Groups, Ideologies and Discourses: Glimpses of the Turkic Speaking World

edited by Christoph Herzog
Barbara Pusch

Orient-Institut Istanbul

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Contents

Christoph Herzog & Barbara Pusch
Introductory Note 7

Christoph Herzog
The "Clash of Civilizations"
in the Post Nine-Eleven Discourse of Turkey 11

H. Birsen Örs
Early Findings of a Field Survey on the Perception
of the Army by Non-Muslim Minorities Living in Turkey:
The Case of Armenians 37

Ayşegül Komsuoğlu
Findings of a Field Survey on Turkey's Armenians:
Notes on Their Political Profile 49

Uğur Kömeçoğlu
Concordance between Asceticism and Activism:
The Numinous Dimension of an Islamic Community Movement 61

Barbara Pusch
Discourse of Islamic Love in Present Day Turkey 83

İnci Özkan Kerestecioğlu
Family as the Micro-Power Domain
of the Ottoman-Turkish Modernization 103

Sevgi Uçan Çubukçu
Gender Discourse in Popular Culture:
The Case of Television Series in Turkey 113

Arienne M. Dwyer
Bridal Laments in the Turkic World:
A Casualty of Modernity? 131

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Feza Tansuğ
The Uyghur Diaspora in Central Asia:
Social Change, Identity and Music-Making 145

*Hanne Straub*e
Pro and Con Manas:
The Discourse about the Use of an Epic
for a National Ideology in Kyrgyzstan 155

About the Authors 167

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Introductory Note

This volume emerged from a conference entitled "Sociabilities in the Turkic speaking world" held 25-27 February 2005 at Bilgi University in Istanbul. The symposium was organized jointly by Claus Schönig (then Orient-Institute Istanbul) and Arus Yumul (Bilgi University). The original conference title was chosen with a view on the basic importance of collocated group interaction for the reproduction of society. However, as the proceedings submitted to this volume mainly deal with groups, ideologies and discourses in Turkey, including some glimpses on other parts of the Turkic speaking world, we decided to amend the title of this volume accordingly.

Over the last twenty years Turkey and the Turkic speaking world have undergone large social, political and economic changes. These changes have influenced and created new social groups, ideologies and discourses. This volume aims at reflecting and analyzing some of these changes and developments.

The first contribution addresses an aspect pertaining to the political sphere of discourse in the Republic of Turkey. It appears that the nationalist discourse in Turkey during the last few years has taken an increasingly negative stance towards the West in general and the US in particular. Drawing on several recent publications as well as the popular film "Valley of the Wolves" the article by Christoph Herzog (Orient-Institute Istanbul) tries to demonstrate that "the clash of civilizations" as a topic in Turkish discourse is not so much connected to any specific political ideology but rather forms an element of the Turkish nationalist discourse that seems to reach a broad consensus.

Armenians in today's Turkey are the subject of the following two articles by Ayşe Komsuoğlu (University of Istanbul) and H. Birsen Örs (University of Istanbul), which are based on quantitative as well as qualitative data from common fieldwork in Istanbul. Komsuoğlu analyzes the political profile of the Armenians by exploring their level of interest in politics, their voting behavior and the ability of the Armenian community to participate in collective political action.

In a similar vein, the article by Örs deals with the attitude of Armenians towards the Turkish army. The two articles, thus, offer rare insights into a group that, while frequently representing the "Other" in much of the public discourse of Turkey, has - perhaps not suprisingly - remained largely ignored and unknown.

New forms of Islamic thinking and acting are discussed by Uğur Kömeçoğlu (Bilgi University) and Barbara Pusch (Orient-Institute Istanbul). Uğur Kömeçoğlu analyzes the concordance between the asceticism and activism of the followers of Fethullah Gülen community, a huge and well-established Nurcu movement in Turkey. In this context he focuses on the correlation between self-denial and religiosity. Secondly he analyzes the societal level of the community according to the works of the movement's spiritual leader Fethullah Gülen and

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underlines his understanding of religion as an expression of the moral expansions of the religious collectivity towards wider publics.

Barbara Pusch, however, points to another aspect within the Islamic discourse in Turkey. In her analysis of a love manual by Halit Erdoğan, she shows the wide-ranging overlap of moderate Islam/Islamism on the one hand and widespread conservative values and standards on the other. Accordingly she argues that the moderate understanding of Islam is not a break but a continuity of Sunni-conservative thought in Turkey.

The women's studies by İnci Özkan Kerestecioğlu (University of Istanbul) and Sevgi Uçan Çubukçu (University of Istanbul) contribute to this volume from the gender perspective. İnci Özkan Kerestecioğlu analyzes family discourse throughout the Ottoman-Turkish modernization process. By comparing the family as a social unit to various social structures and practices, she deconstructs the unquestioned realm of modernity from a gendered perspective in the Turkish discourse.

The changing gender discourse in popular culture since 1990 is the subject of Sevgi Uçan Çubukcu's contribution. In her analysis of television series she points to heterosexist inequalities and masculine discourse. She argues that the place that gender roles occupy in Turkish television series both construct and deconstruct the hierarchical structure of gender roles in the traditional context.

The articles by Arienne Dwyer, Hanne Straube and Feza Tansuğ deal with groups, ideologies and discourses in the broader Turkic speaking world.

In her article on bridal laments in the Turkic world Arienne Dwyer (University of Kansas), besides presenting a linguistic analysis of one case study, argues that these laments as rituals and stylized expressions of grief are on the losing side of the cultural dynamics of modernity. Having been condemned as "backward" by the socialist governments of both the PRC and the former Soviet Union, Eurasian laments, in contrast to some other forms of cultural heritage, seem unsuitable for being rediscovered, reinvented and appropriated for ethnonationalist and other ideologies after the end of dogmatic socialism.

Feza Tansug's (Yeditepe University, Istanbul) article deals with social change, identity and music-making in the Uygur diaspora in Central Asia. After a short overview on Uygur migration to the former USSR, he focuses on the music-making of these migrants by analyzing the overlapping social and cultural patterns in the home and host country. In this context he points to music-making as having an important impact on the construction of their cultural identity.

In contrast, the article by Hanne Straube (Frankfurt am Main) focuses on a different subject in a different geographical area of Central Asia: In her article she lists the pros and cons of the Manas-epic in Kyrgyzstan. After an introductory chapter on Manas and the national ideology in Kyrgyzstan, she portrays different interpretations of this epic by citing various parts of personal interviews she conducted during her field study in Kyrgyzstan.

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As anyone who has edited a book knows very well, there are always many more people than the authors and editors who contribute to a publication. With this idea in mind, we want to offer our thanks to Arus Yumul and Claus Schönig for their initial idea and organization of the workshop, the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung for the financial support of the workshop and Vanessa Karam for her English language proofreading.

Christoph Herzog & Barbara Pusch

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The "Clash of Civilizations" in the Post Nine-Eleven Discourse of Turkey

Christoph Herzog

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 the discourse on the "clash of civilizations" as the dominant paradigm of political perception has been considerably reinforced, especially regarding relations between the imagined blocs commonly identified with the West and the Islamic World. In this imagined bifurcation, Turkey's position has often been considered ambiguous. As a result, the metaphor of a "bridge" between the two worlds has become a commonplace way of rhetorically harmonizing Turkey's situation, both in Turkey and elsewhere. Given the rather antagonistic conceptual background of the dichotomization, the "bridge" image has been one strategy to minimize the fundamental and persistent crisis of identity that the model propounds. In the wake of the war on terror after 2001 and especially since the American occupation of Iraq in 2003, the rhetorical-conceptual figure of the "clash of civilizations" has been endowed with a new explanatory power in Turkey. As elsewhere it has been generally reduced from an approach to political world history to a dichotomistic notion of a confrontation between East and West or Islam and Christianity, making only cursory reference to Huntington. This dichotomization long preceded the reception of Huntington's theory and was connected with a deep resentment towards Europe and the West (Seufert 1997: 66-71).

For its resolution a classical set of basic cultural strategies have been developed since the times of the late Ottoman Empire.[1]

This chapter aims (1) to demonstrate that in Turkey this cultural dichotomization or bipolarity does not necessarily rely on a religious discourse drawing on Islam but is based rather on nationalism or a fusion of nationalist and religious ideologemes, and (2) to show that while the discourses revolving around this bipolarity are dependent on ideological and political orientation, the bipolarity itself is not but rather seems to form a kind of cultural consensus among large parts of the Turkish population, and (3) to shed some light on the discursive strategies that have led to the reversal of the weaker and the stronger positions within this bipolarity.

---

1 The taxonomy in Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, Montreal: McGill, 1964 offers the classical paradigm. The recent monumental enterprise *Modern Türkiye Siyasi Düşünce* (Istanbul: İletişim), which comprises seven volumes so far offers an encyclopedic analysis of individual thinkers, intellectual currents and schools according to the familiar categorization of political thought into conservative, nationalist, liberal, etc.

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A comment on two central terms I use in my analysis seems in order here. When I employ the term discourse, I am thinking of course of the term as developed by Michel Foucault but not in a strict way. My intention is to point to a commonality between my selected texts that inheres in something that could also be called *Zeitgeist* or a paradigm[2] as much as an archeology of knowledge. But I am also interested in the individual particularities of the texts, and I have not tried to dissolve their authors' voices in textual or intertextual structures. I am aware that reading a handful of texts cannot be a discourse analysis in the sense of reconstructing a general mode of speaking or writing. Still I believe that the heterogeneity of the texts I have chosen (one of them being a movie) and the way I am reading them gives rise to some conclusions that go beyond both their individual characters and their belonging to a particular genre. The term ideologeme is taken from Frederic Jameson, who defined it in loose association with linguistic terms such as phoneme or morpheme as "the smallest intelligible unit of essentially antagonistic collective discourses of social classes" (Jameson 1981: 76). For my present purposes I propose to strip the term of its embeddedness in class relations that was assigned to it by Jameson and rather speak of "antagonistic collective discourses of *cultures*." It will be left open as to whether these cultures are in fact antagonistic or whether they are merely described as such by the discourses using ideologemes as delimiting markers. I also intend not to be too strict about the atomistic character of the concept, in other words, not to be too insistent on the definition of an ideologeme as the smallest intelligible unit but rather to pragmatically apply it to interconnected, mutually cross-referencing and sometimes contradictory building blocks or modules of discourses.[3]

The Clash of Civilizations as a Global Confrontation Between Two Camps

The multiplicity of civilizations discussed by the political scientist Samuel P. Huntington has been commonly reduced to a conflicting bipolarity. Huntington himself had paved the way for such an interpretation by coining the catchy phrase "The west versus the rest" (Huntington 1993: 16). However, it seems clear that the widespread perception of a global confrontation between Islam and "the

2 While Manfred Frank remarked that Foucault's notion of archive was not dissimilar to the concept of the *Zeitgeist (*Frank 1994: 424), Hans Herbert Kögler found that Foucault's episteme had amazingly many parallels to Thomas S. Kuhn's idea of paradigms (Kögler 1994: 41).

3 When relating the term to Şerif Mardin's use of Victor Turner's term "root paradigm" in his study about Bediüzzaman Said Nursi for basic cultural-cognitive clusters expressed in terms like *gazi*, *namus* (honor), *hürmet* (respect), *adalet* (justice) or *insan* (man) (Mardin 1989: 3-7), one would have to think of ideologemes as "derivative paradigms" to express the fact that they have a secondary, "derivative" position in regard to the root paradigms.

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West" expressed by the phrase the "clash of civilizations"[4] cannot be ascribed merely to Huntington's certainly extremely influential article (1993) and book (1996) but is linked to older perceptions and stereotypes such as the dichotomy between east and west. We thus may differentiate between a more specific and a wider use of the phrase "clash of civilizations." While the narrower sense of the expression explicitly refers and is tied to Huntington's theses, the wider use simply takes up the phrase and reconfigures it into some kind of historic and global antagonistic bipolarity mostly involving the West and Islam. In the following I will deal with the second meaning of the phrase.

In Turkey the use of Huntington's expression to denote an antagonist bipolarity has not always been uncritically applauded. The poet and essayist İsmet Özel, who started out as a leftist intellectual, turned to Islamism in the 1980s and later added a more dedicated Turkish nationalist flavor to his versatile essays (Aktay and Özensel 2004), gave a talk in 1993 on Huntington's theses shortly after the latter's article appeared in *Foreign Affairs*. The talk was, with some additional notes, published in 2006 (Özel 2006). In his talk Özel raises several objections to Huntington's taxonomy of civilizations.[5] More generally, referring to a distinction made in Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* between the notions of culture and civilization, he argued that Huntington had failed to properly clarify his concept of civilization (Özel 2006: 22). Finally, he claimed that the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc were a spurious setup created and concluded by the West for tactical reasons (Özel 2006: 20-21). In the same vein, he argued that Huntington's thesis of an imminent clash of civilizations was a deliberate delusion arranged to camouflage the fact that, since the 19th century all cultures had been more or less erased by Western civilization, "because in the whole world the things that people are trying to do are things that comply with Western norms" (Özel 2006: 30-31). The real and fundamental division, then, is not between cultures or civilizations but between the controlling and controlled world (*denetleyen ve denetlenen dünya*) (Özel 2006: 21). The basic division of the world into Western imperialists and their (potential) victims proposed here by İsmet Özel is a basic ideologeme of the Turkish discourse. Not withstanding the fact that Turkey as a NATO member is formally integrated into the Western military alliance, the country is generally assumed to be threatened by Western imperialist designs.

My second example for the ideologeme asserting the bipolarity of the world is taken from one of the more politically activist periodicals, *İleri* (Forward), pub-

4 For a survey done by the Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach in Germany on this topic see Elisabeth Noelle and Thomas Petersen. "Eine fremde, bedrohliche Welt," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 114 (17 May 2006), 5.

5 For example, he criticizes the singling out of Confucianism as the determining factor for the identity of China, and questions the validity of the category of the Hindu civilization in light of the presence of Muslims on the Indian subcontinent (Özel 2006: 29, 32).

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lished by the nationalist left wing group *Türk Solu* (Turkish Left)[6] and proclaiming itself in its subtitle as Kemalist. Issue no. 26 was dedicated to the topic of the Third World War. The temporal coincidence of this issue with Burak Turna's long awaited bestseller bearing the same title (see below) was probably intended, but this question does not need to occupy us here. The editorial for the issue was written by Gökçe Fırat, one of the editors of the periodical. I will not discuss its contents in any detail here but content myself with reproducing a table listing the "camps" of alliances of the three world wars, the third of which is claimed to be imminent (Gökçe 2005: 11).[7]

First World War	*Second World War*	*Global War*
USA England France Italy	USA England France Soviet Union	The West The North The Christians (*Haçlı)* Individualism (*bireycilik*) Capitalism Imperialism
Versus	Versus	Versus
Germany Ottoman Empire Austria	Germany Italy Japan	The East The South Islam Collectivism (*Toplumculuk*) The national state (*Ulus devlet*)

According to Gökçe the Third World War will be a global war not between states but between blocs and principles, including religion. It is worth noting that the table puts the national state on the same side as Islam. In this design the position of Turkey – having a Muslim population, belonging to "the East" and "the South," as well as being a national state threatened by partition at the hands of imperialist machinations – is clearly anticipated. While the Turkish Left may be defined as a group on the fringes of the political spectrum that shares some commonality with right wing positions, several of the ideologemes occurring in *İleri* and other publications from this group are by no means limited to the political fringes in Turkey.

6 This group split from the Maoist Workers Party (İşçi Partisi) led by Doğu Perinçek.
7 The table does not list Tsarist Russia among the actors of World War One.

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A Sociology of Cultural Antagonism

The 12th yearbook of the Institute for Sociology at the University of Istanbul is entitled *Tarihte Doğu-Batı Çatışması* (The clash between East and West in history), which also indicates the general topic of the volume (Eğribel and Özcan 2005). The title refers to the conflict between Orient and Occident that has allegedly persisted since antiquity. It presupposes this conflict to be a basic ordering principle of history. The theoretical basis for this concept has been elaborated by the Turkish sociologist at the University of Istanbul Baykan Sezer (1939-2002), who has developed it since the 1960s. The two editors of said volume, Ertan Eğribel and Ufuk Özcan, are his former students and are now lecturers at the same department. While the volume contains a tribute to the noted scholar of Byzantine studies Semavi Eyice, it is mainly dedicated to the work of a symposium, the *Baykan Sezer Working Days*, held every year in honor of Prof. Sezer.

Baykan Sezer was born on 7 August 1939 in Malatya, but his family moved to Istanbul when he was still in his infancy.[8] His father was a medical doctor, his mother a primary school teacher who had given up her job to be a mother and housewife. Baykan Sezer graduated in 1959 from the famous Galatasaray school and in 1960 went to Paris, where he began to study sociology. He completed his studies in Turkey and graduated in sociology from the University of Istanbul in 1968. He embarked on an academic career. In 1976 he became *doçent* (lecturer) and in 1988, chair of sociology at the University of Istanbul, which had been held before by such illustrious personalities as Ziya Gökalp and Hilmi Ziya Ülken. He retired in 1998 and claims that he chose the earliest possible date for retirement because he was unhappy with the *Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu* (Commission for Higher Education) and its control of the universities.

Sezer's time as a student in Paris fell into the last phase of the Algerian war for independence. He read the Marxist literature of the day, followed the controversies about the Asian mode of production and occupied himself with the writings of Sultan Galiev. One of his influences derived from the works of the Australian philologist, archaeologist and historian Vere Gordon Childe (1892-1957). Edward Said, on the other hand, made little impression on him, he wrote, because his thought at that time had already been shaped (Sezer 2004b: 33). The most important intellectual influence for Baykan Sezer resulted from his friendship with the writer and essayist Kemal Tahir (1910-1973) starting from the 1960s. He wrote about this influence retrospectively: "My discussions with Kemal Tahir became a watershed for me. I don't think that since then until today my thoughts have changed again" (Sezer 2004a: 27). As is known, Kemal Tahir's ideas were

[8] The following data is taken from Sezer's self-portrayal in Sezer 2004a, the letter printed in Sezer 2004b and Göney 2004.

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deeply influenced by Marxist theory, and he was an outspoken critic of westernization (Akyıldız 2002: 467-468).

Although Baykan Sezer throughout his life continued to make use of Marxist concepts and terminology, it would be misleading to regard him as a Marxist sociologist. Politically speaking, he was acceptable to such conservative-nationalist circles as the *Kubbealtı Akademisi*[9], where he was invited to read a lecture (Sezer 1995: 123) and to the editors of the MHP-sponsored monumental encyclopedia about Turkish history *Türkler*, where his article "Turkish History and our Sociology" formed part of the programmatic introductory section (Sezer 2002).[10]

Sezer's sociology was closely connected to the interpretation of history rather than to the methodology of synchronous social analysis. Although Sezer located the origin of the bipolarity between East and West in human geography (Akpolat 2004: 258), it would appear that for him the difference between East and West assumed ontological qualities and therefore the epistemological consequence of a specifically Eastern sociology. The step from calling for an Eastern sociology to demanding a Turkish one is justified by the historical qualities of Turkish history itself. "Turkish history," he writes, "has an important superiority when it comes to gaining a comprehensive and holistic view of the world and of history. The reason for that is that the Turks have contributed to relations at the highest levels in history. The superiority and importance of the Turkish society and history (*Türk toplum ve tarihinin ustünlüğü*) also results from that fact" (Sezer 2002: 192). Western concepts of history were not fit to understand or explain Turkish history. One important difference was the absence of social classes and class conflict in Turkish society (Sezer 2002: 189), another the meaninglessness of the usual periodization of Western history into antiquity, middle ages and modern times (or into their Marxist equivalents of slaveholder society, feudalism and capitalism respectively) for the Turkish case (Sezer 2002: 190).

Sezer also interpreted Huntington's concept of a clash of civilization in terms of a bipolarity between East and West and claimed to have preceded Huntington in this respect. He also referred to the historians Arnold Toynbee, Gordon Childe and René Grousset as precursors (Sezer 1997: 45).

After his death in 2002 Sezer's students and successors have continued both Sezer's dichotomization of East and West and his plea for a genuinely Turkish sociology as the fundamental issue for sociology in Turkey.

There is yet another continuity between Sezer and his successors: the belief in the guiding mission politically and culturally of Turkish sociology. "Sociology

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9 This institution and its co-founder Samiha Ayverdi cooperated with the *Aydınlar Ocağı*, where the original form of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis was formulated (Kaner 1998: 50-51).

10 The other articles in this section were written by the president of the official Turkish Historical Society, Yusuf Halaçoğlu, by the historians Halil İnalcık and Şevket Koçsoy and by the late Nihal Atsız.

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has just one obligation in Turkish society: This is to serve the Turkish people and to advise Turkish society." If Turkish sociologists do not consider the interests (*çıkarlar*) of Turkish society, they will resemble Turkish musicians who play Western classical music in Turkey (Sezer 2004a: 28). This view is echoed by Eğribel and Özcan in their introduction to the volume about the conflict between East and West:

> It is our duty to analyse and to solve our social problems. That will be possible when we approach social phenomena from the perspective of our own interests and, confronted with various events, choose the way that corresponds to our own interests (*çıkarlar*). To do that it is necessary that we possess a certain method (perspective).[11] We advocate a perspective that corresponds to the space and the interests of Turkish society in this world and history and a corresponding approach to research. The place and the interests of the Turkish people are defined by their roles in the clash between East and West (Eğribel and Özcan 2004: 6).

A closer look at this text is in order here, because it contains in aggregation two important assumptions that are hidden in its terminology: (1) Interests (*çıkarlar*) does not mean intellectual affinities of any sort here but "collective benefit." That implies that sociology here is put under the tutelage of real (or putative) interests of a specific group described as "Turkish society." (2) What is meant by "method" and "perspective"? In the passage quoted above the word "method" is explained in parentheses as "perspective." Some lines above, however, the word "worldview" (*dünya görüşü*) is explained as "method" (*yöntem*) when the authors explain that "the relation and the cooperation between the social sciences should indeed be based on a specific worldview (method)."[12] In the same context, the phrase "methods of modern science" (*modern bilim yöntemleri*) is explained as "a specific attitude vis à vis social events" (*toplum olayları karşısındaki belli bir tutum*). These semantic cross references as well as the textual context direct us to the meaning of worldview in the sense of *Weltanschauung* rather than to the question of scientific method in the narrower sense of the term.

This points us to a particularistic concept of social sciences and of history according to which social sciences and history (their close connection being advocated by the very conception of Sezer's sociology) are put into service for the representation of interests. This is not done, however, by applying François Lyotard's notion of incommensurable discourses or using similar relativist epistemic approaches as a post-modern reading of Sezer has suggested (Akpolat 2004: 255). This becomes clear when Eğribel and Özcan examine the possible importance of Sezer's sociology for overcoming the clash of the East and the West. Quoting Sezer they write:

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11 "Bunun için belli bir yönteme (bakış açısına) sahib olmamız gerekir."

12 "Toplum bilimleri arasında ilişki ve işbirliği elbette belli bir dünya görüşü (yöntem) temelinde olmalıdır" (Eğribel and Özcan 2004: 6).

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> What does the East have to do? The West had its chance but it could not use it. The West was not capable of realizing a new balance or a new world with new relations. The West did not use this chance but preferred to conserve the dichotomization of East and West for the sake of its own superiority. The East with its productive character, with its human and other resources in its hand is winning a privileged position by overcoming these problems. The East, by relying on these resources, can put forward a new order of relations that overcomes the clash between East and West. We are at one of the places where the relations between East and West are being shaped. The proposal can come from us; it does not need to come from China (Eğribel and Özcan 2004: 16-17).

The claim that the sociological discourse put forward by the East will be able to overcome the clash by pursuing its very own interests relies on the idea that meeting the demands of the deprived will overcome social cleavage. Given Sezer's roots in Marxist thought, this idea probably should be interpreted in the Hegelian tradition of the dialectical three step process of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. However, from the point of view critical of the meta-historical prerequisites that conceive of world history as a dichotomy of two cleanly and clearly discriminable blocs representing East and West or colonized and colonizers, the quotation enforces a rhetoric of dominance by blurring the distinction between particularist justification and its universal application.

Political Fiction

In December 2004 Orkun Uçar (b. 1969) and Burak Turna (b. 1975) published their bestselling novel *Metal Fırtına* (Metal Storm). While nothing indicates that the resemblance of the book's title to Ernst Jünger's famous metaphor in the title of his book *The Storm of Steel* was intended, the resemblance is not incidental because *Metal Fırtına* in fact contains a militarist celebration of war albeit in a completely different vein and context. *Metal Fırtına* is a straight-forward political thriller about a war between the USA and Turkey in 2007, featuring the Turkish secret agent Gökhan Birdağ as the story's hero. The book struck a responsive chord in the Turkish public mainly among younger generations (Seufert 2005). Within a short time it reached record sales. The figures presented by the publishing house on the verso of its title page indicate that the book started with a circulation of 50,000 in the first edition reaching eight reprints and a circulation amounting to 400,000 by April 2005, i.e. in less than half a year after its first publication. Another 100,000 had been printed by March 2006 (Uçar and Turna 2006: 2).[13]

[13] There was also a considerable amount of unlicensed printing; about 150,000 unauthorized copies of the book were confiscated. Uçar further claimed that, as many copies were lent and read dozens of times, the total number of readers may have reached the figure of five million (Uçar 2005a: 197).

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Given the limited size of the Turkish book market, these are enormous figures. Until he won the Nobel Prize for literature in 2006, the Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk's book sales, including translations into foreign languages, came to no more than 800,000.[14] Smaller publishing houses in Turkey print no more than 1,000 to 2,000 issues of a book at one time. If the book proves a success on the market, such small scale reprints may occur with high frequency so that large numbers of reprints can be reached. A case in point is one of the other best-sellers of 2005, Turgut Özakman's *Şu Çılgın Türkler* (Those Mad Turks), a historical narration of the Turkish War of Independence. Published first in April 2005, by mid-June 2006 it had reached a total circulation of 622,000 in 311 reprints of 2,000 issues each.[15]

After their success the authors of *Metal Fırtına*, Orkun Uçar and Burak Turna split up to continue their shared success with separate sequels. Thus there now exist two sequels bearing the title *Metal Fırtına 2*, one by Orkun Uçar published by *Altın Kitaplar Yayınevi* (Uçar 2005b) and one by Burak Turna, whose books continued to be published by Timaş (Turna 2005b). In the meantime Burak Turna achieved yet another commercial success with a book of political fiction on the third world war that was printed with an initial circulation of 100,000 (Turna 2005c). For both authors *Metal Fırtına* enabled them to realize long-cherished dreams of embarking on careers as free-lance writers. Orkun Uçar had been working in the Turkish media sector but since having been laid off in 2001 had been financially supported by his elder sister (Uçar 2005a: 169). At the same time he had been administering his own website and, together with Sibel Atasoy, had been running a small publishing house, *Xasiork Ölümsüz Öyküler Yayımevi*, printing science fiction and fantasy literature, which he claimed were his passion (Uçar 2005a: 34-62).[16] Burak Turna had been working in the banking and textile sectors but in his spare time occupied himself with writing and the study of military technology and philosophy. As becomes clear from their interviews, neither was lacking in self-confidence. Turna has also published an essay entitled *SistemA*, mixing quantum physics, philosophy and systems theory into a synthesis that "when applied to world politics and history brought about the idea of the Turkish political fiction that started with the novels *Metal Fırtına* and *The Third World War*" (Turna 2005c: 11).

Metal Fırtına is structured in a sequence of cinema-like scenes that are localised and dated. The book starts on May 23, 2007 at 00:10 a.m. southwest of

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14 Cf. Korap, E. 2004. "İslami Besteseller," *Milliyet*, April 18, 2004. I owe this reference to Dr. Barbara Pusch.

15 I owe this figure to the courtesy of the publishing house Bilgi Yayınevi.

16 This book contains autobiographical information (pp. 11-62), several literary and political essays by Uçar, reprints of several interviews Uçar and Turna gave to newspapers or TV stations as well as some commentaries (not written by Uçar) in the Turkish media about *Metal Fırtına*.

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Kerkuk, Iraq, where Turkish soldiers are attacked by American units. When the Turks, after some tough fighting, have nearly all been killed, Lieutenant Alper has a vision:

> Alper closed his eyes. The roaring in his ears he was listening to made his head ache. His face smiled. (...) Before Alper's eyes came a vision. Shadows approached slowly, increasing in size. Explosions were heard, but the shadows became larger without changing of shape and advanced directly to his position. He began to distinguish the sounds they made. The sound of horses reached his ears; now he was listening to a symphony produced by thousands of horseshoes. His feeling of loneliness disappeared. Instead, streams of enthusiasm were raining from the sky and like rain relieved his mind. He could perceive the horses now; they were overriding all obstacles as if they had wings.
> A choked sound of "my God" came from his throat. He saw them; tears were flowing from his eyes. "It's them," he cried out. Flying by on their horses they were Turkish soldiers wearing the kalpak[17] their eyes fixed forward. Lieutenant Alper became paralyzed and unable to move. He couldn't describe the happiness he was feeling (Uçar and Turna 2006: 17-18).

The Turkish riders appear on two other occasions upon the heroic death of a Turkish protagonist (Uçar and Turna 2006: 72, 252). The vision occupies an extraordinary place in the book because it is the only one that connects to any mystic or quasi-religious dimension in an otherwise emphatically realistic narration. It is also remarkable that religion or religious feelings play little significant role in the story – at least on the Turkish side. It has been claimed, not least by the authors themselves, that the book is a complex and multilayered structure of codes and quotations. Thus it is claimed that the description of popular resistance in Istanbul took its inspiration from Stalingrad, or that at the end of the novel the plain of Malazgirt is evoked where the Seljuks defeated the Byzantine emperor in 1071 (Uçar 2005a: 92-93), an event that is commonly remembered as an epochal date marking the beginning of the Turkification of Anatolia. The color grey, appearing in the "Grey Team" (*Gri Takım*) of secret Turkish elite fighters to which the hero of the book belongs, apparently draws its inspiration from the fact that Uçar preferred a grey foregound color on the black background of his web page because white made too strong a contrast and hurt his eyes (Uçar 2005a: 92). However, all these codes and allusions do not raise the simplicity and straightforwardness of the story and its characters to any notable complexity required for a novel of some literary ambition. The best part of the book is probably the detailed information given on the different systems of weapons in current use by the Turkish and American armies, which was contributed by Burak Turna (Uçar 2005a: 117, 163-164). But books do not need to be complex in order to be successful.

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[17] Fur caps associated with the Turkmens. A similar kind was used by the Ottoman army in the First World War.

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A partial explanation for why the book received so much attention might be that by making armed conflict with the USA its central topic, it broke a political taboo. Interestingly, although the book received much attention in the Turkish media, its authors claimed that they were first ignored and indeed deserved better coverage (Uçar 2005a: 65, 81, 138). They also positioned themselves as potential martyrs, claiming that when writing the book they were aware that publishing it would put their lives in danger (Uçar 2005a: 138). Modestly, Uçar claimed that the book marked a watershed in Turkish political discourse (Uçar 2005a: 66). In an interview printed in the newspaper *Vatan* in September 26, 2004 – i. e. before the book was out – Orkun Uçar claimed: "The idea that America may occupy Turkey is shocking. The publishing houses we approached to publish our book were shocked too. Some of them were afraid of publishing it. What we are saying in the book is that such a possibility exists in the near future" (Uçar 2005a: 87). Asked whether their intention was to earn money by publishing a book containing conspiracy theories, Uçar replied:

> Making money is only a secondary result of this project. Our principal aim is not money but to feel the excitement of the effect this book will have. Think of Orwell's 1984! Like this book, we want to 'warn' and, in a certain way, to change the course of history! Therefore we want to send this book to Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan, because the prime minister in our book is also Tayyip Erdoğan (Uçar 2005a: 89).

In fact, one of the striking literary devices of the book is to make the real politicians of 2004 play the same roles in its scenario of 2007 – George W. Bush and Condoleezza Rice as well as Tayyip Erdoğan and Abdullah Gül.[18] Asked why they preferred writing a novel instead of a political study, Turna answered that they believed a novel would be much more effective (Uçar 2005a: 118). Both professed that they had no interest in politics (Uçar 2005a: 168).

Most of the discussion concerning the book in Turkey revolved around the question whether the scenario of a US attack on Turkey was plausible. Another heatedly debated topic was the question concerning who had commissioned the book to be written (Uçar 2005a: 91, 167). Although the authors repeatedly claimed that it was their own original idea, even an expert on Turkish politics like Günther Seufert in an article for the daily *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* speculated about that question, given the publication of Turna's book on the Third World War in a critical phase of negotiations between the EU and Turkey (Seufert 2005). Yet when put together, the authors' explanations about their book give few clues.

[18] But not the Turkish military personnel of the book, who all have fictitious names. Asked about the reason for this different treatment of politicians and military officers, Turna explained that politicians were elected, which made it legitimate to use their names, while military officers were "embedded in hierarchies." Uçar on the other hand pointed out that military officers lacked coverage in the mass media, which made it difficult to transfer their personalities into the novel (Uçar 2005a: 93-94).

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Their statements made in various interviews boil down to the claims that the USA would probably attack Turkey because of Turkey's rich sources of boron and because of America's Evangelical beliefs; that they (i.e. Uçar and Burak) were the first in Turkey to have recognized this; and that Turkey should be prepared for the scenario they were describing, and that being prepared could contribute to the prevention of the war they were describing (Uçar 2005a). It is completely plausible that two young authors should write such a book to satisfy their personal ambitions. While it is certainly valid to attribute the success of *Metal Fırtına* in part to the fact that it broke the political taboo of public anti-Americanism in an innovative way at a time favorable for such a venture, another aspect of the success the book has experienced is the fact that it embedded this innovation in a highly conventional structural setting, using a mix of familiar ideologemes that possess a broad consensus in Turkish society.

As has been suggested (Uçar 2005a: 107), *Metal Fırtına* is essentially a "parable" of the Turkish War of Independence that has been shifted into a different scenario in the future. The title of the book is derived from the American code name for the military operation in which American troops from Northern Iraq first conquer Ankara before the American military engages in a battle for Istanbul (Uçar and Turna 2006: 21-22). But operation *Metal Storm* is only part of an American-led international conspiracy that bears the code name "Operation Sèvres" (Uçar and Turna 2006: 151, 215). Sèvres, of course, is a highly important keyword in the political discourse of Turkey pointing to the treaty of the same name after the First World War in which the partition of the Ottoman Empire was stipulated and which was revised after the Turkish War of Independence in the treaty of Lausanne in 1923. As mentioned above, at the very same time as *Metal Fırtına* was dominating sales, a monumental historical description of the Turkish War of Independence stormed the bestseller lists. In the conclusion of this book, Turgut Özakman described this war as "one of the most legitimate, most ethical, justest and holiest wars" against imperialism (Akyaman 2005: 688). In loose analogy to the historical original, the American conspiracy in *Metal Storm* is about the expulsion of the Turks from Anatolia and about the distribution of the country among the Armenians, Kurds and Greeks. The rich sources of boron and uranium are destined to be given in a concession to the American company of a certain Adrian III Lynam. This consolidates US American world hegemony. The reckless bombing and murdering of the civilian population in Ankara and Istanbul is countered by the hero, Gökhan Birdağ who places an atomic bomb in Washington at the cost of several hundred thousand lives. However, the war is not terminated by this successful revenge but by international pressure on the USA, especially by Russia and China. In the end Turkey is saved and Adrian III Lynam is tortured to death by Gökhan Birdağ.

In several interviews Burak Turna has stressed that the book should be considered a study in probability theory (*olasılık teorisi*) not as a case of conspiracy the-

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ory (*komplo teorisi*) (Uçar 2005a: 98, 105, 117).[19] Both authors in their interviews seemed thoroughly serious about the "historical facts" underlying the book's story. After the end of the cold war, the authors explained, the USA and Turkey were not on the same side any more (Uçar 2005a: 67). As Uçar emphasized, the USA was already leading an economically as well as religiously motivated crusade against the Middle East and against Turkey (Uçar 2005a: 96, 97, 106, 128-129, 192). Turna identifies American Evangelicalism as a leading faction in this crusade, defined as follows: "The structure of Evangelicalism is a distorted Christian belief that is formed by private churches that were subjected to the manipulatory influence of Jewish financial groups and accepted the latter's support" (Uçar 2005a: 129).

The ideologeme of Sèvres as a symbol of imperialist aspirations occurs in different political contexts in Turkey. In *Metal Fırtına* the Turkish prime minister Tayyip Erdoğan plays a thoroughly positive role and by employing his diplomatic skills is instrumental in forging the international concord that pressures the USA to end its war against Turkey. By contrast, in a booklet entitled *III. Abdülhamid*, published by the publishing house *İleri* that belongs to the group of the so-called *Turkish Left*, Ali Özsoy polemicizes against Tayyip Erdoğan by comparing him with Sultan Abdülhamid II. (1876-1909), who in most leftist and Kemalist circles serves as a political symbol for retrograde Islamic despotism and cooperation with Western imperialists. At the end of the booklet two maps show a partitioned Turkey, one printing "Sultan Vahdeddin's Sèvres[20]," the other showing "Tayyip's (i. e. the prime minister's) Sèvres." On this map Erdoğan is accused of having given away Cyprus, having allowed an independent state of the Greek-Orthodox patriarchy in the Marmara, an American-controlled vassal state in Kurdistan, an independent Armenia on Turkish territory as well as the separation of the Pontus region around Trabzon (Özsoy 2005: 111). Thus Sèvres serves as a key metaphor that demonstrates many of the structures and workings of political discourse in Turkey. While the keyword "Sèvres" is connected to the ideologeme of the ultimate imperialist design for the partition of Turkey, the political figures identified either as collaborators of imperialism or as patriotic defenders of the fatherland vary according to political position. The notable exception, of course, is the ethnic and religious minorities that practically always are depicted either as politically unreliable or as directly siding with the external enemy that is identified with imperialism and therefore has close affinities (if it is not perceived as simply identical) with the West.

Finally, the ethical utilitarianism of the book is striking. It is more appropriate to distinguish between likeable and unlikeable characters than between good and bad ones, unless one defines good and bad exclusively in terms of national bene-

19 As mentioned above, for Turna *Metal Fırtına* is a practical application of his own eclectic systems theory he calls SistemA.

20 Alluding to the Sultan under whom the treaty of Sèvres was signed on August 10, 1920.

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fit. This is echoed by Uçar in an interview where he says: "As the writer of the character of Gökhan, I do not think of him as a hero very much. He does not relate much to concepts of good and bad. He is like a member of the state (*devletin bir uzvu gibi*)" (Uçar 2005b: 164). What this means becomes most visible in the scene when the future members of the Grey Team are forced to shoot the puppies that at the beginning of their training had been entrusted to their personal care, in order to prove their unconditional obedience to their commanders (Uçar and Turna 2006: 97).

Turkish Rambo

The film *Kurtlar Vadisi Irak* (Valley of the Wolves Iraq)[21] was produced by Serdar Akar, who also directed the very popular TV action series bearing the same name and starring some of the same actors. According to Akar, the film had to be produced in a hurry because the TV series had ended, and the cinematographic version had to come out quickly before the excitement and the impression created by the series faded away. Costing 10 million dollars to produce, it was one of the most expensive Turkish films (Taşcıyan 2006). After a release of only five weeks, the film had been seen by more than four million people, making it the most popular Turkish film ever (Altuntaş 2006). In *Kurtlar Vadisi Irak*, Necati Şaşmaz plays a smart secret agent named Polat Alemdar. Alemdar, who in the TV series fights the mafia, this time takes revenge for his brother Süleyman, who as a military officer committed suicide because he could not bear the dishonor of having belonged to a special unit of Turkish soldiers who had been arrested and had sacks placed over their heads by American soldiers in Sulaymaniyya in northern Iraq. The film begins with the scene of Süleyman writing a letter to his brother Polat in which he asks the latter to avenge his honor. It is not his personal honor however, as is made unmistakably clear, when after finishing the letter Süleyman puts it into the envelope together with a small Turkish flag he has rescued from desecration by American soldiers before shooting himself in the head. His last words, before pulling the trigger are "Long live the fatherland" (*vatan sağolsun*). The letter, read aloud to the film's audience, contains a historical explanation in two sentences: "Whoever ruled this region oppressed the people of this land. Except our ancestors."[22] This digression is highly significant. It claims the heritage of the Ottoman Empire for the Republic of Turkey.[23] It is also significant that

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21 This is the official translation of the film's title. However, in my own quotations from the film I have not always rendered the (sometimes faulty) English subtitles but orientated myself towards the spoken text.

22 "(...) bu topraklara her hükmeden bu toprakların insanlarına zulmediyor. Bunu bir tek atalarımız yapmadı."

23 In an interview the film's director Akar made clear that the historical perspective was intended and quoted the well-known Turkish historian İlber Ortaylı saying: "When we ana-

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Iraq is not mentioned by name but is referred to as "this region" (*bu topraklar*). Thus it is not referred to as a subject of sovereignty in the international system of nation states but as an object, an agglomeration of land, a region whose inhabitants are naturally subject to rule. In accordance with the official Turkish vision of history, it was only the Ottomans who were just rulers. Thus Turkish rule over "the region" is legitimized while at the same time the American occupation is signified as illegitimate. If we remember the historical Turkish claims to Mosul and northern Iraq, this interpretation is all but innocent. Although the film itself doesn't claim to be factual, it tries hard to ground this basic political value judgment in facts that are well known to the politically interested Turkish public. The scene that refers to the factual incident of the Americans placing sacks over the heads of the Turkish special unit is shown *in extenso,* and even its exact date (July 4, 2001) is given in the letter of Süleyman, who also declares that the purpose of the special unit was to "serve the security of the region" (*bölgenin güvenliği için hizmet*). The event was called the *çuval olayı* (hood event) in Turkish, and it triggered a diplomatic near-crisis between Washington and Ankara as well as a major mass media campaign in Turkey that can be said to have attained the status of a *lieu de memoire* in the Turkish collective memory.[24] There are also other allusions to real incidents in the film such as the attack of US troops on a wedding party or the Abu Ghurayb prison scandal that are depicted in the film as American business as usual in Iraq but without any reference to the legal consequences the real incidents had after having been revealed to the public. By referencing these "real events" that gained a status of factuality from the political news coverage of the Turkish and international mass media, the film implicitly makes a claim to transcend the fictional action genre and to represent a sort of political parable, whose distinction of good and bad is grounded in factuality even if the characters in the film are fictitious.

The confrontation between Turkey and the United States over Iraq described so far is presented in terms of a purely secular nationalist symbolism. The moral bifurcation on the level of the film's main actors is between the hero Polat Alemdar and the villain Sam Marshall (played by Billy Zane), who is in command of the American occupation forces. But religion also plays a significant role in the film. The bifurcation here is essentially between Islam and Christianity. But while in the political perspective Polat Alemdar can be said to represent Turkey while Sam Marshall embodies the US, in the religious perspective the film makes a shift. While Sam Marshall, who is depicted not only as the embodiment of ruth-

lyze events in the Balkans, the Mediterranean, North Africa, South Europe and the Near East, we absolutely have to take into account the order of the Ottoman period. Our analysis has to be made through looking at the political order of the period of the Ottoman Empire" (Taşçıyan 2006).

24 Still in December 18, 2006 and January 5, 2007 articles in the Turkish daily *Hürriyet* were concerned with the issue, the one in December even being the lead article on the front page of the paper.

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lessness, hypocrisy, corruption and cynicism but also as a religious fanatic, represents Christianity, the film's hero of Islam very obviously is not Polat Alemdar but the local Sufi shaykh and highly respected religious leader Abdurrahman Khalis al-Kirkuki (played by the Syrian actor Ghassan Massoud). This shift in representation on the level of the leading parts requires that we differentiate between a political and a religious dimension in the film. They clearly overlap, but they are not identical. Interestingly the film turns the tables here. The disjuncture on the level of the leading parts representing politics and religion on the side of Turkey and Islam implies a considerable degree of secularism, whereas through the personal union of politics and religion in the person of Sam Marshall the stigma of religious fanaticism is ascribed to the other side, forming an example of Orientalism reversed. That this is by no means an accidental but on the contrary an essential message of the film is suggested by explicit and lengthy elaboration of this issue on several occasions. Thus when the bride Leyla, whose husband Ali had been killed in the film by American soldiers during Leyla's and Ali's wedding party, asks her stepfather Shaykh al-Kirkuki whether she can avenge Ali by becoming a suicide bomber, she is harshly reprimanded. The severe lecture she receives from the shaykh is worth quoting because it delivers a condensed moral theological message of the shaykh to the audience:

> Leyla, choosing to be a suicide bomber means revolting against Allah's will in two ways by a single action. It means first giving up your hope and committing suicide and then accepting the risk of sacrificing innocent people together with your enemy. Can you know how many will die, when you're a suicide bomber? You can't! And since it is not possible to know that, killing innocent people is like killing the whole of mankind. People who instilled this idea into the minds of Muslims, and recruited them as suicide bombers are the ones who recreate Hasan Sabah's wickedness again. This is a sign of doomsday, my daughter, and it is certainly a work of the devil. I see your grief. However, I feel sorry to see your desire to be one of the suicide bombers who make the world think that Muslims are dreadful people. Never forget that Allah isn't helpless, my daughter; our current helplessness and weakness is due to our deviation from the Quran and our Prophet's way and also due to our failure to be united. Each suicidal act increases this weakness and helplessness. That's why our enemies desire the number of such acts to increase and possibly even organize these actions themselves. Our only hope for survival is to commit ourselves to Allah's way. Let us pray, let us engage ourselves, let us be united and let us be free.

This non-militant and politically quietist Salafi interpretation of Islam given by the shaykh sharply contrasts with the religiously justified political activism of Sam Marshall, who is shown praying in front of a crucifix asking God for "the ability to resolve the conflict in Babylon" as well as with his desire to acquire this promised land "for us" and to die there. While he prays, the scene is cross-faded into an underlayed view of a town in northern Iraq where American soldiers patrol while members of Kurdish militias paint red crosses on the doors of the Turkmen minority who will be obliged to leave. Health care measures and the distribution of care packages and cheap footballs to the population are

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documented by American journalists as is a speech delivered by the leader of the Kurdish collaborators in which he personally thanks Sam Marshall for what he has done for Iraq by offering him as a present a piano from one of Saddam's palaces. The speech of the Kurdish leader follows the prayer of Sam Marshall. While Sam Marshall and the Kurdish leader are exchanging the kiss of brotherhood, Sam Marshall informs his Kurdish ally that "the Turkmens are done, the Arabs are next." The scenic arrangement blends hypocrisy and neo-colonialism and ethnic cleansing into the religious devotion of Sam Marshall. The lonesome prayer of Marshall in front of a crucifix is contrasted in the following scene by the extensive filming of a Sufi *dhikr* led by Shaykh Abdurrahman Khalis al-Kirkuki. Again the visual is crossfaded while the prayer expressing the belief that the Muslims must endure and that Allah will eventually emerge victorious goes on. The scene shows Turkmens leaving their homes. For a while the camera shows a son carrying his old mother on his shoulders while the sound track remains with the prayer. Then the view changes again back to the *dhikr* reaching its ecstatic climax, exhibiting a forceful demonstration of Muslim piety, resolve and unity.

The film as a text clearly gains complexity by the secularist split in the division of competence between Khalis al-Kirkuki and Polat Alemdar. The strategic advantage for the narrative becomes clear when we situate the film in its cinematic genre, the category of hard core action. Regardless of morals, this genre is about bloodshed and killing. On the other hand, the normative concept of religion and Islam the film suggests to its audience is that religion is not about violence, at least not against innocent people. Thus, when Polat Alemdar and his friends at the Turkish-Iraqi border slaughter a Kurdish border guard for harassing them, religion is not involved. But when Sam Marshall shoots dead the leader of the Turkmen community because the latter pretends not to know about Alemdar, he does so as a representative both of US politics and of the Christian religion, while Kirkuki is shown saving a kidnapped Western journalist from being decapitated by masked Muslim terrorists and declaring such actions as un-Islamic.

But the secularist division comes at a price regarding both the cinematic texture and the textual coherence of the film. Although the shaykh's religious values and the national values of the hero are on the same side, in the end they remain separate. The meeting between Khalis al-Kirkuki and Polat Alemdar does not happen because of the showdown between Alemdar and Marshall. The innocent romance between Alemdar and the shaykh's foster daughter Leyla, who saves Alemdar's life, ends with the murder of Leyla at the hands of Marshall. Alemdar, unable to save her, can only fulfill her burning desire for avenging her husband by stabbing Sam Marshall with the dagger which her husband has left her as a cherished gift. Thus, on this level, the film is about revenge, both political and personal. However care was taken not to make this an official political af-

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front: In a dialog between Alemdar and Marshall at the hotel of Mr. Fender, the representative of American capitalism,[25] a first verbal showdown between the two protagonists takes place. Alemdar demands from Marshall that he and the American soldiers put hoods on their heads like they had forced the Turkish special unit to do, threatening to blow up the hotel if Marshall refuses to comply. Sam Marshall expresses his amazement at the Turkish mentality that would be offended because of the treatment of eleven soldiers. He then carries on:

> I tell you why you are offended. Because the US have been paying for you for the last fifty years. We send even the elastic for your god-damn panties. Why can't you produce anything? (...) How can you forget how you begged us to save you from the communists?

The answer of Alemdar to that outspoken American view of history is remarkable: "I'm not the leader of a political party. I'm not a diplomat nor a soldier. I'm a Turk, as you pointed out very well. I wreak havoc upon those who put hoods over a Turk's head!" On the one hand this blunt avowal of ethnic nationalism avoids the confession that Alemdar is on a private mission to avenge his brother. On the other, it also avoids attributing any official character to his punitive mission. The ideologeme of the inseparable connection between honor and Turkishness covers the existence of the deep state (*derin devlet*). But it also tends to blur any demarcation between public and private, between state and society and between legal and illegal. In a way the deep state gives birth to its own negation by dissolving solid state institutions into hidden networks.[26] Thus, the threads of religion and politics on the Turkish side remain unconnected. But the reason for that is not a concept of secularism demanding separation of state and religion but the sheer absence or invisibility of state institutions which are replaced by a vague notion of ethnic nationalism whose compatibility with Islamic universalism the film refrains from putting to the test. That it might not pass this test is indicated, among other things, by the depiction of the politics of clothing imposed by the film on the leaders of the three ethnic groups that it recognizes: Kurds, Arabs and Turkmens. In the scene where they meet with Sam Marshall, only the Turkmen leader wears Western style clothing while the other two are clad in their traditional dress. Thus, at the end of the day the driving motor of the film's narrative is not religion or religious values but honor and revenge clad in secular nationalism. The question about what kind of connection between na-

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25 "Isn't he on your payroll? Isn't the boss of the American soldiers American capitalism?" asks Alemdar of Mr. Fender when the latter claims that he has no connection to Sam Marshall.

26 As a symbol of the deep state the keyword 'Susurluk' has attained some prominence in the Turkish collective memory. In 1996 after a fatal car accident near this little town a notorious death squad leader, a member of the Turkish parliament, a senior police officer and a former beauty queen were found in the wreckage of a car together with diplomatic passports, weapons, forged documents and some cocaine.

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tionalistic and religious values might exist is not only left unanswered it is not even asked. Obviously the film does not feel the need for explanation here but assumes it to be self evident that these values are complementary or in mutual alignment with each other. In other words, a popular form of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis is not discussed in the film, it is presupposed.

Chiliastic Fiction

In 2006 Turgay Güler, employed at the Turkish Islamist TV-station Kanal 7, published his novel *Mehdix*. The book's subtitle was *Olasılık Teorisi* (Probability Theory). The title clearly hinted its synthesis of the two words *Matrix*, referring to the popular movie, and *Mehdi*, the Muslim messiah. The book's cover design, showing among other things vertically arranged and cascading green script characters clearly was a visual evocation of their famous use in *The Matrix*. The story itself read like an Islamist answer to *Metal Fırtına*. However, the author in an interview explained the title simply as a concatenation of *Mehdi* (for messiah) and X (for the unknown), i.e. an *unknown messiah* (*bilinmeyen bir kurtarıcı*). Nevertheless he accepted that the book be compared with *The Matrix* (that in his view was a parable on Jesus) and was enthusiastic about a proposed idea to make his book into a movie. In the same interview Güler also denied that his book was a religious novel (Güler 2006b). However when compared to *Metal Fırtına*, which, although co-authored by a devoted fan of the literary fantasy genre, restricted itself in the main to physical realism, *Mehdix* can be said to have made the transition from physics to metaphysics or to have brought literary fantasy into political fiction. The mythological elements of his book were taken deliberately not from Western but from Islamic sources, as Güler expressed his contempt for Western fantasy:

> The West has no narrative. America none at all. As it lacks a narrative, the Harry Potters and the Da Vinci Code appear. But we do have important narratives. Why does nobody write them? It was left to me to write them. This is the first time that local fantasy has been written. And this book has experienced a sudden acceleration. Its first print of 100,000 has been sold. That is a really serious figure. And I hope and wish that it will be the bestselling novel for years (Güler 2006b).

Thus the question of how to write back against the West is thematized. For Güler it is not enough that the plot of a story slaps America and the West in the face. It needs also to re-localize the setting in which the plot unfolds. Re-localizing the story for Güler means Islamization. As he pointed out in the mentioned interview, he did not hesitate to refer to the Quran and to hadiths.

The book tells the story of the chief of the Turkish general staff who in the year 2019 through a series of dreams and mysterious messages on his computer is appointed the Mahdi. In the process of receiving his mission, he also loses his wife and family in a plane crash (a God-sent ordeal), turns from being a secular

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believer to being a more zealous Muslim observing the Islamic ritual regulations, receives the staff of Moses, which had been hidden for several thousand years, and is commanded to kill the eschatological Dajjal. Not knowing who or what the Dajjal is, the general looks on the internet, where he finds hadiths and their interpretations and finally realizes that the Dajjal is a symbol of the West. For example, a hadith holding that one eye of the Dajjal is blind is interpreted in the following way:

> The philosophy and ideology of the Dajjal is materialism. According to this way of thinking, divine revelation or realities which cannot be perceived by the senses are without any importance. For that reason the religious teachings based on revelation may not be allowed to guide man and his life but must be eliminated. This expresses the understanding of materialism that originated in the West. The phrase of the hadith saying that one eye of the Dajjal was blind shows that the Dajjal perceives only the material aspect of life but is uninformed about its spiritual side (Güler 2006a: 44).

In the following year, 2020, the final decision about the acceptance of Turkey into the European Union is to be announced. Because of the activity of Christian pressure groups, Turkey is rejected. The EU makes further negotiations on this matter dependent on the condition that the Hagia Sophia be given back to the Greek patriarchy and turned into a church. However, this outcome is also the result of a decade-long conspiracy of the US and Israel, who have been secretly working against membership of Turkey in the EU. As a consequence, Turkey experiences an unprecedented economic crisis resulting in famine and declining internal and external security. The USA transfer control over Iraq to Israel, Armenian terrorists enter Turkey, Greece starts to violate the Turkish borders, and the Greek Cypriots start attacking the Turks while the Turkish government is helpless. In this situation the Mahdi-general has a dream suggesting that he turn the Hagia Sophia – converted from a mosque into a museum by Atatürk in 1934 – back into a mosque. This is realized on August 19, 2020, when the Mahdi together with the Turkish general staff and the Turkish cabinet arrive there for Friday prayer. The Islamic world applauds whereas the USA regard this act of prayer as a casus belli. The reason for their reaction is Evangelicalism:

> In America the politics were done according to the prophecies of the Bible. This was openly pronounced. In America alone there were close to 100 million Evangelicals and the American president himself was an Evangelical.
>
> The Evangelicals had a single dream: the Last Judgment should come as early as possible. The Evangelicals, who had brought the president to power worked with all their might to accelerate the advent of Judgment Day. (...) But according to the Bible, all peoples of the world would have to gather in one church. According to them this church could well be the Hagia Sophia. (...) The Messiah would come to the Middle East. But first an early end of the world was needed. According to the Evangelicals, the Jews were chosen people and were to be supported. It was a condition of the end of the world that they be supported (Güler 2006a: 112-113).

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The third world war seems imminent. But the planned invasion of Turkey by US forces accompanied by Armenians and Greeks does not take place because the Mahdi-general is instructed to hit the ground with the staff of Moses, thereby causing a terrible earthquake in California leading to chaos and civil war in the United States. The final showdown is between the secret commander of the Zionists and Israel, called "Sion" (Zion) and the Mahdi-general. The Zionists had demanded from the Mahdi-general the staff of Moses because it belonged to the Jewish people and threatened to destroy the Muslim sanctuary in Mecca if it was not given to them. The official answer of the Mahdi-general is broadcast by international television stations:

> (...) The staff I'm holding in my hand belongs to the prophet Moses. Moses is the prophet of all mankind. This staff symbolizes a power. It symbolizes truth, beauty and justice. The country that wants to be in possession of the staff must defend these values. Turkey possesses these values. Therefore the staff is with us (...) (Güler 2006a: 169).

The book paints this dichotomy between good and evil in a rather crude way, e.g. when the treatment of the Palestinians at the hands of Israel is described:

> (...) the Palestinian population had been suffering a serious decline during the last ten years. More exactly it had been reduced. Hundreds had been killed by Israeli soldiers. The Palestinians were dying of cancer at a young age. The new-born children were almost all disabled. Israel experimented with radio waves in the Palestinian areas. The children born disabled were the result of these cruel experiments. The leaders of the new Intifada movement were the Palestinian women. They had nothing to lose. They knew that they were not strong enough to achieve anything against Israel. But as they were expecting help from God, their hopes were high (Güler 2006a: 169).

Although the Zionists tear down the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem as a part of their prophecies about the preconditions for doomsday, all their activities to stop the Mahdi-general fail although they control even the governments of the Islamic countries. In a conversation between the commander Zion and the Israeli general chief of staff the latter is upset because of the loss of control:

> – But the Muslim peoples do not listen any more to their leaders. They don't read newspapers, they don't watch television. Our social engineers cannot reach them.
> – It doesn't matter. Their countries are not controlled by them but by us. They only vote. In some places not even that (Güler 2006a: 210).

Although the freemasons in Turkey are set in motion by Zion,[27] even they fail to kill the Mahdi-general. An attempt, instrumented by Zion, to conquer Turkey from Europe by means of a crusade army also fails while in preparation because the Mahdi-general manages to infect the electronic weapon systems of the enemy with a computer virus. In the end the Mahdi-general at the head of the Turkish army marches to Israel, gives the land back to the Palestinians, has Zion hanged and the Jews deported to the USA.

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[27] The idea that freemasons act as a part of the Zionist conspiracy is a noted ideologeme in Turkish discourse.

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Conclusion

While it is true that the bipolarity of East and West is a theme that long predates the terrorist attacks on the WTC, there are indications that it has gained a new dynamic and perspective after that date. For Turkey the American invasion of Iraq and the resulting tensions between the two countries have become another milestone. When the authors of *Metal Fırtına* were asked in an interview when precisely they had decided to write the book, Burak Turna answered that it was after 9/11 that he started trying to guess when the third world war would break out. Orkun Uçar, on the other hand, referred to the "hood event" in Sulaymaniyya as the moment when he began to foster similar thoughts (Uçar 2005a: 161). This seems to coincide with the results of public opinion polls by the Pew Research Center about the decline of favorable views of America among the Turkish population that indicated a drop from 52 percent in 2000 to 15 percent in 2003 and only a slight recovery to 23 percent in 2005 (Holland 2006).

Beyond their "anti-western" convictions, the texts discussed above are examples of postcolonial literature.[28] But the ironic words of Salman Rushdie "the Empire writes back" gain an additional twist when we take into consideration the social and political continuities connecting Turkey with the Ottoman Empire.[29] The criticism of the present world order that can be found in these texts converges in some kind of political or cognitive utopianism. While the commercial aspects connected with the production of *Metal Fırtına*, *Kurtlar Vadisi Irak* and *Mehdix* should not be underrated, the seriousness of their messages should not either. "The oppressed await you" is one of the messages mysteriously written on the screen of the Mahdi-general's computer while he receives his instructions (Güler 2006a: 47).

However, as the paradigm of the nation and its state precedes and penetrates all these visions, they may be claimed to form part of the overarching discourse of Turkish nationalism. Benedict Anderson in his now classical work *Imagined Communities* has pointed out the affinity of nationalism and religion (Anderson 1999: 10-12). Obviously this affinity is more prone to mutual reinforcement than Anderson had assumed (cf. Özkırımlı 2000: 153). The authors of the influential work *The Empire Writes Back*, alluded to above, have somewhat uneasily observed the inherent tendency of some postcolonial literature to "a gradual blurring of the distinction between the national and the nationalist" (Ashcroft et

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28 That is, of course, only in vague analogy with the book of this name by B. Ashcroft, G. Griffith and H Tiffin who concentrate on English (or in their terminology: "english") postcolonial literature.

29 Cf. Meeker, M. E. 2002. *A Nation of Empire. The Ottoman Legacy of Turkish Modernity*. Berkeley etc.: Univ. of California Press. Rushdie's phrase originally was "*the Empire writes back at the centre*."

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al. 2002: 17). This observation certainly would deserve profound theorizing, which our space here does not permit.

Taner Akçam, one very critical observer of Turkish political discourse, has recently argued that "Today, Turkey vacillates between the poles of being a great power and deep fear for its own existence. Its natural reaction has been to pull in its horns, to go into a defensive posture, and to treat every situation as a problem of vital security" (Akçam: 2004: 5). The ambivalence between anti-imperialism and the desire for empire nourished by the glorification of the Turkish imperial past (Copeaux 1997) may exacerbate the hegemonialist tendencies of nationalism in the Turkish case. A certain degree of narcissism at least seems the unavoidable price, e.g. when Uçar and Turna speak of Istanbul as the center of the world (Uçar and Turna: 266). The sociologist Baykan Sezer in a similar vein believed in "the superiority and importance of the Turkish society and history." İsmet Özel, who in a conference coined the expression *God* "created the Turks superior to other nations" (*Allah Türkleri diğer milletlerden üstün yarattı*), explained this expression in an interview with the idea that "the Turks have to carry a heavier load than all other nations. The way the Turks have to go is riskier, more noteworthy and more worthy of adoration than that of other nations" (Özel 2005: 5). Özel thus willingly or unwillingly parallels Rudyard Kipling's rhetoric of the "white man's burden." In his book Güler brings this meta-historical claim of Turkish chosenness to its final logical conclusion in the chiliastic conflict between the Turkish Mahdi-general and the personification of the Dajjal in the Jewish-Zionist commander Zion.

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Early Findings of a Field Survey on the Perception of the Army by Non-Muslim Minorities Living in Turkey: The Case of Armenians

H. Birsen Örs

This paper analyzes the early findings of a survey that was begun in November 2004 and completed in May 2005. The main aim of that survey was to understand some of the social and political characteristics of non-Muslim minorities living in Turkey. The focus of this paper is on how the Turkish army is perceived by Turkey's Armenians. Basically two reasons aroused my curiosity about their perception. One is my academic specialization in praetorianism, and the second is the fact that, as is well known, Turkey is one of those countries in which the democratization process has often been interrupted by military coups. Another factor that motivated me to attempt such a survey is the very limited academic literature on minorities in Turkey.

In Turkey, the army is not only a military force but also a considerable social and political force. The Turkish Republic, which was founded in 1923 by the army led by M. Kemal Atatürk after the struggle for independence, experienced three military interventions; two directly in 1960 and 1980, and an indirect one in 1971. Despite the fact that the efforts for democratization in the country have been interrupted by the Turkish army three times and that Turkish civil politics has always been supervised by high-ranking army officers, surveys[1] indicate that a great majority of Turkish people have always considered the army as the most valuable and trustworthy institution of the country. Certain historical, social, cultural and political reasons for this popular attitude can be discerned, such as the crucial position of military officers in the Ottoman bureaucracy; characteristics of Turkish political culture such as elitism, centralization of political power, hierarchical organization, the high importance attributed to and the great popular respect paid to the state; the role the Turkish army played in the struggle for independence and in the foundation of the Turkish Republic; as well as political and economic failures of civil political governments.

By means of this survey, I have tried to learn whether the non-Muslim minorities living in Turkey perceive the Turkish army differently from the way Muslim Turks do.

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1 For example, see. TESEV's survey, Esmer 1999, 41-43

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Historical Background

As is well known, the Anatolian lands had been home to many different ethnic, religious and cultural groups for centuries. A significant proportion of the population of the Ottoman Empire whose sovereignty extended over vast regions from Asia to Africa and Europe, was not Muslim. In some regions of the Empire such as Rumelia, Eastern Anatolia, and some parts of Central Anatolia, non-Muslim subjects outnumbered Muslim subjects.

The Ottoman Empire in its classical period was composed of two classes: the dominant class consisting of the Sultan and Sultan's *kul*s (slaves) on the one hand, and the *reaya* class consisting of peasants, tradesmen and merchants who were engaged in production and paid taxes (İnalcık 2002a, 179). This sharp distinction was not only political and legal in nature, but also represented a huge gap between the high culture of the educated administrative class and the folk culture of uneducated ordinary people.

As a result of Islamization and acculturation policies in large parts of the Empire, where more than twenty ethnic groups with different religions were living, the Ottoman lands may be considered to have been a kind of a cultural melting pot. This has led many experts of Ottoman history to the conclusion that it is possible to talk about an "Ottoman identity" (İnalcık 2002b). Some facts such as the integral appearance of a ruled class composed of different ethnic groups and religions, the recruitment of Christians into the civil and military bureaucracy, and intermarriage between Muslims and Christians seem to support the argument of a common Ottoman identity. However, on the other hand, the *reaya*, the ruled class, was not as homogeneous as it appeared. It was divided into many subgroups on the basis of religion more than economic criteria. Being Muslim or Christian or Jewish mattered in respect to a person's social, political and legal position. For example, even though intermarriage between Muslims and Christians was not prohibited, their children were not readily accepted as Muslims, and were registered separately and designated as "*Ahriyan*" in the official survey (İnalcık 2002b, 16-17). Another example is the taxation system: Muslims and non-Muslims were subject to different taxes. The laws decreed by the Sultans forcing different religious groups to live in certain neighborhoods, to wear clothing distinguishing them from the others, to perform their religious rituals at a certain physical distance from Muslims, etc[2], also reflect the policies pursued by the Empire in order to discriminate against and keep non-Muslims apart from the Muslims, who were perceived as the essential component of society. Thus, it appears problematic to speak about a homogeneous Ottoman society. Ottoman

[2] For social life and non-Muslims in Ottoman cities, see Ercan 2001: 178-184, 280; İnalcık 2002a: 179-187, and Turan 2005 passim.

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identity seems to have been based on political and legal status, rather than cultural homogeneity despite the cultural interaction between the religious and ethnic groups. It is worth mentioning here that the emphasis on discrimination and separation of the communities was not ethnic, but religious.

In order to establish a political, social and economic control mechanism on the non-Muslim communities, the Ottoman Empire had developed what has been called the "millet-system" that distinguished different religious groups living within the borders of the Empire, such as Jews, Armenians and Greeks, and provided for the appointment of the religious leaders of each community as head of the community (*milletbaşı).* Each *milletbaşı* represented his community and acted as a communication channel between the palace and the community. He had a circumscribed authority to make decisions concerning his community. Living in the lands of the Ottoman Empire was considered a privilege accorded by the Empire to the non-Muslims. Despite all discriminative practices and limiting policies towards non-Muslims, they were not subjected to systematic coercion.

Until the mid-19th century, the political and social status of the non-Muslims did not change. However, the Empire's loss of military power and the nationalist movements spreading all over Europe as a result of French Revolution, forced the Ottoman Empire to develop new policies that changed the status of non-Muslims. For example, the non-Muslims were exempted from the head tax (c*izye*); with the firman of Sultan Abdulmecid, known as *hatt-i hümayun,* declared in 1856, all subjects irrespective of their religion were considered equal. But in the end, all these efforts of the Empire did not suffice to keep the Empire alive.

While the Ottoman Empire had been comparatively successful in keeping different ethnic and religious subjects together under its reign, the Turkish Republic that was founded on its ruins, as a secular regime, put an ethnic emphasis, contrary to the religious emphasis of the Ottoman period, on the definition of national identity, rejecting the cosmopolitan civilization as an artificial culture. Even though the new regime defined "being Turk" as feeling oneself to be a Turk irrespective of one's ethnic origin or religion,[3] the minority groups have never been considered equal to Turks. Especially in the early decades of the Turkish Republic, the idea of "creating a Turkish nation"[4] was interpreted by the ruling elites, as creating a society consisting of Muslim Turks by excluding non-Muslims. One of the remarkable discriminative policies toward non-Muslim citizens was to forbid them to be hired into the civil and military services. The fourth and fifth items of Article 788 of the new Civil Service Law declared in

3 *Turkish Constitution of 1924*, Article 88.

4 For some examples of the latest works examining the formation of Turkish national identity see Akçam 2001, Canefe 2002, Çağaptay 2002, and İşyar 2005.

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1926 stated that being a Turk (*Türk olmak*) was a precondition for becoming a civil servant (*memur*) or for being employed (*müstahdem*) by the state.[5]

Another discriminatory action of the new state was the "*Yirmi Kur'a İhtiyatlar*" case (Incidence of Reserves). In 1939, the single party government declared that non-Muslim minorities were to perform their military service without armed education, using wartime conditions as the reason for this different treatment (Rifat Bali 1998, 5). But the actual recruitment of the discharged non-Muslims, who were now being used for labor-intensive work in impoverished conditions, was a clear indication of how the non-Muslim minorities were considered by the ruling elites. The Capital Tax, promulgated on November 1942 in order to increase tax revenues and also to combat black marketing, was another example of discriminative policies of the state towards non-Muslim citizens, since most of the tax payers were non-Muslims. For example, in Istanbul, 87% of the names on the list were Armenian, Greek and Jewish citizens. 1229 of them, all non-Muslims, who did not pay the tax, were sent to labor camps in Aşkale and later Sivrihisar (two small towns in Anatolia).[6]

The last incident to mention here, was the pogrom of September 6-7 in 1955 that began with attacks on non-Muslim businesses, houses, schools, cemeteries and churches by mob groups in Istanbul upon a rumor that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's birthplace in Greece had been destroyed.

All these incidents accelerated the migration of non-Muslim citizens from Turkey to other countries. Today, around 50-70 thousand Armenians, 20 thousand Jews, fifteen thousand Assyrians and one to two thousand Greeks are living in Turkey[7]. The aim of this study, as mentioned above, is to understand some social and political characteristics of one of these communities that for years have been regarded as "the others" by the state and by Muslim Turks.

The Scope of the Survey

The survey, of which only one part is presented here, consists of four parts. The first part, which includes questions about birth date, birth place, marital status, educational level, income, etc., as well as questions concerning the perception of self-identity, is designed to present a general social, cultural and economic profile of Turkey's Armenians. The second part, including questions such as their knowledge of the Armenian language, the extent to which they feel themselves members of the community, the frequency of their visits to Armenian churches, etc, aims to understand the interviewees' social, cultural and religious ties with the Armenian community in Turkey. These two survey parts were conducted by

5 Cf. *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Cilt 7, No. 198, "Memurin Kanunu" articles 4a and 5a: 667-668.
6 For the application of the Capital Tax, see Aktar 2000.
7 For the population figures of ethnic and religious groups in Turkey, see Andrews 1989.

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my colleague Ayşegül Komsuoğlu[8] and me. In the third part of the study, Ayşegül Komsuoğlu, focuses on political behavior and attitudes of Turkey's Armenians, while, in the fourth part, I focus on the perception of the army by non-Muslim minorities living in Turkey, which, besides Armenians, also includes other minorities, Jews, Assyrians and Greeks, living in Turkey. The fourth part of the survey contains thirteen questions. Two of them aim at gauging the interviewees' familiarity with the army; four questions concern the attributed social status of military officership as a profession and whether the interviewees regard it a desirable profession; two questions attempt to determine where the interviewees rank the army as an institution among other institutions and how they perceive the function of the army; three questions evaluate what they think about the 1980 military intervention; and finally two questions inquire about their perception of internal and external enemies. In this paper, I present the statistical findings and my observations of what the interviewees said about officership as a profession and the army as an institution.

Methodology

The survey was implemented using a method that included both quantitative and qualitative styles at the same session. The reason for employing both methods was to minimize the unsatisfactory aspects of each method and thus to embrace a wider range of consideration.[9] The questionnaires we filled out during the interview sessions allowed us to restrict the framework of the interviewing session and gather quantitative data in order to underpin our observations and interpretations, while the interview method provided a freer atmosphere for the interviewee to express himself/herself and for us to gain deeper insight into the world of the interviewees.

The data of this paper are based on face to face deep interviews with 104 Armenians over the age of 17 who are Turkish citizens, living in eleven neighborhoods where the Armenian population is heavily concentrated.[10] The survey area was kept limited to Istanbul, because today none of the Anatolian or Thracian cities of Turkey have a significant population of Armenians. A preparatory survey held in Ankara had showed us that the Armenians scattered in Anatolia are less conscious of their Armenian identity than are the Armenians living in Istanbul. During the interviews, we also filled out questionnaires, while being attentive to the length of the interview sessions. The duration of each session varied from

8 Cf. her contribution in this volume.

9 For advantages and disadvantages of quantitative and qualitative methods, see Bryman 1988.

10 The neighborhoods are: Bakırköy-Merkez, Bakırköy-Ataköy, Bakırköy-Yeşilköy, Bahçelievler. Şirinevler, Samatya, Kumkapı, Şişli, Beyoğlu-Taksim, Üsküdar (Bağlarbaşı), and Kadıköy.

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half an hour to four hours depending on many factors such as willingness of the interviewee, convenience, and even gender and age in some cases.

As the population of Turkey's Armenians is not officially recorded, we employed a sampling method different from the traditional one. Firstly, we made a list of Armenian churches, schools, newspapers, associations, and another list of Armenians we knew as our neighbors, friends, students, etc. We also interviewed the leading figures of the Armenian community such as politicians in local administrations, an editor of an Armenian newspaper, some members of the board of directors of the Armenian Patriarchate, and Armenian intellectuals, in order to depict a general profile of the community. We visited the interviewee at the appointed date and time. We employed the snowballing method, concentrating around twenty snowballs that set off chains of subjects, each of whom guided us to another. Another sampling method we used was to visit some places, without any appointment, such as homes, businesses, associations, coffee-houses where, we knew, Armenians lived, worked and spent time, and to ask them if they would participate in our survey. We were very pleased to find that, in most instances, we were welcomed and not refused. However, we also employed a control mechanism on our sampling to avoid similarity of samples. For example, we paid attention to provide a balance in number between males and females, but also to accumulate on some occupations such as handicraft, which is a traditional and very common occupation among Armenians.[11]

During the research, we did not hire professional interviewers since we had neither financial support nor any predetermined list of interviewees to give to interviewers. We also had to consider the sensitivity of the minority issue in Turkey; we were intent to observe the interviewees and feel what they feel, to hear their personal and family experiences, and also to establish cordiality between the interviewees and ourselves.

The hypothesis of this research assumes that the non-Muslim minorities living in Turkey may perceive certain political institutions and events differently than do Muslim Turks. This hypothesis is based on three assumptions: first, the unique historical experiences of these communities; second, daily life experiences they have as individuals and members of a community; and finally, the particular behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs that they developed as a result of living in a community that is relatively closed to other communities, especially to Muslim Turks.

In this research, the term "perception" refers to all mental and sensory processes that a person has about an object, a subject, an institution or a situation.[12] The working definition of "perception," here, covers all mental and sensory

[11] A large proportion of the male Armenian population engages in the handicraft of silver and gold.

[12] For the term "perception" see Laing-Phillipson-Lee 1969: 3-48; and Berry-Poortinga-Segall-Dasen 1992: 131-60.

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processes accompanied with behaviors and attitudes, ranging from sentiments to definition, classification, naming, meaning, evaluation and finally cognition. Perception assumes interpenetrations, conjunctions and/or disjunctions between the person, who perceives, and what is perceived. The term perception I employ here, is not based on racial differences, but on cultural differences, namely, differences we learn through individual and communal experiences.

Perception includes many dimensions of a relation between the person who perceives and what is perceived. In this research, I attempted to understand three dimensions of the perception process of the non-Muslim minorities, who perceive, and the army which is perceived.

1. Discernment of the institution (the army and the officership) by the person, and a perceived relation between the institution and the person.
2. Perceived distance (remoteness-nearness; accessibility-inaccessibility) between the person/community and the institution.
3. The prestige the person attributes to the army, the officership and their functions relative to the other institutions of the society.

The Findings: Some Data and Observations

The survey data of this paper is based on interviews with 55 female and 49 male Armenians. The educational level is as follows:

Non-literate	2.9%
Literate (no diploma)	1.9%
Primary School	22.1%
Middle School	13.4%
High School	33.6%
Undergraduate degree (2 years)	6.7%
Undergraduate degree (4 or more years)	19%

One of the questions asked of the 104 interviewees, was "In your opinion, what is the most credible and trustworthy institution in Turkey?" The Turkish army scored highest, with 53.8% (56 of 104 persons), among the other institutions. The other institutions mentioned were the Turkish parliament (1.9%), the government (6.7%), the courts (6.7%), the Supreme Court (4.9%), the police force (0.9%), etc. The most remarkable point here is that 16.3% of interviewees found no institution credible and trustworthy. Age, gender and educational level did not make any remarkable difference in the respondents' evaluation of Turkish institutions.

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Another question was "In your opinion, what is the duty of the Turkish army?" The results are as follows: "The duty of the Turkish army" is:

to protect the country against external enemies	20.2%
to protect the country against both external and internal enemies	60.5%
to put domestic politics in order	0.9%
to protect the country against both external and internal enemies and put domestic politics in order	11.5%
have no idea	0.9%
other answers	0.9 %

As is seen, most of the interviewees have a perception of "enemy," internal or external. What is interesting here is that the army is considered to be an institution whose duty is to protect the country against not only external, but also internal enemies. Again, age, gender and educational level made no remarkable difference in the interviewees' perception of the army's duty.

My observations support the data about the perception of the Turkish army as an institution: The Turkish army is considered the most credible and trustworthy institution of the country and as a guarantor of the regime against the groups of "internal enemies," which they have named as follows:

Radical Islamic groups	37.5%
All radical groups	7.6%
Fascists	5.7%
Communists	5.7%
Politicians	2.8%
Kurds	0.9%

At first glance it seems that the radical Islamic groups are perceived by the interviewees as an enemy to the country. However, when we deepened the interviews it was understood that the radical Islamic groups are perceived as an enemy and threat not only to the country, but also to their community in particular. Given that the interviewees regard the Turkish army as the most modernist, secular and laic institution of the country, it seems understandable that most of those who mentioned radical Islamic groups as an internal enemy of the country think of the army as a guarantor of the secular and democratic regime of the country.

The interviews revealed that factors such as the failure of governments to solve the problem of political violence and terror in the 1970s and 1980s, the lack of tolerance and reconciliation among the political parties, corruption in the bu-

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reaucratic institutions, economic crises, etc. eroded the legitimacy of civil governments. On the other hand, the Turkish army is perceived as an institution uninvolved in daily politics, which are frequently perceived as corrupted in Turkey, despite the fact that it was the army that has always dealt with and manipulated politics behind the scenes. The role the Turkish army played in the foundation of the Turkish Republic and in the modernization project is another factor supporting its legitimacy and prestige. During face-to-face interviews, the other arguments explaining why the interviewees considered the Turkish army the most credible and trustworthy institution were its perceived role in protecting the regime and the relatively peaceful periods that followed the military coups.

In addition to the Turkish army as an institution, I also tried to understand what they thought about officership as a profession. The answers to the questions on the questionnaire as well as anecdotes, personal stories, personal opinions and judgments about officers they told us during the interviews, show that officership is still a desirable and prestigious profession. One of the questions in this regard was "What is the first feeling you have when you see an officer on the street, in a market, on the bus, etc.?" 32.5% of the interviewees said that they felt nothing special. Only 3.8% mentioned a negative feeling such as antipathy, inequality, uneasiness, while 32.7% of them said that they felt respect. Others mentioned some positive feelings such as envy (15.7%), sympathy (%5.3), and trust, pride, admiration, etc., each with rates around 1%. The total percentage of positive feelings amounted to 62.5%,

Answers to the question "Would you be in favor of your son choosing officership as a profession?" were very surprising, as non-Muslim minorities are not hired into the military cadres even though there is no legal obstacle preventing this.[13] 15.3% answered "I would definitely be in favor", 38.4 % "I would be in favor," 19% "I would not be in favor," 11.5% "I would strongly oppose," while others answered "I do not know" at 15.3%.

Another interesting point is that some of the interviewees who did not want their sons to be officers gave as a reason "because it is not possible for Armenians to be officers in Turkey," while some others claimed that "even if the Armenians are hired into the Turkish army, they are not promoted." Those answers imply that the interviewees perceive a distance between the army and the community, and regard both the army as an institution and officership as a profession, beyond their reach. Another point worth mentioning here is that the interviewees who held leftist ideological perspectives considered the army and officership as unsympathetic, unnecessary and aggressive institutions. A similar antimilitarist tendency was also observed among a small group of people who were artisans.

13 All Turkish citizens have the legal right to apply for officership in the Turkish army. However, it is known that non-Muslim citizens are eliminated during the exams for national security reasons.

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In the preference of officership as a profession, gender did make some difference. The women seemed more eager than the men to have a son in military uniform. 56.3% of women and 51% of men gave a positive answer, while negative answers were given by 25.4% of women and 36.7% of men. Another difference between women and men concerning officership appeared when we asked the interviewees why they did or did not prefer this profession. Most of the female interviewees mentioned emotional reasons such as public esteem for officership, personal affinity towards officers, the elegance of military uniforms, while most of the male interviewees mentioned more concrete reasons such as a way to represent the Armenian community in a positive way, affirmation of Armenian equality, high salary, opportunity for free education, etc. During the conversations, some of the elderly women said that officers had been the most popular candidates for young girls to marry when they were young. Also some of the men told us that they had wanted to be officers, but were not accepted because they were Armenians.

Conclusion

An overall evaluation of my findings brings me to a set of conclusions which can be summarized in two points. The first is related to the status Turkey's Armenians attribute to the Turkish Army as an institution relative to the other institutions of the country, and officership as a profession. The second is related to the relation and distance they perceive between these institutions and themselves as a community.

The findings of the survey indicate that 53.8 % of interviewees consider the Turkish Army the most credible and trustworthy institution in the country. That such a level of trust is shared by more than half of the Armenians interviewed may be rooted in three basic assumptions. One is that the Army is the 'cleanest' institution in Turkey. This assumption derives from the belief that most of the institutions in Turkey, such as the parliament, political parties, and bureaucracy are corrupt. Another assumption is that the Turkish Army is the guardian of the Turkish democracy. And the third assumption is that the establishment of a fundamentalist Islamic regime in Turkey can be prevented only by the Army, which they consider the most secular and laic institution of the country.

The second conclusion derived from the survey relates to the perceived relation and distance between the community and the Army. Turkey's Armenians maintain their ethnic identity and their strong communal ties. However, I observed that they are less isolated than they appear to the rest of Turkish society. They have a high level of political knowledge and interest, and an awareness of political, economic and social processes. They discern the Turkish Army and its functions. However, they feel a great distance between the institution and themselves. They find the Turkish Army a supportable and prestigious, but unreachable

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institution. Similarly, they look on officership as a desirable profession for both emotional and concrete reasons, but as one that is inaccessible to Armenians.

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Findings of a Field Survey on Turkey's Armenians: Notes on Their Political Profile

Ayşegül Komsuoğlu

The Armenian community is a non-Muslim minority group living in Turkey, along with other non-Muslim minority groups such as Jews, Assyrians, Yezidis and Greeks. This research report aims to discuss several findings of a field survey conducted in Istanbul on Turkey's Armenians, between November 2004 and May 2005. The purpose of this report on Turkey's Armenian community is to contribute to the literature on ethnic voting. In this research, questions on the political profile of Turkey's Armenians are basically organized in three sections.[1] The first section includes questions aiming to establish the level of interest in politics; the second section includes questions aiming to understand the relationship between Armenian identity and voting behavior; and the third section aims to understand whether or not the Armenians have the inclination to vote as a community. With these questions, this paper examines the political behavior of Turkish citizens who are Armenian. Attention is focused on the following issues: 1) examining whether being Armenian has an effect on the voting behavior of Turkey's Armenians who possess the characteristics of a community; 2) assessing the reasons for this effect in the context of the relation between ethnicity and voting behavior.

Methodology

The survey relies on data from 228 face-to-face interviews conducted over a seven-month period in the 11 districts of Istanbul where the Armenian population is concentrated. These districts include: Bakırköy/Center, Ataköy, Yesilköy, Bahçelievler/Center, Şirinevler, Samatya, Kumkapı, Şişli/Kurtuluş, Bağlarbaşı, Moda and Taksim. Other interviews were conducted in Kapalıçarşı and Sultanhamam, where many Armenians practice their traditional professions.[2]

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1 The original version of this preliminary research report was presented in February 2005 when the total number of the interviews had reached 115. The paper has been updated for publication, the total number of interviews at the end of the survey having now reached 228.

2 Skilled trades, such as master goldsmith or silversmith, are seen, in Turkey, as the traditional professions of the Armenians. During this study, the answer received to the question concerning profession mostly referred to a trade, especially in the case of men who were middle aged and older. Apart from being goldsmiths and silversmiths–both areas in which Armenians are known to specialize widely–it was observed that they had mastery in certain other professions, such as carpet repair, and especially in the case of older indi-

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Today the Armenian population in Turkey is estimated to be within the wide range of 40,000 to 80,000, but during the course of this study we came to consider 65,000 a realistic estimate. The great majority of this Armenian population lives in Istanbul. The second city is Ankara, with an Armenian population of 1,000-1,500, by far a figure too small to be compared with the numbers in Istanbul. The remainder, who are scattered around Anatolia, total a given number of 1,000. One exception to this scattered population is the village of Vakıflı of Samandağı of Antakya which is home to an Armenian population of 150. Furthermore, many interviewees mentioned a number of Armenian villages around Cudi Mountain without providing actual population numbers.[3]

The survey area was kept limited to Istanbul because today, as mentioned above, none of the Anatolian or Thracian cities of Turkey has a significant population of Armenians. Ankara was the only city where we had originally planned to conduct interviews, but a preparatory survey held also in Ankara showed us that the Armenians scattered in Anatolia are less conscious of their Armenian identity compared to the Armenians living in Istanbul. Furthermore, the reason for the Ankara Armenians' relatively weak relationships with the Armenian community was thought to stem from religious differences. Ankara Armenians are mostly Catholics (See Hancı 1995: 35-6).

The data used for this paper are derived from the "political profile" section of the survey. The field survey was planned in four sections. The first section aimed to create a general profile of the Armenians in Turkey in order to contribute to the sparse literature available today on the subject.[4] The questions asked in this section related to birth date, birth place, marital status, income, residency, educational level and whether the interviewee had studied in an Armenian school. The second section sought to shed light on the social, cultural and religious ties in

viduals, blacksmithing. The second most popular type of profession after the trades is commerce. There are two reasons for this distribution. Firstly, Armenians cannot work in government and army jobs (there are some exceptions to this rule, such as being a professor or teacher). Secondly the continuity of the master-apprentice relationship is required to qualify as a master handicraftsman, which is achieved by way of family or community connections for the purpose of finding a job or learning a handicraft. Today, it is clearly observed that the scenario is changing. The main reasons are the rise of the educational level, which benefits mainly the middle class, and due to which the Armenian community has begun to work at the same level as the young generations of the other middle and upper-middle classes in Turkey, that is, by making use of their higher education.

3 For a relevant publication, see Peter Alford Andrews's *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey* (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1989), pp. 127-129, and also see: `Istanbul Armenian Patriarch, in Radio Interview, Discusses Current Issues of Armenians in Turkey`, Lraper (26 March 1999) by Talar Sesetyan, http://www.oia.net/news/articles/1999_03_29_newsfile391.html, and `Interview with Patriarch Mesrob II of Istanbul and Turkey`, (Part 1), Azg/Mirror (27 May 1999), http://www.oia.net/news/articles/1999_05_27_newsfile2721.html.

4 The scholarly literature written in English seems to consist of three articles: Der-Karabetian & Balian 1992, Göl 2005, and Björklund 2003.

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the Armenian community in Turkey. The questions were designed to allow insight into the issues of whether the interviewees feel themselves members of the Armenian community; whether they have close contact with other Armenians; the percentage of Armenians in all their social contacts; whether they prefer Armenian schools, define themselves with the word "Armenian," and can speak Armenian; their attitude towards the Armenian Church and towards the Patriarch; and finally whether they perceive the Patriarch as their community leader or as a mere spiritual leader. The third section of the survey, which I conducted, related to the political profile of the community in terms of voting behavior, political cognition and political interest. The fourth section, on the perception of the army by non-Muslim minorities living in Turkey was conducted by Birsen Örs (see her article in this volume).

The overall survey was conducted using a procedure in which qualitative and quantitative methods were employed simultaneously. We had face-to-face deep interviews with subjects and also filled in questionnaires in accordance with the answers of the interviewees. The questionnaires enabled us to both record information and make observations, as well as to gather statistical data that would facilitate comparisons. We tried to keep the interviews within the confines of the separate titles and the specific categories as described above. The primary reason for using qualitative and quantitative methods simultaneously was to reduce, as much as possible, the difficulties and problems that each method presents individually (Bryman, 1988). Additionally, it provided a broad range of data and thus permitted us a greater depth of understanding. Moreover, we were able to establish consistent data, which allowed us to test our observations and reach valid conclusions about the social, cultural and political realities of Turkey's Armenians.

All interviews were conducted by Örs and/or me. Professional interviewers were not employed, for two reasons. Firstly, we preferred to make personal observations in order to penetrate our subjects' world and better understand what they thought and felt. Secondly, in view of the sensitivity of minority issues in Turkey, we decided that only direct, personal contacts would assure cordiality and trust between the interviewees and us.

Each interview was conducted over a broad time-span, ranging from half an hour to four hours. Various factors affected the conduct of the interviews. The most important factors that determined the length of each interview were the attention span of the interviewee and the interview's location. For example, if conducted in a busy shop, an interview would necessarily be shorter. Conversely, interviews conducted at an association of retired people might become prolonged, as interviewees would have abundant time at hand and would consider the interview a welcome diversion in an otherwise dull day.

We employed a non-traditional sampling method because the neighborhoods, gender, level of education, etc. of Turkish Armenians cannot be accurately iden-

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tified from official records. In order to select a representative sample group, we initially interviewed certain Armenian politicians, the editor-in-chief of an Armenian newspaper, persons associated with the de facto Board of Directors of the Armenian Patriarchate, and Armenian intellectuals. These individuals provided a general picture of the social, cultural and economic characteristics of the Armenian community in Turkey. We also compiled a list of local Armenian churches, schools, associations and publications, and additionally contacted our own Armenian neighbors and friends, and Armenian students. Throughout, we paid special attention to assuring a representative distribution of variables such as gender, age and occupation, among others.

We used two different methods to contact interviewees. The first was to make prior appointments with individuals, who were either from our original list or were suggested by the initial interviewees. By using this method, we obtained about twenty snowballs. The second method was that, without making prior appointments, we would visit the associations, schools and workplaces on our list and ask the individuals present if they would like to participate in the study.[5] Interviewees reached through this process led us to other interviewees.

Notes on the Political Profile of the Community

The questions posed in the political profile section were organized under three headings. The first group of questions was aimed at determining the interviewees' level of interest in politics. Questions posed in this section asked if the interviewee was a member of a political party; if he/she knew the names of the members of Parliament and the ministers; if he/she was a member of an association; if he/she had ever worked for a political party; if he/she would be willing to join active politics; and if he/she knew the name of the Armenian representatives in past Parliaments.

The second group of questions was intended to shed light on the relationship between Armenian identity and voting behavior. In this section, questions were posed concerning the attitude of Turkish Armenians towards an Armenian political party, their opinions about political parties establishing an Armenian quota, the effect of any party's formulated policy towards the Armenians, the voting of the Armenians and the effect of political parties' nominations of Armenian candidates in elections.

The third group of questions was formulated to decide whether or not the Armenians tend to vote as a community. In this category, questions relating to

[5] Another point to be mentioned here is the gender of the researchers; being female helped in the communication process with the women (interviewees) and in gaining access to certain places such as private homes, which in this case proved easier in the conservative Armenian community. This reflects a social characteristic that overlaps with the customs and beliefs in Turkish society.

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"how an ethnic group's acting in unison is perceived by the Armenians in Turkey" have been explored. The questions in this section also aim at an understanding of Armenian voting habits in the past elections and Armenian political behavior in Turkish politics today.

Through the questions classified under the three headings constituting the third section of the survey, my intention has been to discover whether it is possible to talk about a common political pattern in terms of attitudes and behaviors held by the Armenian community. This preliminary report presented here simply deals with the results of the first two headings.[6]

Level of Interest in Politics and Voting Behavior

The act of casting a vote lies at the core of active political behavior. During the interviews it was observed that the balloting percentage of the Armenians living in Turkey is by far greater than Turkey's overall balloting percentage. The percentage was 79.1% in the 2002 general elections. For the individuals that we interviewed the percentage was 95.5%.

Only two of all my interview partners gave a negative answer to the question whether they cast a vote. One of these two lives abroad. The high interest in voting may be explained by the effects of being part of a minority population. A community that has in many circumstances experienced a violation of the principle of equality is quite likely to be sensible in practicing its equal rights. Universal suffrage is a right they share with all the citizens of the Republic, and being an equal citizen is considered very important to all individuals who are part of the Armenian community.

Another reason for participating in voting was explained by some of our interviewees as the concept of "obeying the rules." When we remember that voting is mandatory in Turkey, this explanation seems reasonable. One of our interviewees tried to explain the interest in voting as: "(…) are you kidding? They (the Armenians, AK) are even very careful not to get a parking ticket (…)."

As mentioned above, we asked several questions to determine the level of interest in politics, such as, for example, whether the interviewee was a member of a political party, if he/she knew the names of the members of Parliament and the ministers, if he/she was a member of an association, if he/she ever worked for a political party or would be willing to join active politics. The responses showed us that the Armenian community in Turkey is not very interested in politics or in being politically active.

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6 For all the results related to the political profile section, see: Ayşegül Komsuoğlu, "Turkiye Ermenileri'nin Siyasal Tutum ve Davranışlari Üzerine Notlar," forthcoming in *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, Kış 2007.

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The question asking the names of the Armenian representatives in past Parliaments aimed at assessing the level of interest with respect to the historical connection with the community and Turkish politics. One interviewee did not answer the question, 59 (25.9%) interviewees remembered one or more representatives, and 168 (73.7%) people could not remember a name or gave an unrelated name. There is no significant difference between the elder and younger generations in remembering such names because many young people attending the Armenian schools were getting the same information on their community.

The Relationship between Armenian Identity and Voting Behavior

The first question asked in this section aimed to understand how the community would think about the idea of an Armenian political party. 111 (48.7%) of the interviewees gave "positive" answers, 110 (48.2%) gave "negative" answers to the question of how they would respond to the establishment of an Armenian political party representing the Armenians. Out of 228 interviewees, 7 individuals preferred not to reply to this question. It deserves attention that in this case the percentage of these answers did not vary significantly according to sex or educational background. Further elaboration revealed that even though 48.7% gave positive answers, the interviewees were not sympathetic to the idea of a political party based on ethnicity. The Kurdish problem and its connection with the Kurdish party, the People's Democratic Party (*Halkın Demokrasi Partisi*, HADEP) and its sucessor parties[7], may be considered as one of the factors that have negatively influenced the acceptance of political organizations based on ethnicity.

Many of the interviewees emphasized that, while on an ideological level they were against any kind of ethnic political organization, in reality they actually did feel the need for a kind of political organization that would assist them in solving their problems. The idea of an Armenian party representing the Armenians was considered a possible way to contribute to a solution of the Armenian community's problems. Several interviewees remarked that many Armenians had the idea that they were perceived "wrongly" in Turkey, and an Armenian party, by representing the Armenians, would contribute to "rectifying" public opinion in their regard. Several answers that were given to this question also emphasized the connection between the Patriarch and "representation." The idea of an Armenian political party is seen as a balance to the political power of the Patriarch and also as a civil initiative against the influence of the Patriarchy. One answer stating there was no need for a specifically Armenian political party argued that

[7] The successor parties are: Democratik People's Party (*Demokratik Halk Partisi*, DEHAP) and Democratik Society Party (*Demokratik Toplum Partisi*, DTP).

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"the Patriarch is like a party in terms of representation, so there is no need for an Armenian party."

Following the question of how an Armenian political party would be received, we asked comparatively more realistic questions, in terms of current circumstances, on the subject of assigning quotas for Armenian candidates in existing political parties and on the acceptance of such a measure by the Armenian community. Responses given to these questions revealed that this idea was more warmly received. Out of 228 interviewees, 7 individuals preferred not to give an answer, 152 (66.7%) individuals answered "yes," and 69 (30.3%) answered "no." The most frequent response was that assigning a quota would do "justice" because Turkey's political parties did not nominate Armenian candidates for promising constituencies. The second most common answer expressed the will to see more Armenian candidates representing the Armenian community in the elections. The interviewees' desire to see an Armenian representative in Parliament should also be considered as an emphasis on the ever-present quest for equality. The interviewees expressed their feelings in answers such as: "to feel like a full citizen" and "why are people who have been living on this land for 4,000 years not members of its Parliament?"

Some of the political parties are supported by several groups within the Armenian community who view the party as the representative of their interests and requests. One question in the interviews was designed to find out whether there were any individuals who thought that one of the existing parties was representing the Armenian community. 39 (17.1%) individuals answered this question with a "yes." It turned out that most of those who answered in the affirmative were interested in politics, and their approaches to political events were shaped by specific ideological ways of thinking. Whether they were asked or not, many of the interviewed individuals named the party that they supported. The majority of the interviewees who answered with "yes" supported a political party that was out of line with the Armenian community's common political preference. For example, 6 individuals who answered "yes" supported the Freedom and Solidarity Party (*Özgürlük ve Dayanışma Partisi*, ÖDP), a socialist political party in Turkey with insignificant voter support. Among the individuals who gave an affirmative answer to this question were individuals who voted for a party such as the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP), which is also out of line with the community's common political preferences. The individuals who support AKP stated that this party had a more positive approach towards the problems of the community, when compared with the previous governments, and they also drew a connection between the Islamist identity of the party and its anticipated respect for their own religion. In their words: "(…) they are religious people so they also respect our religion (…)."

We also asked interviewees whether their voting behavior would be affected in the event that a party's program adopted positive policies towards the Armeni-

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ans. 7 individuals did not answer the question, 153 (67.1%) individuals answered "yes, I would be affected" and 68 (29.8%) answered "no, my voting behavior would not be affected by the policies towards Armenians." The answers given to this question show that a party's general policy as well as its approach to the issues directly concerning the Armenian community would affect voting behavior.

Two questions were asked with the purpose of understanding the correlation between some parties endorsing Armenian candidates and voting behavior. Asking two questions allowed us to deal with the local and general elections separately. The question worded as "Will your voting behavior change when political parties present an Armenian candidate in the local/general elections?" was answered "yes" by 97 (42.5%) individuals and "no" by 124 (54.4%) individuals with respect to general elections; and it was answered "yes" by 118 (51.8%) individuals and "no" by 103 (45.2%) individuals with respect to local elections.

The main reason for a difference between local and general elections is the fact that in local elections the main motive for voting was the local campaign promises. Several interviewees persistently mentioned that the personality and thoughts of the candidate were the most important point. It was observed that although a candidate may be a well-known, respected name in society and that these qualifications would bring him/her support, nevertheless, this support would possibly not be large enough to get elected. If they do not believe that a candidate will serve the community, then his/her Armenian identity will not play a role in the voting process. When we examined the behavior of the community, it was observed that political parties actually had Armenian candidates in the local elections in areas of high Armenian population but that this did not guarantee unconditional support. An apt example that proves this point is the Adalar district. Here, the Armenian population is large, and although an Armenian candidate ran for local office, the Armenian population supported the Turkish candidate. The reason for this, given by the interviewees, was "we thought that it would be better for us." This statement seems to mean that in the local elections the promises given to the community are much more effective in securing votes than even the ethnic origin of the candidate.

As a result, for an Armenian candidate to be successful, three factors proved important: Firstly, the personality and thoughts of the individual candidate should garner the support of the community; secondly, the candidate's influence within his/her party should be considered sufficient for serving the community; and thirdly, the candidate's party shouldn't be a party that is difficult to support ideologically. By this latter statement I mean political parties such as the National Movement Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP), which is a radical Turkish nationalist party, or a party which puts a special emphasis on Islamic identity. Vasken Barın, who is the deputy of Mustafa Sarıgül, the Mayor of Şişli, Istanbul, is a case in point for such a candidate supported and elected by the Armenian community.

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In the general elections, an Armenian candidate is less likely to influence the interviewees' voting behavior. Various factors such as ideological attitudes, historical continuities and economic expectations guide the voting behavior in this case. One of the most influential historical continuities is the aversion to the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyetçi Halk Partisi*, CHP) shown by middle aged and older Armenians of Istanbul. This antipathy may originate in the severe political measures applied during the single party regime, their discriminatory policies and the resulting migration, which may have nourished the belief that the CHP, in line with the *ittihat ve terakki* tradition, supported the continuation of radical Turkish nationalism.[8] Istanbul interviewees held the ruling party (CHP) and İsmet İnönü, President of the Republic, responsible for the state's oppressive policies and harbored strong feelings against them. However, a number of Armenians who had lived in small Anatolian cities and villages did not share such strong, hostile feelings, as they had not experienced that impact of the regime's anti-minority policies in their daily lives. Poor communications and transportation systems in the Turkey of the 1930s and 1940s kept a few of the Anatolian Armenians removed from the effects of the government's oppressive policies. Moreover, the many uneducated Anatolians did not perceive the connection between the difficulties in their daily lives and the government's policies. Although almost 60 years have passed since the single party regime, the memories are still important even for the younger generations.[9] As an example of the economic expectations that guide voting behavior, the voting behavior of male Armenian merchants and artisans can be given. In relation to their economic expectations, most of these men support liberal policies. This, however, is also in line with the traditional preferences and connections of the community.

Conclusion

The findings of the survey shed light on several aspects of how "being Armenian" affects the political behavior of Turkish Armenian citizens. As a main result, it can be said that being Armenian indeed has an effect on the Turkish Armenians' political identity and voting behavior. This effect can be summarized as:

– The Armenian community is not effective in politics because of its limited population and also due to historical and social concerns.

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8 For some examples of these radical Turkish nationalist views, see: Maksudyan 2005, Akcam 2001, Aktar 2000, Güven 2005, Isyar 2005.

9 The votes given to the CHP in the last two elections were related to the political conjuncture of Turkey. Many interviewees told us they voted for the CHP because they didn't want to vote for the AKP. Furthermore, some elderly interviewees also told us that they went to the ballot boxes on Election Day to vote for the CHP but found that they "couldn't do it."

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- The general sensibility with respect to being active in politics is not on a par with the general sensibility with respect to voting. Because Turkey's Armenians believe that they can't receive a good ranking in the general election lists, they were mostly interested in being active in local politics.
- The CHP is still an un-votable party for many of Turkey's Armenians, especially in the case of the Istanbul Armenians.
- The past positive actions of political parties are remembered and admired.
- The well-known political patronage relations in local politics were also working well for the Armenian community. The voting in local elections was mostly defined by patronage politics besides historically and ideologically based reasons.
- All interviewed individuals showed much respect for their own political ideas. When individual ideas are very important, members of a group are less likely to reach a collective decision and to initiate collective action. The social setting sits on a democratic plane that permits a climate of freedom, and any sign of authority in the community faces reaction. The interviewed individuals, especially the ones over 60, have emphasized the difficulties that the Armenian community encountered in making collective decisions and acting in unison. Sometimes the emphasis on these factors was realized by the telling of folk stories and proverbs. The inability to reach common ground and take action, even in the districts where the demographic potential to be influential in general or in local elections existed, demonstrates the Armenian community's difficulties in acting in unison. As a case in point, the Armenian votes given to Mustafa Sarıgül, the municipal head of Şişli (a neighborhood with a significant Armenian population) were not the result of a collective decision reached by a communication network among the Armenians, but the result of Sarıgül's personal and team effort (the team includes the respected Armenian Vasken Barin, who helps to build connections), as well as patronage mechanisms.

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Concordance between Asceticism and Activism: The Numinous Dimension of an Islamic Community Movement

Uğur Kömeçoğlu

> The modern saint not only deeply believed in his cause; he turned the mission of converting souls into a profession. (Michael Walzer)

The Religious as a Non-Reducible Category

According to Robert Wuthnow one important development in sociology of religion has been its recent interest in spirituality which "can be defined as a state of being related to a divine, supernatural, or transcendent order of reality or, alternatively, as a sense or awareness of a suprareality that goes beyond life as ordinarily experienced" (Wuthnow 2001: 306-307). Although there are various "empiricist" studies about the analysis of Turkish religious communities or community movements, most of them are missing this spiritual characteristic of religious motivation or seeing it as an epiphenomenon, as a secondarily important matter or sometimes completely insignificant factor in the analysis of religious movements; hence these approaches are relatively unable to answer the question "How are the thousands or millions of participants motivated to follow the common path of a religious collectivity?" This criticism is not to deny the effectiveness and justification of empiricist works or empiricist methodology when applied in their appropriate place. Yet this methodology does not give us an inquiry into the profound commitment or devotional practice persisting through deep "religiosity." In fact, devotional practices, as Wuthnow points out, "have generally been regarded as an essential aspect of religious life in all religious traditions" (313). But for the factual empiricist, anything coming from inside suffers from the prejudice of being regarded as suspicious, deceptive or somehow wrong. In contradistinction, the numinous experience is the primary phenomenon in the religious life. The grave and immediate religious assurances are not obtained from pure reason or the empirical world and are not accessible by reasoned evidence. Inner faith is entrenched in the experiential, emotional, affecting, exciting, insightful and intuitive profundities, in something more cavernous than the *rationale*. The very mature form of any religious community cannot be expressed as an a priori, already given situation. *Alreadiness* of a religious collectivity (if this term can be accepted), is not less problematical than its empirical, rational, reasoned characteristics. The spiritual nucleus of religiosity which operates at the

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heart of a religious community is conducive to its development and subsequent growth. As a unique part of Muslim religiosity, numinousness is an inexpressible, transcendental idea of all embracing significance, which deeply encourages a worldly asceticism. One should bear in mind that there is no rational substitute for the *numinosum*, which is conspicuously active in the communal conscience or collective psyche within a religious community.

Numinosum was first coined by Rudolf Otto in his *The Idea of the Holy*. For him, what is numinous is a non-rational and non-sensory experience or feeling. The primary object of this experience is outside the self. It is the non-rational element of religious experience, euphoria, a perception of the divine, a mystery. Otto's concept sets a model for the study of religion that focuses on the need to realize the religious as a non-reducible category. Yet he also scrutinizes the relationship between the non-rational factor in the idea of the divine and the rational. The primary form of *religio* is the essence, the working basis of all religious collectivities, and to understand the significance of this essence one needs to analyze "non-public, latent, less visible forces of motivation," which is expressed in this essay as the numinous dimension. This dimension forces us to proceed from the individual to the community, from the inside to the outside, from the part to the whole. Personal experience is the most fundamental aspect of religion. What is to be studied then is not religion as simply the moral teachings, theology or ideology but religion as it is experienced by the self. In order to deal with this abstract order, I want here to take a close-up look at the sociological and socio-psychological processes of the dialectical relationship between individual and religious collectivity through the case study of the widespread and controversial religious community in Turkey, the Fethullah Gülen community –as it is named after its leader. The empiricist methodology is not adopted in this study, as mentioned before. Although I used a few quotations from in-depth interviews conducted with some students in Boğaziçi University who identified a close relationship with the community in the late 1990s, this essay is not an interview-centered one because of the limitations of the interview with such reserved personalities, who were suspicious of and intimidated by the interviewers; rather it is a discursive analysis stemming from the religious idiom and the religious imaginary constructed in the written and audio-visual texts of the community, like the sermons and the books of Gülen (many of his books are produced from his sermons or journal articles), some media interviews with him, community publications, i.e. the symbolic exigencies of a religious discourse (see the bibliography). The essay is based on a deep reading of these sources and written with sociological inspirations during this process. It should be read more within the tradition of the interpretative standpoint of sociology that operates through a sort of hermeneutics whose task is to restore a connection between data/knowledge and the imagined self which is under investigation. This approach is conducive to Otto's idea about the non-reducibility of the religious. In short, the aim of this study is

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to draw a discursive profile of the aforementioned community movement with respect to social meanings that are constructed to shape the Islamic identity of the community participants. First, I have tried to describe the dynamic process of meaning formation, which is established through religio-conservative values and missionary projects. Secondly I have contextualized this problem on the societal level by depicting the transformative influence of the sacred-private over the profane-public. I try to show that this community movement attempts to carve a space for the creation of a conservative model of publicness through the discursive practices of an Islamic inner world.

The apparent feature of this community has been a vision of power operating through life-strategies such as self-sacrificial social behavior, which can be expressed as a form of Islamic altruism or austerity as well as worldly asceticism, Weberian *par excellence*. Contrary to the de-sacralised social life, one can sense the communitarian attempt of transforming the self through Islamic faith, which is itself a means of altering the normative framework of the purely profane or a-religious forms of sociality. The approach developed in this essay is based on the effort of grasping the significance of this pietistic character of the movement. By analysing the case of the Gülen movement, it is possible not only to point out the crucial role of an Islamic-based network of intrapersonal bonds in achieving socio-religious mobilization and its relation to publicness but also to develop an interpretative analysis to show the salient features of religious convictions and motivations within Islamic communities.

The concept of "community movement" is only used here to enhance our understanding of the variety of forms of collective activity (Buechler 1990). It emphasizes the importance of informal networks and alternative institutions. Community movement is a network of individuals and groups, multiple goals and actions, and is related to a collective identity that affirms participants' common concerns (Taylor and Whittier 1995: 104-33). The concept is helpful for the aim of analysis in this work but not the most proper expression because the participants of the movement in question do not always exist by virtue of individuals' establishing a common boundary between community and society; they are not created simply in a communal structure but in the course of the dissemination of Islamic faith. This voluntary attempt unfolds the intersection of the community and the movement. Community participants move to influence or recruit others, transforming outsiders into insiders through a change in religio-psychological affiliation and personal identification by the emotional attraction of Gülen's religious discourse. Thus, community is not used here in the context of the sharp contrast between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, and the usual aspect of community as its territorial domain is not the focus of analysis. Instead, other conditions associated with community, including voluntarism, a sense of belonging, a body of shared values, a system of social organization, solidarity and interdependency can be emphasized to go beyond the conventional meaning of the

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term. Voluntarism seems a more appropriate term because it expresses reliance both on volunteers and voluntary contributions.

The core of the community looks like the constellation of worldly ascetics, and this core develops through a particular interpretation of Islam, which gives distinction to the movement. In the words of Gülen:

> (...) man, in this world is the representative of two different powers, namely the spirit and the flesh (...) they are usually observed to conflict in such a way that the victory of one results in the defeat of the other (Gülen 1992a).

Here a type of saintly personality is suggested to design a life-project to triumph over the pleasures of worldliness. If Islam as a religion is relocated into such a pietistic community-based movement, it naturally requires high commitments and self-sacrifices. The commitment is understood as the abandonment of the carnal desires, the lusts: "When one sacrifices his enjoyment of material pleasures, he grows perfect as long as he frees himself from selfishness and self-seeking, but living only for the others" (Gülen 1992a). According to this Islamic doctrine, those fettered by desires cannot perceive metaphysically defined *nur,* light. In this discourse, the world should be abandoned in the soul, not actively and externally, and such believers should represent the active units of social life. In many other written and oral texts their basic motto is defined as living to tell/represent the truth of Islam[1]. Here of course working as a committed and pious teacher, doctor or engineer is strongly associated with this maxim, which provides the most basic discursive nucleus of the collective action of the movement in terms of its cognitive and symbolic functions. This essay can be read as an interpretative attempt to understand the latent incentives behind religious community movements. Although it is realized through the case study of one movement by focusing on its metaphysical background and piety-based character, it can be applied to comparable religious communities in a similar style, manner and approach.

A Biographical Sketch

Every religious collectivity emerges with the personal religious experience of its originator, and the religious community exists for the purpose of initiating its believers into the experience of this founder. The followers of the Gülen movement appear as the most mimetic of their charismatic leader. He is the one and the only one, the natural leader of the community, and there is no challenger or successor for the time being. However one should also approach the Gülen movement by tracing its continuity with the well-established movement of *Nurculuk*. The Gülen community stands on the fertile ground cultivated by the religious

1 See bibliography for a list of Gülen's books.

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action, initiated by Said Nursi (1876-1960)[2], i.e. has its roots in this previously triggered collectivism which paves the way for a considerable, ready-made psychology of religious solidarity. The informal organizational networks as the platform from which movement formation occurs are important touchstones of the Gülen community, and in this context the saliency of pre-existing networks of relations in collective action should be emphasized (cf. McAdam 1988). The basic dynamics of the *Nur* movement inspires the Gülen community to reinterpret their situation in light of the available religious frame of Said Nursi. Preexistence of this frame constitutes the cultural resources that facilitate the emergence of the Gülen movement. Said Nursi started that movement of Islamic revivalism in the 1910s. His writings, which argued that there is no conflict between religion and science, had an important impact on Gülen's thinking. The *Nur* movement spread throughout Turkey after 1950 and had special success among the young and those educated in the secular institutions. The religious culture of the Gülen community is to a certain extent tied to the social and psychological inspiration of the *nur* doctrines. Continuity between the *Nurculuk* and Gülen movements is provided by Nursi's written discourses of *Risale-i Nur* (Treatises of Light), voluminous doctrines of belief and the interpretation of the Koran, which contribute to create the text-based characteristic of Gülen's faith movement. But a brief evaluation of Gülen's life history and religious personality traits seems necessary because the religious morphology of the community is extensively influenced by his particular interpretation of Islam and his own identity characteristics.

Born in the city of Erzurum, eastern Turkey in 1938, Gülen was raised in a clerical family. According to the findings of an auto-biographical book of serial interviews with Gülen, conducted by Latif Erdoğan (1995) (who was the first director of the Foundation of Journalists and Writers established by the community), his ancestors arrived at Erzurum from Bitlis, the city in which Said Nursi was born. Bitlis was historically the place of expansion of the most influential Sufi movements, like the Kadirilik, and Erzurum was an environment in which Sunni orthodox Islam and Turkish nationalism were very pervasive throughout the city. The social reality of this city influenced the internal dynamics of Gülen's psychology in terms of his dedication to the revitalization of Islam. His father, who was the preacher at the village mosque in Korucuk, taught him Arabic and activated in his psyche the emotional ties with the Prophet and his companions. He received further training in Sufism from Sheikh Muhammed Lutfi, called Alvarlı Efe, who was the most influential personality in his early education. He attended both the informal religious seminary and the Sufi order. In the same auto-biographical interview, he refers to this situation as the collaboration

[2] For an elaborate analysis of *Nurculuk* and participation in the *Nur* movement, see Mardin 1989.

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of reason and emotion (Erdoğan 1995). His education in Sufism strongly affected his ongoing spirituality.

Gülen initiated his calling as early as 1953. In 1958, he moved from the east to the far west of Turkey. He was appointed to teach in the Üç Şerefeli Mosque in Edirne, as an official preacher paid by the state institution of Directory of Religious Affairs (the only legal position a preacher can hold in Turkey). In 1966, he moved to Izmir. While in Izmir, he did not restrict himself to preaching in a single mosque. He began to travel to various central Aegean cities to give sermons in different mosques and to visit public places like coffeehouses in order to convey the message of Islam. Drawing inspiration from life histories of the Prophet's companions and other early Muslim saints, Gülen invites and encourages the faithful not only to attend public services but also to allocate time in their personal lives to prayer, contemplation, personal silent chanting and inspirational reading of *Risal-i Nur* (cf. Wuthnow 2001).

His style of preaching is quite spiritual, metaphorical, full of symbolism, allegories and aphorisms, yet instead of canonical interpretation, the esoteric interpretation of religion and religious activity is preferred in his usage of the Islamic idiom.[3] For instance, the process of continuous religious action is symbolized by a numinous spiral curve which is also the shape of time and history in his understanding (see Gülen 1992b: 104). A spiral curve best represents the opposite motions of rising and falling. Metaphorically, it represents eternally continuous upward or downward movement better than a circle which is a closed-ended finite shape. For him time and history are not linear or circular, but a spiral which may be imagined as the connection of open ended circles through which it is both possible to rise up and to fall down. Gülen calls his followers to uphold the responsibility of raising Islam to the rising lines of the spiral continuum of time. Spirality of time is a legitimation process, with the unique capacity of this shape being that it locates human phenomena within a cosmic frame of reference in order to justify the social and historical realities. Here religion legitimates so effectively because it relates the precarious social constructions of empirical reality with ultimate reality. It reminds us not only of the rise and fall but of the processes of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction. Existence of real time as a condition of appearance, disappearance and reappearance is an incessant phenomenological world of existence and re-existence of things (*hakiki zamanın vücudu levh-i mahv ve isbattır*). This understanding of spiral time also alludes to the matter of resurrection, like the death of some plants in the winter and their new lives in the spring. Even the rise and fall of Islamic power is also similar to the processes of death and resurrection in his view. Everything "here below" has its analogue "up above." Religious legitimation as of the shape of a spiral curve

[3] Many of the inferences made about his discourse in this article are obtained from recorded sermons and talks of Gülen. See bibliography.

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claims to relate the reality of the world to ultimate, sacred reality. In this rhetoric, humanly constructed systems are given a cosmic status; it is the divine structure of the cosmos, that is, the conception of the relationship between the social world and cosmos as one between microcosm and macrocosm.

Through similar uses of the richness of a literary/poetic address, there is the frequent emphasis on the self-transcendent experience of life. In this religious attitude, the ultimate goal is defined as the full and complete closeness with the Divine Being. The desires and interests of the flesh are dramatically devalued in his ascetic approach. The worldly pleasures and self-centered individualism vanish in this all pervasive ocean of divinity. However, his mystical profile does not imply complete retirement from the world in which the ascetic will escape all forms of worldliness, as the dervish of the Sufi lodge. The Islamic idiom is easily transferred from the high level of sacred gratification down to worldly attitudes. The reason for this ease lies in the absence of a radical dualism of the divine and the profane. Actually in his discourse, there being really no strong duality, plurality of reality is even more deceptive, since all separate forms are said to be originating in the indistinguishable divine unity, the sacred oneness.

Izmir has been the central city of the formation of his community; however, as his spiritual reputation grew in the 1970s he was often invited to give conferences in different cities, especially in Western Anatolia, on a variety of subjects related to Islam in the modern world, such as "the Quran and contemporary science," "the Islamic perspective on Darwin's view of nature," "social justice in Islam" and so on. His religious performance in the evaluation of such topics seems to be directed to reconstruct the correspondence between the Divine Being and human subjects, to support the discovery of laws of creation in an attempt to prove the harmony between science and religion. In his view, the more Muslims witnessed the perfect order of nature by the use of various positive sciences, the greater their euphoria of understanding the attributes of God.

Although Gülen's inspiration was generally carried out by his travels throughout the country in the 1970s and 80s to address public gatherings, fast and practical accessibility of the movement to the public was made possible by modern tools of communication, through the duplication of Gülen's sermons. Thus the movement transmitted its spiritual frame by using audio-visual instruments. By the circulation of sermon cassettes, the boundaries of the community became extremely diffuse. The transmission of such tapes contributes to the aim of creating a spacious counter community of pious discourse. Each person joining in the task of disseminating Gülen's doctrine of faith becomes "ipso facto" a disciple. Such and similar flows of faith-based knowledge make it difficult to define the movement's collective action as a form of rigid communitarian action. From time to time, especially in the months of Ramadan late at night his preaching has been shown on the community's nation-wide television channel. Gülen weeps euphorically during these sermons. He quotes the words of early Muslims verba-

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tim to reenact their well-known sufferings, and his tears serve as an expressive vehicle to establish emotional connections between early and contemporary Muslims (Özyürek 1997: 46). In such televised sermons his crying, which acts and operates as the symbol of deep religious conviction, is transferred from the privacy of community to public visibility. This is certainly the most novel representation of religiosity in the public realm of the country. In this way, the movement uses the restructurings of the Islamic idiom through audiovisual communications that provide connections between the semi-private and the public. In addition, Nursi's doctrinal way that reaches the Creator through the harmony of the universe is carried to the public by the use of visually intensive video facilities, which contextually blend the artistic beauty of nature with the rubric of the Great Artist. (Effective expressions like "everything tells of God Almighty" are juxtaposed to pastoral scenes of nature). Even the name of the community's TV channel, *Samanyolu* (Milky Way), metaphorically recalls an all-pervasive understanding of Islamic piety. The participants believe with utter conviction that from each being, from tiny particles to the planets, a window opens directly to the existence of the Divine Being.

The small group that had begun to form around Gülen's opinions by the end of the 1960s has increased rapidly and steadily ever since. The young followers, captivated by his altruism, have rendered, and still continue to render, social services through the main social institutions in public life, like educational and media structures. Gülen retired from his regular official job of preaching in 1980, having inspired a large group of students from high schools and universities. But he irregularly maintained his official preaching activity until the year 1990.

Self-Denial and Religiosity

In all my conversations and in-depth interviews with informants staying in the student houses of the community, I have asked them about their hermitic lifestyle. Although they were reluctant to talk about this matter, they confessed that they try to sleep less and eat less and that they try to fast on Mondays and Thursdays as a tradition coming from Prophet Muhammad (sunnah). These inner states of mind have certain practical consequences. Fasting and sleep deprivation in the ascetic form of Islam provide one of the principal means for the control of the inner body, emancipating the spirit from the luscious presence of the flesh, with a consequent sense of freedom from the narrow confines of the self. The shift from ego-consciousness to religiously conscious mental states creates spiritually liberating effects. These tend to be the relinquishing of the egotistical mind. The main emphasis of the participants lies in religious experience based on an intensely sensed inner reality, not pure theology. Gendered mobilization and regulation of men's and women's sexuality by means of a worldly sainthood; the control of libidinal energy; and strengthening the frequently declared "meta-

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physical tension" constitute the central issues in the moralization and Islamization of the lifestyles.

The voluntaristic character of the Gülen movement provides a strong criticism of egotistical wants, and the aim in general is defined as "saving the faith of others." Egotism is seen as the weakest side of one's self:

> (...) it must be removed from the character at once; it is not possible for those unfortunate ones who are caught up in the egotistical tornado to see the truth (…) The people of the truth have to give up the ego if they are to serve the truth (Gülen 2005: 48-9).

In this axiom, religious consciousness is deemed capable of transcending its ego condition. They subordinate possession of self as much as possible to possession by God and the Prophet Muhammad because they believe that if ego-seeking exists, neither genuine faith nor spiritual liberation is possible. Contents of mind are loosely connected with the subject, and greater stress is laid on ideal mental structures which include a depotentiated ego. The core of the community exalts the extinction of the selfish ego as the real goal of spiritual efforts. One of the greatest dangers and pitfalls that the believer faces is defined as the "desire for rank and position; ambition for fame and acclaim and self-advertisement" (Gülen 2005: 48-9). If this interpretation of Islam as a worldly asceticism is transferred to a community network, to a text-based faith movement, it requires high personal devotion: a kind of commitment which pervades the whole life-time of the participant; a dedication in which the compassion of God can only be attained by the community's motto of living only for others. The movement thus tends to get its human resources from devotion embedded in a self-denying way of life. This can be understood as the Muslim form of saintliness.

It is helpful to conceive of the Gülen community as a grid of particular relations which strengthen the commitment of its members to shared organizational goals. Islamic spirituality is employed to mobilize members through the adoption of the religious doctrine of Gülen, and through the creation of reading circles and informal living spaces, like student houses and dormitories, where the participants have the opportunity to practice religious experiences by way of daily prayers. The spiritual atmosphere in such spaces has been useful as a means for extinguishing the frequently mentioned egotistical self. The community depends on its members' recognition of a set of shared references to Gülen's spiritual understanding of Islam. A common mode of piety directs them toward shared goals like becoming "ideal teachers in the community's high schools" and "financiers of those institutions." In this case the development of alternative rational life strategies, the issue of the construction of meaning and cultural resistance are important aspects of sociological curiosity.

In such an intense religious context it is possible to explore the new religio-social meanings produced by the strong sense of belonging to a collective ideal, which can be generalized as "the mission of converting souls" (Tarrow 1994: 38). Participants see themselves as part of a group when this shared characteristic be-

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comes salient. Instead of a confrontational stance, an open door policy is adopted towards outsiders, a strategy conducive to the integration of the latter into the movement. The movement's public achievement cannot be grasped unless we understand the basic incitement of the mobilization in the "non-public" or the private sphere. It does not generally mobilize its followers through formal organizations; rather, it is composed of informal networks, which, however, can turn into supportive mechanisms for the formal and bureaucratic organizations. Melucci (1989) defines such systems as "submerged networks." The submerged networks of mobilization are comprised of the *Nurcu*-run houses, called "houses of light" in the sub-language of the community. Giving concrete meaning to the ideal metaphysical life depicted by Gülen, these houses are inhabited by three to five participants who are university students -mostly majoring in the positive sciences. These houses provide the community with an environment conducive to the reinforcement of the Islamic belief and identity of the participants. As a result of sharing the same body of knowledge in these community spaces, they develop a separate language and a novel interpretation of the inner world. The main function of these places is to develop an atmosphere of sincerity and fraternity, to create a sacred aura of piety and conscience with collective and individual prayer, and to provide a relaxed atmosphere for the students to study for their courses. This informal space of piety socializes the participants into a collective consciousness that channels them to a spiritual environment which provides an ethical distance to the a-religious aspects of public life. The construction of the sacralized living space provides a means to withdraw from the values and lifestyles of materialistic worldliness. In the analysis of religious movements, "though the private sphere is often defined by exclusion, private life also discloses an inclusive character, which gives purpose to private life, providing it with the impetus to break out of the closed world of the self" (Cochran 1990: 22). This is accomplished by introducing outsiders to the sermon cassettes, books and doctrines of Gülen. Furthermore, the pious milieu of these spaces, where religious practices such as prayer and fasting are practiced, familiarizes the non-members with the Islamic way of life.

To reiterate, the inner culture of the community creates an ambitious commitment to the dissemination of the Islamic faith. It is a central means of solidarity, which is valued by the devotees over and above any other rewards. They plan their future through missionary projects based on Islamic altruism, that is, the cost-benefit analysis fails in the face of the participants' self-sacrificial behavior. Islamic values based on a puritan understanding of gender relations, and a particular redefinition of Muslimhood through communitarian morals constitute the basic touchstones of the movement.

A new emphasis in the Gülen community gives increasing consideration to problems of social organization and cultural integrity. The movement spreads into the public life at two levels. First, it uses collective identity structures by

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producing meanings over "history and time," "reason and submission," "love and worship," "faith and rationale," "science and revelation," "divine being and natural order." At the second level, which bridges the gap between the individual and institutional, it tries to manipulate major patterns of societal institutions, like high schools, foundations, universities, insurance companies, finance houses, television and radio channels, newspapers and magazines. The accomplishments of the movement lie in its anti-fundamentalism and its strong effort to redefine the Muslim personality at the subjective level – a level that is quite analogous to Sufi subjectivity, but also quite different from the old Sufi remoteness from socially active units and personalities.

In fact, through this process, there is a reverse flow from the public realm into the semi-private domain of the community that also has its own semi-public (its inner circles) to conserve the participants from the effects of the western way of public life or lifestyles. Safekeeping of Islamic morality is provided by gender distinctions. Naturally, even the dissemination of the Islamic faith, which is the primary responsibility of the participants, is based on the segregation of the sexes. The movement spreads into the public sphere through this gendered mobilization. Females provide the inner transformation of females. In other words gender operates as a constitutive element of social interaction and relationships; gender distinction is an organizing principle of this faith-disseminating movement.

Some of the gender relations related to the public, like dating, premarital relations, intimate encounters and love affairs between man and woman before or outside marriage are discarded. Islam forbids premarital sexuality. Although one of the most important characteristics of today's sociable publicness concerns love affairs during the post-adolescent period, the community participants, – mostly university students – male or female, resist these mainstream styles of socialization. The strategy of resistance against unsegregated publicness arises through altering the rules of public encounter between men and women, resetting these rules according to Islamic morality, that is, by means of Islamic conjugal bonds. According to Göle this situation could be named as "the gendered nature of the public sphere" (Göle 1997). She illustrates the centrality of women's visibility in shaping the boundaries of the public in Muslim contexts of modernity. Parallel to her argument, in this movement, the boundaries of the public realm are largely determined by the religious principles governing gender relations.

Göle's analysis leads us to new perspectives in understanding the contrast between Islam and modernity as it opens up a new territory of conflict. The disharmony arises between Islamic morality and western publicness. The community's desire to differentiate itself from the western ethics and gender issues, such as public encounters between men and women, become a matter of central concern for the movement policies. This faith movement realizes its moral and ethical entry into the public life at the axis of "piously motivated marriage" which is

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the cornerstone of Islamic conservatism. Any kinds of intimacy between the sexes, without conjugal intentions, and temptations of the flesh outside the marriage bond, are avoided.

In this context, it is also possible to argue for the concept of a communal public sphere which may be conceived of as the sphere of private people coming together as a public (Habermas 1989). By way of communal protection from western lifestyles, the participants are protected from being transformed by the outer social life. Young members withstand the seductive images of social life by the inner workings of the religious psyche, by the formation of emotional selves suffering for the people's loss of faith. Although they spend most of their everyday life at the very center of secular public spaces, it is the personal piety of participants that helps them resist the main images of western forms of socialization. In the process of the creation of the collectivist public front, the participants' private experiences in their Islamic conscience play a particularly significant role.

The answer of an informant (a male university student) to my question "How do you abstain from premarital intimacies initiated in the public domain?" was not framed in terms of Islamic ideology, which asserts that gendered moral behavior is based on divine revelation. Instead, he referred to his inner persuasion, his inner psyche, his "conscience" shaped by reading a specific book of prayer (*Cevşen*), and also by fasting outside the month of Ramadan, and performing acts of worship beyond the required ones (*nafile ibadet*) such as awakening late at night in order to pray. Although these practices operate at the individual level, they are in part produced within the community, that is, by the workings of a collective consciousness.

According to Mardin (1989: 179), C. G. Jung's approach captures the way in which this process works. Although Mardin only devotes half a page to this issue in his book on Nursi, he shows the significance of Jung's approach, namely that there is a subconscious level in the Muslim identity building process, which is related to religious symbolism. In our case this is provided by Gülen's ecstatically transmitted preaching and his highly symbolic language, and is not solely related to communal or moral obligations. Participants' ideas about God are part of a stock of symbols used for the purpose of establishing their identity. The sacred ambience provided by the community culture encourages the internal activation mechanism of the ideals or archetypes. For example, contents of hero archetypes, hero-cycles prevalent in Islamic culture, the heroic companions of Prophet Muhammad, other archetypal figures like angels and devils, archetypal places of holiness, the Kaaba, Medina, Jerusalem, heaven and hell; not only archetypal figures and places but also events like cosmo-genesis, creation, birth, death, marriage, holy emigration, miraculous events, visions and dreams of holy Muslim personalities, which all eventually leads to the discovery of the fullness of Muslim identity. Taken together, common mythical texts like the book of prayer, *Cevşen,* the *Nur* treatises, and Gülen's preaching and symbolism in his books,

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produce shared archetypal God-contents as sensible effects for the participants. Archetypes are forms without contents; these empty forms can be filled with religious images and ideas, and in this case with certain images and ideas prevalent in the history of Islam.

In the effort to understand the followers' motivations, I frequently encountered their concentration on the inner experience as the all-important guide to living an ethical life. Religious experience rather than religious dogma is the real background for motivation. Here the analytical emphasis should be on the religious experience rather than the religious behavior. In order to understand the mechanisms that Gülen's preaching activates we have to see that ethics do not only consist of moral commands, but also provide means of integrating a person into an environment felt as a cosmos (Mardin 1989: 180). It is through the acknowledgement of a personal numinous experience that the participant comes to self-knowledge and to the transcendent core of his being, which can be called the Muslim Self. Through the religious experience of repentance, through their fear and hope, good deeds, submission and self-abasement the participants are influenced to propitiate the divine power.

For example, when the author asked the same male university student the following question:

> On the one hand, you emphasized the individual nature of your metaphysical experience, which helps you to keep your distance from the lifestyle of the youngsters in public life. On the other hand, you live together in a communal environment. What about the influence of the others, other participants?

His answer had clear implications about the basic motivations:

> (...) other friends have the same means of preservation of self. They read *Risale-i Nur*, *Cevşen*, *Hocaefendi*'s (i. e. Gülen's) books and the *Quran*; they fast and resort to acts of worship beyond the required ones. These are our armor against *nefs* (carnal desires of self). All my friends need to 'strengthen their metaphysical tension'; otherwise we will be transformed by the outer life, instead of transforming that life by telling the truth of Islam (…)

Similar responses were repeatedly encountered by the researcher. These are full of implicit and explicit meanings about the pervasive deep religiosity that is common in the community. Here the domain of esoteric inspiration, gained by Gülen's preaching and *Risale-i Nur*, functions as a preparatory stage in the inner circles to resist the materialistic mode of publicness prevalent in the outer circles. The exchange of religious symbols and language supported by various texts and spiritual exercises has great significance in his mode of action. It seems that earlier conversions or spontaneous transformations of self, pervading the mind with a tranquil mood, can be replaced by special disciplinary practices of asceticism and saintly actions. The first half of the informant's response is psychically, the latter part is socially imaginable. He is spurred by religious experience and creed to superior endeavor and deed in the practical realm. This is the creation of a

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new core of spiritual dynamism. His inner psyche has such a firm hold on the outer consciousness that the external environment has little chance of tearing him away from his inner roots. Worldly targets and desires which crave for external fulfillment and forge the chain that fetters him to the world of materialistic attitudes are to be abandoned. Here a high form of Islamic asceticism seeks a mental condition in which the ego is practically dissolved by fettering its carnal impulses. Actually this first level of meaning of his words has its own perils because the inner psyche gains the ascendancy to such an extent that he would be alienated from his outer being or environment and thus the inertia of personality may emerge. But what is important is the existence of a psychic and sociological state, which insures the commitment to the faith and the movement. Because in the second level of meaning hidden in his words, the physiological strata of the psyche which are subdued by metaphysical tension are not exactly denied or suppressed by a supreme effort of the will, as is customary in mainstream sublimation. Rather, the collective consciousness to tell the truth of faith to others necessitates his personal piety and activates his cause. We should not doubt the existence of mental states transcending ego-consciousness, as mentioned before. Here the Muslim mind has no difficulty in conceiving of a consciousness without personal self. All physiological and mental energies are adapted and shaped through his cause or mission. It is the assertion of religious experience over the social reality. This second level can be seen as the projection of Islamic altruism into the focus of the public domain. It is not the essentially ritualistic character of religious obligations, but an individual conscience attached to a collective ideal aiming to change the inner worlds of outsiders. Here prayer is a locus for sharpening the meaning of private life and proselytization appears as the "beau ideal" of Islam. The word "proselytism" is derived ultimately from the Greek prefix "pros" (towards) and the verb "erchomai" (to come). It describes attempts to convert a person from one point of view to another. Islamic saintliness finds expression in these proselytizing efforts, which encourage or induce an outsider to join the Islamic faith. This is a conversion to an Islamic cause, which can be experienced both by Muslims and non-Muslims. Thus, we need to expand the meaning of conversion to understand the proselytization actively operating in this movement. The close interpersonal relations, the process of fraternization initiated in the semi-private domain, later on, provide conversion into a missionary cause. Saintliness may seem an objectionable term in the Islamic idiom or context, but the ambivalence in the term points to the gist of the matter. Islamic saintliness expresses itself in a definite potency of psyche by which personal aims and concerns are exceeded and become insignificant in the light of the greater object of one's devotion which is to tell or represent the truth of Islam. Thus, two basic religious phenomena, numinous worship and proselytizing effort exhibit the dialectics between private and public. Speaking about Islam to ignorant, uninformed or badly informed subjects, is neither a mere reflection of a rational

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ideology nor a cultic missionary act. The participants act not only according to purpose but also according to values. Similarly, many participants described their inner satisfaction, inner peace, and the strength of their spiritual tension by referring to their power to resist the egotistical life goals, physical desires, lust and seductive images of western publicness. There appears first the dominance of numinously motivated spiritual interests and, second, more concrete real-life motivations and missionary projects. These two are in fact overlapping processes. As Michael Walzer has significantly shown, "the modern saint not only deeply believed in his cause; he turned 'the mission of converting souls' into a profession" (quoted in Tarrow 1994: 38). Priority of one over the other may change according to the diverse personal traits of members. But in all respects, their inner motivation to act in public emanates from the aptly defined "metaphysical tension" or the "inner reality" to which one feels united in religious experience. The extraordinary feeling of oneness is a common experience in the community. The individual participant's religious experience does not take place in emptiness but in the context of the religious collectivity, and there seems no sharp contradiction between them.

The Community at the Societal Level

Islam, as a personal submission to the Divine Being, forces the participants to devote themselves to a strongly ideational faith movement. Religion in this movement radically shows the limits of politics and of the difference between politics and public life (cf. Cochran 1990). The movement even sees the women's headscarf problem in Turkey as a secondary matter of religion ("dinin füruatındandır" in Gülen's words) when compared to the emergence and development of women's inner faith.

The movement does not advocate a holistic or systemic change, but rather competition over the realm of social institutions through the establishment of alternative structures. This results in the promotion of moral life in public through institutional channels. The movement thus penetrates just that daily routine of life in order to fashion it into a moral life in the world, but "neither or nor for this world" in Weberian terms. This may be referred to as the transformation of the public sphere from within. The community appeals to middle and upper-middle class groups, especially young urban men (religious businessmen, tradesmen, doctors, teachers, journalists and other professionals) who act as "movement entrepreneurs" and the university students who act as "adherents" or "devotees." As the social and the spiritual leader of the community, Gülen aims to create a devoted Muslim consciousness that tries to oppose religious radicalism. For him personal or national anger, hostility and other similar motives usually move those who have adopted Islam as a political ideology. In his words:

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> Muslims cannot act out of ideological or political partisanship and then dress this partisanship in Islamic garb, or represent mere desires in the form of ideas; strangely enough, many groups that have put themselves forward under the banner of Islam export a distorted image of Islam and actually strengthen it" (Turkish Daily News National 2000).

The community certainly consists of the characteristics of a faith-based revitalization and does not operate on the model of a traditional Islamic sect.

It is not even easy to identify Gülen with the centuries old traditional virtuosi typology. The use of examples, references or quotations from the Western intellectual world actually is a common part of his public speeches or media interviews. When the Turkish army took over the government in 1971, Gülen was arrested, like many other Muslim leaders. After months of imprisonment, he was released and later acquitted of the charge. He describes the difficulties of this past situation with the analogy that after his imprisonment he was followed everywhere like Jean Valjean, the hero of Victor Hugo's classic novel *Les misérables*. To give some other examples from various media texts and sermons, he mentions Kant's claim that God cannot be known by theoretical reason but by the practical one, i.e. by experiential reason; he gives reference to Toynbee, uses Goethe's Faust and Mephisto to represent good and evil, and mentions the classic American movie *Ben-Hur* (1959) to exemplify how the apostles took their force only from their inner faith. He mentions the same example to explain how difficult and expensive film production is when he talks about Muslims' weak position within the movie industry. In a TV program when he was asked to comment on "February 28 Decisions (1997)" of the Turkish National Security Council, which were affirmed and signed by all of high officialdom, he made an analogy that the event reminded him of Rousseau's social contract. In the same program he used the names of Renan and Voltaire, saying that even they accepted the impossibility of religious-free man and society, and that Rousseau needed to implement the notion of natural religion (*STV*, *Haber Kritik*, 29 March 1997). He has also made reference to Prince Bismarck and Bernard Shaw, stating that they praised the Prophet Muhammad. In an interview, he said that he has read all the works of Dostoevsky and other Russian classics (see *Hürrriyet*, 23-28 January 1995, and *Sabah*, 23-30 January 1995). He uses diverse value patterns such as good and evil, faith and trust, sincerity, belief and honesty all in a cross-cultural sense, applying them to his local contextual speech.

Gülen's followers have established various organizations to spread his ideas to the educated sectors of society. Various private companies and foundations associated with the Gülen movement publish a monthly journal, *Sızıntı,* (on popular science and faith); three scholarly journals, *Yeni Ümit* (on divinity), *Ekoloji* (environmental issues), *Yağmur* (literature); and also *Fountain* (an English language journal of science and spirituality); and *Aksiyon* (a weekly news magazine). The movement established the Foundation of Journalists and Writers in 1994 as an addition to the earlier establishment of the Foundation of Turkish Teachers. The

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former organizes public meetings under its motto of tolerance and dialogue. These meetings have regularly brought together religious leaders, academics and intellectuals. The movement also operates a television channel, *Samanyolu* with a global satellite outreach; a newspaper, *Zaman,* published in twelve different countries; and a few local and national radio stations. The content of public participation – participation through this media network – is both similar to and different from the commercial media, somehow more representative of the movements' needs and interests. Televised, aired and printed public participation can be viewed as a reserve that provides voice to the movement's concerns, and it offers alternative selections and sometimes non-commercial information to a tangible audience and reader. It is possible to perceive this media network as a virtual public space where general as well as particular issues central to the movement's interests are brought to the fore and regularly disseminated to the public at large. Through regular advertisement of the movement's schools abroad and by giving voice to the students' parents, for example, *Samanyolu* TV tells the public that pupils in these schools achieve higher scores on university entrance exams, the best of them winning gold medals at international scientific competitions. The public voice of the movement uses mainstream means and techniques of broadcasting but at the same time resists the exclusive standard of conventional information production. This new publicity is created through the electronic medium by including the participation of Islamic personalities who have been ignored by the mainstream media. In this way, followers of Gülen carry out their struggle for recognition.

The movement runs more than five hundred private schools in many countries. The schools in Turkey are under tight state control and use the same curriculum as Turkish state colleges, with an added emphasis on conservative values. Their faculty is staffed by graduates from high-ranking universities in Turkey. The community's businesses have sponsored the schools by collecting contributions, and schools have a vital role in fund-raising efforts. The admixture of recruited finance, expertise and media recreates educational publicness. In the post-1990 period the movement extended these education, media, and business networks to ninety countries (Gülerce 2006: 17). The movement has grown in part by sponsoring summer camps, student houses and dormitories, classrooms, cultural facilities, and communication organizations (Aras 1998: 25). The size of the giant community of sympathizers is not known exactly, but according to Aras crude estimates range between two hundred thousand and four million. In fact, trying to estimate the membership of a voluntaristic movement is not very significant since there are neither initiation rites nor formal membership. Another difficulty lies in the flexibility of the participation process in the movement's activities, and for this reason some categorizations are made to differentiate between the core followers and sympathizers in the sub-language of the community as a way of defining strong and weak commitments; however, these categories do not refer

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to concrete groups or exclusive attitudes, but rather hypothetically signify the openness of participation at various degrees.

Gülen's followers participate in the "modernized" public sphere but refuse to totally assimilate to the moral values of western modernity. Piety and the moral purity of the participants become a point of reference for the re-shaping of the seemingly trivial social issues related with ways of living, expressing a desire to shape the public sphere without radical regulations but with conservative value systems.

At the institutional level, the movement tries to compensate for the structurelessness of Islamic identities in public life. The participants, who intend to move beyond communal boundaries, desire to print their mark on the social institutions, be they educational, financial or media-oriented. According to this Islamic imaginary, if participants of the community as an Islamic status group own and successfully run primary types of social institutions, this achievement would amount to the recognition of Islamic morality in public life. It is accomplished in a sort of civil disobedience, yet the participants resort to the transcendent aspect of religion as a pious motivation for their public performance. It is not protest activity in the public realm, but it demands recognition of "devoted Islamic personalities" as the competitive runners of civic institutions. There is also this awareness that every socially significant power group is in the long run recognized by other parties, unless the very existence of the latter is threatened.

In a country characterized by the absence of strong civil institutionalization dominated by clientelistic parties, which could not attain built-in political structuration, there is a heightened potential for such and similar voluntaristic movements to be successful. With its capability to create its inner collective life circles and to preserve them, the movement has been able to establish intense ties among its participants. The community, in turn, has protected the movement from the danger of losing its basic dynamics, a rare occurrence in party-centered actions in Turkey.

Conclusion

In cultural terms, the community can be conceived as a public space in which Islamic actors interact. In other words, it is a domain of (re)presentation for Islamic life ethics. The communitarian public collectivity provides a locus in which social behavior is judged according to Islamic morality. The deceptive dispute or discord between the "sacred private" and the "profane public" is firmly established and then transcended in the religious-cultural code of moral purity and in the normative definitions of proselytism. In this milieu, "religion in the private sphere" corresponds to contact with the transcendence provided by Islamic forms of worship and prayer with the consequent sense of pietism, both individual and collective; whereas "religion in the public" relates to the mission

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of converting souls, not only by telling the truth of religion (*tebliğ*) but also representing this truth (*temsil*). Even in the recent discourses of community, *temsil* is prioritized over *tebliğ*. Thus, at the individual level, social life is perceived as an arena of social encounter between faithful and unfaithful, between hopeful and desperate, the latter targeted for proselytization.

While transforming the religion-free aspects of publicness, participants of the movement have invented new terms for describing the basics tenets of their mission, including "sacred emigration," "metaphysical tension," "victory over the flesh," "society of tolerance," and "interfaith dialogue." Certified with such discourse, the followers remodel their religio-conservative identities and reveal the contestatory function of Islamic collectivity. According to Nancy Fraser (1992: 124):

> After all, to interact discursively as a member of public, subaltern or otherwise, is to aspire to disseminate one's discourse to ever widening arenas. Habermas captures well this aspect of the meaning of publicity when he notes that, however limited a public may be in its empirical manifestation at any given time, its members understand themselves as part of a potentially wider public, that indeterminate, empirically counterfactual body we call "the public at large."

In the case of Gülen, religion has always been understood as an expression of the moral expansion of the religious collectivity towards wider publics. At the institutional axis, they open up a "conservative model" of public sphere by redistributing the stuff of the Islamic way of life, by reorganizing "minuscule" techniques of power through religious solidarity. Thus the movement shows the dual character mentioned by Fraser (1992: 124):

> On the one hand they function as spaces of withdrawal and regroupment; on the other hand, they also function as bases and training grounds (…) directed toward wider publics.

This communitarian yet volunteering action is an instance of the conservative publicness touting accessibility through the pious values. The movement tends to get its resources of action from the personal commitment of its participants embedded in worldly asceticism and self-sacrificial devotion to the dissemination of faith; without such commitment, the movement cannot hope to transform the wider publicness in which it operates. Thus devoted life-strategies reactivate and empower collective morality, turning Islam into a basis of an imagined community reinforced within the realm of the sacred. The boundaries between the holy as the numinous and the holy as the baggage of intense worldly activities become mutually infiltrated and extremely diffuse.

The social experience of blurring the boundaries between the divine and the profane, the private and public, rational and non-rational, cannot be regarded as absolutely religious as distinct from secular but rather as the religious dimension of the experience of the devotees in general. The numinous dimension of community prevents the radicalization and politicization of the movement on cer-

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tain issues pertaining to public life. Otto's approach to religion helps to understand this extraordinary harmony between the non-rational saintliness and rational activity operating simultaneously in the movement. For Otto, this is the intimate mutual interpenetration of the numinous with the rational:

> By the continual living activity of its non-rational elements a religion is guarded from passing into 'rationalism'. By being steeped in and saturated with rational elements it is guarded from sinking into fanaticism or mere mysticality (Otto 1973: 141).

The extraordinary growth of the movement can be explained by this unconventional congruence between ascetic spiritualism and public activism.

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Discourse of Islamic Love in Present Day Turkey[1]

Barbara Pusch

Love constitutes an important dimension of socialization and interaction among people. It has influenced, be it positively or negatively, many events in human history. As we know, love is a vast subject. In this article, I will consider only a very small part of the vast topic of love and focus on "Islamic Love." In fact, I will limit the topic even further by focusing my magnifying glass on the Islamic love discourse as depicted in Halit Ertuğrul's love manual titled *Aşk Böyle Yaşanır* (Love is Lived Like This).

In today's Islamic love literature in Turkey, love is used mainly in two senses: "divine" and "human." "Divine love" is generally perceived as "true" or "real," while "human love" is considered "figurative" (*uzri*), that is, "temporary" (for example: Ertugrul 2004, Yalcın 2004, Ulvan 1998). This difference is very important when trying to comprehend those books that we may define as "Islamic love manuals." With Halit Ertuğrul, we will concentrate more on "human" love.

Writer Halit Ertuğrul

If one wanted to describe the author of *Aşk böyle yaşanır*, it would not be wrong to state the following: Halit Ertuğrul is a paradox who can be described as "an unknown Islamic best seller" or "an important representative of Islamic popular culture." He is a best seller, for by 2004 his book sales had reached one million one hundred thousand copies. Considering that Orhan Pamuk, a renowned writer both nationally and internationally, had sold 800,000 copies (Korap 2004), this figure is a serious record. However, in spite of this record, Halit Ertuğrul is not known in Turkey because he is very rarely featured in the popular mass media.[2] He could be described as an Islamic writer as well, though he objects to this designation. Indeed, he addresses, with his Islamic[3]/ Nurist (*Nurcu*)[4]/Sunni-

1 A shorter version of this article has been published in Turkish in: *Muhafazakar Düşünce*, Issue 9-10, 2006: 203-222.

2 There has recently been only one news article about him in the leading newspapers of Turkey (Korap 2004).

3 In this paper, I use the concept "Islamic" in a very broad sense and mean everything that is linked to the religion of Islam and all those Muslims who show interest in the religion of Islam. On the other hand, the concept of "Islamist" describes many dimensions of "political Islam." Further in this article, for instance where I describe Halit Ertuğrul as a "moderate Islamist," these concepts overlap a bit. However, this overlapping should not be perceived as a conceptual ambiguity since religious and political values often make up a

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conservative discourse, a Sunni-conservative setting.[5] Besides, his books are published through a Nurcu publishing house.[6]

* * *

Halit Ertuğrul was born in the Besni district of Adıyaman in 1956. Growing up without a father, his childhood years passed in poverty, and he was only able to receive education with some help. He received his primary schooling in the town where he was born, and attended middle school and teacher's college in Kırşehir. Later, he graduated from Niğde Education Institute and Gazi Education Faculty. He completed his MA at Cumhuriyet University in Sivas and his Ph.D. at University of Sakarya in Adapazarı. He was a faculty member and administrator in various universities. Because his first occupational formation is teaching, he worked as an elementary school teacher and a school principal at various places in Turkey. Later on, he assumed the duties of the National Education District Directorship and the National Education Directorship. In addition to all this, he worked as an expert and a consultant to a minister. Currently, he is a faculty member at Kırşehir Education Faculty.

In addition to his professional life of diverse interests, he can also be described as a very active writer. As he explained in a personal interview[7], he picks up his pencil not as an Islamist or Islamic writer, but as a scientist, a sociologist, a psychological consultant and a teacher. As far as the Islamic dimension of his writings is concerned, this emanates, according to him, from the Islamic lifestyle of people. With this identity, the 49-year-old writer has written 29 books. Since

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whole. And since the nonpolitical essentially acquires a political dimension from the moment it is transferred to the social domain, this ambiguity is suitable for the nature of our subject.

4 *Nurcular* is a community. In academic literature, this community is generally described as a religious school that developed in Turkey. The spiritual leader of the Nurists is Bediz-zaman Said Nursi, and the collection that consists of more than 130 of his works is known as *Risale-i Nur*. Written in a repetitive style, these works carry an utmost importance for the Nurist community and are read in all the religious conversations.

5 Some concepts need to be defined here: With the concept of "Sunni-conservative" I not only describe the Islamist setting in Turkey, but also all those conservative-right groups that bring the Sunni understanding of Islam to the social platform. The Sunni classification emphasizes that this phenomenon is unique to the dominant Islamic sect in Turkey in contrast to the Alevi minorities and the few Orthodox Shiites. The conservative classification is concerned with the place and/or religious interpretation that said groups occupy in the political spectrum. In summary, the Sunni-conservative setting can be described as very heterologous.

6 *Nesil Yayınları* is a known Nurist publishing house (Çakır 1992, Ferşadoğlu 1995). According to Halit Ertuğrul, he has no connection with the identity of his publisher: "My connection with Nesil Yayınları is because I am a writer. To me, there is no difference between Nesil Yayınları, Timaş Yayınları or any other publisher for that matter. It worked out the way it did, because they were the ones who took my books into consideration" (personal interview).

7 This personal interview was carried out by an interviewer according to a questionnaire developed by the author of this article.

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the list of books is very long, devoting even a single sentence to each book would exceed the scope of this article. Therefore, in order to give an idea about this writer's works, I would like to briefly present his three best selling books.

Kendini Arayan Adam (The Man in Search of Himself), which was printed in 1994 and has gone through 300 printings is according to Halit Ertuğrul's own judgment his most important book. *Kendini Arayan Adam*, in Halit Ertuğrul's words, is "the novel of what was lived."[8] *Kendini Arayan Adam* is faithless, distressed and depressed, and after meeting with our writer, he discloses to him his suspicions and hesitations. Finally, following the discussions between them, he embraces Islam and reaches peace.

Halit Ertuğrul's best selling second book *Düzceli Mehmet* (Mehmet of Düzce) has a similar scenario. *Düzceli Mehmet* is "neither fantasy nor fiction, but a purely lived true"[9] story of transformation about an ordinary youth who rejects spiritual belief and rules. *Düzceli Mehmet* was first printed in May 2000 and has had 110 printings so far.

The book titled *Aysel* (female name), which was based on one of numerous letters from his readers, has been printed 110 times since February 2002. The book tells us the lifelong struggle of a young girl, who, having been left both motherless and fatherless, is raised in an orphanage only to have her youth ruined at the hands of malevolent people, and who eventually develops cancer. This book questions the relationships between people, the problems of youth and the phenomenon of "social degeneration," and it tells us the story of the salvation of a young girl and her turning to Islam.

If we are to generalize at this point, we can say this: The scenarios we have just described are not a Halit Ertuğrul phenomenon. Such identity crises and "transformation stories" are the subject of many Islamic/Islamist novels. We could present Şule Yüksek Şenler's *Huzur Sokağı* (Tranquility Road) or Emine Şenlikoğlu's *Maria* (Maria) or *Bize Nasıl Kıydınız* (How Much You Hurt Us) as novels of this type. However, if these novels and their writers are compared, one paradox stands out: The novels of the scholar Halit Ertuğrul are not much different from the novels of the less educated Şule Yüksel Şenler and Emine Şenlikoğlu. Their language, style and the way in which their stories are told have many points in common.

Aşk Böyle Yaşanır

Aşk Böyle Yaşanır was first published in March 2002, and, according to Halit Ertuğrul, is only his sixth or seventh most important book. Halit Ertuğrul's assessment reflects the sales figures. *Aşk Böyle Yaşanır* has been printed 54 times so far,

8 www.halitertugrul.com
9 www.halitertugrul.com

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and thus is below the sales figures of the books mentioned above. As far as the topic is concerned, our writer attaches great importance to love.

Importance of Love

The book begins with the importance of love. I would like to convey his thoughts in his own words:

> Whereas "love" is a feeling to be made a crown on one's head, to be hidden in the purest places of one's heart, unfortunately, there have been those who have turned it into something vulgar. However, those who have made their loves vulgar have unfortunately become vulgar themselves (Ertuğrul 2004: 7).

As this citation shows, love is generally perceived as something important, pure and sacred. However, his use of the term "whereas" indicates that love does not have this glorious place anymore. Something has changed. Some people have made it vulgar, "brought it down to the level of the feet." In other words, neither all of humanity nor all of society, but only some people have degraded it. And this is not all: in the course of degrading it, they themselves have become miserable as well. Those who miscomprehend love and think that it is something else are being deprived of love and, indirectly, of the many "lofty" qualities true love harbors. For "love purifies the human soul, matures it, equips it with sublime feelings" (Ertuğrul 2004: 7).

As we can see, a very deep insight into life is hidden in these short citations. Considering the general mood of the book and the interview I had organized with Halit Ertuğrul, the importance of love and his perspective on the world can be summarized as follows: With modern life, degeneration takes hold in people's lives. The mass of people who pursue an ostentatious and free lifestyle, called *Tele-Vole* (Tele-Volley) culture, have already penetrated the remotest corners of Turkey. The essentially conservative Anatolian youth have been affected and also shaken by this process. Since they do not know how to deal with the problems this lifestyle presents, they often resort to suicide. He writes especially to help this group. Indeed, according to the writer, "the most significant source of their mistakes is love. The walls placed in front of their traditions, the obstacles, also arise from love" (Ertuğrul 2004: 8).

Love and Religion

According to Halit Ertuğrul, religion is the remedy for the occasionally confused Anatolian youth. For, according to him, it is the element that relaxes a person the most. Here we are faced with an interesting sociological analysis: Ertuğrul tries to rehabilitate the relation the Anatolian youth, who is essentially religious but has been moving away from religion and tradition and therefore experiencing problems, has with religion. In this context, one may speak of a proposal

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based on turning to religion, a struggle to make religious identity permanent. This tendency can also be seen in the subject of love.

If we go back to the "human" love/"divine" love dichotomy that I mentioned in the introduction, Halit Ertuğrul's work is dedicated without doubt to "human" love. The human dimension in an Islamic work certainly includes an Islamic dimension. In fact, as the writer indicated in a face-to-face interview, he wants to "make worldly love divine" and "embed it in a divine fiction." A kind of dramaturgic element stands out in stories and letters of this genre: with their beliefs and, as will be emphasized later, the teachings of *Risale-i Nur,* people who have firm (i.e. religious) personalities now, live love in the "right" way.[10] This rightness encompasses a significant hierarchy. Divine love is superior to worldly love in every sense. In this context, the writer is saying "If people realize that true love is to know Allah and to prostrate oneself before him, to be with him in an eternal universe, they would never stoop to the level of worldly love" (Ertuğrul 2004: 71). As can be seen here, people manage worldly loves as if with divine power.

General Observations on Style

As far as the style is concerned, a simple and easily understood language is used. Both Halit Ertuğrul and his letter-sending readers convey their experiences not in a colorful and literary language, but in daily language itself. This language also contains a number of conservative elements. For example, issues of sexuality are expressed in conservative language: "to get close" (*yakınlaşmak*) instead of "to make love" (*sevişmek*), "innocence" (*masumiyet*) instead of "virginity" (*bekâret*), etc.

When religion is being discussed, a number of religious expressions turn up; one often encounters words like "God" (*Allah*) and "My Lord" (*Rabbim*). Furthermore, one sees, very frequently, religious expressions like "Let my Lord be a friend and a helper" (*Rabbim yar ve yardımcı olsun*), "All prayers are with you" (*Dualar sizinle*) or "Let Allah not give such a hard test to anyone" (*Allah kimseye böyle ağır bir imtihan yaşatmasın*). Unlike the language used in many other Islamic and/or Islamist works, this religious language does not contain complex, Ottoman Turkish expressions. It is simple and similar to the one used in daily life.

In the style of the book, the references to *Risale-i Nur* and to the writer's own books are also noticeable. These two are mentioned favorably in nearly every story and are recommended to the readers as a manual on life, as a source of energy or, in their own language, a "source of inspiration."

It is interesting that in spite of the content and all the qualities mentioned above, Halit Ertuğrul does not describe the book as "a manual on Islamic love." Although the writer accepts that he acts as a guide, he is, on the other hand, quite uncomfortable with the concept of "Islamic:"

10 For Risale-i Nur go to footnote 3.

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> (This is, BP) not a love manual because I am not a theologian. I am not an erudite person in Islamic literature (…) I am a sociologist, a scientist studying society; I give meaning to people's behaviors in social life (…) In *Aşk Böyle Yaşanır*, one (some, BP) of the examples of thousands of behaviors fully within the society (is/are presented, BP). Since he/she lives in an Islamic atmosphere, I wrote this book accordingly. (Interview)

Owing to his professional formation, Halit Ertuğrul positions himself differently from the theologians. Since he specialized in the fields of sociology and psychology, he wants to be active in these fields. In this context, he repeatedly gives psychological and sociological information during the interview that was conducted for me. As was emphasized before, he also wants to be a guiding light for people, and thus (as was and will be seen better later) he acts, with his religious identity, as a guidance counselor on life. According to him, the Islamic love manuals, since they contain Islamic literature, are theoretical and scientific and indirect, and are thus detached from real life. Because he takes as his starting point a love that is lived and alive, he finds his works more useful in coping with social problems.

Apart from this, in Nurist circles, the concept of Islam is used very cautiously in public discourse. Since the "Islamic" elements are often confused with "Islamist" elements in contemporary Turkey, the Nurists, who see themselves outside/against "political Islam," use concepts very cautiously in order not to politicize Islam. They see themselves as the representative of the living folk Islam. They do not see religious life, as I have shown it before, just as a condition. They present Islamic values – in fact, according to Said Nursi's special interpretation – as a social solution. According to him, the discourses of representation are nothing other than a political hide-and-seek.

Listified Advice

In *Aşk Böyle Yaşanır*, there is another element worth considering. As emphasized by Halit Ertuğrul, it consists of letters from his readers. Because of the "best-sellers" I described above, Halit Ertuğrul has a large circle of readers. What is even more interesting is that these readers write him not only about their thoughts on his books, but also about their own lives. With books like *Kendini Arayan Adam* and *Aysel*, Halit Ertuğrul became a counselor on life. As he also points out, he receives countless letters and phone calls from his readers looking for advice and suggestions; besides, he gives students psychological support in the university where he works. As he finds some of the life stories he hears for various reasons suitable for book projects, he invites people to write their own stories. In this way, the book becomes, as he also indicates, based on "true" and "lived" love affairs. In this context, he states the following in an interview about the book *Aşk Böyle Yaşanır*:

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> Had I told them that this is the definition of love, that it is separated into the following topics, that love is this and that, that such and such a scholar perceived it in such a way, that some pedagogue said the following about it, then nobody would open the cover of this book. However, what the subject in this book is is a segment from each love affair that these young people have lived. The young reader says "Oh! This one describes exactly how my relationship is. This is how the relationship I am living today will end up; because these people experienced it like this and they ended up like this (Interview).

Owing to the way the book is constructed, in other words, because it is based on the evaluation of letters coming from his readers, his own words are rather few. Apart from the few paragraphs making up the introduction, an interview, short commentaries and a list of points to which one needs to pay attention, the actual text of the book belongs to the readers. What is interesting about this book is that the good and bad examples given by readers who frequently write back are also in the form of lists. The first list is by a woman who knows the secret of a happy love.

1. First of all, I grew up in a well-ordered family atmosphere. I established a good dialog with my parents. I shared every problem and received their support in every difficulty.
2. I was raised a girl devoted to our traditions, family values, moral feelings and national values. Through these feelings, first a sense of confidence in myself (…) was formed…
3. As I was known as a girl devoted to her spirituality (…) and with a settled worldview, the men around me could not be ordinary people either (…) Young people who liked my style wanted to communicate with me. This had created a very important advantage for me (…) They were at least not the kind of people who were irreligious, unbelieving, unspiritual, idle or who saw life as made up of daily pleasures.
4. I met my spouse in such a setting. He approached me while paying attention to my moral feelings and worldview (…) The wishes in our heads and hearts met each other and they overlapped (…)
5. I questioned myself after I met my spouse (…)
   - Why do you want this young person?
   - Can he provide me with the kind of life I would like to have? (…)
   - How much does he want me? (…)
   - Are his spending habits, dreams, his thoughts about the future consistent, in harmony, with mine, and do they inspire confidence in me? (…)
   - Does my family approve? (…) (Ertuğrul 2004: 123-4).

Our first step in interpreting this list should be to emphasize that love is perceived as being the same as marriage. Therefore, this list contains advice not for living a romantic love, but for having the right marriage. For a good marriage, we see that family roots are mentioned in the first part (Point 1). It is emphasized that the family roots form the psychological and social background of the individuals. While doing this, the institution of family is given two important meanings: Whereas attention is paid to the individual's family, it is also indicated indirectly that the family being formed and the right decisions in this process are equally important (Point 2). But it does not end with this: The social background

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presented by the family symbolizes a worldview and reinforces the personalities of the individuals. Here it is emphasized that a settled identity is not just an individual value; a settled identity means a social selection as well. For, as the female writer of this list tells us, "ordinary people" would not approach her because of her spirituality. Therefore, we realize that said selective mechanism is also a protective mechanism keeping away undesirable relationships and the wrong type of love (Point 3). For the fourth point, the writer of our list tells us that the conditions for a happy marriage should not only be understood as theoretical propositions. By talking about her life, she emphasizes the applicability, the practical nature, of these proposed conditions. In the last point, the writer invites people to build a happy home by inviting the person in love to examine him/herself. Here, happiness is presented as a logical and problem-free relationship. In this section of the list, the duties one expects one's spouse to perform are also investigated. When one looks carefully at the list of spousal duties, it becomes apparent that this list was written by a woman and for women. In this context, one fact stands out very clearly: Women can reinforce the traditional roles. In fact, as can be seen in this example, we understand that women expect that a man should take on traditional roles and duties such as providing for the family. If we are to evaluate the whole list briefly, it can be said that it does not contain too many Islamic elements and stays in the framework of the general conservative discourse.

Another reader who describes the love she experienced as "wrong" gives many other pieces of advice in her letter. As we can see, her advice is less of the "do this, do that" kind of clear encouragements or recommendations and more in the nature of "do not ever do this or that" type of warnings.

1. Girls should not enter this kind of relationship like "bam," not in a hurry, [but] be careful and selective (…)
2. Do not go with your feelings and emotions. At least know to wait, to be patient and not to be hasty (…)
3. When you meet for the first time and during the period of engagement, try to watch him carefully and get to know him.
4. Do not do everything he wants, he asks (…) be hard to get (…)
5. Do not ever make a mistake you cannot reverse (…)
6. His smoking, drinking and some bad habits were the biggest threat to our marriage, too (…)
7. Now I understand how necessary family support and approval are.
8. A person brought up without any belief, any spirituality, sees life merely as consisting of pleasure and desire and makes great mistakes. Whereas the one who knows Allah (God) (…) makes fewer mistakes… knows duties, worship, (…) more or less. He/she tries to be happy through knowing Allah, afterlife and heaven (…) (Ertuğrul 2004: 108-111).

When we look at this list, we realize that it is written by a woman and for women. We also see in this example that sexuality and, as Halit Ertuğrul puts it, lost "innocence" are in the forefront of the list of mistakes. Sexuality or, more

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particularly, traditional sexual morality is mentioned at various places in the book *Aşk Böyle Yaşanır*: As can be seen in the following citation, a significant difference is established between male and female sexualities.

> Imagine you are in a relationship. But later, you are separated from each other without turning [your relationship] into a serious marriage. Let us now think whom this relationship would hurt more. Certainly, the girl (…) For no man would face anything like "You were in a relationship; therefore your initial innocence is gone, and you are no good for us." Nothing will change for him, even if he goes through a hundred relationships (Ertuğrul 2004: 107-108).

This is the predominant understanding in the bad example list. In fact, although points 1 to 5 are not clear, they are concerned with female sexuality. It is seen that the woman conveying her experiences had a premarital emotional relationship and now regrets it. She now presents sexuality as something to be left for marriage, for true love, and she sees premarital relationships as something harmful to women. As can be understood from the expression "Do not ever make a mistake you cannot reverse (…)," she sees sex as a "mistake" when experienced in the wrong setting. In this context, premarital virginity is approved and recommended. The male and female roles are presented as we know them: males are demanding and females are submissive. The submissive female is asked to use reason (invitation to reason) in order to protect herself from the demanding male. Emotions, on the other hand, exist only for a man's pleasure and can indirectly mislead the woman. All these suggestions reinforce the conservative worldview existing in Turkey. The sixth and seventh points are also part of the Sunni-conservative values. The bad habits are presented as a threat to the institution of family. Moreover, it is stated that the approval of the family elders is important for a happy home. The importance of the family elders is perceived, as can be seen in the other parts of the book, as a social insurance: A woman should not offend her family so that there is a place to return to in case there is a problem in the newly established family. Religion and belief are mentioned last: The message is quite clear. Since religious people act according to religious and traditional values, and since religion offers a clear framework in many areas, they will make fewer mistakes. Consequently, because they suffer less, religious people become happier. Although this understanding contains a religious perspective, it cannot be attributed solely to the Islamist/Islamic groups but to large social groups in Turkey.

In this book, there are two similar lists devised by Halit Ertuğrul. One of these lists is about the person loved, and the other one consists of the questions the reader needs to ask him/herself.

> What Qualities Should Be Looked For In the Person with Whom One Falls In Love?
>
> 1. Is he/she worth my love?
> 2. Is he/she an experienced person?
> 3. Is his/her spirituality strong?

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4. Does he/she have the material capability?
5. Can he/she be a confidant on the most difficult day?
6. Does he/she have the knowledge, desire and ability to make a living?
7. Does he/she have adequate education?
8. Does he/she have beautiful morality and chastity?
9. Is he/she a loyal friend?
10. Does he/she share the same culture and traditions?
11. Is his/her age suitable?
12. Is he/she single?
13. Does he/she value family?
14. Does he/she have an illness or a habit that would make life difficult?
15. Is love based on material reasons or personality and character?
16. Does he/she share the same philosophy of life with me?
17. Is he/she moderate and careful in his/her spending?
18. Does he/she value the opposing party and respect it? (Ertuğrul 2004: 131-132).

The "What Qualities Should Be Looked For In the Person with Whom One Falls In Love?" section of the list can be summarized in four categories: (1) religious identity, (2) being a good/suitable person, (3) socioeconomic status and materialism and (4) being a bachelor. In fact, questions 3, 8, 9 and 10 are about religious identity, questions 1, 2, 5, 11, 13, 14, 16 and 18 are about being a good/suitable person, questions 4, 6, 7, 15, 17 are about the socioeconomic status and materialism, and question 12 is about being a bachelor. When one looks carefully at this categorization, religious identity and being a good/suitable person overlap considerably. This overlap shows that being religious is equated with being a good/suitable person and vice versa. Since questions related to being a good/suitable person and religious identity are important categories for both women and men, the questions about the socioeconomic status and materialism are, though not clearly expressed, for men. Therefore, what is suggested here is not social sexual roles based on equality and sharing, but the allocation of the traditional roles.

These perceptions that we have taken into consideration up until now are not surprising, since we have been talking about a Sunni-conservative writer and a Sunni-conservative audience. We can also add that these perceptions are common among the Sunni-conservative groups. On the other hand, the 12th question of the list we have been analyzing constitutes an important exception. In fact, the question whether or not he/she is a bachelor (single/unmarried) shows that the writer rejects the idea of multiple marriages. What is interesting is that even though the issue of multiple marriages is a reality among the Sunni-conservative groups, it is not mentioned in the other sections of the book. The writer explains this omission, in an interview conducted with him, by indicating that he intends to write a separate book on multiple marriages. He is generally against multiple marriages, since, he adds, he has not seen happiness in multiple marriages. The viewpoint he describes deserves attention because multiple marriages are not rejected as clearly as it is indicated here within the Sunni-conservative

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groups.[11] Since multiple marriages as an institution of family are encountered especially in Sunni-conservative and Islamist settings in Turkey, the writer's attitude about this issue merits attention. Indeed, although he seems to be interested in organizing society as seen in his other suggestions, in this area, he does not reinforce traditional values – to the contrary, he tries to break with traditionalism in this area. This break is, as one would expect, not an Islamic attitude – on the contrary, it represents the modern worldview. This phenomenon is very important, because, as Nilufer Göle, starting from this point, determined, the Islamist groups do not modernize life while implementing Islamic activities. Sometimes, as can be seen in Halit Ertuğrul's love discourse, they directly adopt values thought to belong to the secular world. As we see in Halit Ertuğrul's second list, the author also invites the individuals to question themselves.

Questions about one's own self

1. What am I doing? Does what I am doing make sense to me? Am I aware of the fact that I am doing something very important?
2. Who am I getting ready to be with? Is this person worth sharing my life with?
3. Do I have enough knowledge and examples to deal with this serious task?
4. Have I talked to people with similar experiences and asked for their opinions?
5. Have I talked to an expert?
6. Have I informed the family elders and gotten their support? (Ertuğrul 2004: 132).

The questions in the "Questions about one's own self" section are very similar to the previously considered questions in "invitation to reason." Indeed, the writer invites those who have fallen in love to act according to reason based on conservative morality and conduct.

If we are to compare Halit Ertuğrul's list with those of his female readers, we notice that the women write for women while Halit Ertuğrul takes on roles addressed to both sexes.

With his suggestions he invites his readers, once more, to be more logical than emotional. Since, according to him, what is legitimate is that a person can fall in love with someone from the opposite sex only once, love becomes a very serious task. This seriousness is attained through the self-examination people conduct.

The popular cultural products of the Islamic publishing sector generally give their readers very clear advice. It should be considered natural that due to their didactic functions these publications present their suggestions in lists. Indeed, with their rhetoric and didactic nature, these lists direct people towards the desired direction in a very definite manner.[12]

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11 Legitimacy of multiple marriages is generally emphasized only in exceptional cases. An abundance of women, e.g. widows, as often seen after wars, is presented as one such exception. In Islamist/Sunni discourse, not being a child is enough to legitimize being taken by men as a second wife (Dilipak 1995).

12 Priska Furrer observes the same phenomenon in "Islamic" novels (Furrer 2001).

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In order to show how wide a spectrum the Sunni-conservatives in Turkey represent, I would like to consider briefly the list of another writer:

My conditions in the order given are as follows:

1. I do not demand from you any condition in the form of furnishings or gold (…): If you do not have money, we can buy a mat or kilim. In return, you will not want from me the kind of dowry the girls whose main interest is to show off bring with them and accept whatever I bring (…)
2. If you are to provide house furnishings, I do not want expensive and fancy furniture. I was not created to serve objects. Objects must serve me. Therefore, the number of objects must match our needs. We should not waste.
3. I want an Islamic wedding.
4. After I am married, I will teach the Kur'an and pray at least five times a day.
5. I do not go anywhere without permission from my spouse; I expect loyalty from my spouse… I cannot imagine a spouse who is out at coffeehouses until twelve at night.
6. You should stop me if I make concessions from Islam.
7. Since you want me to show respect to your family members, I expect the same respect for my own family.
8. If I make a mistake, and I am sure I will, I would like you to tell me first, I would not want anyone else to hear it before I do.
9. Every night, at least for one hour, I would like you to give fıkıh (canonical law) lessons to me and whoever else may be in the house. Otherwise, I would like to read.
10. Though not frequently, I would like to stroll in solitary places as a couple (…) This strolling is not for pleasure, but resting (…)
11. I would want my spouse to share his problems with me.
12. I would want him to support neither me against his family, nor his family against me. I only want justice (…)
13. I will try to do my cooking and house work to the best of my ability. In the meantime, I do not want my small mistakes blown out of proportion, but to be told of my mistake in a manner appropriate to Islam.
14. I do not get out of my mahrem [sexuality of woman's body] for anyone else.
15. I will wear old clothes, old shoes, but I will never wear external clothes that make concessions (…) [opening her body to the outside gaze]
16. I want everything to be done with kindness. When there is a quarrel, which is a natural human condition, I will not talk back, but if I am blamed for what is not my fault, then I will defend myself (…)
17. If we make concessions from namaz and the other religious duties required of all Muslims by Allah, my respect for you will decrease.
18. As a mihr, I ask for permission to have a student educated. If we reach disagreement and separate, I want 50 Reşad gold pieces (Şenlikoğlu: 244-247).

I took this list from Emine Şenlikoğlu's novel titled *Bize Nasıl Kıydınız*; the heroine of the novel writes this list to her future spouse. In this context, one does notice a stylistic difference, when the above list is compared with Halit Ertuğrul's list. However, I believe another element is even more important: This difference shows that these lists change according to the worldviews of their authors and how they comprehend Islam. In fact, compared to Halit Ertuğrul, Emine Şenlik-

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oğlu makes more political and radical suggestions. In connection with this, the lists overlap with their authors' general worldviews/ideologies: While Emine Şenlikoğlu, who represents the populist voice of political Islam, nearly demands a social change, Nurist Halit Ertuğrul, on the other hand, makes suggestions that are personal and are accepted in Turkish society by wide Sunni-conservative circles. The different positions these writers have are related to the worldview of the groups they represent. This reminds us how even subjects like love, which is thought to be "light" and to belong to the private sphere, can be very political. Both writers – which is the point we wish to emphasize here – present "alternative" "love" models to what they define as "modern" or "urban liberal" life and what they perceive as "modern" or "urban liberal" love and marriage conceptions. Although these writers are searching for different alternatives, their ideas overlap with many of what are accepted as general values in Turkey.

The Story of Aşk Böyle Yaşanır

Aşk Böyle Yaşanır is a 154-page work. It is composed of a preface and fourteen love stories. Most of the stories (13) consist of readers' letters. The book's first and longest story is presented as an interview.

The name of the first story and the title of the book are the same: *Aşk Böyle Yaşanır*. This life story is the longest section in the book; it makes up nearly 30% of the book. It is also the only interview in the book. All these characteristics make this story very important in its own framework. Taking this importance into consideration, I would like to present a brief summary of it:

İffet and Hikmet are two young people who know each other from secondary school. They live in the same town and the same neighborhood. Their social statuses are very different: while İffet is the rich girl of the neighborhood, Hikmet comes from the poorest family there. Because of the status difference and the general rules of conduct both accept, the two youths cannot divulge their feelings to each other.

A year later, the two youths both see an old man in their dreams. This man tells Hikmet "My son, you will have this girl, but it will be very difficult. Do not give her up; she is a very nice girl" (Ertuğrul 2004: 11). The girl has the same dream and on the same night, but since İffet is not attending the high school, the two youths are not able to see each other any longer. However, when these two come to Istanbul for various reasons, they walk into each other in a hospital. There, they exchange their new addresses and telephone numbers. Hikmet gets a letter to İffet, and a new phase starts in their relationship: They go through a friendship/flirtation period. In the meantime, the two start becoming more devout Muslims than they were before: They get to know *Risale-i Nur*, attend meetings and take part in readings.

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Following her return to the town where they both grew up, what İffet has been afraid of all this time happens: men who want to marry her start coming to her house. After she refuses all the suitors, her father decides to marry her against her will. İffet can find only one way out of this: She sends Hikmet a letter and tells him to abduct her. Luckily, since the groom her father has chosen dies in a traffic accident, İffet's problem ends. In the meantime, nothing is heard of Hikmet because something bad happens to him: While helping an old woman, he is hit by a truck and loses both legs. Since he thinks he now has no chance of ever marrying İffet, his whole world collapses and he never writes to İffet again.

Time goes by and new people appear who want to marry İffet. She rejects her suitors. Suspicious of her behavior, her mother asks her "if there is someone she wants" (ibid.: 25). When İffet explains what is going on, her mother simply restricts herself to saying "Be careful, don't let your brothers and father hear about this; otherwise they will kill us" (ibid.). Upon this, İffet sends a message saying "Abduct me" to Hikmet through a friend, but she is not aware of Hikmet's situation at this point. Although he does not see much chance, Hikmet sets out to get İffet, telling himself "I will marry her if she accepts me like this" (ibid.: 27). However, the tragedy does not end here: He gets into another traffic accident on this trip and loses both eyes. Consequently, marriage becomes a dream that he will never attain, and he moves in with his family in Istanbul and starts living an isolated life in a slum house.

Meanwhile, suitors keep coming to İffet's house. When another secondary school friend, Selami, seeks her hand in marriage, İffet tells him her problem. Selami tries to help her. He first finds out Hikmet's telephone number, and then helps them meet through a secret telephone call. İffet learns about Hikmet's condition during this telephone call. Her reaction is as follows: "If your eyes are gone, I have mine. If your legs are gone, I have mine. They will be enough for both of us" (ibid.: 34). Upon hearing this, Hikmet abducts İffet with Selami's help. On the way they have a religious (Islamic) marriage ceremony performed, so that "there will be no sin;" later, they have an official marriage ceremony and settle in the slum house in Istanbul. They start living a humble but happy life with their daughter, born a year after their marriage. İffet's father tries to break off this marriage, but he never succeeds.

At first, it is impossible not to liken this story to the popular Turkish love films that are often seen in Turkey. However, there is one difference, namely the emphasis that is put on *Risale-i Nur*. Apart from this, the succession of tragic events, the characters in the story, the fatalism of the woman in love, the kindheartedness of the victimized man, the general moral principles, and finally the humble but happy ending are very familiar elements. In fact, when I was retelling this story during the symposium titled "Social change and human relations in the Turkish world," the audience wanted to know what the specifically Islamic dimension of this story was. As with the other stories in this book, the writer's

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"Islamism" is restricted to piety, fatalism, love of Allah and the teachings of *Risale-i Nur*.

From the point of view of dramaturgy, the other stories in this book are less tragic and much more banal than this one. These stories are set in comparatively more "normal" frameworks: One woman does not marry again after her husband's death because she still loves him. Another woman regrets having married her teacher (ibid.: 83ff). One man says "My mother's love was my father (…) and my father's was the motherland" (ibid.: 136), etc. Although the stories presented in the book all differ from one another, they do have some points in common. The most important of them are the following:

In general terms, the book consists of "good" and "bad" stories. Although life is presented in very rosy terms in the "good" stories, the people never lose their direction in life. They overcome difficulties with their faith. On the other hand, the people in the "bad" stories find the "right" path after some turning point they experience. The turning point and the rightness appear as two key concepts. In this context, the "right" path is always the one that is humble, simple but peaceful, detached from worldly pleasures. It comes with a life full of deep emotions. The "wrong" life, on the contrary, consists of a series of pleasures, superficial and empty. Besides, there is always a turning point in a wrong life, and after this point, what is "bad" becomes "good." The turning points generally consist of human tragedies such as traffic accidents or serious illness such as cancer; and these tragedies are the cause behind irreligious people's developing religious identities. Even those people who lead happy lives in the wrong path take these disasters as signs that they need to change their lives; and, of course, eventually they become happier than they were before. Therefore, as "a symbol of unpredictability," these disasters play an important role in this book and invite the reader who is happy in the "wrong" path to turn to the "right" path. We can perceive this open invitation as one of the principal discourses of this book.

In parallel to the "right" and "wrong" path discourse, there is also an "us" and "them" discourse in almost every story. In the "us" category are those Sunni-conservative people who are devoted to their religion, nation and traditions; the "them" category contains people who are urbanites and have more liberal and individualistic values. Even though at first sight the others ("them") seem to be more modern and contemporary, the truly important values belong to the Sunni-conservative groups.

In various sections, the book also reinforces traditional sexual roles. While attributes such as brave, hardworking and honest are very important, the desirable qualities for women can be summarized as "nice," "innocent," "chaste" and "self-sacrificing." Woman's role as "helper" is also emphasized. The most obvious example for this is the story summarized above. The woman tells her legless and blind lover "If your eyes are gone, I have mine. If your legs are gone, I have mine. They will be enough for both of us (ibid.: 34)." Her eyes and legs are pre-

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sented as spare parts. The names İffet (virtue) and Hikmet (wisdom) alone present a sense of traditionalism and a clearly sexist distribution of roles.

Although in the "good" stories the couples do not come together through matchmaking and act against their parents' will, still, a dignified and conservative courtship is followed. The words that are said and the steps that are taken all occur within a conservative framework. As can be seen from the advice lists, what is emphasized is not acting only according to one's emotions, but especially acting according to one's logic. Despite all this, there is still passion, but this passion is different from the passion we know from romantic love. This passion is presented as a feeling of faithfulness, of self-sacrifice that grows with and finds strength in loving Allah. In this passion, it seems as if the person with whom one falls in love is in the background and the elements of spirituality (that is, the desire to pass Allah's test, fatalism, etc.) are in the foreground.

According to the writer, Hikmet and İffet's love story needs to be interpreted in this framework. What could be interpreted as insanity, obsession and suffering from a different perspective is presented and praised as the product of an extensive spirituality. Let us question particularly the steps taken by İffet as a woman and the value system presented with this. Will women always sacrifice? Will women always adapt to a bad life for their great loves? Will women always be the "helpers"?... The writer looks at this issue from a very different perspective. According to him, what is praised in the story is not the general plot of the story. In this sense, he adds, the story of making it against all odds is "an exemplary story of self-sacrifice" rather than "an exemplary love story" (interview). And, in his opinion, these qualities are shown by both the woman and the man in the story since the male character is prepared to forgo his love because of his situation, and since the female character accepts her beloved in spite of all the difficulties. Apart from this, the author advises people of ordinary spirituality to act according to his list. He promises them that they will be happy once they find spiritual love and choose their worldly loves logically. Since in today's world, people are too much, as he puts it, "into flesh and bone for the sake of love" (ibid.), the loyalty and self-sacrifice needed for true love should be emphasized even more. Hence the decision to publish the İffet-Hikmet love story in his book.

Love, Woman and Society

The Sunni-conservative setting I described is very uncomfortable with the society in Turkey that is in the process of modernization and with the lifestyles that change with it. Since life is changing throughout society, the Sunni-conservative groups are active in every social area in order to develop an alternative (Kömeçoğlu 2007). They want to form an Islamic alternative in areas from politics to fashion, music and the way to spend one's leisure time – and it seems that they have already formed such an alternative (Göle 2000). Although the aim is to

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bring with these attempts an Islamic transformation / Islamic modernization, nonetheless, they try to maintain some of the traditional and conservative values as well. In this context, we may observe an "us" and "them" distinction.

We should evaluate the discourse concerning love in this framework as well. Referred to as *tele-volley* culture in daily Turkish speech, the affluence and free lifestyle of modernity have made their presence felt in every household in Turkey, especially through private television channels. According to many Sunni-conservative writers, the free relations seen in these programs are not only "immoral," but also "confusing" to many young people.

Although the Sunni-conservative groups monitor and criticize the confusing nature of modern life in every area, they worry more about its "potential to confuse" in private life and family structure. The reason for this is the importance they place on family life and the role they attribute to women: They take family as the pillar of society. They see family as the institution assigned to protect society from negative innovations. Here, the actual burden is on the shoulders of those who work in the family, i.e. the women. Indeed, women are shown as the inner pillar of the home in all of the love, marriage and family manuals I could find. In this context, women are presented as self-sacrificing mothers, understanding and supportive spouses and fearful servants of Allah. (The men, on the other hand, are shown as the outer pillar of the home, providing for the family, and their qualities are given as bravery, hard work, honesty and of course piety– all separated from daily pleasures.) Especially the roles attached to the woman as mother and wife are, as put by Ayşe Kadıoğlu (1998), very common in "great social projects" such as Kemalism, socialism and Islamism. Consequently, women are given the duty of shaping society, educating it. In this conceptual system, it is as if the women, who are perceived as the ones who can perpetuate the religious worldview the most, are taken into "a special protective field." This area must be a very important matter for men – indeed, all the love, marriage and family manuals (unlike the novels) are written by men.

I believe that the reason the Sunni-conservative men are so concerned with family, love and marriage is the social mission they impose on women. This is how I explain the fact that all the love, marriage and family manuals I could find are written by men (Şelubi 1995, Çakmaklı 1996, Büyükçınar 2003). As a side note, it should be emphasized at this point that there is a difference between the Sunni-conservative women and men. While some women are demanding certain changes within crossgender relations and the traditional family structure, and trying to realize these changes, the men reinforce the traditional and patriarchal status quo even more.

At any rate, many texts are published in order to protect and/or encourage the above-mentioned religious values. The triangle of love-marriage-family is reinforced or shaped in accordance with the Sunni-conservative worldview through manuals on marriage and love and love novels, which contain clear advice.

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Conclusion

The Islamic love discourse, as seen in this article, is very different from the familiar romantic love. Here people's passions, sexual desires, and rosy fantasies are not in the forefront. Instead, what takes place is that worldly love is made more beautiful with the spiritual power that spiritual love provides. Moreover, worldly love is not perceived as a feeling that "needs to be caught" and "is desired to be caught." Worldly love is a functional element that helps generations to continue within the Sunni-conservative framework with which we are familiar. Despite all these features of the Islamic love discourse, we should not forget the following: Especially the love discourse of Nurists and "moderate Islamists" like Halit Ertuğrul overlaps with the conservative values that are widely encountered in Turkey. If we think of Islamic love as an alternative, we should also ask for what it is the alternative. The answer to this question is hidden in the examples given above – the "Islamic love" discourse of writers like Halit Ertuğrul does not constitute a desire for radical Islamization on the social level and, accordingly, a new understanding of brand new / radical Islam. On the contrary: The Islamic love discourse of writers like Halit Ertuğrul is a "rescue operation" in the private domain, aimed at trying to save the values that are still very widespread but are slowly being lost as a result of ongoing social change. Religious understanding is not experiencing a break in this discourse – on the contrary, Islamic love discourse is where the continuance of the religious values is sought.

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Family as the Micro-Power Domain of Ottoman-Turkish Modernization

İnci Özkan Kerestecioğlu

The hypothesis that micro structures are inextricably intertwined in a reciprocal relationship with the macro structures of nation-building forms the basis for utilizing the family as a starting point for examining modernization in Ottoman and Turkish society. The mutual dynamics between micro and macro spheres and power structures underlie the approach advanced by the major theorists of the Frankfurt School[1] as well as by Michel Foucault.[2] When one analizes changes in family structures as a way to gain further insight into the establishment of power and its legitimization, one should not view the family as a simple reflection of society as conceived of in classical sociology, but rather as an agent within a dynamic social nexus.[3]

Tracing the changes and continuities in family structure offers fresh perspectivesfor understanding the diverse challenges presented by the modernization project. The family has served as a symbol of continuity as well as an instituion of socialization both in the traditional and modern contexts. Nationalist ideology provides a sense of continuity in the face of the uncertainty and ambiguity introduced by the process of modernization. Presenting the new as tradition and the rupture as continuity, nationalism becomes the dominant code that seeps into every part of the modernization process.[4] Nationalism's emphasis on continuity predominates within the family. By presenting the nation as an inclusive family, Turkish primary school textbooks impart an illusion of an of naturalness and immutability to both the nation and the family. The nationalistic discourse, which de-historicizes and fixes the family, either ignores changes sustained by the family or presents them as deviations from its essential characteristics and necessitates intervention allowing the society/nation/family to find its true self. This

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1 E.g. Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and Adorno's *Authoritarian Personality*.

2 In his major works such as *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, *Madness and Civilization. A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, *The History of Sexuality*, Michel Foucault gives us examples of how micro and macro powers are established in their relationships with each other.

3 For an article that places family and in general the social sexual relations as a variable that forms and is formed by power in the protcess of modernization, refer to Nükhet Sirman "Kadınların Milliyeti" (*The Nationality of Women*). In *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, Milliyetçilik,* vol. 4. İletişim Yay.: 226-244.

4 For the theoretical approach to nationalism that is employed here cf. İnci Özkan Kerestecioğlu, "Söylem ve Olgu Olarak Milliyetçilik," unpublished PhD thesis İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1998.

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article explores the transformation of family in the modernization process and its accompanying difficulties and challenges through a variety of literary texts. Moreover, the function of nationalism in this process is defined by referral to the mutual links between gender relationships and the establishment of national identity. The second part of this article evaluates, within the framework of family relations, novels published since the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Social Change and Family: Theoretical Analyses

Traditionally, the family, the neighborhood and the religious institutions of the mosque and madrasah comprised a complementary tripartite structure of socialization by which modes of social behavior were taught and reinforced. Ottoman morality tracts provide insight into the ideology of socialization within the tripartite structure as seen in their constant reference to "compliance," "waiting one's turn" and "treating others as one has observed in one's elders" (Ayni 1939). Modernization, and the consequences of urbanization, industrialization and social mobilization brought about transformations and ruptures in traditional social structures and required the development of the new institutions of socialization. Chief among these developments were schools as the carrier of secular and pragmatic values and the main provider of literacy. With the rise of literacy and education, the press, popular novels, the theatre, and later, the cinema were more effective in conveying different messages and values.It was no longer possible to speak of a single, holistic, non-contradictory discourse and, accordingly, an authority in and of itself. Hannah Arendt's article in which she suggests that one must not ask what authority is but what it was, is an important text that sheds light on this subject (Arendt 1991: 91-141). Through the fragmentation of the self, the individual is confronted with conflicting pressures, contradictory messages and diverse authorities which compromise the status of the family as an exclusive power center, resulting in changes to the family structure. The literature on modernization defines this change as a transition from the large patriarchal family to the egalitarian nuclear family. This discourse hides patriarchy in modernity and defines the new family as being in harmony with the modern values and opposed to traditionality. Yet, not only is it impossible to speak of an unchanging family, as claimed by nationalists, it is also not possible to refer to a radical change in traditional structures. Patriarchy continues to exist under different forms and motives; the transition from the large family to the nuclear family does not take place automatically nor in a straightforward manner. When viewing Ottoman-Turkish modernization through the lens of the family, one should not assume that it was uniform in its structures, and solely present in the form of the "traditional family," with its many members, dependency on agrarian structures as a subsistence unit, and conformity to local customs. In fact

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there was a great diversity in family structures which generate different results when viewed from the perspective of the effects of modernization. Variables based on regional factors, ethnicity, religion or class give rise to differences in modernization practices. Standing out among these differences is the Ottoman dichotomy of elite family versus that of the commoner. The elite family consisted of a household closely connected with Ottoman officialdom. The typical Ottoman elite family resided in a mansion (*konak*), accommodating servants, female slaves (*halayık)* and concubines, the number of which sometimes outnumbered family members by a ratio of three to one. The Ottoman elite were concentrated in urban centers such as Istanbul, Izmir, Thessalonica, Monastir, Trabzon, Diyarbakır, and on a smaller scale, in Kütahya and Konya. Moreover, because of reasons emanating from its religious traditions and local customs, the Muslim Ottoman elite family type was structurally different from that of the elite among Jewish, Armenian and Rum (as in Romaioi/Greek) communities. Since this article looks at changes in the family by referring to the Turkish novel that emerged during the Tanzimat period, the primary concern here will be the transformations of the mansion-type family of Istanbul. Although the mansions which served as the residences of the bureaucrats who put their mark on Ottoman modernization, and Istanbul, the center of the empire and its modernization project, function as an ideal type which allows us to trace this change, they also hinder a deeper and multidimensional analysis of the same phenomenon. Furthermore, the reliability of novels as sources in sociological analyses is open to discussion. With increasing frequency one comes upon studies which attempt to cast light on social and political history through reference to literary texts. This is seen as the most effective way to way to reach the history of the invisible ones, the subalterns.[5] Likewise, postmodern theory, which emphasizes that reality is a construct and that a single reality discourse is not possible, has turned the social sciences into intertextual relations. I would like to state that I do not necessarily agree with this judgment; on the other hand, I think it is not possible to establish a determinist connection between facts and ideas. However, we can derive conclusions about social developments, through the study of the novels discussed in this paper, since they reveal the world of their authors, who happen to have been the actors in the new socialization process of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Some Examples from Ottoman and Turkish Stories

In the novels appearing in the Tanzimat period, we read about the nation's birth pangs of a new man, a new woman and a new family, the metaphorical dis-

[5] Cf. e. g. Mardin 1974. The works of Jale Parla, *Babalar ve Oğullar* and *Efendilik, Şarkiyatçılık ve Kölelik* can serve as other outstanding examples here.

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placement of the traditional with reflecting modern adaptations. In his *Üç Nesil Üç Hayat* (Three Generations, Three Lives), Refik Halit dynamically conveys the transformations taking place in nineteenth-century Ottoman society. In his text we find practical answers to questions regarding the evolution of traditional society, how the new institutions entered Ottoman life and their effects were. As Jale Parla emphasizes in the framework of father-son-house triangle, one finds the stories of how the son, deprived of the absolute authority of his father's guidance, drags himself and the whole house to destruction (Parla 1990). With the "wrong" and "essenceless" modernization, the son, deprived of the communal principles and the guidance of the father, is especially susceptible to its dangers. Foremost among these dangers is his female counterpart: the wrongly modernized woman. What captures one's attention here is that while a man is victimized by wrong modernization, women are presented as perpetrators. In the social practice of gender segregation, where the world of men and women remain separate, encounters between the sexes is characterized by fear, manifested as the fear of women. The partial loss of control over women and the subsequent disintegration of the absolute father's authority turned the woman into a threat within the family. In fact, in most of the important classical Ottoman texts, one finds the interference of the "taife-i nisa"[6] in palace affairs as one of the causes of the Ottoman decline. [7] In a way, being distrustful of women, as seen in the Tanzimat period, had actually been present all along. We could say that with the Tanzimat period, anxiety regarding women left the palaces and the big mansions and spread to the other layers of society. The absence of the authority of the father in the novels from the Tanzimat and the 2nd Constitutional periods is usually reflected in the absence of the father figure. Families are frequently incomplete; generally the father, but occasionally the mother is missing. The absence of the mother is indicative of the absence of the traditional woman. The girlfriends and mistresses replacing the mother are the main actors in the disintegration of the family, for the father is either a passive puppet without initiative or an irresponsible pleasure-seeker, completely unaware of his duties. Ahmet Mithat Efendi's Felatun Bey and Rakım Efendi, characters in a novel written in 1875, were constructed as the representatives of the modern and the traditional, the West and the East, respectively, and the author left no doubt that his choice was tradition. Felatun Bey was characterized by snobbery, laziness, and wastefulness; at the root of these flaws lay Felatun Bey and his father's extreme admiration for the West, otherwise known as the "passion for the European style." On the other hand, hardworking, frugal and moderate Rakım Efendi, a product of Turkish-Muslim culture (although this did not prevent him from translating French), became rich through the fruits of his own labor. What is interesting here is that

6 "Taife-i nisa" refers to women, but this term generally has a pejorative meaning.

7 Lütfi Paşa (a grand vizier of the 16th-century Kanuni period), *Asafname*, Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, Ankara, no date.

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both Rakım Efendi's father and mother were dead. His Arab nanny had raised him by working as a maid; his household also included a concubine. Family thus did not necessarily presume a blood connection; values formed the basis of family ties. Rakım Efendi created his family by clinging to thesevalues and establishing order in his house. Here one sees traces of the belief that saving the multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire from disintegration was possible by returning to the old/traditional or, at least, by maintaining the order, to avoid being transformed. In his Young Turk novel, *Jön Türk*, written in 1908, Ahmet Mithat Efendi drew the boundaries that modernization/westernization imposed upon women through his character Nurullah's description of his ideal girl: "middle-class, educated, French-speaking, musically inclined, freed of old ideas but not captivated by new ones." During the Second Constitutional period, in contrast to that of the Tanzimat, although it became accepted that the old ways were never to return, – the new remained vague and undesired.

In Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's novels *Mürebbiye* (Nanny) and *Metres* (Mistress), written in 1899, one sees the same subject matter: the disaster caused by blind admiration for the West. In both novels, the story is the disintegration of the family, caused in *Mürebbiye* by the "prostitute" Anjel, who is hired as a nanny for the sole reason that she is French, and in *Metres* by the wastefulness and spoiled manner of Parnas' sons. What gets one's attention in these novels is that the threats to the family order (whether Muslim or non-Muslim) always come from outside. While these threats may come from complete foreigners, as in the cases of Anjel and Parnas, they may also come through those who join the family later, as with Bihter in *Aşk-ı Memnu* (Forbidden Love) and Meveddet Hanım in *Kırık Hayatlar* (Broken Lives) (Uşaklıgil 1900 and 1923). By approaching his subject with empathy and a depth not seen in contemporary works, Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil legitimized the fear of modern women in a very forcible manner. Even good will could not forestall the impulses emanating from woman's nature; the new woman, a danger and threat, brought unhappiness to the family.

Appearing for the first time in the first Turkish novel, *Taaşşuk-ı Talat ve Fıtnat* (Talat's and Fıtnat's Love) (Sami 1872), the critique of the situation of women married through match-making and forced to live dependent on their husbands' will soon came to a deadlock. The search for the new family entered a deadlock crisis as a result of the ambiguity ensuing from confusion over the nature of male-female dialogue and the problem of constructing sexual identies through social roles and functions rather than on sexual relations. This crisis expresses itself in some novels as suicides of the main characters. The desire for resolution and closure results in the suicide of the man/father who lost his authority. In *Acımak* (To Feel Pity, 1928), Reşat Nuri Güntekin narrated Mürşit Efendi's powerlessness as "I was stupefied, my willpower was in a way paralyzed, I was unable to pass decisive judgment" (Güntekin 1997: 107).

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How would this man get his power back, free himself from stupefaction, the condition of paralysis, without authority? According to Namık Kemal, the solution was patriotism (Kemal 1872). Advocating the idea that harmony in the family, and thus, in society, could be secured by the authority of the father, Namık Kemal nevertheless constructed this modern father as a friend, guide and teacher. As the enlightened head of the family, the modern father could both reclaim fading traditions as well as symbolize individual and social reinvigoration, thus functioning as the founding element of modern society. Through the reconstitution of paternal authority, one would salvage rapidly disappearing values; through the sentiment of nationalism, one would better control and manage changes in the outside world.In this approach one can see clearly the parallelism between the future of the family and the future of the society. Moreover, by transforming himself into a patriot, the father would realize his new identity by rediscovering and reinterpreting his traditional military virtues. At the same time, this idea of the modern father would form a paradigm for the male role in society.

In Place of a Conclusion: The Alliance Between Patriarchy and Nationalism

Ottoman patriotism turned increasingly into ethnic nationalism after the Balkan Wars. The new nationalist ideology and the social construction of femaleness and maleness mutually influenced and reinforced each other. Since the Tanzimat period, the direct interference of nationalism – which eliminates the disturbing aspects of the modernization process by making it authentic through naturalizing it – in the female and male identities served to mitigate tension, in general terms, between Westernizers and Islamists. It did this by inventing traditions appropriate for the necessities of modern life on the one hand, and on the other hand by making nationalism permanent, internalized and regenerated in various aspects of life by letting it seep into the daily practices of life beyond its function as a political ideology.

The Independence War offered fertile ground for the consolidation and the legitimization of these new identities. As the nationalist struggle elevated masculinity by redefining it through the soldier figure, it also constructed the boundaries and purpose of the new woman by making her belong not only to the family, but to the nation. Transformed into something that belonged to the whole nation, this woman was constructed as the antithesis of the wrongly modernized cosmopolitan Ottoman woman, the artificial woman of Istanbul, who paid a lot of attention to her looks. The new woman was identified as the Anatolian woman, imagined as simple, with "impeccable chastity" – i. e. pure according to the moral laws/customs of sexual conduct – ready to sacrifice herself for her country. These women, who, as teachers and nurses, educated the nation and alleviated its pain, deserved the right to enter public life through quiet sacrifices and humble hero-

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isms. While the woman was identified with the nation, the nation was identified with the woman, and hostility toward this woman was equated with hostility toward the nation. Halide Edip's works are full of such women.[8] In *Vurun Kahpeye* the figure of Aliye, an idealistic teacher who leaves Istanbul to support the war of independence in Anatolia dramatically demonstrates that the enemies of the new woman and the nation were identical, as the reactionaries who were objecting to her work in the small Anatolian town in which she was teaching were the same men who were supporting the alliance of the palace and the occupational forces against the independence movement in Ankara.

Through nationalism, the inconsistent, ambiguous and community-divisive messages of modernization were constructed into a coherent, clear and holistic super-narrative. Although this construct seems convincing in times of war, like the nationalist struggle of Turkey, it is actually fragile and contradictory. One solution to overcome this fragility and contradiction was the construction of the myth of the continuity of family in Turkish modernization. In fact, countless papers submitted to the Family Councils that originated in the 1990s[9] aimed to homogenize the diverse messages coming from schools and mass media, intending to bring about absolute harmony. One such paper, given by Ahmet Uğur, entitled *Tarihi Seyr İçinde Türk Aile Yapısından Örnekler* (Examples from the Turkish Family Structure in the Historical Course), discusses the history of Turkish family values extending into the distant past. He defined what was to be done today as "to present to the new generation the values unique to our nation" and explained that the only way to do this is through "joining hands with the mosque, the school and especially TV and the media, securing harmony by hitting the hammer in the same place" (Uğur 1990: 11).[10] Professor Uğur's statements seem to be an extension of the traditional world into the present because they evoke the monist concept of power that was the most common and basic practice during the traditional periods of Ottoman and Turkish society. In the course of modernization, however, this practice, that is, the monist concept of politics, changed its nature from a feature inherent in the structure of traditional society to an emphatically pursued politics that may be termed faschistic to some extent.

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8 Among the many novels of Halide Edip Adıvar, especially see *Raik'in Annesi*, 1910 (The Mother of Raik) *Yeni Turan*, 1912 (*New Turan*, where "Turan" refers to an imagined Turkish country in central Asia) and *Vurun Kahpeye*, 1923 (Beat the Bitch).

9 These were official meetings organized on a regular base by the General Directorate of Family and Social Research which is under the supervision of the office of the prime minister.

10 This kind of approach is not unique to Professor Uğur. While the numerous historians and sociologists who spoke in the Family Councils (the fourth and last one met in 2004) put forward "proofs" showing how the family structure in Turkish society remained unchanged, they, on the other hand, concerned themselves with taking precautionary measures against threats that might change this structure. That the basic procedure in these meetings has not changed despite the changing governments may be taken as an indication of how dominant the "conservative modernization" line has been.

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In spite of all longings, searches and nostalgic feelings towards "union," "unity," "likeness" and "harmony," gender identities and, in relation to this, the family structures in Turkey are changing. Since this change has not fully established its own point of view and legitimization yet, there are frequent attempts to solve the problems of modernity, nostalgically, through traditionality. However, a certain aspect of this situation not unique to Turkey but generally intrinsic to the modernization practice is a topic that deserves much more thought: namely, that modernity has been unable to develop its own ethic. If the reason for and effort in developing this ethic starts from settling scores with the dominant modernization practices, the first thing to be recognized in this beginning is that patriarchy, nationalism and militarism are processes that go hand in hand, feeding on one another.[11]

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[11] For this topic in general cf. Enloe 2000; for the Turkish context cf. Altınay 2000.

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Gender Discourse in Popular Culture: The Case of Television Series in Turkey

Sevgi Uçan Çubukçu

Introduction

The 1990s were a period of rapid change in the political, economic, cultural, individual and social realms in Turkey. Various terms such as "globalization," "crisis of modernism," "postmodernism," "late-modernism" were attached to that particular period, each underlining various aspects of the same era of transformation. But it became increasingly significant to track the phenomenon of change, which is immanent to human history, with its projections in mass communication devices together with the amazing scale that technology had reached. It is possible, directly or indirectly, to follow lived experiences in other places in the world, especially through the medium of television or the products that are manufactured somewhere else. In this way, we have the opportunity to obtain data of far-away places through the transfer of other geographies', societies' or culture's products or realities. These data are also important in the context of their impact on the change of local, universal, and global cultures. In particular, devices like TV, cinema and electronic communication have both homogenizing and alienating effects.

The importance of debates on popular culture in this context is on the rise (Williams 1993: 184) because cultural studies about the private realm, everyday life or micro-relations have the function of understanding social and power relations in society. When aiming at understanding the characteristics of these social power relations, one will come to view the folkloric elements which are commonly depicted as being "peculiar to people" as rather unrefined products taking shape within the borders of this popular culture realm (Özbek 1991). The proliferation and spread of the private TV channels during the rapid changes of the 1990s that were experienced in the cultural realm carried the debates on "popular culture" to the academic platform.[1] While TV channels formerly were broadcasting mostly serials from the US or Latin American series of Brazilian or Mexican provenance, nowadays they are more likely to broadcast Turkish series.

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1 It is possible to watch these series every single day of the week. For example, the areas where the series *Asmalı Konak* is set attract huge numbers of tourists, and the traditional scarves from that region are being sold all over Turkey. Ağva, a small district, witnessed a real boom in tourism trips after *Bir Istanbul Masalı* began to be shown on TV. The number of examples might easily be augmented.

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These Turkish series were at first set in districts like Kuzguncuk, Maltepe, Samatya and Çengelköy, where traditional bonds and *hemşerilik*[2] relationships were and are more powerful, yet recent examples seem to indicate that peripheral places like Nevşehir, Urfa, Mersin, the Ege coast and Edirne are becoming more popular. What is common to all these localities or places is the nice scenery and emotionally comforting themes they provide for people who are suffering from rapid social change. The artificialness, depression, distance and alienation from the natural environment that are the outcome of modernization and urbanization carry with them an increased need for the warmth and security of traditional relationships (Fiske 1997: 32-34). The series serve both worlds, however. In this sense, they depict a world where authentic elements and all kinds of modern luxury coexist together.[3]

The aim of this study is to depict the form and extent of gender relationships; symptoms, modes of behavior, roles, identities and finally codes that are presented in and represented by these kinds of series. Then we will try to decipher the unequal and hierarchical relationships and the hegemonic language between the sexes in the period that is widely claimed to have witnessed a large process of change, breaks, dissolutions and reconciliations (Williams 1993: 22-30). Rather than scanning all TV series or analyzing one of them in detail, we have preferred to look at examples of various kinds of series that may be termed as traditional, modern, urban, local or rural. Our aim here is to assemble that amount of data that will be sufficient for us to analyze the gender roles, codes and relationships that are perpetuated in those series and to decipher the social relations both vertically and horizontally (Corner 1986: 49-52).

Firstly, by pointing out the contexts in which concepts like popular culture and gender are employed, we aim to justify our use of TV series as popular culture products in analyzing the gender roles and relationships and the reason why this particular area is important. In a second step, by taking the TV series broadcast after 2000 as a starting point, we aim to bring the general prospect of gender relationships and identities to light.

The Concept of "Gender" and "Popular Culture"

Approaches to popular culture in general can be categorized into three groups: The Frankfurt School, which denunciates popular culture (Hall 1995: 23), the culturalist approach, which affirms it (Özbek 1991: 68) and finally Gramsci's theory of "hegemony" which involves a more complex approach to its evalua-

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2 *Hemşerilik* is used in Turkey in the meaning of 'being from the same city, or town as another'.

3 In other words, it is basically class-based and cultural relationships which have no social and real counterparts in a way recalling Baudrillard. See Baudrillard 1996: 60-69.

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tion (Hall 1997: 88-96, Zoonen 1997: 301-307). The Frankfurt School takes popular culture as a part of the industrial realm created by the bourgeoisie, who consolidated its power with the rise of industrialization. Its aim, according to the Frankfurt School, is to create and spread the "capitalist values" within the logic of free market ideology.[4] Capitalists instrumentalize this realm with profit maximization motives. In contrast, the culturalist approach takes popular culture as a sign for and expression of everyday life and the majority of the people. In this view, popular culture is seen as a mirror of society, which both produces and consumes that culture itself (Özbek 1991).

According to Gramsci, who is one of the leading Marxist theorists in cultural studies, popular culture is neither a one-sided process which is definitely determined by the capitalist class and its manipulative efforts nor the realm of a perfect reflection of what is peculiar to the masses. Gramsci is moving beyond these views of strict determination and exaggerated culturalism when he argues that popular culture is a field of power and struggle. In other words, it is a "hegemonic place" where diverse social tensions collide and sometimes reconcile (Hall 1997: 88-96, Özbek 1991 81). Bourgeois capitalist ideology, then, may constitute its hegemony only to the extent that it succeeds to occupy a place within the borders of the culture and values of the opposite class. Popular culture is a realm of struggle and negotiation between conflicting classes (Hall 1999: 121).

Intermingled with inequalities in society, these cultural and ideological practices offer models and clichés by creating myths and icons. In this sense questions as to what extent these series –such as *Asmalı Konak* (Asmalı Mansion)[5], *Bir İstanbul Masalı* (An Istanbul Fairy-Tale)[6]- reflect or represent the truth are not the basic questions of this study.[7] However, because popular culture, consciously or unconsciously, reflects the society that produces it, popular culture simultaneously holds a "clue" for the society and paradoxically forms "models of roles" in a particular historical conjuncture. The aim of this study is to analyze the gender based models of roles and relationships as represented in those series that we have selected.

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4 Studies using this approach convey a detailed research on the reproduction processes, use of technology of these TV shows, series, newspapers, journals, etc. For an example, cf. Marris et al. (eds.) 1996: 60-123.

5 *Asmalı Konak* is one of the most popular Turkish TV series in the new millennium. The story is about relations of a rich and feudal family in a small town, especially the contradiction of gender roles in the different generations.

6 *Bir İstanbul Masalı* is the story of relations between a rich, modern family and a servant family. The main subject of this story is the love affairs between members of the second generations of these two families. The contradiction of social classes is another theme in this series.

7 The main concern of this study is to analyze the roles and relations by using TV series, not to question to what extent these relationships are real or not. We take these data as some "hints" for our evaluation of social reality. A more feasible method for understanding social reality would be a large and systematic sociological field survey.

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The course of feminist struggles and feminist criticism has showed us that almost all forms of social relationships and cultural products are masculine (Steeves 1999: 127). Therefore many forms of social practices in political life, history, arts and business life are masculine and gendered. That unequal reality is recognized as a historical practice without, however, defining it in absolute terms using an essentialist approach. Thus, through appropriating the practices of manhood and womanhood one can try to analyze its constitution and construction processes (Williams 1993: 188-189). As is known, the term "gender" differs from the term "sex," which defines male and femaleness. "Gender" reaches far beyond the concept of sex so that it sometimes even seems to involve a contradiction. According to this promising and innovative approach, femininity and masculinity are modes of existence that are fixed and closed to social change. Gender, on the other hand, is a socially constructed mode of existence and an identity (Acar-Savran 2004). Gender suggests that the subjugation and oppression of women, inequalities between men and women do not arise from sexual differences that are determined biologically but states that these differences are exploited by and for discriminatory practices. This criticism made possible a break with biological determinist approaches. Underlining that ultimately the qualities of both femininity and masculinity were not naturally given but socially and historically constructed categories, this approach enables us to go beyond the limitations of an abstract and absolute understanding of sex.[8]

The concept of "gender" that is the contribution of the second wave of feminist criticism provided us with a base from which we are able to deconstruct the gender divisions and oppositions in the unequal and hierarchical- patriarchal order.[9] This means that our gender roles, attitudes and conditions are determined by social practices, a realization which resulted in an increase in the definition of gender as a direct or indirect outcome of sociological practices. In addition to male and female identities, transsexuality, bisexuality, and homosexuality must also be counted as legitimate identities. The patriarchal heterosexist order which is articulated along unequal class, race, nation, religion etc. relations emerged as a contradictory totality. Resistance or deconstruction attempting to turn this discourse inside out can display the gendered system, which is essentially based on binary opposition. What enables us to realize and analyze the dual opposition and split in gender relations that are constructed through language, discourse, practice, attitude and relationships, are the deconstructive studies on both femininity and masculinity (Hall 1999: 108, Modleski 1996: 371-381). These studies make clear that the biological differences are used to generate an exclusionary

8 For a detailed discussion on sexuality and gender see Acar-Savran 2004: 233-310.

9 Thinkers like Foucault and Butler employed "deconstruction" in order to understand the multi-centered power structure of society. Judith Butler, for instance, used this method to analyze "femininity." Butler 1999.

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opposition in the gender realm through naturalizing and fixing differences. While there is a possibility to see the difference based on reproduction and fertility as a complementary difference, it has in fact to be seen as an exclusionary and oppressing difference serving to justify segregation. By the mystification of the anatomy of reproduction two aims are achieved simultaneously: reinforcing the gendered and discriminatory capitalist division of labor and situating sexuality within the borders of heterosexist hegemony.

Consequently, gender studies are at pains to demonstrate that sex, sexuality and gender are not naturally determined but socially and historically constructed identities and categories. Therefore we need to understand this construction process in detail. Moreover, conducting our research on popular culture with an adequate background and critical attitude that we may inherit from gender studies will help us to contribute to popular culture studies more productively and with analytically more convincing results. As is well known, gender relationships have their own oppressor/oppressed, exploiter/exploited dichotomies, which are expressions of extremely hierarchical and unequal relationships. Our sexual identities, roles and practices have been shaped in these structures of inequality. This process is multifaceted and self-contradictory; and it includes various elements.

Heterosexist patriarchal identities and relationships are constructed in culture, nature and history. While nature is an element that determines the limits of human conduct, labor and action form together another element that is significant in the relationship between nature and human beings. The deconstructive and transformative perspective is based on the severe criticism of the discourse of nature; in other words, these studies base themselves on praxis. To exaggerate, to deepen, to manipulate and negate the natural differences as underlying elements of inequality is seen as important techniques of deconstruction, but the intersection of class, culture, race, language, religion and familial is gender. This process consists of opposition and exclusion, which are imminent in linguistic, discursive, social and psychological structures (Laclau 1993: 100).

Using the perspective discussed above in our analysis of popular culture, which can be seen as one of the leading realms where these gender differences, inequalities, hierarchical, heterosexist, capitalist and patriarchic characteristics are represented and reproduced, will form the theoretical backbone of this paper. This is because mass communication devices like newspapers, journals and magazines, television and radio are very effectual in forming, reproducing and fixing the sexist stereotypes (Brunsdon 1997: 115).They determine the rules and dispositions by constituting models. Popular TV series set significant examples and are consumed widely. Therefore one is very likely to glean the everyday forms of femininity and masculinity in these popular TV series (Onur and Koyuncu 2004: 44).

Models of both men's and women's life styles are constructed and represented in these series, and through their collective reception the sexist culture is repro-

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duced.[10] This enables sexist control and dominance and spreads it. It is, therefore, important to depict these relationships. Hegemonic codes, motifs, relationships and attitudes are constructed and cultivated by certain processes. These codes, models and icons form a system of categories and values that determines all segments of society including women, men, and children.

Thus, taking the TV series as a starting point for looking at "gender" in popular culture will enable us to understand the construction process of gender. Different relationships that are formed in different places and localities (such as the work place, homes, streets, coffee houses, urban places and cars) all take shape within the practices of the heterosexist system. Despite the fact that the "masculine discourse" is a construct, it corresponds to a certain concrete "subject" that is shaped within power relations of reality.

Gender Identities in TV Series: "Roles" and "Relationships"

As discussed earlier, TV series are important popular culture form, and they have been an academic subject for decades. Academic interest in series has a twofold reason: first of all, these series represent a mirror of social relationships, structures, roles and models; secondly, they have a determining role in "forming and reproducing" social practices (Onur and Koyuncu 2004: 44). What makes TV series more available and more accessible to analysis than more refined cultural forms like literature or art is the technological development and the huge infrastructure it is based on (Brunsdon 1996: 389, Alayoğlu 2004: 34-35). Thanks to technological change, mass communication devices have become tremendously widespread, easily attainable and consumable on a global scale. That makes it important to understand and decipher the sexist hierarchical system through this type of TV programs.

Gender and Division of Private/Public Sphere: "Inside" and "Outside"

The division of labor according to the patriarchal and hierarchical order also reflects the class-based divisions in society.[11] It is now possible to see the sexist division of labor and all its manifestations in the public and private distinction of modernism. Wealthy women mostly do not work, and we usually glimpse them at home, in sports centers or restaurants while the women from low-income families are working either at home or in the homes of their employers. We

[10] Connell calls this "hegemonic masculinity," see Connell 2001.
[11] For detailed discussions on the concept of "public sphere", see Özbek 2004.

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mostly see them working in the kitchen preparing food or cleaning the house. Women who have to have a job in order to earn a living have to work "inside" rather than "outside." Wealthy men, on the other hand, are either at work in a company, riding in their car, or sitting at a bar. Sometimes we see them eating food at home, watching TV or reading the paper. Men are like guests in their homes but like homeowners at work. Class differences do not generate much of a problem for men in defining the "inside" and "outside." Working class men, on the other hand, work as drivers or night guards, but their position at home is not different from that of wealthy men. They too watch TV and eat, but it is clearly observable that they do not see themselves too closely connected to their "homes," which are a place for men to rest (Kuhn 1997: 143-154).

Almost all series depict a peculiar relationship between servant and house owner that recalls Hegelian master slave dialectics, and this relationship is mostly characterized as reciprocal respect and affection based on reconciliation. *Asmalı Konak*, *Bir İstanbul Masalı*, *Zerda*,[12] *Haziran Gecesi* (A Night in June)[13] and other similar series promote a message of reconciliation as if there were no gender-based inequality nor class conflict in public or private spaces.

Upper-class women do not work, and their chief obligation is to regulate and control the private space, in other words the "inside." On the one hand the upper-class woman decides the menu and organizes the house work, and on the other hand she takes care of the children and their education; and last -but not least- she participates in certain "philanthropic" activities. Upper-class men are mostly represented as successful business men. This casting clearly supports the idea of gender-based public/private distinction and reproduces the capitalist patriarchal view of women's place in society: she belongs to the private, definitely not to the public sphere. In addition to that sexist division of labor which puts women in a passive role while it posits men in an active one, we can clearly observe a dichotomy between an aggressive and violent discourse connected with men and an emotional, kind and peaceful discourse connected with women. These discursive dichotomies, easily visible in almost all the series, reinforce and reproduce unequal gender-based social positions.

The limits of female sexuality are all determined and decided by men. Seduced and tempted men juxtaposed with sexually repressed women lead us to imagine a kind of women who have no sexuality.[14] The same dichotomy also di-

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12 *Zerda* is the story of a large, traditional, rich and feudal family from East Anatolia in Turkey. The main story revolves around the struggle of a young educated woman - Zerda - against the traditional gender roles and conservative rules in rural areas.

13 *Haziran Gecesi* is another Turkish series set in the year 2000 and after. Again the story of this series is a big rich family in a big city. The main subject is the contradictions of gender roles in this family.

14 In Aliye, for example, the star of the serial is a woman who is betrayed by her husband and who is cheating at the same time. She is in love with another man but cannot express her sexuality freely. See, Arslan, A. and Okay M. 2006: 16.

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rects us to imagine men as sexually free subjects who cheat regularly and have a life based on sexual pleasure.

Discourse of Reconciliation: "Romantic and Sublime Love"

In spite of dissimilar class-based contents, sexist hierarchical order functions in similar ways with some minor differences. The idea of public/private or inside/outside roles is founded on the same constructive bases. At this particular point the discourse of romantic love is created in order to provide reconciliation and inter-transition between the wealthy family (it might be traditional or modern, feudal or bourgeois) and the people who serve them (Ryan and Kellner 1997: 236). The capitalist patriarchal system softens this sexist masculine discourse (actually makes it seem nonexistent) and reproduces it.[15] A reflection of the continuity and fixation in above-mentioned roles and identities in real life can also be gained from public surveys. For instance, various responses of male viewers concerning characteristics of Seymen Ağa show how they construct masculinity and its typical features: "Seymen Ağa is an exceptionally successful businessman. He has a victorious commercial career and he acts in coordination with his mind rather than his emotions" or "I would like to be a successful and noble employer and businessman like Seymen Ağa."[16] Underlined features are success and reason rather than emotions. Women viewers on the other hand focus on Bahar's magnificent love with Seymen: femininity and "sentimentality," which are strictly attached to each other. Bahar is a well-off person educated in America and interested in "painting," a passionate art form. To live for "marriage" and "to be married" are the core characteristics of Bahar, and she does it for her love; she can easily dispense of her career and her place in the external world.

Excluded "Other Woman"

Focal points of masculinity and femininity in TV series direct us to this general tableau: Women live a home-centered life mostly with their children. This is valid for all women from all segments of society including the wealthy and the poor, the educated and the non-educated. Taking good care of one's children

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15 The sexist mentality, women's inferior role and inequalities in casting can clearly be observed in all kinds of series, independent of their form and content. In both *Asmalı Konak*, which is about traditional values and filmed in feudal settings, and *Bir Istanbul Masalı*, which is set in the "modern" world and filmed in a metropolis, characters like Behiye Hanım and Sümbül Hanım may deceive us into thinking that they are ultimate decision makers. One is represented in a bourgeois setting, the other in a feudal setting, but both of them are the only old women of their houses.

16 Demolho et al. 2005. In addition cf. http://www.tempodergisi.com.tr/eglence/tv/00837.

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and being a good wife are depicted as more valuable than being a successful business woman. This sterile dichotomy locates women at home (cooking, taking care of children, serving the food, etc.) and men in the public space (driving, going to coffee houses or bars, and finally working in their work place). In other words, women are inside while men are outside. In this way, the public space/private space distinction of modernity is reproduced and reinforced on a sexist level.[17] However, some examples of women who exist in the public space as professionals and educated individuals are also presented. These are women who have managed to exceed the private realm and to gain a certain place in the public sphere.[18] Yet these are "bad natured" "problematic," "ambitious," "loveless" women who generally do not have healthy relationships and partners in their lives. They have a desperate "will to power" and they are presented as "unhappy," "dissatisfied and mostly "ugly" (İmamoğlu 1996). They are unmarried women (they could not marry indeed) who fall in love with their bosses and destroy happy marriages. They are "demanding women" (Arslan 2004: 11). Şahika in *Bir İstanbul Masalı* for instance, is a successful business woman, but at the same time she is a spy and she also destroys people's marriages; she devotes herself to her job since she is by definition an unhappy person. She has succeeded in constructing a public identity for herself in some way, and she has reached a successful point in her career. But her inner conflicts, contradictions and competitions do not take place in the public space but in the private space of her boss and his life. She is defined with respect to the "real woman" at home, the wife of her boss.

Another example of the "other woman" cliché is the mother-in-law. *Asmalı Konak*, *Aliye* (female name), *Bir İstanbul Masalı, Zerda, Haziran Gecesi,* all these series feature unhappy and dissatisfied mothers-in-law who engage in constant competition with their sons' wives. Sexist patriarchy constantly underlines the inner competition between women and demonstrates this as the only struggle in the realm of women. Women cannot share men but have to vie for their glorification, while, ironically, they are represented as victims of this competition. This prevents us from seeing the responsibility and role of men in this so-called competition. These roles make it impossible to track and to question the masculine codes within sexist ideology and cultural social practices. These models and relationships prevent us from seeing the hegemonic position of masculinity and conceal masculine power (Onur and Koyuncu 2004, Cengiz 2004: 50-71).

To sum up, we can argue that the male discourse conceals the hegemonic masculine codes and, in addition, that it depicts femaleness and femininity in a

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17 The slogans of the second wave of feminism "private is political" and "we have the streets" are direct challenges to the divisionary structure of the patriarchical system.

18 This woman makes us think and ask this question: "How was she able to find a job?" Occasionally we think "There must be something wrong with her." Moreover, mostly these women provide an element of color as the main subject is the male characters.

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specifically exaggerated and distorted way thus reproducing and reinforcing the multi-layered heterosexist perspective. In addition to that, this discourse puts forth the following assumptions:

a) A successful woman, be it in the public or in the private realm, is a bad woman. She lacks certain morals and she is problematic. Her definite place is in her marital "home," the home of her husband; she is attached to nature and unable to experience her bodily desires and fertility.
b) The conflict among women is essential, not the conflict between men and women. Women's struggle among themselves is about men, men are the reference point and women have no particular identity or their own individuality.[19]

Militant Sexist Roles

Traditional masculine and feminine roles and sexual identities are strictly and in an exaggerated way underlined by these TV series (Uçan-Çubukçu 2005). We encounter men with guns, and masculine violence in almost all kinds of series.[20] On the one hand masculine and feminine identities are exaggerated and conveyed in extreme ways; on the other hand, marginal identities like bisexuality, homosexuality or transsexuality are completely concealed. These exaggerated roles –e. g. *Kurtlar Vadisi* (The Vally of the Wolves)[21]– exaggerates the male status, *Melekler Adası* (Islands of Angles)[22] exaggerates the female status) do not have real, actual counterparts in society. These exaggerated and extreme representations of sexual roles and identities are signs of fundamental breaks (Onur and Koyuncu 2004, Cengiz et al. 2004). What lies beneath this exaggeration is a subtext that implies the crisis of sexual and gender identities. With reference to Gramsci and his concept of hegemony (Hall 1997: 88-96, Gans 1999: 55-59), we can argue that these harsh and extreme representations of sexual identities (espe-

19 For the dichotomies between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law like Ayşe Melek and Bahar, Behiye Hanım and Zerda, etc. see Danışmend 2005: 3.

20 Marginal sexualities are only depicted with humiliation and as unusual figures of entertainment. They are generally excluded, and even when included, we see them marginalized within the heterosexist way of understanding. In addition all these series, *Kurtlar Vadisi, Asmalı Konak, Zerda, Melekler Adası,* etc., underline the male, father, husband in a very strict and ironic way. *Asmalı Konak* also emphasizes exaggerated forms of masculinity and femininity. (Aliye is another extreme. Her motherhood is exasperated and her sexuality is degraded). See Özcan 2006.

21 The story of *Kurtlar Vadisi* is the dirty, illegal and scandalous relations between the state, mafia and politicians in Turkey. The masculine roles, violence and power are sublimated in this serie.

22 The subject of *Melekler Adası* is the complicated relations between men and women; these are played out in love affairs, crime, murder, and so on. The women's characters in this series are not so real; because the women are always characterized as having psychological problems and devilish personalities. In contrast, the men in this series are characterized as ordinary and good people.

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cially the role of masculinity) are open to severe discussions and quarrels; in other words, this sharpness reflects the hegemonic struggle.

One of the main tools of this fixation process is "violence." Violence of men against men and women, as well as war among men are used to affirm masculinity and intersexual power relations. [23] "Defeated men," "excluded women" and "women subjected to violence," these themes are taken as bases for hegemonic reproduction (Hall 1999:121). Affirmation and legitimacy are endowed through television series.[24] Dying, killing, depression, paranoia, jealousy, crime, obsession, despotism, rapist features, codes, stereotypes and attitudes are all embodied in male characters (Somay 2004: 18).

Hegemonic masculinity, which is constructed within homo-social structures such as the military, sports, finance and the police force, is normalized as the plural male perspective within the real practices of everyday life. Even more important is the legitimation of the realm of competition. Here, we can talk about exclusion and inclusion as two separate but interconnected layered processes of the exclusion of women and the hierarchical relationships between men.[25] Beyond physical, emotional and psychological violence, we observe one more realm of violence against women: the economic realm. Women in the public sphere are usually represented as servants, cooks, childcare providers, secretaries, teachers or family planning counselors. These are low income jobs which are easy to give up.[26] Thus, the secondary and inferior role that is attributed to women is once again reproduced in the negotiation processes of this sphere. Weberian "ideal types" of man and woman are thus becoming separate clichés with different class belongings.

Comparable forms of relationships can also be observed in the "use of place." Representations of places (like neighborhoods, houses, cars, companies, courtyards, coffeehouses, bars, restaurants, etc.) and the physical presence of man and woman (Ayata 2002: 37-56) and their agency in those places shape and institutionalize the patriarchal forms of relationships (Onur and Koyuncu: 31-50). What do the men do and what don't they do at home? Or, what do the women do and what don't they do? If we look for answers to these questions, we find the following: men watch TV, read newspaper, sleep, eat and chat; women, on the other hand, clean, cook, prepare the meals and wash the dishes, etc.

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23 Mafia series like *Kurtlar Vadisi* provide the leading examples. See Koçak 2005.

24 Hooligan culture in real life, for instance.

25 According to Anthony Giddens, breaks in modernity would have the severest and most radical effects on gender roles. "Masculinity" is seen as the victim of modernization. The reasons for this are that women have gotten their right for representation in public after their long-term struggles, and the advantage that technology provides women. Although masculinity is in crisis, people still internalize the codes in the cultural realm and structure. See Giddens 2004: 11-16.

26 Esma and her elder sister in *Bir Istanbul Masalı* teach courses free of charge despite the fact that they are both university graduates and have jobs.

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Series like *Bir İstanbul Masalı, Zerda,* and *Asmalı Konak* tell the tales of modern urban or rural feudal forms of relationships.[27] Although some kinds of relationships change over time, they continue in a form of sameness. For instance, in both contexts the housewives deal with the pedagogical education of their children (Acar-Savran 2004). When we look at the households and ask to what extent the man stays at home, we meet the same panoramas over and over again: the man appears either at breakfast, or while watching TV or in the bedroom. When we look at the homes and ask to what extent the woman stays at home, we notice another particular set of panoramas: the woman appears to be at home almost every hour of the day while doing the housework. In contrast, men instrumentalize their home for their peculiar needs. With this objectification, man dominates the private realm – inside – with the power he gets from the public realm. As discussed above, by regulating the household in general and the woman's body, identity and attitudes in particular, modernism conceals man's existence and makes it invisible and, therefore, makes us believe it is constant. At the same time, imprisoning women at home defines household as natural and trivial. The man controls, looks and watches (in a sense like a guest in his home) while the woman irons, washes and cooks. The upper class woman on the other hand deals with the education of her children and the organization of the servants at home. In the public realm rich women engage in philanthropic activities which are not part of the production process. In addition, women, not men, are the subjects of the subjects related to house and housework.

Yet we can still give examples of some breaks in the conditions of masculinity and femininity. For instance, we can assert that the typology of the tough man (*taş fırın erkeği*) in *En Son Babalar Duyar* (The Fathers Learn of it Last)[28] started a discussion on the limits of masculinity. Although the traditional place of mother and father is still the same in this particular instance, the ironic depiction of a harsh and seemingly despotic father makes the series different. But it would go too far if we took this example as the expression of a critical evaluation of masculine dominance; rather it represents and reproduces the same uncritical division of space at home (Ayata 2002: 37-56). The *taş fırın erkeği*-father is a caricaturized man, who obeys his wife completely. The henpecked man and father of the house is the ironic character of this series. Unlike other models, these models and roles are examples of construction of masculinity in the private realm (Öncü 2002: 183-200).

Another prominent device that is used to reproduce the masculine discourse is the "language" itself (Hall 1999: 108). While tough and despotic men generally use a more violent language (both in form and content), women use more mod-

[27] They essentially fix the lived experiences that modernity is unable to overcome or has exactly inherited.

[28] *En Son Babalar Duyar* is a story of a typical middle class family relations. Even though the father is characterized as a masculine role, the family relations are not so male-dominated.

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erate language. Women in general speak about their children, health problems, nature, etc. while men speak about their problems at work. Their hard, rational and logical language is attached to masculinity and imagined as male language. Of course, the extent of this generalization varies according to class positions, yet we can still assert a certain classification.

In other words, the way language is used here is a construction of active men as opposed to passive women. Aggressiveness, violence, carnal pleasures (especially in the context of husbands cheating on their wives), rationality, physical occupation, desire, lust are all characteristics that posit men in an active situation. On the other hand, compassion, slowness, softness, emotional sensitivity, romanticism, etc. are features that are attached to passive women.

Heterosexist Hegemony: "Invisibility of Homosexuals'

What is most striking in these series is the coexistence of "invisibility" and the "exaggerated" role of homosexuals within heterosexist-patriarchal language. We only come across exaggerations and travesties of their lives; but we never see homosexual identities outside shows and entertainment programs.[29] Zekeriya's sudden death in *Bir İstanbul Masalı* precisely at the time when the audience learns about his homosexuality is not a simple coincidence. Viewers who did not see that particular episode had no chance to understand that Zekeriya was a homosexual.[30] Series fix women in the private realm as "lacking individuals;" men on the other hand, are fixed in the public sphere with all their good or bad sides. Another reading is also possible: there are male homosexuals in this scene (whereas transvestites, bisexuals, transsexuals are excluded), but they actually do not exist. Moreover male homosexuality is used to insult people and is generally depicted as a corrupted, effeminate form of masculinity. In *Avrupa Yakası* (The European Side)[31], which tells humorous stories of modern and western people, has a similar view of homosexuality: it is just a theme of mockery.[32] The so-called

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29 *Kurtlar Vadisi*, where hegemonic masculinity is reproduced through all kinds of violent activities; *Melekler Adası*, where the victimization of women is also exaggerated; and finally *Bir Istanbul Masalı*, where heterosexist love affinities are constructed with the help of class negotiations. All these reflect dissimilar aspects of the same dominant discourse.

30 Mehmet Bilal, the scriptwriter of *Aliye*, told me that he stopped showing the homosexual identity of Zekeriya after some objections from both TV administration and viewers. Uçan-Çubukçu, Sevgi, Mehmet Bilal'le görüşme, 25 Şubat 2005, Istanbul.

31 *AvrupaYakası* is a typical example of a sitcom on Turkish TV.

32 Ally Mc Beal is also about well-educated, working, middle class young people, but there is no limitation on displaying different sexual identities. Problems, conflicts, negotiations that those existences derive are not only a matter of discussion on an emotional or psychological level but also on a legal level where norms are constantly re-questioned. For an

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representative of the western face of Turkey, i.e. *Avrupa Yakası*, at least talks about homosexuality; other series about rural Turkey and the feudal relationships in underdeveloped parts of the country (*Asmalı Konak, Zerda, Haziran Gecesi*) pay no attention at all to homosexual identities.

Consequently, there is no place for homosexual identity in these series. Of course, it is possible to track the traces of these identities in other art forms that are essentially based on individual production like literature or cinema (Somay 2004: 18). This kind of cultural products may enable us to follow the traces of repressed dimensions of our sub-conscious or collective unconscious. But heterosexist patriarchal models, roles, norms and practices are realized as forms of inner contradictions even in these rare and valuable examples (Probyn 1997: 137). Moreover, there are no challenging views put forth against heterosexist patriarchy. Furthermore the homosexual does not exist as a "concrete person" as the collective unconscious is afraid of homosexuals as it is afraid of the concrete and full existence of women.

Conclusion: "Negotiation Realm'

We have tried to portray the increasing effect of TV series on popular culture in forming gender stereotypes and reproduction of heterosexist inequalities. Unlike art and literature, TV series have a high tech advantage and thereby are accessible to large portions of society. Looking at TV series from the perspective of power relations enabled us to see encounters, conflicts and most importantly negotiation realms, and this in turn allows us to make visible repressed codes, veiled identities and relationships.

As a result, TV series that we can watch every day realize the militant sexual identities with exaggerations, repressions, insults, ignorance and exclusion. Of course, another reading of the Turkish adventure of modernization, which is based on sexist, patriarchal and capitalist relationships, is also possible, and we may argue that what we encounter is the result of a "legitimation crisis." That is why I take these TV series as places of hegemonic struggle and negotiation, which I believe is crucial in such a context.

As for the crisis, it has, I think, some basic causes: It is essentially connected with the overall crisis of modernity; however, one might add the fact that the actual presence of women in the public realm, however limited, and the second wave of feminist criticism have not been without effect.

The masculine discourse that we tried to make explicit by examining TV series shows us that there are some breaks in hegemonic masculinity and its social

even more extreme example, one can look at *Angels in America* and more sophisticated forms of relationships and sexual identities.

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practices in Turkey. The threat that these carry appears on the level of sexual identities and practices and also as exaggeration/repression mechanisms. The place that gender roles occupy in TV series both constructs the hierarchical structure based on social oppression and violence and provides us with an enormous amount of data to depict the contradictory whole of social conflicts and reconciliations.

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Bridal Laments in the Turkic World: A Casualty of Modernity?

Arienne M. Dwyer

The Way In

Public demonstrations of grief and dissatisfaction are strongly circumscribed in many contemporary societies. Even though formerly private matters such as sexual transgressions have become a staple of public news, discussions of death or public displays of deep sorrow remain largely socially taboo. At the same time, the repertoire of symbolic practices for familial discord and death –as opposed to spontaneous outbursts of emotion in these contexts– have become ever more limited. The suppression of ritual lamenting can be viewed as a casualty of the reflexivity of the modernity of nation-states: laments are perceived as old-fashioned, even backwards.

Far from being solely a Western malady, in Central Eurasia we also find that reflexive perceptions of modernity suppress laments and other symbolic practices. These perceptions are promulgated both by governments and individuals. During the socialist periods in Central Asia and Western China (1920s–1990s and 1949–present, respectively), governments condemned laments and other oral arts as "feudal"; after several decades of suppression, individual citizens developed an ambivalence towards these practices. Some were fully abandoned, some were practiced secretly. Visiting some Salars of northern Tibet in early 1990s, for example, I sought out people who had experienced or performed these communicative arts in their youth. On the one hand, they had a nostalgia for these perceived keys to their collective heritage; on the other hand, they also partially rejected them, having had also assimilated the notion promulgated by the PRC government since the 1950s that these practices were associated with backwardness (*luo huo*) and premodernity. In both the former Soviet sphere and the Sinosphere,[1] various degrees of ambivalence towards such "traditional" oral arts can be observed in people old enough to remember them. Individuals were also sensitive to trans-regional and global media, which portrayed oral chants and canonical songs as part of the past, while sometimes incorporating their melodies into modern popular music.

This reappropriation of oral art forms is part of a larger trend of growing reflexivity towards cultural heritage, which is appropriated for ethnonationalist, nation-state, and other ideologies. In much of the Turkic world, be it in Turkey, the

[1] The term, originally describing a linguistic and cultural area of Chinese influence, is from Matisoff (1990).

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former Soviet realm, or western China, long-suppressed and nearly moribund oral arts are partly being resuscitated to serve these new agendas. Certain iconic orally transmitted art forms, such as the epic Manas in Kyrgyzstan, the Dede Korkut stories in Turkey, and overtone singing in Tuva are revived, standardized, and promulgated in order to bolster new modern-yet-traditional national identities in these regions.

Laments, however, do not lend themselves well to such reappropriation and nationalist discourses: they are too personal and too somber. They are therefore nearly extinct in many Turkic areas. Since ritual laments are no longer integrated into e.g. weddings and funerals, the only means of getting access to them is by interviewing lament "rememberers." This study stems from my visits during 1992 and 1993 to the Turkic Salars in northern Tibet in search of oral art forms. My interest in the social uses of Turkic laments stems from a chance meeting in May 1992 with an elderly woman, who volunteered to perform as much of her own bridal lament as she could remember. I was to record only one other Salar lament, also re-created by the performer out of context, but these moving encounters led to an interest in characterizing the discourse and social functions of Salar and, more broadly, Turkic laments.

A Typology of Laments

Laments are a stylized expression of grief. Symbolically, the lament represents a "transition to another state or world" and with it, "the possibility of symbolic renewal" (Porter 2005). A lament may be sung, chanted or spoken; in a given culture it has a particular textual and possibly also musical structure.

Though not all societies have laments, a universal characteristic of laments is that they are associated with a ritual leave-taking. Most commonly, laments are performed during funerals and weddings, taking leave of the deceased and the natal home, respectively. Other laments precede literal departures, e.g. a mother's lament as her son goes to battle. All of these express grief about a departure, be it from a home or from this world.

Laments are most often performed by women. Given that men are also physically and cognitively capable of stylized oral grief, scholars have hypothesized causes for the gender bias in lament performance. In a number of cultures, the public display of emotion is primarily or even exclusively licensed to women. In much of Europe and North America, for example, women are licensed to be the primary conduits of public grief displays, while the display of grieving in men is socially circumscribed, except under certain limited circumstances. In eastern China, laments may well serve a social protest function within a society where other societal rituals are presided over by men. Watson (2000) considers Chinese laments to be an important platform for women to voice their opinions and power. In other contexts, they may serve simply as an expressive genre.

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Another significant dimension to laments is how they reflect and reinforce local belief systems. Symbolically, laments may function to communicate with a spirit world. They often have a magical function, and are frequently associated with the exorcism of inauspicious spirits or evil. In so doing, performers of laments may neutralize negative forces and, like trance mediums, effect a transition to and from the spirit world.

Laments differ in style and structure around the world. Though instrumental accompaniment may be present, *a capella* vocalization is the primary vehicle. Recitation and stylized crying are generally involved, which may or may not involve the activation of tear ducts. Recitation may be of preexisting texts or partially or wholly improvised, but there is generally an established discourse structure to laments.

Socially, laments differ from spontaneous individual expressions of sadness, mourning, disappointment, and frustration in that the grievances expressed in laments are collective and formulaic in their rhetorical persuasion (McLaren & Chen 2000: 209). Women are the primary performers, and the laments themselves are most often transmitted intergenerationally by older to younger women, who may even be present while laments are being performed by younger women. Such female apprenticeships are also the rule for the transmission of certain song forms (e.g. the Chinese *hua'er* dialogic song forms, see Dwyer 2007). Typically bridal laments are memorized from older village women in local girls' houses, and can be improvised to some extent.

Structurally, laments can be spoken, sung or chanted; they can incorporate gestures; and some degree of improvisation and creativity is permitted, even accepted. Laments possess set musical and discourse structures that are distinct from everyday discourse. Vocalization may include techniques that significantly alter or mask the normal vocal timbre to signify the performative space or communication with spirits; this vocal *Verfremdung* can be similar to that practiced by trance mediums. Lament "texts" are generally specified for mode (chanted, sung, spoken), rhythm, rhyming, alliteration, and coherence; some may also be specified for line length. These fundamental structures, their melodies, and key phrases are memorized from older women and previous weddings or funerals but a degree of improvisation is also expected (cf. Feld 1990). During the performance of a lamentation, there may or may not be significant audience interaction, but no lament occurs without an audience. Their topics can be "boisterous and histrionic, but do not threaten major male concerns" (Johnson 1988: 157).

Thematically, all laments focus on a transition: from girl to woman and bride, and in the case of funeral laments, from life to death and/or the afterlife.

> The rituals of marriage transform the unmarried into the married, boys into men, girls into women, and daughters into wives (...). Elderly women from both the bride's and the groom's village preside over these transformations. It is their job to empty the bride-daughter and reconstruct her as a fertile wife (Watson 1996: 107).

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Laments may even function as magic to exorcize evil spirits; in the Chinese context, weddings most typically are held during the late-January early February new year's festivities, when there are a host of other ritual exorcisms associated with driving away evil from the previous year (McClaren & Chen 2000: 210).

There is a good deal of persuasive rhetoric involved to assure the best possible outcome: a good marriage and continued close relations with the natal family (and, in funerals, an auspicious and smooth departure of the deceased). As such, laments contain a mixture of invocations of good fortune and curses and quasi-narratives. While many funeral or bridal laments contain similar thematic elements, local knowledge determines which are fixed and obligatory, and which are variable and optional. We will focus our attention on bridal laments.

Bridal laments at the intersection of cultures: some examples

Bridal laments are a common feature of Turkic, Sinitic, and some Tibeto-Burman and surrounding peoples, as well as Russians, Finns, Bangladeshis, Romanians, Kalulis, to name some of the more famously-studied examples. Wedding and funeral laments are absent in the region among the Khalkha Mongols[2] and in most modern societies, at least among their dominant groups. It may well be more productive to view laments as regional symbolic acts rather than being exclusively associated with a particular ethnic group or even ethnolinguistic family.

We cannot speak of specifically *Turkic* laments expressing particular ethnic identities. Much of Central Eurasia has eight-syllable line laments in a typical octosyllabic line, that is, an alternating five-line/three-line pattern. This structure is apparently of Kipchak origin, but spread to Russians, Bashkirs, and other groups. A similar rhythm is even found in Hungarian and Romanian wedding songs and Georgian laments, probably from the Kipchak influence in 12th century Georgia (Porter 2005). In northern Tibet, the Salars reside at the intersection of Turkic, Sinitic, and Bodic (Tibetic) cultural areas. The practices of the first two ethnolinguistic complexes are by far the most influential.

In China, bridal laments (哭家, lit. 'cry-home;' *kujia* in Mandarin, *kuga* in Cantonese) and funeral laments (哭丧, lit. 'cry-funeral' *kusang*) were very common but are now endangered, especially in the urban areas of eastern China. Bridal laments, for example, apparently disappeared in Hong Kong in the 1960s (Watson 1996: 108), yet are still widely practiced in rural areas.

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2 The absence of bride-crying is as significant as its presence. Though bridal laments are or at least were common among the peripheral Mongol groups such as the Monguors, the central Khalkha have no such practices. Songs are exchanged, but no one laments. In the Mongol world, Pegg (2001: 195, citing Sampildendev 1990: 20) notes that "[i]n *üzemchin* weddings, the bride's father performed wish-prayers to advise his daughter on how to conduct herself in her new life. Both the bride and her mother grieved."

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The apparent paradox in hypothesizing that these are also, if not primarily, regional rather than purely ethnic symbolic practices is that participants see these as expressions of language and ethnicity, closely tied to belief systems–as contributing to the definition and re-definition of ethnic identity. But regional commonalities and emically viewed local or ethnic differences are simply two aspects of the negotiation of ethnolinguistic identity, whether overtly viewed as such or not. Just as linguistic features and language groups may be productively analyzed via common inherited ("genetic") features from the language family, as well as by areal features (shared with neighboring languages), so can laments be assessed according to either ethnicity or area. That is, both an areal and a family-specific approach (in this case, Turkic) are useful.

What is common to Turkic laments (but also Chinese and those of other groups) is the absence of musical accompaniment: laments are usually sung or chanted a capella. In contrast, eastwards of the Turkic world in Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Korea, and Japan, instrumental accompaniment plays a large role in for example funeral laments.

Taking the example of *a capella* Kazakh laments or 'weeping songs' *sïngsïma* (< *sïngsï-* 'to cry'), together *köris ajtïw* 'songs of sorrow,' these constitute a series of songs sung by the bride immediately before her departure from her home village, the *awïl*.[3] She sings to her relatives (especially to her father, brother, and sister-in-law) and to the threshold of her natal home ("do not let me get away"). If we first examine the themes of such bridal laments (here a wedding lament *köris* in an English translation by Halik et al 1998: 113-121), the bride's regret at leaving the natal home is palpable:

On me I wear a white skirt,
My folks are sending me away.
The place I go to is far, far away,
Oh, I will remember you with longing.
(...)
There are twins in the sheep herd,
the ends of rivers are in the ocean.
My *awïl*, you will no longer call me Girl,
From now on you will say, 'the young wife is coming'

She recognizes and does not relish her changing role to that of a woman, and she expects to be homesick and lonely in the groom's home, which is typically in another village:

How hard-hearted you all are!
(...)
How can I endure all the bright days?
How can I endure the nights?

[3] The Kazakhs also have funeral laments, *zhoktau*.

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While I am in such a strange place
Deep sorrows accompany me from daybreak until night.

After singing these laments in her natal home, she then mounts a horse and with her dowry she travels to the groom's house for the wedding ceremony and celebration.

The chronology of the Kazakh wedding ceremony–including the public display of anguish by the bride–is typical for not only Turkic but other laments in the region, such as Chinese laments. These mark a rite of passage, even an exorcism of the girl that once was. These laments also serve to indirectly honor the bride's family with her words. I was told both at Kazakh weddings (in 1992) and by Salar consultants during the same year that the bride and her family would be judged by her "skill": her faithfulness to the common themes of bridal laments, her depth of expression, and her creativity in innovative variation of these themes.

An Inner Asian lament, both Turkic and Sinitic: the Salar sagheshi

The Salar *sagheshi* [saʁəɕi] wedding lament survived only until the 1930s and 1940s. Therefore only the oldest women remember its words, melody, and archaic language. Salar weddings are usually held in the winter, when food is readily available and work is minimal, and those people who have left the village for secondary work have returned. On the wedding day, there are two centers of activity: the bride's house and the groom's house.

Although all the public-realm ceremonial activity–the actual marriage ceremony–occurs at the groom's house, the bride-crying occurs at the bride's house. The Salars separate public and private-realm activities sharply, and not surprisingly, the bride's taking leave of her natal family and mourning the departure are confined to the bride's house. Women used to crowd into the house to see older women dress her up and watch her cry and sing laments.

The bride learns *sagheshi* a month or so before the wedding from her older female relatives: grandmothers (often the paternal grandmother) and aunts. The song first praises those woman who are helping the bride get dressed up, then praises concerned relatives, and then bemoans her early marriage, the primacy of men, the downside of arranged marriages. This subtly denounces those present. However, the *sagheshi* finishes with the hope that everyone will wish her well in her new life.

The etymology of the Salar word, which is a different but related etymon from that of the Kazakhs, seems to be related to *sïgït* 'weeping, lamentation.' Clauson (1972: 806) claims this possibly onomatopoetic form "survives only (?) in NE Koib., Sag, Tel, Khak. ...Xak. Kash. id., Kom." A more promising form phonologically is *sağdïç*, a denominal noun from *sa:ğ-* ' sound, healthy, right,' which

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only occurs in Oghuz. Clauson (id.) states that this form "survives only(?) in Southwestern Turkic, e.g. Azeri *saghdiš*, osm. *saghdic* 'a bridegroom's best man, bride's attendant.'"

Text analysis

Below is a lament that I recorded in 1992 from an elderly "rememberer" in Mengda, Xunhua county, Qinghai province. The "exoticizing" features that suggest that this performance is not of the everyday realm: there is preaspiration before every word (e.g. *ʰajaʁ*, *ʰini*, and so on), and nasalization of many words (*el* > *ʰaˀiŋ*). These "strange" features delineate the supernatural realm from the everyday one, and are reminiscent of the performances of trance mediums. They also indicate the power of the performer through her connection with the spirits.

Note on the transcription: The first lines are *phonetic transcription* in the International Phonetic Alphabet; second lines are *phonemic transcriptions* in a practical orthography based on Chinese *pinyin*. In the latter, N.B. x=[ɕ], [ʂ] (ś, š, ş); q=[ʧ], [tʂ] (č); j=[ʤ] [dʑ] (c, ĵ). The third lines are part-of-speech annotation.[4] A free translation into English follows.

The octet pattern of other Central Asian laments is absent; the stanzas are generally five lines:

I.

1.	ʰn̩	saʁəɕi	jo	—	ʰajaʁ	ɢalʁan	—		
		Saghɨxi	yo!		Ayagh	galghan.			
		lament	EXCL		foot	remain-PERF.EXP			
2.	ʰini	ʰidʑilirim		—	ʰini	ʰawalirim	—		
	Iyinighi	ijälirim,			iyinighi	abalirim:			
	self-GEN	mother-HON-POS1			self-GEN	father-HON-POS1			
3.	ʰa	miɲi	paɕiːma	—	ʰaˀiŋ	qojʁufuʤi	—		
		Mini	bashima		el	koyghufuji			
		my-GEN	head-3POS-DAT		hand	lay-PURP-PERF.DEF			
4.	ʰaːʤi	poʁdaːʁɨ	—	ʰaba	laji muːʂtʰɨ	—			
	Aji	boghdaghi		aba	layi mushti				
	grandmother	neck-3POS		grandfather	??				

[4] Abbreviations used in this text are the following: DAT dative, EXCL exclamation, EXP experiential, GEN genitive, HON honorific, HORT hortative, PERF perfective, POS possessive, PURP purposive, 1,2,3 first, second, third person, respectively.

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5. ʰaχor aʁuɹː — xɛ gɨji jo —
Ahur aghur xay gi yo
now daughter shoe wear HORT

II.

6. ɳ saʁəɕi jo — ʰajaʁ ɢalʁan —
Saghɨxi yo! Ayagh galghan
lament EXCL foot remain-PERF.EXP

7. ʰini ʰidʑilirim — ʰini ʰawalirim —
Iyinighi ijälirim, i[yi]ni[ghi] abalirim:
self-GEN mother-HON-POS1 self-GEN father-HON-POS1

8. ʰa miɲi paɕima — ʰaʔin qojʁufudʑɨ —
Mini bashima el koyghufuji
my-GEN head-3POS-DAT hand lay-PURP-PERF.DEF

9. ʰaʔ aʁəzɨ ˌidʑaː dzʲiu —
Aghizi ija jiu
mouth mother EXCL

10. ʰaʔa ɕia pɨːɹ — xajɨ kʰi jo —
cia bir xaj ki yo
one shoe wear HORT

III.

11. ʰɳ saʁəɕiː jo — ʰaja ʁalʁan —
Saghɨxi yo! Ayagh galghan.
lament foot remain-PERF.EXP

12. ʰini ʰidʑilirim — ʰini ʰawalirim —
I[yi]ni[ghi] ijälirim, I[yi]ni[ghi] abalirim:
self-GEN mother-HON-POS1sg self-GEN father-HON-POS1sg

13. ʰa miɲi paɕima — ʰaʔiŋ qojʁufudʑɨ —
Minighi baxima el koyghufuji
my-GEN head-POS3-DAT hand lay-PURP-PERF.DEF

14. ʰabuːm ʰidʑaː dzʲio — ha dɨnna pɨɹ —
Abam ija jiu, dɨngna bir
father-1PS mother EXCL listen one

15. xaji kʰi jo —
xay gi yo!
shoe wear HORT

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In language use, the performer makes use of otherwise extinct lexemes, such as *ahur* 'now,' *aqa* 'elder sister' (compare modern Salar *quxur, ajie* for these lexemes), and *adɨnggɦan* 'stagnant.' Furthermore, her grammar reflects archaisms in e.g. the consistent use of the possessive on nouns (e.g. *abam* 'my father') and the use of the plural in parental address forms to indicate respect (*abalirim* < *aba* + pl. *lAr* + POSS *(i)m*), usages which have been weakened and lost, respectively, in modern Salar.

The above is an abridged version of this *sagheshi* rememberer's performance, in which the above three stanzas repeat with some variation; see the English translation immediately below.

English translation

I

1 Oh, lament! My feet remain behind.
2 My mother, my father:
3 Listen, those who lay hands on my head.
4 My grandmother's neck. My grandfather.
5 I'm putting on my shoes.

II

6 Oh, lament! My feet remain behind.
7 Listen, oh father and mother
8 Listen, those who lay hands on my head.
9 The mouth of my mother.
10 I will put on a pair of shoes.

III

11 Oh, lament! My feet remain behind.
12 Listen, oh father and mother
13 Listen, those who lay hands on my head.
14 Mother and father, you listen a minute.
15 I'm putting on my shoes.

IV

16 Oh, lament!
17 Listen, oh father and mother.
18 I'm putting on my shoes
19 Your daughter, it was the matchmaker who is sending me
20 out [into the cold]. [You are combing] my hair [for the last time].

Here, the combing of the hair symbolizes her transition to adulthood as a woman; Chinese bridal laments include one called 'putting up the hair' 上头哥 (cf. Ho 2005: 56-57).

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V

Oh, lament!
Listen, oh father and mother.
Listen, my sisters.
My shoes, I'm putting on my shoes.

VI

Oh, lament! Listen, oh father and mother.
Your daughter, like the heel of a shoe,
like a stagnant pool, useless, [you think]. Alas!
The people of our village; my uncle;
they are coming [to bring me away].
I will go.

VII

Oh, lament! Listen, oh father and mother.
My mother's head, my body, those who lay hands on my head.
My back.
[My father], one of your shoes.

VIII

Oh, lament! Listen, oh father and mother.
From my mother, from everyone,
from everyone I will be separated.
My father, one of your shoes.

IX

Oh, lament! Listen, oh father and mother.
Those who lay hands on my body.
My mother's mouth.
Sigh, I'm putting on my shoes.

X

Oh, lament! My feet remain behind.
My mother, my father:
Listen, those who lay hands on my head.
My grandmother's neck. My grandfather.
I'm putting on my shoes.

XI

Oh, lament! Listen, oh father and mother.
Listen, those who lay hands on my head.
The mouth of my mother. I will put on a pair of shoes.

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XII

51 Oh, lament! Listen, oh father and mother.
52 Listen, those who lay hands on my head.
53 Mother and father, you listen a minute.
54 I'm putting on my shoes.

XIII

55 Oh, lament! Listen, oh father and mother.
56 Your daughter, like the heel of a shoe,
57 like a stagnant pool, useless, [you think].
58 Alas!

After she has sung, the bride is taken outside, flanked by two elder women. In earlier times, she would lead a horse or mule three times in a counterclockwise circle (distinctly reminscent of Buddhist circumambulations) and scatter some grains. This symbolizes the wealth of her birth home, along with the wish that she will take root and flourish in her new household. The bride then mounts the horse or mule and rides to the groom's house, wearing a full veil and accompanied by two married female relatives. These days, most brides ride on a tractor. Other relatives and friends surround them, running to the groom's house, where the formal ceremony occurs.

All of these wedding rituals, including the lamentations, are no longer practiced by Salars. Instead, emphasis is now placed on the wedding ceremony (*nikah*) and village meal thereafter, in the style of the local sinophone Muslims (Huis).

Scholars have looked at these performances from the perspective of feminism (as social protest, women "finally" having a voice), structuralism (as sharing many features with epics[5]), and sociologically (as part of a larger matrix of belief systems; men do one kind of shamanizing, the women another). Wedding laments are undoubtedly the women's realm.

Laments as a casualty of modernity

Modern life scarcely has room any more for laments (Wilce 2006). Death is taboo in many Western societies; public displays of mourning are subdued and little or no mourning is stylized. Brides marry happily. The decline in laments performance can be linked to an overall decline in oral arts. There is certainly a correlation between an increase in the level of written literacy to a decrease in oral literacy, as well as the incompatibility of economic advancement and modernization with oral performance. To take perhaps a simplistic example, how many

5 Such features include a potential endlessness, strict regulation of content, chanting pattern. Also, the performer continually contextualizes the event and is judged by an audience.

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North Americans or even Western Europeans can sing spontaneously, other than "Happy Birthday" and their favorite pop song? What rituals remain in major life passage events in Euro-American cultures? The rise of both karaoke (generally "happy") and even revived laments groups (generally "sad") in industrialized, economically advanced countries may signal a need for the *stylized* public displays of emotion, despite taboos against spontaneous displays. Often, the decline in laments was related not just to government policy, but also to the proscriptions of a dominant religion. Yet today, some in post-industrial societies are searching for alternative religions, and lament practices offer a connection to a supernatural and magical realm. These reinvented practices bear little structural resemblance to Eurasian laments, though the social functions are similar.

If we can speak of the social consequences for a decline in laments in the Turkic world and Eurasia more broadly, then it is their value as a psychological and social tool: laments certainly constitute cultural and linguistic heritage, but they are more than that.

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The Uyghur Diaspora in Central Asia: Social Change, Identity and Music-Making

Feza Tansuğ

Introduction

The dissolution of the Soviet Union and fundamental realignments in Eastern Europe not only have had major implications for changes to the global political order but have also given new impetus to the movement of populations and ideas (Hosking 1991, Hutchinson and Smith 1994, Smith 1990). The study of migrants and refugees is a relatively new aspect of inquiry for the social sciences that takes on increasing significance in this fast-changing world (Hall 1993). Anthropological examinations of the cultural milieu in which migrants and refugees have had to make sense of their state of displacement can make an important contribution to this area of research (Rutherford 1990). In particular music-making, as a personal expression of social identity and as a significant domain of shared experience and communal activity, creates reflections of the cultural lives of migrants and refugees and provides a convenient focus for research to explore these issues.

In this paper I will attempt to describe the dynamics of the relationships that link social change, identity and music-making with reference to the Uyghur diaspora in the former Soviet Union. Specifically I will focus on the Uyghur migrants to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. As these processes are complex, I will begin by providing a brief history of the events that led to the establishment of this diaspora. Secondly, I will examine music-making in these Soviet Uyghur communities and the principal forces that shaped musical change. Thirdly, questions of identity will be discussed as they relate to these changes, new cultural contacts and resultant musical creativity. Finally, in an effort to make sense of modern social complexities, an increasingly multicultural context, and a loss of any strong sense of continuity, we find identity and music-making to be fluid and subject to the political and economic realities of an uncertain future.

Uyghur Migration to the Former USSR

According to the 1989 Soviet census, there are 263,000 Uyghurs in the former USSR, making them the 40th largest ethnic group amongst 127 officially recognized "nationalities." The three largest Soviet Uyghur communities include: 185,000 in the Republic of Kazakhstan, 37,000 in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and 36,000 in the Republic of Uzbekistan (*Natsianal'iy Sostav Naseleniya SSSR* 1991: 159). There are also 5,000 Uyghurs in the other Soviet Socialist Republics. Of

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the Uyghurs in Kazakhstan, about 60% (110,000) are concentrated in Almaty, making them the most cohesive Uyghur community in the contemporary Commonwealth of Independent States. Today Uyghurs live in Xinjiang Autonomous Region of China, in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan (Fikalov 2004: 93).

There have been Turkic people in Central Asia for at least 1500 years, and Uyghurs claim a history that reaches even further back. The Turkic peoples of the area converted to Islam in a rather slow process as the religion crept across Central Asia, but certainly starting around the 12th or 13th century. The Uyghurs have spent most of their history linked to Central Asian culture, of which they are a part, rather than to Chinese culture.

Also known as *Taranchi* (Khamraev 1967: 6), they call their homeland "Eastern Turkestan," which is better known as the Chinese region of Xinjiang. (Starr 2004: 4-6) About eight million live inside China, with about one million ethnic Uyghurs living mostly in Central Asia, Saudi Arabia, Europe and North America. Uyghurs constitute a distinct Turkic-speaking, Muslim minority in northwestern China and Central Asia. According to the 2000 Chinese census, 19,250,000 people live in the region, with a heavy increase of ethnic Chinese in recent years. This region of China's remote northwest borders formerly Soviet Central Asia, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Mongolia, and Tibet.

Uyghurs have been struggling for independence since the 18th century. They have twice declared a short-lived Eastern Turkestan Republic in Xinjiang in the 1930s and the late 1940s, but have remained under Beijing's control since 1949 (Starr 2004: 6).

The October Revolution of 1917 brought many changes to the life of Uyghurs in Central Asia. Most importantly the new policies of integration and Sovietization of Uyghurs in the region were initiated (Fikalov 2004: 93), and this led to Uyghurs' becoming involved in the revolutionary movement by taking an active part in establishing Soviet authority in the region (Hutchinson 1994: 103-7, Olcott 1990: 3-7). In June 1921 *The Voice of the Poor*, the first Uyghur-language newspaper was published in Tashkent (Zatayevich 1971: 138).

During the years of Stalinism, however, Uyghurs were repressed like other peoples. According to Fikalov, "only Uyghurs were not subject to this forced migration since the majority of them were killed at the place. Many Uyghurs had to change their nationality to Uzbek, Kyrgyz and others, in order to escape the genocide. Like in other parts of Central Asia, all Uyghur cultural and educational centers in Kyrgyzstan were closed, including Uyghur schools in Frunze, Prjevalsk, Tokmak, Jalal-Abad and in the Osh region" (Fikalov 2004: 94). In 1938 a full time Russian curriculum was imposed on all non-Russian academic institutions although article 45 of the Soviet constitution (Akiner 1983: 21) guaranteed all Soviet citizens the opportunity to education in their native language (Akiner 1983: 23).

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After September 11, 2001 Chinese security forces stepped up efforts to crush Uyghur separatism. Since the People's Republic of China was founded, Uyghurs have resisted Beijing's attempts to control their religious and political activities. In the past few years, Uyghur separatist groups have been blamed for attacks in northwest China as well as the capital. Chinese officials have warned that Beijing will not tolerate separatism or social disturbances under the guise of religion. China has moved to crack down on Uyghur separatists, whom Beijing regards as "terrorists" (Gladney 2004: 381).

During the 1950s and early 1960s a large number of Uyghur migrated from the People's Republic of China to the Soviet Union for political and economic reasons (Kamalov 2005: 151). With regard to the Uyghur forced migrants and refugees in Kazakhstan today, the number is not exhaustive as only about 30 Uyghurs had the courage to show up, whereas over 500 Chinese Uyghurs are believed to be in Almaty alone, being helped by the Kazakh Uyghur community. The protection of Chinese Uyghur refugees constitutes a major challenge in Kazakhstan, as Chinese Uyghurs are considered as being linked to both the Taliban and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. Furthermore, in accordance with the agreement signed between Kazakhstan and China in December 1999, both countries undertook the obligation not to tolerate the presence in their territory of "separatist groups" from the other country (Gladney 2004: 109).

In view of the above, Uyghurs are not admitted to the Kazakh national asylum procedure. Hence, there are no official statistics on the number of Chinese Uyghurs in Kazakhstan. Due to the fact that Uyghurs fear persecution from the Chinese authorities as well as mistreatment by the Kazakh authorities because they are staying in Kazakhstan illegally, they apply to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Office in Kazakhstan, where they are admitted to the refugee status determination procedure in accordance with UNHCR Statute. Those Chinese Uyghurs who have been recognized as mandate refugees by the UNHCR are resettled in third countries.

Since the migration to Soviet Central Asia, Almaty, in the Republic of Kazakhstan, has become the most important center for the Soviet Uyghur culture in the region, with an Uyghur theatre, radio station and newspaper. An Uyghur cultural center Unity (*Ittipak*) was established in 1989 in the Kyrgyz SSR at the initiative of Muzapparkhan Kurbanov, a personal correspondent of the interrepublican Uyghur newspaper *Kommunizm Tugi*, published in Almaty at that time (Fikalov 2004: 94). *Ittipak* became the first organization in the wide-scale process of the growth of national self-consciousness among ethnic groups living in Kyrgyzstan, and it led to the establishment of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kyrgyzstan, uniting all ethnic organizations for the sake of interethnic peace, civil consent and the development of each ethnic group (Fikalov 2004: 95). There is a similar organization in Almaty established by the Uyghurs in Kazakhstan. The Uyghur theatre is the most important cultural center of the Uyghur

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community in Kazakhstan. *Ittipak* also organized a radio program for the Uyghur community in Kyrgyzstan on the State Radio and Television (*Gosteleradio*) (Fikalov 2004: 96).

According to my observations, Soviet Uyghur communities in the different regions have been integrated through a process of migration between the regions and associated inter-marriage. However, each group of Uyghur migrants identify themselves in terms of their regional geography and cultural stereotype. For example, Uyghurs in Uzbekistan pride themselves as being more Uyghur than their counterparts in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan because they believe they have retained more of the Uyghur culture, primarily the language. On the other hand, Uyghurs in Kazakhstan consider themselves more sophisticated, i.e. European.

Music-Making of the Uyghur Migrants in the Former USSR

It is possible to describe and analyze the complexities of music-making of the Uyghur migrants in the former Soviet Union by using the model illustrated in the figure below. It is comprised of two sets of overlapping concentric circles that represent the social and cultural forces in the parent and host country that shape this creative process. The more distant and less direct elements are on the outside, and the more direct and interpersonal elements are on the inside, producing a spectrum of influences that range from the general to the specific (Hood 1982). The flow diagram underneath the circles represents the direction of migration and cultural contact (Reyes-Schramm 1990: 3-21, Hirshberg 1990: 68-88). I will not attempt to provide a detailed theoretical analysis of all the nuances and implications of this model here. However, in general it may prove helpful to describe the elements that have shaped music-making among these Soviet Uyghurs by referring to this theoretical construct.

In the figure, "outside wider society" relates to any external influence on the cultural and social life of either the host or parent country. For the Soviet Uyghurs these influences are the historical context and geo-political forces of conquest and alliance, described above in the previous section that gave rise to this diaspora. Most recently the end of the Cold War has brought changes to many aspects of life for the peoples of the former USSR. For example, the establishment of both diplomatic and economic ties between the People's Republic of China and the new nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States, such as the republics of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, have brought changes to many Soviet Uyghur communities. These events have already resulted in a second musical migration which is having considerable impact on the music-making of Uyghur communities in the former USSR. I will describe the outcome of these influences in the next section.

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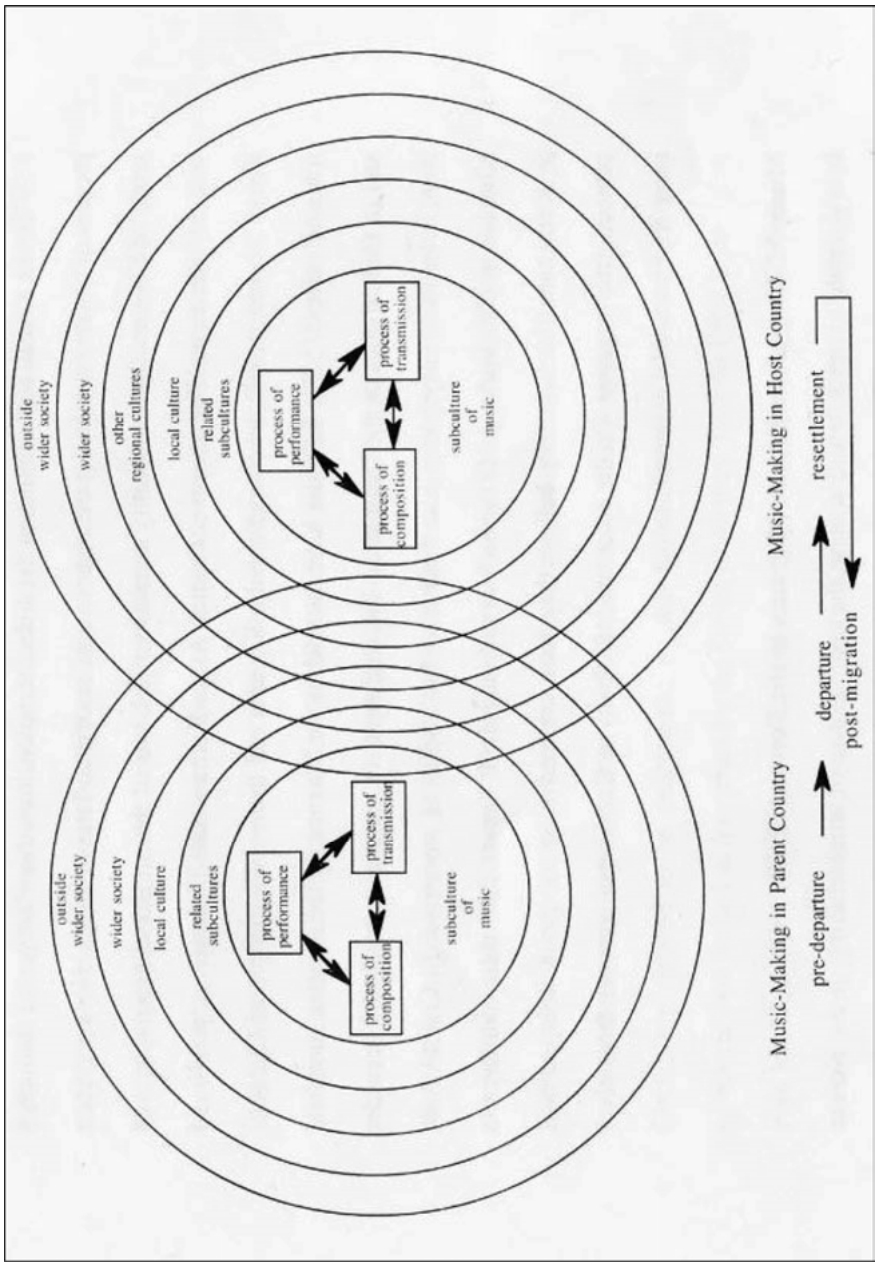

Processes of Music-Making in Migration

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For both sides of the diagram "wider society" refers to the interactions between institutions in general and the influences of social, political and cultural systems. In migrant communities, for example the Uyghurs in the Republic of Kazakhstan, these interactions would include the relationships established between the Uyghur theatre and the Uyghur radio station in the city of Almaty and contacts with other regional cultures, which would include involvement of the Uyghur community in local folk festivals organized in cooperation with other ethnic groups. These festivals were frequently organized with the sponsorship of both the local and central Soviet government. Ethnic folk ensembles also used to go on performance tours all over the former USSR with similarly coordinated official patronage between Moscow and state authorities. The traditional culture was considered to be a community culture which teaches the superiority of the group over the individual (Kerblay 1983: 271), providing it maintains a "culture national in form and socialist in content" as defined by the Communist Party (Lane 1985: 209).

"Other regional cultures" on the right side of the diagram refers to the cultures of other ethnic groups who also reside in the host country. For example, in the Republic of Kazakhstan these are principally the Kazakhs and Russians as well as various smaller minorities such as the Germans, Ukrainians, Uzbeks, Tatars and Koreans (Kho 1987: 24). Relationships between individual members of these groups can become quite personal, for example, when I visited Almaty in 1994 I met with a group of Uyghur, Russian and Kazakh musicians who had worked together on compositions. During my 1989 fieldwork in Tashkent, the capital of the Republic of Uzbekistan, I met an Uyghur musician, now a successful businessman, who used to write Uzbek pop songs for his Uzbek singer friends.

The "local culture" represents any regional variation within the geopolitical boundary of the given country under examination. With reference to the right side of the diagram, it refers to the local culture of the migrant community in the host country. For example, the urban Uyghur community in Tashkent, Uzbekistan has adopted Uzbek popular songs into their musical culture. On the other hand, the rural Uyghur community on the collective farm of Polit-Ozel, in Uzbekistan, still retains the Uyghur music which they brought with them from China.

The "related subcultures" indicate any other cultural arenas that are associated with a given musical genre or form, for example, literature, theatre, dance, etc. In Soviet Uyghur communities, music-making has been inseparable from these related arts. For example, Soviet Uyghur plays are always performed in conjunction with music and dance. In fact, the acclaimed Soviet Uyghur poet and writer Jusup Gapparov is also a director and actor as well as a composer and singer (Zatayevich 1971: 145).

The "subculture of music" refers to the arena of interacting individuals, such as musicians, composers, audience and mediators, who are involved directly in

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the creative process of music-making in a particular musical genre or form. However, within the "subculture of music," I would like to suggest that there are three interrelated processes of music-making, namely, the processes of composition, performance, and transmission. For example, the process of composition is influenced by the process of transmission in the sense that the style of the Uyghur songs newly composed in Central Asia is derived from the songs which the migrants brought from China. And the processes of composition and performance are also closely related to each other in as much as many Soviet Uyghur songs are often improvised when performed. The processes of transmission and performance are also linked to each other since the learning of songs in Soviet Uyghur communities usually takes place in a performance setting.

The arrows at the center of the diagram are bi-directional suggesting that a cyclical process is operating in which aesthetics is both generated by and influences other aspects of music-making. These socially enabled and constructed aesthetic values of the individuals in different social classes, regions, genders and age groups will differ from each other. For example, the older generation in Central Asia appreciates traditional Uyghur *khälq nakhshiliri* (folk songs) and the Uyghur songs derived in China during the early part of the 20th century, whereas their grandchildren prefer modern Russian and Western popular songs. In Uyghur weddings in Soviet Central Asia, both Russian and Uyghur popular music are played in Kazakhstan, while Uzbek popular music is also included in Uzbekistan.

Identity and Music

The ethnomusicologist Alan Merriam considers music to be "one of the most stable elements of culture" (Merriam 1964: 304), and the sociologist Janet Wolff suggests that "the stylistic convention and aesthetic autonomy of a particular genre can survive automatic social determination" (Wolff 1981: 71). These propositions may well be true, especially in the case of transplanted music, which is often used and viewed by the members of migrant communities as symbols of cultural identity. For example, some music which Uyghur migrants brought with them from the parent country has survived several generations and can be viewed as a marker of their ethnic identity. An Uyghur popular song from the 1920s is still sung by Central Asian Uyghurs although it is no longer performed in Xinjiang.

However, any strong notion of a static model of musical continuity precludes much of the dynamic reality of music-making. If music is "an ideal form for the study of relationships between patterns of social interaction and the invention and acceptance of cultural forms, which in turn may influence further action" as Blacking suggested (1987: 48), the study of transplanted music should provide an insight into the life of migrants and their changing identity influenced by cultural contact and social changes. I believe the examples given above and used to illustrate the model of social and cultural change demonstrate the truth of Black-

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ing's conclusion. Some more specific examples may help to add weight to the thesis that such changes are inextricably linked to questions of identity.

For example, there are new musical genres whose origins are linked directly to the refugee experience. These new genres reflect the history of migration and social and political changes in the host country, all of which in turn influence changes in cultural identity. For example, the songs of the October Revolution, sung in Russian and Uyghur, mark the beginning of the Sovietization of Uyghur migrant culture in Central Asia. After the resettlement in Soviet Central Asia in 1937, new Uyghur songs from collective farms began to appear. Additionally the folk songs of local ethnic groups, such as the Kazakhs and Uzbeks, also became a part of their song repertory through the process of adaptation to local regional cultures. The songs of longing for the home country, which are found in all Uyghur communities in the former Soviet Union, have different musical styles dependent on their region.

Some of these new genres are also closely related to new forms of literature and theatre as found in the work of the Soviet Uyghur poet Jusup Gapparov (1876-1938). For example, as illustrated in the following extract, the theme of Gapparov's *Chal Naghmani* (Play Your Tune), is associated with the cultural life of a socialist state (Zatayevich 1971: 145).

> Play the *naghma* [tune] to make me feel better!
> Sing the songs, so that people are woken up!
> Write slogans, so that other proletariat could hear them!
> The oppressed people are willing to get freedom,
> to join you when you play the *naghma*!
> Sing the song, so that other people from different countries could listen to it.
> As a result, the proletariat will be active.
> Tune your *naghma*, so that it would speak like a man
> and the proletariat would find a way to liberate the oppressed.
> Play, *naghmanchy* [the player of the *naghma*], tune your *naghma*,
> so that the proletariat would gain equality of rights.
> The oppressed proletariat would listen to you from the bottom of its heart.
> Squeak the *gidzhak*, strum on the *dutar* and the *tanbur*.
> I wish the proletariat would be liberated and put the imperialism to the complete rout.

Born in 1876 in Xinjiang, Jusup Gapparov lived in Kazakhstan, and his poems were widely appreciated and sung by Soviet Uyghurs throughout the former USSR as well as in his homeland of "Eastern Turkestan." He also took part in the establishment of the Uyghur theatere in Almaty (Zatayevich 1971: 145).

In addition to the changing cultural identity of Soviet Uyghurs, reflected in their music-making, described above, identity is also influenced by issues of citizenship. Among the Central Asian Uyghurs, it is quite common for members of the same family or close relatives to have different citizenships. In spite of the complexities of citizenship, most Soviet Uyghurs strongly identify themselves as being Uyghur.

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Conclusion

The life of the Soviet Uyghurs in Central Asia has been influenced by social and political changes in their host and home countries as well as the broader political forces that have given shape to our modern world. The migrations to Central Asia, the process of Sovietization since 1917, adaptation to local ethnic cultures in Soviet Central Asia since the forced migration in 1937, changing cultural influences from the homeland of East Turkestan, and the process of de-Sovietization since the dissolution of the former USSR in 1990 are all to be understood in these contexts.

Just as much as the life of the Soviet Uyghurs has been influenced by new cultural contacts and social changes, their music-making has been subject to these same forces. For example, the music-making of Soviet Uyghurs in their "subculture of music" has always been undertaken in association with the "relevant subcultures" of theatre, dance and literature. In the "local culture" of Soviet Uyghur communities, this process of music-making often takes place in contact with the "other regional cultures" of the various ethnic groups in the "wider society" of the former USSR. However, this artistic development is also influenced by the policies of the state which are, in turn, subject to external cultural, social and political forces described above.

Music plays an important symbolic role in Soviet Uyghur communities in the construction of their cultural identity. Not only because their music has survived for several generations as one of the most stable elements of their culture, but also because the newly created musical genres and forms reflect the dynamics of their changing identity shaped by personal experiences, cultural contacts and socio-political events. The identity of these Uyghur migrants is now subject to increasingly uncertain social and political forces that will give rise to an as yet unknown future. However, given the artistic creativity of these resilient peoples, we can be sure that their music making will continue to play an important role in defining their place in the world – as they find it.

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Pro and Con Manas: The Discourse about the Use of an Epic for a National Ideology in Kyrgyzstan[1]

Hanne Straube

Arrival via Kyrgyzstan Airlines at the airport of the capital city Biškek. The inscription "*Manas*-Kyrgyzstan" hangs proudly above the customs clearance hall. The highway, with a view of snow-covered mountains, leads in the direction of the center, 35 km away. *Manas*-street, the former *Ulica* Belinskaja, goes past the Philharmonic, in front of which stand gigantic sculptures, figures from the *Manas* Epic.[2] A ten foot high bronze Manas,[3] the hero of the epic of the same name, with his lance raised dashes atop his horse Akkula towards the sky, beneath them a twisting kite. Manas, as I had previously read in President Askar Akaev's comments, was the benevolent father of the Kyrgyz people, the saint of the nation. For Manas, the freedom of the fatherland and the honor of the homeland are holy; today's Kyrgyz people are his successors.[4]

1. Prologue

The break-up of the USSR brought national independence to the Central Asian Turkic-speaking constituent republics. Among them was the former partial Kyrgyz republic, which, on August 31, 1991 announced its independence and be-

1 The essay is based on empirical material that I collected through the support of the German Research Foundation (DFG) during several field visits, altogether for five months between 1999 and 2000. The research project "Ethnic-national identity determination and historical sense of consciousness building in the formation of the young Central-Asian republics Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan" was carried out from 1999 to 2002. It was part of the interdisciplinary study group "Sense of consciousness concepts as life and action determining orientation systems," which took place from April 1st, 1997 to March 31st, 2002 under the leadership of Professor Dr. Klaus E. Müller and Professor Dr. Jörn Rüsen at the Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut in Essen, Germany. I was aided in translating literature, interviews and personal communications from Russian and Kyrgyz by my colleagues Mairamkul Sopueva, Šarapat Alieva, Ainura Kapalova and Dr. Pamira Kadyrbekova. My sister, the cultural anthropologist Doris Stennert, read and critically commented on this text. My brother-in-law, Kurt Jauker, translated it from German to English. To all of them, my sincerest thanks.

2 The sculptures were created by the contemporary Kyrgyz artist T. Sadïkov.

3 In the above, *Manas* is italicized when referring to the epic. If the hero is described, standard writing is used.

4 Travel diary of Hanne Straube.

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came a nation-state. Because this national independence was imposed so suddenly (Mangott 1996: 65), the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, in order to establish and preserve internal stability and continuity and acquire an effective integration mechanism as well as a convincing identity ideology, had to find ways to fill the existing vacuum.

In such upheavals, he who determines the starting conditions controls the consequences. As in other constituent republics, the Kyrgyzstan parliament did not elect the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the republic into the newly created office of the President of the Republic, but instead, not least due to pressure from Moscow central, the reform-oriented academician Askar Akaev[5], who could count on the support of Mikhail Gorbachev.

Originally, the Kyrgyzstan Democratic Movement, representing almost the entire political spectrum of the country and uniting 14 political membership organizations, supported Akaev, with nationalistic Kyrgyz organizations coexisting peacefully with Russian-speaking ones. Among them, however, from the beginning, there existed varying opinions of the national problems and the politics of the government (Trutanow 1994: 213).

In the west, President Akaev was initially viewed as a European-oriented politician because of his attempts at modernization. It was said: "Akaev has really given up on tradition. In the government, there are only his fellow countrymen and cousins, like it used to be. The president is looking for and supports people with new ideas" (Trutanow 1994: 219).

Much like in the other Central Asian Turkic-speaking republics of the former USSR[6], which became politically unstable after the release into independence,

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5 Askar Akaev, was born on November 10, 1944 in Kïsïl-Bairak, studied from 1963 until 1968 at the Institute for Precision Mechanics and Optics in Leningrad, and worked there until 1972. After that, he was a teacher for one year at the Polytechnic Institute in Frunse (the former capital city); in 1973 he was scientific staff member at the same institute in Leningrad, from 1976 until 1987 instructor and chair at the Polytechnic Institute in Frunse. There he was promoted to Doctor of Science and Technology. In 1981 he became a member of the Communist Party, and in 1987 Vice President of the Academy of Science of Kyrgyzstan. In addition, he has headed the Economy Section of the Central Committee of the Communist Party since 1986. Since 1989 he has been a representative and member of the Citizenship Council of the Upper Soviet. Akaev, one-time member, but never party leader of the CP of the Kyrgyz SSR, resigned from the CP in August 1991 and has remained unaffiliated ever since (Mangott 1996: 67).

6 In Azerbaijan, after the death of President Gejdar Alijev, who had a KGB career behind him, Alijev's son Ilchan assumed power. The current Turkmenistan, more a confederation of tribes than a modern nation, was governed under the authority of Saparmurat Niyazov from 1991 to December 2006. After his death Gurbanguly Berdimuhammedow became president. The president is both the chief of state and head of government. In Uzbekistan, the governing elite is oriented toward the opinions and authority of President Karimov. Suppression of any opposition began as early as 1992. Today, Uzbekistan is seen as the "Law and Order" state. There, a national integration legend is created through the "cultural rebirth" of nation founder Timor Lenk (Tamerlan 1336-1405). In Kazhakstan, President Naserbaev, former Glasnost proponent, is pursuing a path toward modernization.

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the desire to reestablish stability through authoritarian political leadership grew in Kyrgyzstan also. The constitution established the country as a moderate secular, presidential republic. Soon, however, contrary to the October 1990 law regarding the establishment of the office of president, the authority of the president was broadly expanded. As head of state, Akaev became the primary organ of the executive authority (Mangott 1996: 102).

Akaev "slimmed down" the executive authority by means of a government reform in January 1991 and named his own reforms – in allusion to the "velvet revolution" in Czechoslovakia and with reference to the long history of the Silk Road – "silk revolution" (Götz/Halbach 1996: 216). At the same time, in a referendum on 17 March 1991, 94.5% of all Kyrgyz citizens favored a continued participation in a renewed socialist Soviet Union (Trutanow 1994: 213).

Like the other presidents of Central Asian Turkic-speaking republics, Akaev understood cleverly how to present himself as a solicitor of national interests and a champion of national independence. "The emphatic national attitude of the new leadership did, after all, rest in the tactical intent to capture the political momentum of nationalistic movements up front and, at the same time, to effectively legitimize one's own power" (Mangott 1996: 65). As detailed previously, the *Manas* Epic and the hero of the same name were helpful to Akaev in the creation of a national identification figure (see Straube 2005; Straube 2007). A short abstract of this development follows.

2. The creation of a national identity with the Manas Epic

Historical interest, as has been proven, generally grows from critical and conflict-laden situations. Through the look backwards historical experience becomes available for the present and the future. Kyrgyzstan is confronted by two complex problems that threaten to fragment the aspiring internal cohesion. Over 80 different ethnic and religious groups live in the nation. Besides the minority problem, there is also a language issue (Straube 2003).

Integration mechanisms and identity ideologies were mainly supported through the unifying and integrating fallback on common traditions. So too in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. One's own ethnic tradition, such as folklore, yurt building, equestrian games, etc., which were already encouraged during the Soviet era, were to serve as traditional connection points. Other benefits were offered through one's own ethnic historical awareness, the local national and cultural history and also the socialist-democratic heritage, because the earlier history of the republic in the alliance with the Soviet Union, which lasted over 70 years, had left behind its own traditions and monuments.

Soon after Akaev took office, Manas, the hero of the epic of the same name was arranged to be the unifying "figure" to help Kyrgyzstan determine its identity and create a national ideology. Approximately ten months after the declara-

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tion of independence, the parliament passed a mandate to use the epic as a strategy for gaining a new nation-state ideology (Kumar 1998: 17). In 1995, a 1000-year celebration took place for which historical memorials were erected. For this occasion, President Akaev extracted first three and then seven "heritages," or rather commandments, from the epic, which were to be considered guidelines for the conduct of all. Contributions about the epic from literature, art, theatre, music and film followed. *Manas* programs for schools and universities were developed which described how the epic was to be didactically and methodically taught. The epic hero is portrayed in Kyrgyzstan as the first ancestor of divine parentage. Manas, so it is said, founded a Kyrgyz state more than 1000 years ago. As can be deduced from the epic, today's Kyrgyzstan was the ancestral home of the Kyrgyz, and the Kyrgyz, as authorities, thereby have leadership claims in the titular nation. The extent to which this is historically founded can be determined from different papers (see Prior 2000; Straube 2005; Straube 2007). Already then, Manas was able to integrate several minorities in his "state." And already then, the Kyrgyz exemplified characteristics of democracy, equal opportunity of the sexes, fraternalism, openness and hospitality. Manas showed that the Kyrgyz are unique and superior.

The *Manas*–era is depicted as the golden era. As Manas had already solved the problems of his time in exemplary fashion, the Kyrgyz people could, according to Akaev, view his deeds as a model.

> Before we, as an independent country, establish relationships with far and near states, we must research the historical experiences and the spiritual legacy of our ancestors, because we can learn something from Manas (Akaev 1997: 105f).

Today, the Kyrgyz can have a state for the second time in their history. It is Akaev's obligation to concern himself with problems similar to Manas' to hold together this second state – "Kyrgyzstan – our common home" (Akaev 1995: 91f) against "internal and external enemies." Akaev, who acts as administrator of the Manas legacy, thereby legitimizes his presidency and the leading role of the Kyrgyz in the state.

Akaev depicts himself herewith, as do many other leaders in post-colonial states, as someone uninterested in emulating Europeans, but rather committed to contemplating his own origins in order to successfully survive the time of upheaval and a new beginning.

In the populace, the attempt of the political leadership to construct a national identification figure through the *Manas* Epic, is judged very differently. Using interviews and essays, I will attempt to show how the population, in accordance with biographical background and knowledge base, sees and values *Manas* from the various perspectives.

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3. The discourse about the Manas Epic

The inhabitants of the Talas region claim a particularly close relationship to *Manas*. This is where Manas' tomb is said to be located. Sanasa, a 60-year-old from this area, recounts:

> In early childhood, virtually with their mother's milk, the children are told of the Manas legends and his heroics in Talas. Little children are put on horses by their fathers and told, hold on tightly, don't fall off, or you will disgrace the name of Manas.
> Despite the fact that Manas is a historical personality, the people today consider him a living person. We know that many doubt his existence and believe that he is a figment of their imagination. However, people like the Azerbaijanis and Turkmens also have their heroes. – My father told me that, in accordance with a party decision, the communists were going to demolish the mausoleum. Two people died during the first attempt. On the second attempt with a bulldozer, the driver died. Thereafter, nobody attempted it again. Today, there are readings from the Koran on Thursdays and Fridays there. One makes a wish and supplicates the spirit of Manas for help. Whoever says Amen, pleads with the Manas spirit for support.

The epic, written in verse form, was handed down orally by bards, who still recite it today. The bard Urkaš Mambetalï Uulu from Biškek told me:

> No one can repeat *Manas* like the Kyrgyz. They say it from early morning, with full devotion, with all their souls. All that is inside the bard flows out. God gave him this gift. This gift was also given to me. I'm transported to a different time, when I recite the *Manas* epic. Even when the *Manas* epic is recited in a short form, it touches people.

President Akaev made the memorial cult surrounding *Manas* a personal priority. Nikoscha Suleimankov, in his mid-forties, one-time senior customs officer, today jobless, realizes how the president is using the epic to create a national ideology, but nevertheless supports it:

> I heard about Manas in the fourth grade. My older brother read me the Kyrgyz epics two to three times per week during that time. – Manas was a kind of mythology for us youngsters at school. At the same time, it is proven that Manas was a real person who protected the Kyrgyz from the Chinese and Kalmucks. Manas was a leader. During that time, there were few in the population that were as smart and strong. Manas had a lot of organizational talent, the ability to become a hero.
> The *Manas* accomplishments did not only have significance then, but also today as educational guidance for the youth, the peoples, and their unification. When you consider global problems, think of the epic. If we want to solve those, one can find many examples. – The development of Kyrgyzstan is not comparable with that of Europe and the United States. The Kyrgyz don't have a national ideology because they stem from a feudal society. Our president, therefore, creates directly from the epic. His attempt to use the epic in the unification of the entire population has shown results.
> Whether a different president would have used the epic this way is unknown. It would depend on his intellectual philosophy of life. There is a whole generation of *Manas* researchers making new proposals. The 1000-year memorial celebration made Akaev very successful and reinforced his power. But such a memorial is celebrated only once.

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The opinion, that such a memorial celebration was necessary to crown the new national ideology, is shared by Irisbudu Beybutova, in her mid-forties, professor at the Balāsāġūn National University in Biškek:

> 1995 – that was special publicity for Manas. Whoever didn't know him was now interested. Since then, his significance has grown. 1991/1992 were difficult years for our nation. But 1995 was a good time. The timing for the celebration was correctly chosen. We presented ourselves to the entire world as Kyrgyzstan. It was a good time to show the turning point.

At the universities, many young Kyrgyz are thrilled with *Manas*, even though they may not know much of the content of the epic. Dulat, a 19-year-old student, said:

> Manas really existed. If he hadn't existed, there would be no tomb and his name would be unknown. Just the name Manas has great significance for the Kyrgyz. When one travels somewhere, one wishes that his soul and his spirit may protect the Kyrgyz people. When one starts something, one says, may the spirit of Manas protect one. That is why Manas has such significance for everyone.

Numerous examinations of the epic have been publicized since the unification. There were almost 3000 small and large studies available in 1994 (Mussajew 1994: 186). Doctoral and post-doctoral theses were written. Rïsbek, 22 years old, also wrote his masters thesis about *Manas*. He said:

> The epic will continue to achieve more significance for our national identity. Not a single nation possesses such a literary work.

The essays at the University for Human Research in Biškek also view *Manas* largely positive. A student, Alinar, age 19:

> The *Manas* epic has great significance for the people of Kyrgyzstan. That is our history, which we cannot forget. In all schools, students learn the seven commandments from the epic. These commandments influence the students very positively. The past, the present and the future are tightly connected with each other. That is important. – Because I'm Kyrgyz, the epic is very important for me personally. That is my history, my home, my people. I live in Kyrgyzstan and I have to know and respect my literary treasures.

Anara, a 20-year-old student, adds:

> Manas led his people to a better, freer life. The commandments from the epic teach us to be more helpful and friendlier to people. They teach us to honor the interests and the freedom of other people. One must be kind-hearted. For the people, unification is important. Unity and agreement will save us. We have to treasure our history, our traditions and customs so that we can pass them on to our people.

The characterization given by the student Alvira, age 19, who reflects the current propaganda, is typical:

> I am proud that my people possess such a great epic as the *Manas* epic. This epic is an authentic encyclopedia of the Kyrgyz people. All knowledge in the area of medicine, all nature and environmental ideas are collected here. In the epic, morals, customs, the phi-

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losophies of life of the ancient Kyrgyz are collected. Manas, the main character in the epic, was a hero who protected his people from strangers. He was not only brave, bold and strong, but also wise and smart. He wrote seven commandments, which are still relevant today because they teach people to be tolerant. The commandments urge all people to live in peace. In 1995 the Manas-1000 celebration took place. The whole world recognized the Kyrgyz people through this celebration. I find that such a beautiful epic could only be created by a great people. *Manas* is the greatest epic in the world. Even world famous epics such as Ramayana and Mahabharata are much smaller than the Kyrgyz epic.

Kyrgyz scholars who researched the epic supported Akaev in the distribution of his national ideology from the beginning. Bolotbek Saparalijev, approximately 35 years old, a university graduate and currently in a leading position, gives his views on *Manas*:

For today's life, Manas is of great significance. Not for nothing did the president extract the seven commandments from the *Manas* epic during the Manas memorial celebration. In them are thoughts that can fulfill the functions of our national identity. Themes are mentioned, such as consolidation of the state, enlargement of international contact, peace with other nations, tolerance, ecology and environmental protection. The seven commandments form the core of the national ideology. They must be developed further, instilled in the people. That is important. – When this is not propagated throughout the people, it cannot develop itself further. Anarchy will evolve. The goal of every ideology is to further develop the society.

Earlier, the epic was presented and read as cultural history and literature. After the 1000-year celebration, the people paid much attention. Every single one of the seven commandments was selected and tested by scientists. The commandments were taught in school. They're displayed in every school; all children should memorize them. They are to be viewed as a call to the creation of a humanistic culture for all. The epic contains general human values, the imagination and culture of people.

Manas is something purely Kyrgyz, national, which is why it is carefully accepted by the minorities. The Russians, Kazaks, Uzbeks, Uigurs and Ukrainians have their own epics. Despite that, I believe that they view the epic positively, since Russian boys and girls also learn to memorize it. Other peoples also have a great interest in *Manas*.

Only now, is *Manas* publicized. There is a *Manas* propaganda center in Biškek. There it is translated into English, Turkish and Hindi. *Manas* is spread by patriotic teachers in the villages. If a city school wants, it is taught there. Honestly though, it is not of a high standard because the teachers don't know it very well. But the next generation will pay the epic more attention.

Scientists, – historians, philosophers, linguists – concern themselves with *Manas*. Health professionals learn from it how to heal wounds, with which instruments to operate, for instance removing bullets, how to staunch blood. Every expert can find something therein.

Every generation contributed to the epic. One can consider *Manas* as a universal encyclopedia. *Manas* is constantly updated and therefore will continuously provide new variants. The Manas of the 21st century will at some time report about our own history. Heroes such as Askar Akaev, Felix Kulov, Yeltsin and others will appear in it.

Manas had great significance as early as the beginning of the 20th century. The Soviet state contributed funds for its research. Many of our scientists have examined it. *Ma-*

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> *nas*, Manas, you nourish us' – those were familiar quotations of those times. There was good salary and good work from the research. The first intellectuals of Soviet-Kyrgyzstan were nurtured through Manas. And, honestly, Manas still nurtures us now.

With state encouragement, *Manas* is taught according to *Manas*-programs in the Department for International Relations of the Balāsāġūn National University in Biškek. The teacher Mairamkul, age 35, explained the purpose of the epic:

> We educate through Manas, to learn from his mistakes and to adopt his positive traits. When I select a subject, I tell the students how Manas conducted himself and ask what they would have done in his place. That means, we influence their thoughts with him and teach them about life.

The teacher took her class to honor Manas at a sacred memorial and mausoleum in the Talas region. Because of the instruction and such activities, enthusiasm for the epic is growing. Ajnagul, 20 years old, says:

> We went through the *Manas* epic in our second year of studies and I liked it very much. After each class, I wanted to continue reading and learning what happens. We, the Kyrgyz nation, number approximately four to five million people. We have to preserve our language and traditions. After we read it here, we try to do as Manas did. Manas assembled a very small group of people and led them to his territory. Other nations can conquer us easily because we are only four million people. What then, if we don't keep our traditions and our language? This objective lies on our shoulders. – If we don't know Kyrgyz history and Kyrgyz literature, we cannot survive as a people.

Another student, Ajbek, 21 years old, declared:

> My knowledge of the epic grew this year. I'm of the opinion that the *Manas* epic is our greatest cultural heritage. As it was left behind by our ancestors, so we have to leave it behind for our descendants. That is the first goal that we have to achieve. By means of the positive parts of the epic, we have an example of how the Kyrgyz live and what kind of relations they should have with other people. We have to adopt all that. In my opinion, Manas education should be offered in all schools and universities. The epic is our pride; it contains patriotism and encompasses the traditions of the Kyrgyz people. It teaches us to stick together, to defend our soil, it teaches us not to be inferior to others and to be independent of them.

Even before independence, Kyrgyzstan belonged to the "underdeveloped" union republics deemed poor. This is till true today. In such a country, in the opinion of the student Čibek, age 19, Manas serves as a bearer of hope:

> We have to learn and research our history. There are currently many difficulties; for instance, students have great desires to study, but they have no money to buy books. Despite that, our inner world is enriched when we read the *Manas* epic. The epic helps us in that it keeps our hopes alive. We see that our ancestors lived in even more difficult times. They worked partly for others. Our republic is independent and, in my opinion, compared to the difficulties then, today's are simple. We have to consider that, if they were able to overcome those difficulties, we have to ask ourselves why we can not do the same.

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Gulia, a 42-year-old sales clerk who was raised in Biškek and attended a Russian school, views the use of the epic for a national ideology critically:

> It is the greatest epic, but still an epic. – *Manas,* that is ideology. *Manas* has no significance for me. Concerning nationalism: In my class there were only four Kyrgyz, the rest were all other nationalities. Nationalism is not tolerated in my family. I have friends from various nationalities: Russians, Tatars, Koreans, Jews (...) I find it more important to teach my child pure human values, rather than nationalistic ideas.

Of the nearly five million people living in Kyrgyzstan, 64.9% are Kyrgyz, 13.8% are Uzbeks, 12.5% Russians, 1.1% Dungans, 1.0% Ukrainians, 1.0% Uigurs, 9% Tatars, 9% Tadjiks, 7% "Turkish," 4% of German origin, 4% Korean and 1.5% other ethnic groups (National Statistical Committee 2000: 26). As early as 1993, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan was renamed the Kyrgyz Republic, a sign of growing ethnification. In January 1994, the president announced a State of Kyrgyz under the motto "Kyrgyzstan, our common home" (Akaev 1995: 91f) and demanded to speak of the "people of Kyrgyzstan" rather than the "peoples of Kyrgyzstan." At the same time, to ensure interethnic and civic harmony, an Assembly of the Peoples of Kyrgyzstan was created (Elebaeva 1999: 190).

Despite these arrangements, the "Kyrgyzation" of the state is growing. It is accompanied by the exclusion of members of other ethnic groups from important positions. The construction of *Manas* as a carrier of national identity, as an example to all "Kyrgyz," is viewed by many members of minorities much more critically than by the previously quoted Kyrgyz.

Saituna, a 52-year-old German teacher at the Balāsāġūn National University in Biškek, who is a Tatar married to a Kazakh, adds:

> This talk about Manas, he is supposed to be a hero (...) Nobody knows if this person really existed or whether he fell from the sky. You see, there was no written language here; the Kyrgyz began only after the October Revolution with the Latin script. Before, there wasn't even an Arabic script. That is why Manas was always only communicated orally.
>
> We never heard anything about Manas, not even in the Kyrgyz school. The interest in Manas didn't begin until Perestroika. In the past, we didn't need it. We had the ideology of communism, which we have now lost. We are atheists. Because we have no ideology, the ruling powers are searching frantically for an ideology. And this ideology is Manas.
>
> In the past, Manas was not so important, nobody was interested. We have no money, live poorly, and celebrated this expensive anniversary. My god, how unhappy the population was in 1995. There was great dissatisfaction during the anniversary. Do you understand me (...) It is a forced ideology, nothing more.

Sultan, a 25-year-old German teacher at the same university whose parents come from the Caucasus, also remembers the 1000-year celebration:

> Many Manas books appeared then, during the time of the 1000-year celebration. I saw the celebration on television. The newspapers concentrated on Manas because he is a Kyrgyz hero and this epic depicts the culture and tradition of the Kyrgyz people. That is why they pay so much attention to it. The celebration was majestic, but in our city there

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> is much unemployment. It cost a lot of money to put on this celebration. I think about the retirees who received no money for four or six months. The money went for the celebration. It appeared to me that the common people did not celebrate at all. They didn't know what to celebrate, who that was. The people in the villages didn't hear about it at all. They could not imagine what was being celebrated. The celebration was meant only for the people who lived in the city. Only those that were invited participated: professors, foreign guests.

Tatiana, a member of the Korean minority, is a 22-year-old project assistant with the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) in Biškek; she too does not think much of *Manas*:

> I completed school during the 1000-year celebration. We were supposed to go to the Kyrgyz theatre to see the Manas piece. I was curious why it was talked about for a whole year. The piece was in Kyrgyz, but even my Kyrgyz friend understood nothing. Despite simultaneous translation, my friends and I were lost and didn't even know what it was about. – Because of the heavy publicity, we, as members of the minorities, wanted to understand why there was so much advertisement for the epic. Some said that it was about national identity: "The Russians have so many heroes and can identify with them at any time. We had nothing. Now we have Manas! He is the one who unified all the tribes and created the Kyrgyz state." Others say: "Identity, identity. We need publicity so the tourists will come. Let them be interested in Manas." – That then was the reason! Only this way can I understand the 1995 campaign today. – In my opinion, Manas did not exist.

The student Olga, a 20-year-old member of the Russian minority, was the only one in her class to express a critical opinion in her essay:

> I have very little information about the *Manas* epic. I know that Manas was very strong and tall and that he is a hero to the Kyrgyz people. Manas is loved by the people, but not by me. He is not a god, but the Kyrgyz believe that. I believe that the story about the *Manas* epic is a simple fairy tale.

When we take a look at Akaev's policy, the skepticism of members of the minorities about the use of the epic for a national ideology can be well understood.

4. The end of an era

Akaev ruled the country and its five million inhabitants from the "White House" for 15 years. This was only possible through a constitutional amendment allowing him to stay in office longer than was originally permitted. Added to that came the manipulations which gave cause for concern that Akaev planned to hold this office for life.

As early as 1990, the election observer OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) found fault in the presidential election process in Kyrgyzstan. The conviction in the spring of 2000 of the opposition politician and strongest rival of Askar Akaev, Felix Kulov, for misuse of official power stimulated internal protests and external political attention. Kulov's acquittal in the

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summer was viewed by the OSCE as a positive sign in the run-up for the presidential elections planned for October 2000 (*Wostok* No. 4/2000: 7). However, at the beginning of 2001, Kulov was finally sentenced by a public military tribunal to seven years in prison. The former confidant of the president and minister of national security was accused of "document forgery." It came to demonstrations for his release. During altercations with police, several people were killed and more than 60 injured (*Frankfurter Rundschau* 3/19/2002).

An additional rigged parliamentary election in March 2005 finally led to Akaev's fall. After the vote tally for the new parliament, fewer than 10 opposition candidates had been elected; two of his children, however, were. As the resistance to the Akaev government in the poorer south started to seethe, no one in the capital in the better-off north was prepared to take to the streets, despite repeated vote fraud. Only after several articles in an opposition newspaper about Akaev's private residence, a white palace at the edge of the city, and the disclosure of the lucrative government positions occupied by members of his family, was there finally an uproar. It led to mass protests against the Akaev clan, not only in the south of the country, but also in the capital city. It is interesting that this opposition newspaper was produced in a print shop financed by the Freedom House foundation, which worked under contract of the US State Department (*Der Spiegel* 47/ 2005: 186f).

Akaev fled into exile. His family was accused of acquiring successful businesses through extortion. With an overwhelming majority, Bakijev, who was already acting president, was elected the new president in July 2005.

It is not yet possible to determine whether the *Manas* Epic as a national identity figure will be of significance under President Bakijev or whether the end of the Akaev era is also to be the end of the *Manas* era.

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