity and minority-majority positions of the chosen groups as synonyms. I wonder whether the minority situation of the Kurdish cases is not more important than the assumed ethnic difference. They are after all not the same thing; one could belong to an ethnic group and be in politically dominant position as the case in Syria or the former case of whites in South Africa. I would like to learn more what the author thinks about the possible effects of

enclosure and conservatism due to this minority position, which cannot be reduced to some ethnic or cultural difference. One point mentioned in the paper that the Kurdish women's lack of participation in the work life in Tehran seems to be a very significant observation; this certainly cannot be reduced to the result of being from the Kurdish culture but probably highly related to their minority position within the society. I would finally like to suggest the author to consider the effect of migration to the capital as a possible factor for accounting for the gender attitudes mentioned here. Does the length of residence in the capital have an effect on how these attitudes are shaped? If not, why not?

Part VI Gender, Ethnicity and Sexualities

Part VI Gender, Ethnicity and Sexualities

Bir Varmış Bir Yokmuş: Representations of Sexuality in Edgar Hilsenrath's "fairy-tale" about Anatolian Armenians

Ayşe Kadioğlu¹

Edgar Hilsenrath (b. 1926 in Leipzig) is one of the most important novelists of the twentieth century. He fled the Nazi regime with his mother in 1938 to live with his grandparents in Siret (Sereth), which was, then in Romanian Bukovina. They were later deported in cattle trucks and interned in a ghetto that was close to the Ukrainian city of Mogilyov-Podolski. Both his first novel *Nacht* (1964) and his autobiographical *Die Abenteuer des Ruben Jablonsky* (1997) were based on his experiences in the Jewish ghetto. After survival, Hilsenrath lived in Palestine, Israel, Paris, New York City, and returned to Berlin in 1975. He currently lives in Berlin.

Hilsenrath is mostly known for his novel *The Nazi and the Barber* (*Der Nazi und der Friseur*) that was published in the United States in 1971 in translation -before it was published in German in 1977. This novel is about the Nazi persecution of the Jews from the angle of a perpetrator who later assumed the identity of his victim. This novel shattered the taboos about the possibility of a clear distinction between good and evil that pervades the Holocaust literature and used both a grotesque and humorous narrative akin to the traditional satire portrayed in Charlie Chaplin's Film, *The Great Dictator*. Hilsenrath's satiric style is distinguished by virtue of its absurdity. His aim in resorting to satiric display is not to guide the characters and the reader towards "good" behavior. Hence, his style is inflicted by nihilism and black humor.

Hilsenrath's novel *Das Märchen vom letzten Gedanken* (*The Story of the Last Thought*) problematizes the comparability of the Jewish Holocaust and the Armenian "Genocide." Hilsenrath was given two critical awards for this novel, namely, Alfred Döblin Prize that was handed to him by Günter Grass in 1989 and the State Award for Literature of the Republic of Armenia that was handed to him by the President of Armenia in 2006. *The Story of the Last Thought* is the story (or rather the "fairy-tale") of the Armenians in the village Yedi Su before and after the 1915 deportations and death marches. The story is told by a Meddah, the storyteller in the imagination of Thovma Khatisian who is on his deathbed.

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This novel is undoubtedly first and foremost distinguished by its author, Hilsenrath, who is a survivor of the Jewish Holocaust and therefore, in an extraordinary position of being both an “insider” and an “outsider” to the phenomenon of the Armenian “Genocide.”

The Story of the Last Thought is composed of three parts (Books). In Book One, Meddah guides Thovma Khatissian in his last thought towards his uncle and father. Thovma's uncle, Dikran is portrayed as one of the three Armenians who are hanging at the Gate of Happiness in the city of Bakir. A German major joins the state officials such as the *Vali*, *Mutessarif*, *Kaimakam*, and the one-eyed *Mudir* of Bakir in their conversations about Armenians who live there. The German and Turkish officials talk about the similarity of the “back-stabbers” in their respective soils, Jews and Armenians. In this part of the book, Meddah introduces Thovma to his father, Vartan, who is being tortured in the prison of Bakir so that he confesses an alleged crime about his involvement in an Armenian plot to conquer the world. This plot is reminiscent of the *Protocols of Elders of Zion*, a forged document published in English in 1920, describing the alleged meeting of an invented secret Jewish government and their intention to conquer the world. Nazis used this forged document as a means for justifying the annihilation of the Jews.

In Book Two, Meddah takes Thovma (and the reader) away from the torture chambers to the birth of Thovma's father, Vartan, in the Armenian village of Yedi Su, which is in the vicinity of the city of Bakir. Thovma gets to meet the rest of his family and observe their lifestyle in detail. Book Two is a beautiful depiction of life in Anatolia with the blissful coexistence of the Armenians, the Turks, the Kurds, the Yezidis, and the Gypsies. These people are enjoying each other's traditions, which seems to have amounted to a common Anatolian culture.

Book Three is about the great *tebk*, the massacre of Thovma's family along with the Armenians in Yedi Su. In the final pages of Hilsenrath's novel, the stories of the Armenian survivors of the 1915 massacres and the Jewish survivors of the Holocaust intersect.

There are quite grotesque depictions of sexuality in Hilsenrath's narrative. In the torture scenes in the prison of Bakir, Hilsenrath depicts the rape of the male prisoners who are personified in the character of Vartan. There are also agonizing portrayals of rape of women by the *chettes*, *saptiehs* and Kurds during the death marches. The raped women are almost always killed by these men

Throughout the novel, Hilsenrath describes the Kurdish males as handsome, potent, and sensuous men. Another over-sexual figure in the novel is an Armenian woman with a hooked-nose who is the wife of an Armenian trader. It is obvious that the linking of the hooked-nose with insatiable lust evokes Orientalist discourses and can be compared to the depiction of Jews in racist texts.

Hilsenrath's depiction of life in Yedi Su portrays the ever presence of patriarchy in the Armenian, Kurdish and Turkish communities. He does not limit

patriarchy to the Muslims. Boys are the preferred sex in all of these communities. Hilsenrath provides the reader with a rich depiction of women characters in the Armenian village of Yedi Su, ranging from the over-sexual hooked-nosed women, to old women as guardians of morality, new brides who are not allowed to speak, fat and desirable yet heedless women, ugly and old hags, mothers as well as educated women.

Hilsenrath's narrative encourages a comparison of the catastrophes of the Anatolian Armenians with the Jewish Holocaust by pointing to the stereotypes about the Jews and the Armenians. *Mudir* of Bakir, for instance, refers to Armenians as “rats,” an expression that was widely used for the Jews by the Nazis. Armenians are portrayed by the *Vali* of Bakir as people who are just waiting “to stick a dagger in our back,” an expression which is similarly used for the Jews in Nazi Germany (*Dolchtosslegende*). Such themes raise the comparability of the two atrocities, namely the Jewish Holocaust and the Armenian “Genocide.”

The people who live in Yedi Su are scared people. They are scared of losing their children to the dead ones (hence they take them up on the roof of the house during funerals). They are scared of their women being abducted by the Kurds. They are scared of quarrelling with the Gods of the Christians, Muslims, and Jews. They are also scared of educated women. It seems like the grotesque methods of torture and murder are committed at a time when a whole society has been devoured by fear. Fear precedes the catastrophe. Even the perpetrators of violence are portrayed as fearful people who are afraid of losing their privileged status and hence are cajoled into inflicting pain on the less powerful.

Hilsenrath does not glorify the victims. His narrative reminds one of what Hannah Arendt has earlier called “the banality of evil.” There are no easy punishments. There are no ethical verdicts. Yet, *The Story of the Last Thought* can be distinguished by the relative absence of a nihilism that pervades Hilsenrath's earlier novels. For, there is still hope in the Pandora's Box that Hilsenrath opens through this remarkable story.

The Story of the Last Thought is distinguished by the presence of hope that is generated by the witness. It is obvious that Hilsenrath is celebrating life, the birth of Thovma, despite the atrocities that darken their (both the author and Thovma as witnesses) past. Thovma, the witness, is “good luck in the bad” for he can send the story of his last thought into the gaps in Turkish history books.

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Modernity Misconstrued: Religious vs. Secular Patriarchy in *Çirkin İnsan Yavrusu (The Ugly Human-ling)*

Eser Selen¹

Expanding on the 2008 theatre performance *Çirkin İnsan Yavrusu* (The Ugly Human-ling), this paper aims to clarify how the work of sacrifice functions through ethnic, religious, gender and sexual identifications in contemporary Turkey as they are represented in the piece.² *Çirkin İnsan Yavrusu* as a reflexive performance stages the experiences of three women—a türbanlı (woman who wears a headscarf), a lesbian, and a Kurd—all of whom are legal citizens of Turkey. The piece critically presents identificatory differences in the women's lives while challenging the homogenous, heteronormative, and patriarchal constructions of Turkish citizenship. While understanding *Çirkin İnsan Yavrusu* as a critique of the Turkish nation-state's misconstrued notion of modernity violently effecting differences in ethnic, religious, gender and sexual identifications, I locate this theatre performance as a progressive piece in which multiple identifications can and do exist on the same plane.

Oyun Deposu's (The Play Depot) and *Çirkin İnsan Yavrusu*

The title of the piece, *Çirkin İnsan Yavrusu* (The Ugly Human-ling), invites us to imagine the well-known children's story "The Ugly Duckling" (1843), written by Danish poet and writer Hans Christian Andersen, as a paradigm for difference. *Çirkin İnsan Yavrusu* (hereafter known as "Çirkin") is the first production by the group Oyun Deposu, (The Play Depot) an Istanbul-based theatre company. Founded by five women artists, the company consists of three performers (Gülce Uğurlu, Yelda Baskın, and Elif Ürse), dramaturg Ceren Ercan and director Maral Ceranoğlu. *Çirkin* is a one-hour piece in six scenes, performed in a black box theatre. The first four parts are structured as a text-based performance in which each actor plays a character as well as transitory figures such as narrators and storytellers. The last two scenes are improvised and vary considerably (both in rehearsal and performance) following constraints devised by the creative team at each performance of the work.

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² My larger aim in this study is to use the work of sacrifice—which I have been developing in my work on the notion of survival in Turkish, gendered and sexualized bodies—as a lens to critically analyze the issues of religion, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality in contemporary Turkey political, theoretical, and aesthetic levels. The work of sacrifice also suggests an economy in which the sacrificed is lacking in the social construct. This lack reveals itself with the loss of the body: forced or voluntary, real or imaginary. This lack also labels the work as expenditure or the sacrifice as consumption by how they are performed. The work of sacrifice provides an opportunity to question the vulnerability of the sacrificial body. I engage the performativity of these subjects as displays of the work of sacrifice, or conversely, of their subjecthood sacrificed by the patriarchal subject.

The content of the piece ranges from a translated version of Anderson's tale to narratives of the daily experiences and memories of women in contemporary Turkey. While the children's story occupies a significant portion of the performance, its function is to expose the visible difference of the duckling's appearance and the invisible "structures of feeling" of the "human-ling" characters in the performance. The company's research process for the text pursued a form of documentary procedure, based on interviews and lived experiences narrated by women who are ethnically, religiously or sexually constituted as the *çirkin* (ugly) other. The company investigated how these women's lives are shaped by everyday life in Turkey through encounters with authorities and institutions. Many of the interviewees are university students and all were Turkish nationals currently living in the country.

The three central characters remain anonymous throughout the performance. This namelessness should be assessed as an attempt to resist individualization on the basis of singular identitarian features. A lack of individuality in the text should not be understood as a lack (or absence) of characteristics, specificities and particularities. Instead, the performers render personality through recognizable gestures—whether in or out of character—which perform the difference between "human-ling" characters and the narrators. The piece suggests plurality through its aggregation of multiple women's voices, stories, memories and lived experiences. Each performer embodies a mode of identification rather than a particular persona. The piece thereby renders differences that we (as spectators and citizens) are trained to ignore, look down upon and despise. This abjection occurs in two settings affectively: in fiction and in non-fiction, from the performers to the audience. The impulse to exclude appears in the real world as well as the childhood story; in another words, between the Real and Represented. The characters' overlapping and even repeating stories compulsively engage the spectator with the untold: where might or would these characters live?

The women's stories in *Çirkin* locate the performer or spectator in a specific landscape. The staging of the performance aims to clarify the characters' locations in the story, verbally: in their own rooms, in police custody, at work and so on. Taken together, these stories situate the piece in a country that is both secular and Muslim. Each figure appears in a geography in which national identity disengages from the minoritarian subject through policies sustained by the nation-state. Through narrative and improvisation the performance marks its time as the present, a present that is staged in a culturally traditional, geographically concrete, "ideologically" secular and religiously Islamic society, all of which strongly suggest contemporary Turkey. None of the performers represent the category of "womanhood" in the same way—they produce distinct interpretations of a *türbanlı*, a Kurd and a lesbian. Yet each figure narrates (and thereby creates) a space that reifies a mode of identification in a secular and Islamic nation that renders women outside the patriarchal, state constitution as invisible and/or aversive.

The piece particularly challenges its audience by presenting majority ideals and norms, at least as a point of departure, meanwhile it challenges the company members' own identificatory realities. The last two scenes significantly produced

by the life stories of the interviewees and the interviews with the performers that accumulate on stage as combined characters as decentered self-identifications. The decentered parts are the blind spots in which the creative team genuinely works to locate, where self-description fails. "Understanding repulsion" states Ceranoğlu "is the most significant part of the process. Only then could we start to search for a style as an outlook." And yet the ugliness of these women has become a working metaphor of sacrifice extending repulsion's affect into physical and psychological representation on stage.

"Structure, Sign, and Play" of *Çirkin*

Çirkin takes place on a bare stage with the outlines of three figures in white, caught in mid gesture on the back wall of the theater. These three shapes reflect light, standing out against the darkened stage. The spatial arrangement of the stage, as bare as it seems without any décor, functions as an imaginary cube which is filled with action, sound and light. Spectators first hear a montage of continuous and intertwined sounds, clicking, tapping, scratching, tingling, crashing, moaning, and breathing. The track fades slowly, replaced by a monotone that might best be described as a magnet interacting with a television set. A little after the piece begins, the lights lift slowly on what appears to be a crime scene. In what seems to be an illusion, the audience then slowly realizes that actors are already standing on the dark stage (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Scene from *Çirkin İnsan Yavrusu* (The Ugly Human-ling), 2008.

All three performers speak at once. Their voices collide, intelligible but repeated and distorted. The performers begin to sound like different characters with unique voices, even when they repeat similar lines or speak them together. One of the performers comes to the front of the stage, standing in the light but keeping her face in the shadows. She begins to play with her hair, braiding it into a scarf-like cloth of crocheted threads. Her head looks exactly like she is wearing a headscarf. Moments after she finishes with her hair, the performers back stage enter into the light,

pace quickly and furious. They seem very anxious, as if uncertain what to do with themselves. Suddenly, a performer shouts loudly: "Excuse me! Is anybody out there?" Performer A answers curiously: "Yes, I'm here. And I have my ID card with me."

The absence of décor opens up the space, amplifying the production's use of color, tone and style, particularly for the costumes. Monochromes indicate three differentiated figures, marking intricacies of identity the audience still doesn't know. The one who wears a hairdo that resembles a *türban* also has a costume looks like a top-coat (*tesettür*). Another has on a dated dress made of layered fabrics in different tones, and a third wears a low-cut, trendy pair of trousers and tailored vest. At the beginning, with their faces concealed, the performers speak semi-anonymous and whispered texts, and only the costumes differentiate the characters for the audience. Then one shouts, "Yes, I'm from Diyarbakır!" Dropping her voice, the character from speaks in a frightened state: "No, there is nothing I'm separating. Really, I'm not separating anything. I'm not a separatist." Her anxious stance on separatism and birthplace, Diyarbakır, quickly sketches her Kurdish identity. The audience begins to fill in the blanks in the context of her performance, leading to the conclusion she must be being interrogated in a police station.

The performers' average height and weight makes them seem "normal." Their skin complexions are shades of olive and all three brunettes have beautiful long hair. One woman's hair is shorter than the others, with a fierce attitude who yells out: "You can't treat me like this!" Their personalities appear when all three begin, as though following instructions, posing at a certain angle which suspiciously looks like they are being checked out: "Like this?" asks the woman who wears trousers as she raises her arms, reaching sideways as if hesitating to comply with instructions and fearing what would happen if she doesn't. Her resistance grows more explicit as the two other women comply. Performer B extends her arms upwards, as if surrendering, and asks submissively: "Like this?" Performer A raises then half-extends her arms upwards as though unable or unwilling to comply with the instruction. Seeming to pray for herself, she asks: "Like this?"

As the performance continues, it becomes clear to the spectator that all three are being interrogated at different times and places. Each woman's identification co-implicates a victim, victimization and a victimizer. Performer C outs herself, raging "Pardon? Where does that come from now? Is it written on my forehead? What's it to you whom I sleep with? What is it to you if I'm a lesbian?" Following this piece of information, that the performer reveals in the intimacy of stage, in resistance, has become the site for her exposure sexually, which affects the audience through her movements and voice. Just when the spectator feel that she pulls together almost enough information about the characters of the performers by the end of the scene three, performer C starts dancing/moving with figures which seems as if she is seizing. A rhythmic electric sound is audible; her movements are also aligned with what the audience hears. The two other performers hold her seizing body by wrapping their bodies around her until she moves no more, then hold her up in the air (Figure 2). Performer C is finally calmed down, however still breathless; she remembers a photograph that was taken in the hospital; in her mother's arms on



Figure 2. Scene from *Çirkin İnsan Yavrusu* (The Ugly Human-ling), 2008.

the day she was born: "You should see the way she is looking at me." She says, "as if I were an ugly duckling," which gives the queue to the narration of the lingering metaphor, *The Ugly Duckling*.

As they narrate the *Duckling* in turns, the piece brings forth a simple, interchangeable, and repeatable structure: the "ugly" is "other" and the "other" is "ugly." And yet to form a non-ugly identity, an "ugly" must be sacrificed. The link between the story of *The Ugly Duckling* and the story of *Çirkin İnsan Yavrusu* is in the ways in which these three women are labeled as the "other" or "ugly" within a heteropatriarchal society. In the given society, contemporary Turkey, these women are the "ugly others" within a normative understanding of how women should look, behave, and appear. In between their lifelines each performer demonstrates her "ugliness" in relation to the *Duckling's* with specific references to how they are marginalized, differenced, rejected, and violated in and off their surroundings such as neighborhood, school, and friendship.

The piece finds itself endlessly caught up in an effort to fulfill the imperative to complete Anderson's story of the Ugly Duckling, which structures the performance, and to convey similar trajectories in three women's experiences, marking a juncture or escape within this piece as it is narratively constituted. Early in the piece a character might seem paranoid saying "being late, thinking that you'll be late... even the thought of it always makes me uncomfortable. They gossip about latecomers." Yet the character's biggest fear is activated on the day she arrives last to work. She comes upon two women at the office talking behind her back about her lesbianism. When she enters the pair pretend to mind their own business, acting as though she is invisible. What should one say in such conditions of erasure?

"And I said to them" Performer C says, "[silence]." The fullness of her silence nevertheless did not fail to convey the character's devastation. Although her

outing frees her from both her biggest fear and secret, the character's devastation recognizes that the secret will return to haunt her. She seems to anticipate that her work of sacrifice is unfinished: her work only thus far has prevented her from being a sacrifice. The work implies that she remains caught (to appropriate Kierkegaard's phrase) between the fear and trembling of freedom and unfreedom. Perhaps that is what the silence was for, just before she "slammed the door left." The long silence before the character slams the door contains multiple contradictions. Her departure signals the return of an Ibsenian, socially critical performance of the exit. Signaling a specific departure, an awakening and a sacrifice, but also anticipating a return of the repressed, and blocked and, quite dramatically, the lights fade out.

Conclusion

In parts and as a whole, the memories, experiences and stories of these women read beside Anderson's story of the ugly duckling, may seem or be experienced as sources of laughter and scandal that are cathartic to an enabling audience. The performance is unique in its effort to stir the audience even if that public is not, as such, aware of the full details of the ongoing Kurdish situation in Turkey, the türban debate or lack of LGBTTTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual and Queer) rights and recognitions. Çirkin inscribes the work of sacrifice as pure expenditure, suggesting the ongoing marginalization of how women and queers are abjected. The performance makes it viable to indicate the threshold between the 'Real' and Represented. This representation, however, does not elucidate the "why" of what has been happening in reality. In fiction, however, as in Anderson's story, the sense of loss passes by rather easily since the "ugly" duckling finally grew into a "beautiful" swan. To fulfill the loss, the piece stages a range of voices, one, that of religious and secular patriarchy, dominates the rest. Especially when the audience notices that the violence that is exercised and perpetuated by women on women. Turkish womanhood, suggests the piece, seeks the body in which to be sacrificed. The need, therefore the demand for such offering, however, is sustained by the patriarchic construct, religious or secular. And yet, in their work of sacrifice, the audience uses this as an exit strategy to free themselves from the burden of the representation, clinging to the ideal of not being "that" woman even when she knows she is.

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Appendix Conference Program

Appendix Conference Program

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Hrant Dink Memorial Workshop 2009
Gender, Ethnicity and the Nation-State: Anatolia and Its Neighboring Regions
Sabancı University
in collaboration with the International Hrant Dink Foundation and Anadolu Kültür

May 21-24, 2009
Tütün Deposu, Tophane

May 21	THURSDAY	
17.00	Film screening and discussion	Chair: Ayşe Öncü (SabancıU)
	Kapıları Açmak Opening Doors	Ülker Uncu & Burcu Yıldız (Kardeş Türküler) Takuhi Tovmasyan & Pakrat Estukyan (Sayat Nova Choir)
	40. Kapıyı Açarsan... If you Open the 40th Room..	Talin Büyükkürkçyan
	Opening Reception	

May 22	FRIDAY	
9.30 – 10.00	Opening Remarks	
10.00 – 12.00	Memories and Testimonies	Discussant: Hülya Adak (SabancıU) Chair: Karin Karakaşlı (Writer)
	Arlene Voski Avakian (UMASS, Amherst)	Powerful Silences: Becoming a Survivor Through the Construction of Story
	Hourig Attarian (McGill U)	Lifelines: Matrilineal Narratives, Memory and Identity
	Rev. Daniel (Kuban State U)	Trabzon: Family Memory and Making of Personality
	Arpine Konyalian Grenier (Research scientist & Poet)	Heritage Like Money Then: Exaptation at the Margins / Risk to Reward Where the Word Meets Itself

12.00 – 13.00	Lunch break	
13.00 – 14.30	Educating and “Civilizing” the Nation	Discussant: Elif Ekin Akşit (Ankara U) Chair: Fatoş Gökşen (Koç U)
	Nazan Maksudyan (SabancıU)	Physical Expressions of Winning Hearts and Minds: Missionary Aspirations over Children’s Bodies in the Late Ottoman Period
	Zeynep Türkyılmaz (UCLA)	White Women’s Burden: Educating the “Mountain Flowers” of Dersim
	Metin Yüksel (U of Chicago)	Training Kurdish Men and Women in Turkey: Mobile Village Courses in the “Eastern Provinces”
14.30 – 15.00	Coffee/Tea	
15.00 – 16.00	Ethnicized and Nationalized Masculinities	Discussant: Serpil Sancar (Ankara U) Chair: Ferhat Kentel (İstanbul Bilgi U)
	Arus Yumul (İstanbul Bilgi U)	Fashioning the Turkish Body Politic
	Yeliz Kızılarıslan (İstanbul Bilgi U)	Gendered Ethnicity, Hegemonic Masculinities, and the Kurdish Question in the Girl of Yezid
16.00 – 16.30	Coffee/Tea	
16.30 – 19.00	Contemporary Constructions of Kurdishness and Armenianness	Discussant: Deniz Yüksek (Koç U) Chair: Fuat Keyman (Koç U)
	Dicle Koğacıoğlu (SabancıU)	Knowledge and Political Community in Discourses on Honor Crimes
	Rojda Alaç (EHESS)	“I understand you...” : Taking Women’s Empowerment Literally
	Nerina Weiss (U of Oslo)	When Spheres Collapse: Conflict, Gender and Perceptions of Belonging in a Kurdish Community
	Emel Karagöz ve Akın Deveci (Kocaeli U)	Reading The Other, Through The Other: Representation of Armenian Identity in The Agos Newspaper

May 23	SATURDAY	
9.00 – 11.00	Gender, Ethnicity and History	Discussant: Ferhunde Özbay (Boğaziçi U) Chair: İnci Kerestecioğlu (İstanbul U)
	Fethiye Çetin (author of Anneannem)	Anneannem Across Borders
	Ruben Melkonyan (Yerevan State U)	The Image Of The Islamized Armenian Women In Modern Turkish Literature
	Ayşe Gül Altınay (SabancıU)	(Unraveling) Layers of Gendered Silencing: Converted Armenian Survivors of 1915 in Historical And Contemporary Works
	Karin Karakaşlı (Writer)	Old History, New Language
11.00 – 11.15	Coffee/Tea	
11.15 – 12.30	Film screening and discussion	Chair: Betül Tanbay (International Hrant Dink Foundation)
	Finding Zabel Yesayan*	Discussion with directors Talin Suciyan & Lara Aharonian
12.30 – 13.00	Lunch	
13.00 – 14.30	Ottoman Women Writers: Zabel Yesayan & Halide Edib on Gender, Ethnicity and Violence	Discussant: Murat Belge (İstanbul Bilgi U) Chair: Müge İplikçi (PEN Turkey Women Writers Committee)
	Marc Nichanian (SabancıU)	Mourning Usurped: Zabel Essayan
	Hülya Adak (SabancıU)	1915-16 in Halide Edib’s Life History and Works
	İpek Çalışlar (Writer)	The Armenian Question in Halide Edib’s Writings
14.30 – 14.45	Coffee/Tea	
14.45 – 16.45	Art and Politics Across Borders	Discussant: Ayfer Bartu (Boğaziçi U) Chair: Sibel Yardımcı (Mimar Sinan U)
	Neery Melkonian (Independent Art Critic/Curator)	A Feminism that is Often Accented, Sometimes Whispers, Even Stutters: Modern and Contemporary Armenian Woman Artists in Transnational Contexts
	Anna Barseghian and Stefan Kristensen (Utopiana)	“Voyage in the Land of the Ghosts” & Armenography
	Osman Kavala (Anadolu Kültür)	Art, Politics and Reconciliation

16.45 – 17.00	Coffee/Tea	
17.00 – 19.00	Gender, Ethnicity and Feminist Politics	Discussant: Şirin Tekeli Chair: Yeşim Arat (Boğaziçi U)
	Nebahat Akkoç	Diyarbakır KAMER
	Handan Çağlayan	Kırk Örük
	Pınar Selek & Nil Mutluer	Amargi
	Yeşim Başaran	
19.00 – 20.00	Reception	
20.00	Rakel Dink	Introduction
	Arpine Konyalian Grenier Karin Karakaşlı	Poetry Reading

MAY 24		SUNDAY
9.30 – 11.30	Gender & Ethnicity: The Balkans and Anatolia	Chair: Buket Türkmen (Galatasaray U)
	Halide Velioglu (U of Texas, Austin)	Remnants of Ottomans, Excesses of International Order: Political life of Bosniaks' Feelings
	Milena Davidovic (Institute for Criminology and Sociology, Belgrade)	Gender and Ethnicity: The Case of Kosovo
	Anastasia Kamanos (McGill U)	(Re)Covering Identities: Ethnicity, Gender and Narrative
	Sophia Koufopoulou (Michigan State U)	"Biz de Avrupalı" and the Swirling Dervish Father : Cundalı Giritli Women and the Politics of Turkishness
11.30 – 11.45	Coffee/Tea	
11.45 – 13.15	Gender & Ethnicity: Caucasia and Anatolia I	Discussant: Lale Yalçın-Heckmann (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology) Chair: Nedim Nomer (SabancıU)
	Nona Shahnazarian (Kuban Social and Economic Institute)	"Why divide the nation into men and women?": National Ideologies, Survival Strategies and Gender Identity in the Political and Symbolic Contexts of Karabakh War
	Rita Kuznetsova & Igor Kuznetsov (Kuban State U)	"(Gendered) Unwritten Culture": Turkish Armenians, Ahiska Turks, Abkhaz

	Akram Khamseh (Alzahra U)	A study on the Diversity of Gender Role Stereotypes in Two Groups of Iranian College Students: A Comparison Between Iranian Kurdish and Persian (Farsi) Females and Males
13.15 – 14.00	Lunch	
14.00 – 15.15	Gender & Ethnicity: Caucasia and Anatolia I	Discussant: Işık Özel (SabancıU) Chair: Ayşe Durukbaşa (Marmara U)
	Vladimir Igorevich Kolesov (Krasnodar State Historical & Archeo. Museum)	Marriage Strategy and Nationalism (Circassian Greeks case)
	Setenay Nil Doğan (SabancıU)	"Circassian Beauty": A Myth in Anatolia
15.15 – 15.30	Coffee/Tea	
15.30 – 16.45	Gender, Ethnicity and Sexualities I	Discussant: Ayşegül Baykan (Yıldız Technical U) Chair: Fikret Adanır (SabancıU)
	Ayşe Kadioğlu (SabancıU)	<i>Bir Varmış, Bir Yokmuş:</i> Representations of Sexuality in Edgar Hilsenrath's 'Fairy Tale'
	Halil Berktaş (SabancıU)	"Our men their women": Turkish-Muslim Men and the Dangerous Sexuality of Non-Muslim Women in Ottoman-Turkish Literature
16.45 – 17.00	Coffee/Tea	
17.00 – 18.30	Gender, Ethnicity and Sexualities II	Discussant: Hale Bolak (İstanbul Bilgi U) Chair: Şahika Yüksel (İstanbul U)
	Serkan Delice (U of the Arts, London)	Masculinity as a Fractured Domain: The Political Implications of Revisiting Male Intimacies in Ottoman Society
	Eser Selen (NYU)	Modernity Misconstrued: Religious Patriarchy vs. Secular Patriarchy in <i>Ugly Humanling [Çirkin İnsan Yavrusu]</i>
	Stefan Detchev (South-West U of Blagoevgrad)	"Tenderness too incomprehensible ..." (Homo)sexuality, Ethnicity and Politics in Modern and Contemporary Bulgaria
18.30 – 19.00	Open discussion	

*** Finding Zabel Yesayan****Directors: Lara Aharonian, Talin Suciyan**

This film brings together the bifurcated life of Armenian activist and feminist writer Zabel Yesayan. Born in 1878 in Istanbul, and most probably died/killed on the way to Siberia after 1942. Yesayan was a prominent intellectual among Western Armenians. A socialist, she immigrated to the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia in 1934. This decision led to an obliteration of her name from Western Armenians' life. Yesayan, who escaped the genocide of 1915 in Ottoman Empire, became the victim of the Stalinist regime in Armenia. While the individuals who shared Yesayan's destiny later were honored as "national heroes" in Armenia, she was, again, forgotten. Yesayan's life represents how the events of 1915 created distance between Armenia and Armenians living in diaspora. Her life enables us to gain a new perspective on Stalinist era and its aftermath. Last but not least, her life and her work still sheds light on Armenian realities today.

A joint production of Women's Resource Center and Utopiana (2008) Yerevan.

