International Gender for Excellence Research Conference Proceedings

Selected Papers and Abstracts

Edited by

Lucia Amaranta Thompson

Selma Değirmenci

Tomas Brage

Sara Goodman

Mary Lou O'Neil

Part 1

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June 18-19, 2022

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Preface

This book represents one of the outcomes of the Gender for Excellence in Research EU project which seeks to promote the use of gender and gender theory in a range of disciplines amongst early-stage researchers (the academics of the future). Together the participants in this Early-Stage Research conference presented research from a variety of disciplines in the social sciences, humanities, natural and physical science. Their research through including gender as a concept and/or as a theoretical perspective, demonstrates how gender theory can contribute to expanding our understandings of different scientific phenomena. This project also appeals to the turn in academia towards interdisciplinarity knowledge production by challenging the ways in which knowledge is produced in different disciplines, including natural sciences.

The editors of this book would like to thank all the conferences participants, the staff of the Gender and Women Studies Research Centre, Kadir Has University, Istanbul, and all the members of the GenderEx Team, for their contributions to the First Gender for Excellence in Research Conference.

Lucia Amaranta Thompson, PhD Candidate, Department of Gender Studies, Lund University, Sweden

Tomas Brage, Division of Mathematical Physics, Dept of Physics, Lund University, Sweden

Selma Değirmenci, GenderEx Project Manager, Dr, Gender and Women's Studies Research Centre, Kadir Has University, Turkey

Sara Goodman, Retired Lecturer, Department of Gender Studies, Lund University, Sweden

Mary Lou O'Neil, GenderEx Project Director, Professor, Gender and Women's Studies Research Centre, Kadir Has University, Turkey

Pictures from Kadir Has University in Turkey

Introduction

This book collection is part of the GenderEX: Gender for Excellence in Research project, funded by Horizon 2020. GenderEX: Gender for Excellence in Research is a three-year project designed to build networks, exchange knowledge, and engage in best practices to stimulate the integration of the Sex and Gender Dimension in Research Content (SGDRC), between the Gender and Women's Studies Research Centre at Kadir Has University (GWSRC-KHAS) in Turkey and three internationally recognised partners in this area: the Lund University (Sweden), the University of Genoa (Italy), and Technological University Dublin (Ireland).

The papers and abstracts presented in this collection stem from the First International Gender for Excellence in Research Conference, which was held on June 18–19, 2022, at Kadir Has University in Istanbul, Turkey. The papers and abstracts collected here are a representative selection of those presented at the conference and make clear the wide range of subjects into which individuals are integrating a sex/gender perspective. For some of the authors, their paper represents the culmination of a journey that began with an idea presented at the GenderEX-supported Gender School, which was held at online in October 2021 and then developed into the paper presented at the First International Gender for Excellence in Research Conference and then revised for publication here.

The integration of the sex and gender dimension into research content is defined as an approach that addresses issues of gender, issues related to women and females, or issues related to men and males, none of which are considered mutually exclusive. GenderEX embodies an intersectional approach to SGDRC which recognises a multiplicity of gender identities and that gender is embedded in intertwined systems of difference and power. SGDRC as we envision it under GenderEX embraces intersections of gender and sexual orientation, race, class, religion, and ability and the ways in which these categories mutually construct gender identities. Although gender studies as an academic field has been well established for more than thirty years now, SGDRC in all aspects of academic research is far too often absent. This both represents and perpetuates the androcentric and biased orientation of academia and academic production. The importance of SGDRC lies in the ways in which it can illuminate the gendered mechanisms that produce inequalities. Furthermore, the lack of attention to SGDRC provides any number of previously unexplored areas for academic research and production.

Following the European Research Area for Gender Equality, GenderEX aims to "better integrate the gender dimension in projects to improve research quality as well as the relevance to society of the knowledge, technologies and innovations produced" (European Research Area, 2020) with a primary focus on Turkey, where the scientific gaps in this area are prominent. The key assumption that underpins this project is that gender has all too often been overlooked in many scientific areas, and that a sex/gender analysis is an indispensable means to innovate and drive excellence in research and tackle societal challenges. A sex and/or gender analysis obliges researchers to question stereotypes and gender norms and to ensure that research addresses the realities of all individuals, regardless of their gender identity.

Research that ignores sex/gender interactions is often incomplete and/or biased, which leads to the formulation of inadequate policies, programmes, theories, and outcomes. Researchers need greater awareness of the importance and benefits of integrating sex/gender into their work, as well as training on how to incorporate a sex/gender dimension into their research.

Studies have shown that the lack of a gender dimension in research design, implementation, and organisation may undermine scientific excellence and creativity, and reduce its benefits for society, and that gender inequalities have influenced the outcomes of research on a large scale (League of European Research Universities, 2012). The inclusion of a gender dimension in research helps prevent bias, as well as generating better quality results (European Commission, 2018). In order to overcome gender bias in science and technology, simply adding women, while important, is not enough. The integration of SGDRC should be implemented throughout the entire process of basic and applied research, including: priority setting, funding decisions, establishing project objectives and methodologies, data collection, evaluating results, and transferring ideas to markets. Researchers should be aware that their choices and priorities may have implications in terms of sex and/or gender and should know how to address them. Employing sex and gender analyses during research will add scientific value to the work and overcome the problem of gender blindness in research processes and outcomes. Sex and gender analyses can serve as a filter for bias.

Visibility in academia is a significant aspect of attracting opportunities for funding, and this is particularly true for early-stage researchers (ESRs) who are near the beginning of their careers. For this reason, the GenderEX project is hosting two international conferences that will create a platform for ESRs to share their research with a wider audience, have the opportunity to network with other early-career and established scholars, and receive feedback on their work. The First International Gender for Excellence in Research Conference is the first of these two conferences.

We are especially proud of those authors who have been with us throughout the evolution of the GenderEX project. The diversity of papers presented at the conference and those included in this volume demonstrate both the added value that a sex/gender perspective can bring and also the importance of ensuring that sex and/or gender are taken into consideration whatever the subject.

Mary Lou O'Neil, GenderEx Project Director, Professor, Gender and Women's Studies Research Centre, Kadir Has University, Turkey

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Pictures from Technological University of Dublin (Ireland)

Section 1: Selected Papers

Establishment of an Autoethnographic Self-Narrative Method by Researching the Availability of Abortion in the Context of Gender Studies

Deniz Altuntaş

Gender and Women's Studies Research Centre, Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

In Turkey, where abortion without restriction as to reason is currently legal for up to 10 weeks, subjects seeking access to abortion services encounter many challenges at both public[1] (O'Neil and Altuntaş, 2020) and private[2] hospitals. According to a report by Kadir Has University, the availability of abortion services without restriction as to reason at public hospitals is very low, while at private hospitals it is restricted, both economically and through some conditions. In this context, the results of the research on access to abortion services at private hospitals in Turkey contain qualitative challenges to the norms of traditional patriarchal society, based on different identities and belongings such as age, marital status, place of residence and underlying quantitative data.

In this article, an evaluation is made of the results gathered from 454 private hospital interviews,[3] which were the main structure of the field research conducted by Kadir

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[1] I should mention that in Turkey there is a bureaucratic difference between the terms 'state hospital' and 'public hospital'. While a state hospital is a specific type of hospital, the term public hospital is used for several different types of hospitals, such as city hospitals or education and research hospitals, and it includes the state hospital. This research contains all these kinds of hospitals which are dependent upon and funded by the Ministry of Health. For this research, I contacted a total of 295 public hospitals by using a method called the mystery client telephone survey in Turkey.

[2] We (the Director of the Gender Centee, Prof. Mary Lou O'Neil and I), applied the mystery client telephone survey as a method to contact 593 active private hospitals affiliated to the Private Hospitals Department of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Turkey, General Directorate of Health Services. The research on the availability of abortion services at private hospitals was completed in 2022.

[3] For this research, I collected both qualitative and quantitative data: I phoned the hospitals and asked our pre-prepared questions. Due to our mystery-client survey approach, the people we interviewed gave realistic answers about their daily routine. I also took notes on these answers during the

Has University between November 2021 and January 2022. Semi-structured interviews were conducted over a particular role of the interviewer that I will discuss under further, excluding subjectivity and different intersectionality status. In semi-structured interviews, which gather qualitative data, one can deepen the topic with new questions chosen in accordance with the conversation. This article was prepared in light of the results of the research and underlines the subjectivity of the feminist position by considering the concept of situated knowledge developed by Donna Haraway (1988) at the epistemological level. The researcher's position and experiences are socially constructed and, in this context, all identities and belongings are important for the findings of the research, which are unique. Hence, the researcher's position is not objective but constitutes subjectivity. The subjectivity of the researcher and the subjectivities reproduced within the scope of the research play an important role in revealing different stories. In this regard, during these interviews, if one were someone who really needed an abortion without restriction as to reason, one might hesitate to ask questions, one might not be able to call, one might fight with the call centre[4] on the phone, one might swear, hang up, or cry; in short, one might give very subjective or political responses. However, the communication continues with conversational answers that are appropriate for a particular role, as I will explain in detail below in the context of this research.

The focus here is not only on the feelings or pure experience of a person who wants to access abortion services, but also on the differentiation of barriers experienced by people in different situations in the face of current pronatalist policies. It is also not very realistic in real life for a person who wants to access abortion services to call 454 hospitals. Thus, there is an important gap between quantitative and qualitative data which this article aims to fill. This article identifies and analyses the limited access to abortion at private hospitals by means of storytelling. The aim is to criticise the problem of "abortion services: legal but not available" revealed by the quantitative data and to illuminate the process by means of a qualitative method, autoethnography and self-narrative methods, employed by a researcher with a situated knowledge position in gender studies.

This autoethnographic study, prepared in the social context of Turkey, reflects the reality of the challenges encountered by subjects who want to access abortion without restriction as to reason by applying the mystery-client method. Even though the subject

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conversations. However, it has not yet been published and, in order to improve the research, I prepared this article using the quantitative and qualitative data that I collected.

[4] Note that both private and public hospitals in Turkey use call centres to accept calls from clients.

of the research using the mystery-client method is confidential, this article retains its reality in the social context of Turkey.

Keywords: Autoethnography, gender studies, abortion, self-narrative, situated knowledge

Introduction

Termination of pregnancy has been one of the most important and primary issues of feminist struggle and in gender studies. Within the scope of this article, the right to self-determination applies not only to nations but also to individual citizens. As we can see in the map below, prepared by the World Health Organisation (WHO), termination of pregnancy can only be legally performed in 56 countries (red zone, almost half of the world) across the world, upon the woman's request with no requirement for justification without any justification. I should note that this applies in: Africa: 3, Asia: 15, Europe: 30, Latin America: 4, North America: 2, and Oceania: 1 countries with reference to the WHO's results by region. According to the WHO: "Around 73 million induced abortions take place worldwide each year. Six out of 10 (61%) of all unintended pregnancies, and 3 out of 10 (29%) of all pregnancies, end in induced abortion (World Health Organisation, 2021)". Below is a map showing countries where women can legally access abortion with no requirement for justification, in short only at the woman's request.

As shown on the map, Turkey is also in the red zone. But this title "*Legal but not necessarily available*" describes the most fundamental problem revealed by our research in Turkey. Although abortion without restriction as to reason is currently legal for up to 10 weeks, and has been since 1983, subjects seeking access to abortion services encounter many challenges at both public (O'Neil and Altuntaş, 2020) and private hospitals. Since the legalisation of abortion, many women have taken advantage of their right to legal abortion services in Turkey. In a newspaper article (*Evrensel Gazetesi*, 25 May 2022), it is reported that, after the enactment of the law in 1983, people were selected by lottery due to the increasing number of abortion appointments at a state hospital in Istanbul. This anecdote was a hugely significant piece of information for me. The right to abortion is vital, but availability is limited. According to a study conducted by Hacettepe University, approximately 15% of women stated that they had had an abortion at least once in their lives (Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, 2018). However, in recent years, there have been many reports questioning the availability of abortion services, especially in public hospitals, in Turkey today.
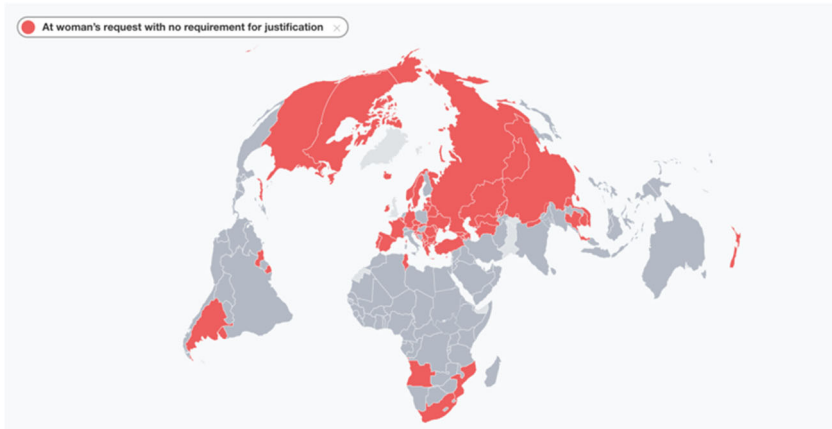
Figure 1: Global Abortion Policies Database, World Health Organisation

The red zone on this map indicates the countries in which abortion is legally available. The number of countries by region are Africa: 3, Asia: 15, Europe: 30, Latin America: 4, North America: 2, Oceania: 1 with reference to the WHO's results by region (World Health Organisation, 2021). Note that the numbers may have changed since this paper was published.

According to the report by Kadir Has University Gender and Women's Studies Research Centre,[6] the availability of abortion without restriction as to reason at public hospitals is very low; while at private hospitals it is restricted, both economically and through some conditions. In this context, the results of research investigating access to abortion services at private hospitals in Turkey reveal qualitative challenges due to traditional patriarchal social norms – based on different identities and belongings such as age, marital status, and place of residence – behind the quantitative data. However, this article has been prepared using the quantitative data gathered during the research on the availability of abortion services in private hospitals in Turkey in 2022, taking into account the situation we mentioned in the introduction. This research, and subsequent work, systematically attempts to answer the question of whether abortion is available at private hospitals in Turkey, and under what conditions.

It should be noted that, the more people there are, the more stories there are in the world. Within the scope of this article, one of my goals is to make the obstacles visible and critique them by telling just a few of the billions of stories. The main aim of this study is to take a critical step towards ensuring access to the right to abortion without restriction in a healthy, safe, equal, and fair manner for every subject in need all over

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[6] Henceforth, I will refer to this briefly as 'the Gender Centre'.

the world, and to critique the current situation using a feminist approach. It should not be forgotten that the more subjects, the more stories. In this article, I seek to critique the problem of 'abortion services: legal but not available' revealed by the quantitative data and to explore the process using a qualitative approach: autoethnography and self-narrative methods, as a researcher with a situated knowledge position in gender studies. The second aim is to highlight the process of struggle to solve a problem. I conduct this research, analyse the outputs, and create the stories as a feminist, a researcher, and a woman living in Turkey. I would like to underline that the questions I asked and the answers I received in the stories I chose were real. Also, I concluded the story with a happy ending, as everyone wanted to have the right to access the possibility of abortion.

Methodology

In this article, an evaluation is made of the results of 454 private hospital interviews, which were the main component of the field research conducted by the Gender Centre between November 2021 and January 2022. Semi-structured interviews with hospitals were conducted over a particular role of the interviewer excluding subjectivity and different intersectionality status as I mentioned and discussed this role and questions below to ensure standardisation of the research. For this research we don't focus on other identities or belongings such as being a Kurdish or Turkish woman, a rich or poor woman. I should emphasise that these interviews were a mystery-client survey; this is a method in which the client's identity is not known to the hospital during the phone conversation. Furthermore, the interviewees did not know that they were taking part in research. In semi-structured interviews, where both qualitative and quantitative data are obtained, we are able to deepen our understanding of the topic by introducing new questions chosen in accordance with the direction of the conversation. This article was prepared in light of the results of the research. It underlines the subjectivity of the feminist position by considering the concept of *situated knowledge* developed by Donna Haraway (1988) at the epistemological level. The researcher's position and experiences are socially constructed and, in this context, all identities and belongings are important for the findings of the research, which is unique. Hence, the researcher's position is not objective, but constitutes subjectivity. The subjectivity of the researcher and the subjectivities reproduced within the scope of the research play a crucial role in revealing different stories.

Haraway writes that: "Feminist objectivity means quite simply situated knowledges" (1988, p. 581. We subjects have many different experiences and knowledge sets, and our work cannot be built independently of them. As Haraway exemplifies, researchers

cannot perform the God Trick, and "situated knowledges are about communities, not about isolated individuals. The only way to find a larger vision is to be somewhere in particular" (Haraway, 1988, p. 590). In the context of 'situated knowledge', I have conducted this research, analysed the outputs, and created the stories as a feminist, a researcher, and a woman living in Turkey.

The construction stages of the research are based on this epistemological basis. We as a research team thought and planned down to the last detail how we would advance this process. We applied a mystery-client telephone survey by contacting 593 active private hospitals affiliated to the Private Hospitals Department of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Turkey. We prepared a list of private hospitals for communication by working with a list covering all the provinces[7] in Turkey, which we created based on the Ministry of Health list, which can be accessed online. At the time the list was prepared, there were a total of 593 private hospitals in Turkey.

Generally, private hospitals in Turkey can provide abortion services according to *Article 4: the Regulation on the Execution and Supervision of Uterine Evacuation and Sterilisation Services*, within a Gynaecology and Obstetrics department. Private hospitals that do not have Gynaecology and Obstetrics departments – such as Oral and Dental Health, Eye, or Chest Diseases Hospitals – were not included in the list and the sample was revised for abortion services.

Afterwards, we prepared our questions for the research we had created in this way for the interviews. However, we added additional questions and categories because sometimes issues that we had not anticipated came up. Therefore, we continued our research using the semi-structured interview method with the questions listed below:

1. Is abortion available at the hospital?

2. Is abortion without restriction as to reason available at the hospital?[8]

3. Is abortion available in cases of medical necessity?

4. If the answers to the previous questions were "no", we asked for confirmation that "abortion services are not available under any circumstances".

5. Why are abortion services not available?

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[7] Turkey has 81 provinces.

[8] In the context of Turkey, the 1st and 2nd questions are different from each other. Because, as we see in the results of this research, the issue of 'abortion without restriction as to reason' is controversial.

6. Is medical abortion[9] available?

7. [If abortion without restriction as to reason is available] What is the examination and processing fee? Does the Social Insurance Institution cover it?

8. [If abortion without restriction as to reason is available] For how many weeks after conception can it be done? Is an appointment available?

9. [If abortion without restriction as to reason is not available] What else can be offered? (Such as another method, hospital, or doctor, etc.)

Working with a prepared text that matched the specific profile of a person who wants to access the abortion service, I as the researcher contacted all of the hospitals during a period of three months. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which affected the whole world, hospitals were expected to be very busy and so those that could not be reached were called again on different days and at different times. Forty out of the 593 private hospitals could not be reached because their phones were not answered, and we learned that 43 private hospitals had been closed. Thus, the final sample consists of 454 hospitals. Due to the inaccessibility of abortion services, those who want to access abortion services were required to go to the hospital even just to get information during the pandemic.

Considering the traumatic effects of these interviews on my psychology, *which could be the subject of different a research project and discussion,* I conducted a maximum of 10–15 interviews in a day. Although I was using a false identity for the research and was not currently in need of an abortion, I generally aimed to reduce the traumatic effect that the restrictions on freedom and inaccessibility of abortion had upon me in order to conduct the research more healthily and to think scientifically and objectively without an individual focus. This is why I mentioned Haraway's concept of situated knowledge. Haraway talked about this phenomenon in 1988 and, 34 years later, I claim that this research can be conducted by using the same concept, which has continued to be important and is widely used in gender studies and other research fields. As a woman living alone, a part of feminist struggle for years, and a researcher trying to bring these positions together, in my opinion the gathering of this knowledge is very important. I believe that all the knowledge and experience we have gained in this universe constitute our next step, our research, our position, and our options. In addition, if we think that everything in the universe affects everything else at some point, it is obvious that we do not live in a sealed glass bell jar, in isolation from all other influences. As a result, the

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[9] The term 'medical abortion' refers to ending a pregnancy by using pharmaceutical methods.

information we have and the ideas we defend are the result of all these interactions and cannot be considered independently of each other.

From this perspective, in these interviews, if I had been someone who really needed an abortion without restriction as to reason, I, personally, might hesitate to ask questions, I might not be able to call, I might fight with the call centre on the phone, I might swear, I might hang up or cry. In short, as a researcher I would be able to give more subjective or political responses. However, the conversations I had with the hospital personnel continues with conversational answers that are appropriate for a particular role in the context of the research.

The focus here is not only on the feelings or pure experience of a person who wants to access abortion services, but also on the differentiation of barriers experienced by people in different situations in the face of current pronatalist policies. It is also not very realistic in real life for a person who wants to access abortion services to call 454 hospitals. Thus, there is an important gap between quantitative and qualitative data that this article aims to fill. This article identifies and analyses the limited access to abortion at private hospitals by means of storytelling. By means of creative fiction that I created using the self-narrative method, I narrate the research outputs by blending them together with methodology and emotions.

I chose the method of autoethnography as the best way to narrate this kind of qualitative data gathered from my own experience under a different identity. As Adams, Jones, and Ellis (2015: p. 1 state: "autoethnographic stories are artistic and analytic demonstrations of how we come to know, name and interpret personal and cultural experience". Everything that I describe and critique in this article demonstrates the process of access to abortion services in Turkey as people start thinking about what to do, and how to deal with the situation, as well as their feelings. According to Wall (2006), autoethnographic methodology provides a wide-ranging understanding of experience by writing in a personalised style. Using the method of autoethnography with storytelling is a way of examining and explaining the problem experienced by people investigating the availability of abortion and to discuss a difficult subject using the simplest and most striking method. For instance, during my high school years, I used to write stories using the storytelling technique to facilitate my understanding of subjects such as physics and chemistry. I aimed to combine storytelling with all the methodology I mentioned above.

This autoethnographic study is prepared in the social context of Turkey and reflects the reality of the challenges encountered by subjects who want to access abortion without restriction as to reason by employing the mystery-client method. Even though the subject of the research using the mystery-client method is confidential, this article

retains its reality in the social context of Turkey. I use my own personal experience with autoethnography, a qualitative research method, to identify and critique existing norms, practices, and problems.

My pseudonym for this research is Menekşe, who is a 30-year-old, single woman seeking a place that will provide her with an abortion. Being single can mean different things; an unmarried woman could be have a partner or not. According to the law in Turkey if a woman is married, she is need to have her husband's signature for the abortion. But there is no such a regulation for unmarried women. It means the hospital personal can ask about neither husband or partner's information nor their signature. So, it doesn't matter whether she has a partner. For this research her partner is not involved in the process. And to see the reactions against single women, we chose to say "he is not in the process". For this article, I selected 10 from a total of 454 interviews to be categorised and narrated. In this way, I can specify the story series that resulted from all this as follows:

> Case 1: Appointment
>
> Case 2: Being a single woman
>
> Case 3: Where is his/her father?
>
> Case 4: Is she/he alive?
>
> Case 5: Personal information
>
> Case 6: Hospital is calling back
>
> Case 7: Additional services
>
> Case 8: Medical abortion
>
> Case 9: Forbidden
>
> Case 10: Don't worry

Even though Menekşe is fictive, the cases remain true. There are major problems with the availability of abortion services in Turkey. As the report "Legal but not accessible: Abortion services in public hospitals in Turkey" (O'Neil and Altuntaş, 2020) states, abortion services were available in only 10 out of 295 public hospitals in Turkey; these hospitals are located in only eight of Turkey's 81 provinces. And in 2022, we were able to access abortion without restriction at only 206 out of 454 private hospitals.

Autoethnographic and Self-Narrative Examples from the Research

In this article, I, as a researcher, have used my own personal experience with a qualitative research method, autoethnography (Poulos, 2021) to identify and critique existing norms, practices, and problems. However, the researcher is not a subject living alone in a glass bell jar; therefore, I think the researcher's relationship with other people is important. In addition, I am trying to carefully accurately report the circumstances that I am questioning with my experience as a researcher in this situation. My aim is to highlight the process of struggle in order to gain knowledge to help solve a problem. While doing this, I use the self-narrative method to create a story by blending research outputs with methodology and emotions into a creative piece of fiction that I have written.

As I mentioned in the methodology section, I was able to contact 454 private hospitals within the scope of the research. However, as the result of a process of elimination that I applied by considering answers, attitudes, dialogues, and suggestions, I chose 10 case examples as falling within the scope of this article. Thus, I focused on categorising them. I recorded the conversations by taking notes with a pen and notebook, I did not use a voice recorder in any way. Firstly, I started with the themes to be included in the story after analysing the results of the research. The reason why I chose these 10 interviews in particular was because I judged them to be the most remarkable and impressive interviews.

In particular, I chose the examples from different topics so that I could create the process as parts of a single cohesive story. In the end, because I aimed to reach a happy ending, I encapsulated the interviews and categorisation within this fiction. In the storytelling that I created from the qualitative results of this research, I did not mix up any of interviews. However, the expressions and observations are based entirely on my own perspective and form the basis of this autoethnographic work.

Case 1: Appointment

I am excited, but this is not a thrill that fills my heart with happiness. My name is Menekşe, I am a 30-year-old woman living alone; I am six weeks pregnant; I want to have an abortion and the reason is nobody's business but my own. I searched online and looked at maps to find a hospital that I could easily reach. I'm worried, because I read on the news a few years ago how difficult it is to access abortion services at public

hospitals. That's why I called the private hospital, I thought I would at least get better service for the money.

I dialled the phone number, waited through those endless boring information messages… I'm worried anyway, my heart is pounding; yes, finally the phone is connected to the call centre. Hello… I asked the call centre directly but hesitantly if they provided abortion services without restriction. The person I spoke to said that they do provide abortion services without restriction at the hospital, but the gynaecologist and the public relations manager of the hospital meet with the patients beforehand. "They're personally interested," she said.

Although a doctor's examination before the procedure is a normal situation, she did not give detailed information about the connection of the public relations manager to the meeting. I was concerned that the public relations manager was involved in this process without the consent of an adult individual who wanted to access the health information that goes into high-quality personal data and an abortion.

In addition to this, I was given a negative answer to the question of whether I can have a medical abortion or if it's possible. When I asked how far into the pregnancy I could have it done, I got the answer of 10 weeks, in terms of the legal process, anyway. This gave me some relief. Although some of the examination and processing fee insurance is covered by my medical insurance, I was informed that the fee for the optional abortion service varies "according to the week and size of the child" and that there is no fixed fee. Is it a child? Just a six-week-old embryo, only about 12mm long.

At this point, I gave up. I do not want to include a public relations manager in my decision, I will meet with another hospital.

Case 2: Being a single woman

I gave up on that hospital, but not on terminating my pregnancy. Since I was born, I have been exposed to all kinds of discrimination and marginalisation just because I'm female. The answers to my dreams used to start with: "You're a girl, you can't do it." Now I'm a 30-year-old adult woman and I'm facing obstacles again. But I will not give up, I hope that of course I will achieve my legal right. Hoping…

What an interesting feeling it is, that I'm uncertain whether I will be able to exert a legally protected right or not. Isn't that the gender inequality we live in? Equal access to rights, freedoms, and opportunities… Anyway, I found another hospital, I'm calling now, I can't waste time. A male operator answered the phone. I immediately asked without further ado: "Do you provide abortion without restriction?" His first question was: "Are you married?" I said no. "I understand... That... Well, how old are you,

ma'am? Co-signature is required," he said, and the uncertainty in my mind began to grow.

When I said I was not married, he forwarded me to a male doctor. "Married? Single?" the doctor asked. Why was it so important to define my legal rights in terms of marital status? Of course, I said I was single. He asked how many pregnancies it was; I thought the conversation was getting more interesting and I said first. "Then 2,500 Turkish liras," he said. How? I asked if the prices were changing: "It changes, it would be the same with the second or third pregnancy. It also varies according to birth and caesarean section. Depends on how many children you had before. And you're single, it's troublesome," he said.

I couldn't understand. Yes, as a woman, I've experienced "being the other" many times, but what did you mean when you said "troublesome"? I asked. "Now you're single, how should I know whether you're with someone? You're in legal trouble with someone."

I was surprised, then surprised that I can still be surprised. In addition, this situation determines the price. In the end, he said that 10 weeks is the limit for abortion without restriction, but I could not elicit any information from him about whether a single woman can receive the service or not. I learned that a single adult woman was legally and practically "troublesome". That's how they saw it. I wanted to try my chances with medical abortion, but he said: "It's made for the very small, it's not a pill for six weeks." I took a deep breath, said thank you, and ended the call. Let me go have a glass of water and keep looking.

Case 3: Where is the father?

I will not stop hoping, I believe I can at least find a safe space somewhere in this whole country. Yes, I found another hospital. "I want to terminate my pregnancy, do you, have it?" I feel like I'm going from store to store looking for an outfit that fits my size but can't find it. Was there anything this time?

She said: "This is for married people, not for single people." Another thing that makes me sad is that I'm single. "But I'm single, so is there any other place you can recommend for me? How can I reach it?" She said: "You can call other hospitals and find out." I was thinking, I guess that's all I can do right now, when I got another unexpected answer: "You have to come and sign with the father. If there is no father, it's not done that way." The father? A chickpea-like embryo, which is still only 12mm long, unborn and has no identity, automatically gives a man the status of a father. I believe and wish I can reach the abortion services, I can overcome the obstacles in my way. A different

hurdle appears in front of me during every search. Nobody even asks what I want. A little rebellion started to form inside me. I thought it shouldn't be this hard to enact a right. I will continue.

Case 4: Is she/he alive?

My initial anxiety grows, but my mother always said that I'm stubborn. I can do this too. I'm looking for another hospital, so I ask the same question again: "Do you, have it?" I'm shocked by the question that comes in response to my question: "Is it alive?" Suddenly I find myself in a problematic of being. I don't understand why they're asking such questions, is it to reinforce the question? To reinforce the importance of the question? To convey indirectly the emphasis that a 12mm embryo, which has not yet been born, and is therefore a chickpea that has not acquired the right to personality, is considered alive? I don't know. How will the emphasis on it being a living being affect me? No, I can't accept that, how am I in a position to have an abortion without restriction? What I'm going through must be some kind of emotional violence. Does anyone accept *my* life as a living being? Of course, there must be one, and I will find it.

Case 5: Personal information

I, as Menekşe, want to access my right to abortion but, as you can see from the subtitles, I'm facing a multitude of problems. I take a deep breath and dial another hospital's number. The rebellion that currently exists is being replaced by a new feeling of despair. If I cannot get an abortion, what will I do? What kind of future can I imagine where I am not allowed to make decisions about my own life? Ah, the hospital has picked up the phone. "Do you do pregnancy termination?" Yes, they do, and no one is asking whether I'm married! I guess this time it will happen, I knew I could make it. Well, I wonder if there was an alternative medical abortion, I did a lot of research on the internet.

Medical abortion is preferred in many countries because it's easier and more accessible, but I don't know what the situation is in Turkey. Such things are never talked about here: Shame! Anyway, the person I talked to on the phone said: "No, it's not healthy." Okay, at least there is abortion using aspiration. I immediately asked for an appointment, and of course I wanted to know how much time I have left within the legal time limits of the law. I may be a 30-year-old adult woman, but I work. I need to get annual leave and handle this process silently.

After all, abortion is a very controversial subject in this society, I'm not sure if I can handle people's weird looks. If I say I'm going to visit my mother and get annual leave,

what will happen? "Family" is important here… Yes, an appointment is available; "Unwanted pregnancy? Married-single? How many weeks?" the receptionist asked. Desirable or undesirable; I want to terminate this pregnancy and the answer to this question is of no interest to anyone but me. Let's not forget that they asked about my marital status… Anyway, the receptionist said, I can come tomorrow at least.

But I have to be careful, the doctor was only doing abortion up to nine weeks; "doctor won't do if it's 10 weeks," the receptionist said. I'm not sure whether I should be happy that I haven't approached the nine-week limit yet, or whether I should be angry that they've put yet another obstacle in place, even though the legal limit is 10 weeks. No, I will not be angry, everything is fine. I have only one question left: the examination and processing fee. The receptionist said: "There is no examination fee," which is great, but I wonder how much the processing fee is: "5,000 TL, but if you want it to be confidential, you have to pay an extra 400 TL. If you have social insurance from the state, an extra 315 TL is paid. If it's nine weeks, the cost becomes 10,000 TL."

I can't believe it, I want to have it performed silently, but what is this privacy issue? If I don't pay extra, who will hear and who will know? No, no one should hear, I don't want that. I also earn the minimum wage of 4,253 TL per month that I received in 2022. Rent, bills, food expenses that increase every day… I give up my salary to one place or another; I never see the money. Where will I find 5,315 liras? It's not enough for me to make decisions for my future. Let me keep this hospital to one side; if I can't find a more suitable place, I must come here. I'm very unhappy and worried; the hours are passing…

Case 6: Hospital is calling back

Another hospital, another number, another operator… I called, but no one answered the phone.[10] Maybe, during the pandemic, hospitals are very busy: doctors are resigning, examination times are getting shorter…

I feel a little mentally tired, I need a rest, so I take a shower. The hot water feels very good, and I become calmer. I look at my phone to check the time, I've only been away for half an hour! And the hospital that I just called and couldn't reach, called back. I was very upset by this. Maybe I was calling from a very distant city, maybe I was alone

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[10] *Note: We called the hospitals that we could not reach normally, on different days and at different times. The hospitals we interviewed sometimes asked: "Give your number, you can be called back by the relevant department" (sometimes the obstetrics and gynaecology department, sometimes the cashier) on the grounds that they do not have enough information about the abortion service. In order not to hold up the research, when this question is asked, I state "I don't want to be called back".*

when I first called, but then the person who had exposed me to violence would come home…I could have had a lot of different stories that might have compromised my safety. It could be that my partner, who didn't know I wanted an abortion, or that I was pregnant, or a family member I didn't want to share this information with, could pick up the phone. Why might Menekşe have called a hospital miles away? I might have been at greater risk if I was exposed to violence. Having been called back without even getting my approval for the callback turned my anxiety into fear. Okay, it could have been an emergency, but I phoned the hospital call centre, not the emergency line. I thought: "there can be no excuse for this." I feel in more danger than ever, but I'll keep going.

Case 7: Additional services

It's like I haven't taken a hot shower a short while ago; I feel angry, aggressive, unhappy… I sing a song by Tarkan and dance with strange movements by myself: "This is the last blow, not the first." He's right, this was not the first time I had faced an obstacle posed by inequality, it was not the first time I had struggled so hard to achieve a right. Even when I wanted to go to university, our relatives said: "Investing in a girl is pointless, get married." I didn't give up then, and I won't give up now. Ok I'm ready now, yes, I'm dialling the next hospital.

They have an abortion service, this is good news to start with: "Ten weeks is the limit, but you have to do it right away, the price changes a lot after eight weeks," he said. I've reached the abortion services, but I can't get past this economic barrier. Even during the first few minutes of the conversation, I'm in despair. I wonder: what kind of fee will this hospital ask for? I hesitate to ask about the inspection and processing fee. The examination fee is 200 TL, the transaction fee is 2,300 TL.

Then, I suddenly get new, interesting information: "If you're married, if you have children, they fit coils for free. If you're single, they don't." If I were married, access to a birth control method would be free. But I guess I'm being punished differently by the system again for being single. Should single people not have sex? During the previous calls, the issue of privacy came to my mind, and I wonder what the procedure is here. I asked if they were saving the data on the system. "They write to the system as pregnancy, they're required by law to write it," she said, and hung up the phone without prolonging the conversation. The procedure fee is also affordable compared to other hospitals, but I didn't like the way they treated me. Discrimination even in additional services…

However, married and unmarried persons alike conceive, and give birth. While I'm tired of discrimination based on gender, I'm also experiencing a separate form of discrimination between women: single woman, married woman. How many identities we have, and this (patriarchal) system forcibly imposes all of them on us. My hope is about to run out.

Case 8: Medical abortion

I want to find a solution as soon as possible. Being a single woman living alone is not easy. I must be patient a little while longer, let me call one more number. Again and again, I asked if they provided optional abortion. They said: "Yes, we do, but first we look at the examination and availability." I was happy after so many negative answers! Well, I asked, do you provide medical abortion? "There's no such thing, if there was, everyone would do it, right?" and he laughed. Was my question funny? Or is it the knowledge that not everyone can access this right? In fact, I also love to laugh, I laugh most at those who say, "women will not laugh in public". But this time I couldn't laugh.

Never mind, don't think about it, Menekşe, let's ask, is an appointment available for abortion? Yes… I asked how much time I had, time is very important to me. He said six to seven weeks at the latest. I'm at the limit! How can this happen when the legal requirement is 10 weeks? He said, "You can tell the doctor when you come, we can do the procedure without signing in for the appointment." How secure was the recording of such personal data for my life and future? Will my information be confidential? In general, his attitude seemed to be helpful, but I will never forget that implicit smile. I've put it on the list of hospitals I can go to, but hopefully I can find a safer area.

Case 9: Forbidden

A safe area, a safe hospital, a safe house, a safe street, a safe school, a safe service… I wonder whether I'm asking too much. Don't we have the right to an equal and free life? Whether society accepts it or not, there are single women like me who live alone, and we want to live, by our own decisions…

I started to feel that my energy was running low enough for today, even my hands and voice had begun to tremble. I must resist. Watching the flowers by the window, I dialled another number and asked if they provided abortion without restriction. But the person I spoke to said: "There is no optional abortion at this hospital."

Abruptly, I fell into my chair. It was as though these obstacles were pressing on my shoulders, my whole body began to go numb. I asked with great calmness why it was not done. I was given the answer: "It's not done at the patient's own request."

I wanted to confirm this by asking if it's not done in any way. To my surprise, some hospitals were able to provide this service only in certain compulsory situations: "It's not done at the patient's own request. Even if it's one day old, it cannot be done. It's illegal," the receptionist said. Is it forbidden? So, my own will doesn't matter? So, someone other than me has the last word over my body? I know it's not forbidden, and I should have an abortion… I asked if there was another place this receptionist could recommend. "I don't know, I don't want to mislead," they said. What was wrong here? Is it me, is it forbidden, or is it my right?

Case 10: Don't worry

It's almost time for working hours to end. I want to call one more place and finish today. Worry, fear, worthlessness; in addition to all of these, I felt helpless. The circle around me was getting narrower. If I had a lot of money, I could get the service at the hospital that I would most prefer among all these encounters. Ok, I'm ready for the last call. I take a deep breath and dial the number.

Good news! They have pregnancy termination, and the operator forwards me to the doctor. I immediately ask if they also do medical abortion: "Small pieces of the foetus may remain. There is no harm. Those who are harmed are those who are not treated in the right place and under the right conditions." I guess I should be glad, someone has finally highlighted the importance of safe spaces.

I asked about the appointment status, because, as I've told you before, I'm working, I will take leave accordingly: "What time do you leave work? If there's a problem, you can tell me when you come, I will come to the hospital at that time." I don't want to say that this is a dream because it's such a cliché. The people I've spoken to since this morning have acted so much as if I didn't have any rights… I got used to so many rejections and obstacles…

"Ten weeks is legal, but don't leave it that long. How many weeks are you?" asked the doctor. I said six weeks. Finally, there is the issue of examination and processing fee, but this time I don't want to be eliminated at the last stage: "They give information when it comes to the processing fee, but don't worry, I'll see you there," he said confidently. Maybe he didn't say the price, but it was very valuable to me that he told me that I was not alone, that I was safe, that I shouldn't worry. Yes, I will make an appointment here.

Conclusion

There are so many different stories, so many different women face these problems every day. Menekşe finally accessed her right to abortion without restriction. She is doing very well now; she is continuing her life and making her own decisions. Menekşe is one of us, Menekşe is us.

This article is a qualitative study prepared using autoethnography and self-narrative methods, and seeks to contribute to gender studies. It highlights a problem posed by the quantitative data: The availability of abortion without restriction at private hospitals in Turkey is limited. Since the research method by which we collected quantitative data is the 'mystery-client' experiment, 'I', the person conducting the interviews, is both a fake person and a real subject, a woman, who is conducting research in the society in which she lives. If we think within the scope of situated knowledge, which I described in the introduction, it is possible to say that this research is not independent of my experience and knowledge in gender studies, feminism, feminist struggle, daily life, and so on…

As I mentioned at the beginning, even though the person called Menekşe is a fiction, the cases remain true. There are major problems with the availability of abortion services in Turkey. As the authors of "Legal but not accessible: Abortion services in public hospitals in Turkey" (O'Neil & Altuntaş, 2020) stated in their 2020 report, abortion services were available in only 10 out of 295 public hospitals in Turkey, and these hospitals are located in only eight of Turkey's 81 provinces. And, in 2022, we were able to access abortion without restriction at only 206 out of 454 private hospitals.

If public hospitals do not provide abortion services, where can we go? The first thing that came to our minds was 'private hospitals', and we expanded our research. Within the scope of the research, we observed that the problems of availability being experienced still continued. However, we found that there are some different dynamics in private hospitals; for example, the State Insurance does not cover the costs, or only covers a small fraction of the costs. In the stories above, I also included various other relevant dynamics such as wages, marital status, registration in the system, extra fees, privacy, and additional services.

The unavailability of hospitals in the city where a woman lives creates a huge obstacle: according to the results of this research, there are provinces that do not perform abortions without restriction in either public or private hospitals. Maybe many stories do not end happily like the one I have constructed using the self-narrative method; we do not know. What we do know is that abortion without restriction is a legal right in Turkey, and yet there exists an enormous availability problem in both private and

public hospitals. This research, which we have carried out from a feminist perspective, clearly reveals this loss of rights experienced by individual women as a group.

Research on the availability of abortion reveals that, although it is legal, access to it is not available without restriction due both to demands for women to give a reason and through some additional conditions. Subjects are coerced into going to different cities, trying unsafe methods in unsafe places, hiding, paying extra fees, or giving birth against their will. In this context, the right and freedom of subjects to make decisions about their own lives are precluded. The unreality, in which the legal is presented as forbidden, constitutes the reality of a pronatalist policy. One conclusion we draw in this article is that the subjects who want to access abortion without restriction as to reason become very vulnerable and isolated in different ways in this situation. It should be noted that a subject who needs this service in real life might not have the time to explore as many alternatives as I did or a psychological state that can handle such traumatic interviews.

When we look at the overall research, all the stories I tell in the cases above are actual dialogues made up of experiences with different doctors/nurses/call-centre operators/health personnel in different cities, and in different hospitals. I did not make any changes to what they said, and I narrated my own experiences and feelings in the context of the article's method.

Finally, I must state that, as a woman, a feminist, and a researcher, the stories gathered within the scope of this research and article are not only mine, but ours as well. Women make their own memories and history.

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Learning and Practising Architecture: What a Gap!

Cristina Càndito & Alessandro Meloni

Department of Architecture and Design, University of Genoa, Genova, Italy

Introduction

Gender inequalities seem to be an unavoidable condition of our society; however, it can be observed that there are moments and fields in which women appear to be in the foreground in terms of both numbers and results. For example, it is easy to recognise female predominance in architectural degree courses, although the situation seems reversed when we talk about architectural design assignments, especially in the elite circles of Archistars. Is this a problem of different abilities shown by women and men, or is it only a matter of social disparity?

The present paper focuses on different stages of learning during Architecture undergraduate and master's degree courses, comparing student numbers and the results obtained by women and men. The aim is to verify whether specific capabilities can be observed through the tools that are used to evaluate real learning results in terms of natural predispositions or acquired competences.

We consider the entire educational path of architectural representation disciplines at the University of Genoa. Different stages of the learning path undertaken by male and female students are discussed. Initial tests aimed at establishing the inclinations and existing knowledge of students enrolled in the first year of the Architecture degree are shown. These tests are made up of open questions probing basic knowledge of methods of representation and their history and meaning, combined with a test focused on determining spatial skills, mainly comprehension of the three-dimensional nature of space and objects. Secondly, assessment tests during the first-year course are used to establish how many students are able to maintain an appropriate learning rhythm. Thirdly, final examination results are compared with the previous two stages. In order to complete the picture, final examinations from the last year of the master's degree

course are also considered. In this way, we can represent the full learning path of students in Architecture in order to compare it with the presence of female architects in the Archistars firmament.

1. Women in architecture

"Which architects do you consider fundamental for their theories and works?" This was a question some professors asked us in the long-ago 1980s as first-year students in architecture. I can remember our answer often included some sacred monsters of the twentieth century: Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, and Louis Kahn. I could never have imagined that some of their most fascinating projects had their origins in the work of other architects: specifically female architects.

The profession of architect has traditionally been reserved for men, except on rare occasions that document only the uniqueness of the individual protagonists. However, this is not the focus of the present discussion.

Since the time when, after a long struggle, women first gained the right to become architects, our society has come a long way. The first step was taken when women were admitted to university courses in architecture. In Europe, this first occurred in Finland, and the first woman in Europe to graduate as an architect did so in 1890 (Schulman, 2017). In London, alongside the battles of the Suffragettes, the Architectural Association accepted women from 1917 (Darking, 2018), despite resistance and disagreement from existing male members of Association.

The same reluctance was also seen in Germany, in the progressive Bauhaus school, although the admissions policy (1919) officially stated: "Any person of good repute, without regard to age or sex, whose previous education is deemed adequate by the Council of Masters, will be admitted as far as space permits". In fact, women were only welcomed onto some courses and the same Walter Gropius[11] was convinced that they were not physically or genetically qualified for certain arts, because men thought in three dimensions, whilst women could only cope with two (Corinne, 2019).

In the USA, one of the first women graduates from Harvard was Anne Griswold Tyng (1920–2011) in 1944, and she became one of the most important associates in the firm of Louis I. Kahn (1901–1974) between 1945 and 1964. Nowadays, critics are aware of the role she played in various projects carried out for Kahn's firm and how some of her

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[11] Water Adolph Gropius (18 May 1883 – 5 July 1969) was one of the most important architect of the XX century. He founded the Bauhaus School and was director until the 1928.

work could be of interest (Càndito & Meloni, 2022). However, in university texts and classes, often the only name mentioned is that of Kahn.

"A body of theory and design in architecture apparently must be associated by architecture critics with an individual" stated Denise Scott Brown (2000, p. 258). She explained how the attribution to her of the main part of the seminal text *Learning from Las Vegas*, written jointly with her husband Robert Venturi and Steven Izenour, has always been ignored by the critics. All architects can confirm that the new vision born from an innovative teaching experience is usually attributed to Venturi, the post-modernist American architect. It is more effective to assign a building's architecture or theory to one strong personality, so a similar misattribution frequently occurs in architecture firms, as all young architects – both male and female – know, but where the attribution concerns a woman, we can be sure that omission occurs.

It is a question of numbers, because we can obviously find relevant female architects, such as the famous Zaha Hadid, the first woman to receive the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 2004 and the gold medal of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 2016.

The episodes mentioned are extremely important in the history of architecture, but the problem we are trying to investigate (not to solve) is: are men really more deserving of becoming architects due to a natural inclination? We may note that women currently make up the majority of students in architecture, and we are aware that professors and successful architects are mostly men; therefore, we will try to clarify some of the aspects related to key abilities that we can detect during architectural undergraduate and master's degree courses.

2. Profession and university, statistics in Italy

To address this issue of gender differences in the field of architecture, it is important to define a general framework for the current situation regarding the role of women within the architectural world, from both an educational and a professional point of view. This argument is central to the contemporary international debate (Toy, 2000; Stratigakos, 2016; Ippolito, 2021) and sees the figure of the woman emerge from a numerical and capacity point of view. However, these characteristics are not yet fully recognised. We intend to analyse the Italian architectural context[12] where the gender difference, despite good intentions, is still quite evident.

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[12] In the European context, Italy has the largest number of architects of any nation, about 27% of the total number of architects present in Europe (CNAPPC, 2021, p. 54).

The university is the main institution where everything begins and future careers are forged. It is also where some dynamics can be interpreted as the reflection of what happens in the working world. At the same time, these allow us to conceptualise future developments, providing a useful basis for resolving problems that are currently apparent. At the state university level, new enrolments record the proportion of women as 55.62%[13] (Fig. 1a), while at the local level, data from the University of Genoa shows a slightly higher percentage, with female enrolment standing at 56.27%[14] (Fig. 1b). The growing size of the female university population is also visible within the architecture departments, with an average of 59.4%, despite a general drop in enrolments of 6.7% compared to the previous three years (CNAPPC, 2021) (Fig. 2a). In Genoa, women are still in a majority and the percentage of women, according to data dating back to 2019, is 56.4%[15] (Fig. 2b).

The female component is therefore becoming predominant in the architectural world, thus rebalancing the numerical disparity that characterised previous decades (Cuoghi, 2022). The significant presence of women is evident, but the statistical data does not support what happens once the study period has ended and women have entered the working world. In this context, there are still preconceptions that continue to generate notable inequalities.
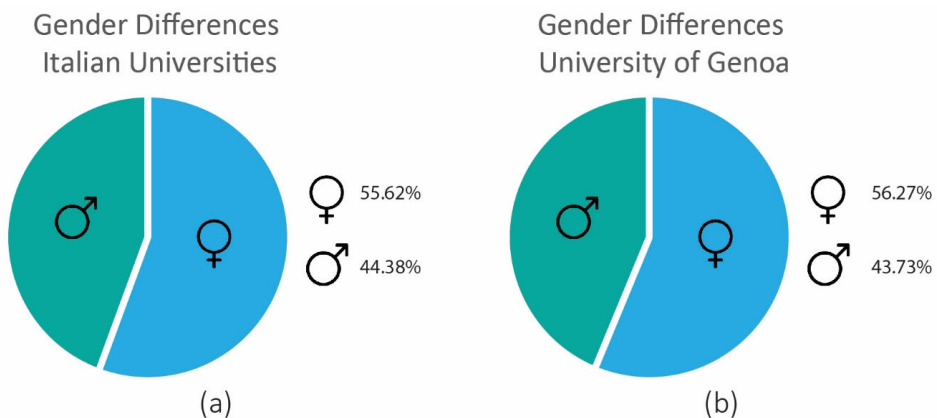
Fig. 1. University enrolment statistics: a) Percentage of enrolments at Italian universities; b) Percentage of enrolments at the University of Genoa.

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[13] http://ustat.miur.it/dati/didattica/italia/atenei

[14] http://ustat.miur.it/dati/didattica/italia/atenei

[15] Università degli Studi di Genova. Bilancio di Genere (2019, p. 10). Comitato per le Pari Opportunità. https://cpo.unige.it/sites/cpo.unige.it/files/pagine/Bil_diGenere_01.pdf
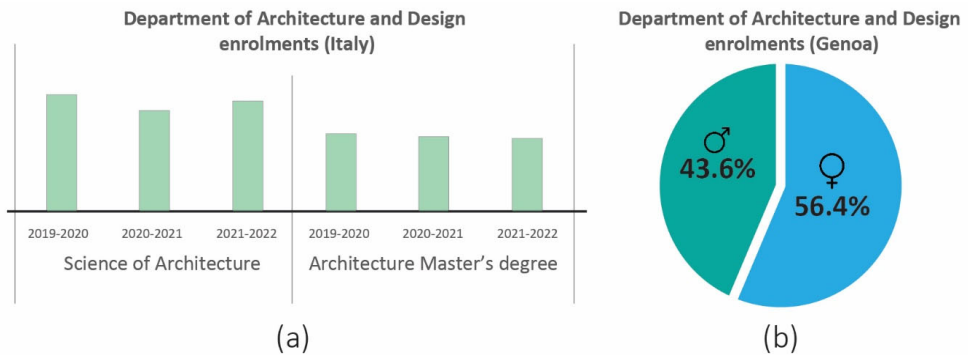
Fig. 2. Architectural enrolment statistics: a) Enrolment trends in architecture courses in Italy; b) Enrolment percentages at the Department of Architecture and Design in Genoa.

The next step after graduation involves enrolment in the professional register (OAPPC),[16] and the data presented above confirms the increasing proportion of women (55% of the total membership)[17] and reveals an interesting relationship between the macho conception of the architect and the personal data of the members: the numerical majority of the new generation of members are women, while the older generations are for the most part men. The highlighted data reveals that, in the last century, architecture had a preference for men but that the situation is currently changing.

The balance that is being generated unfortunately still relates only to the numerical value, because some clichés that position women in the background are still evident. These include the context of the construction site, where architecture really takes place and where male hegemony tends to prevail over the female architect, with a lack of recognition of their leadership role by workers. The aspect that is most evident, however, is the phenomenon of the gender pay-gap, which in Italy often manifests itself, causing significant income differences between the genders (Tavella, 2017).

Female architects are therefore growing in numbers, both at an educational and working level; yet, despite this, gender differences are still pronounced. However, they can be overcome by the new generations and, following this logic, university and research become decisive in contributing to a change in mentality.

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[16] Ordine degli Architetti, Pianificatori, Paesaggisti e Conservatori.

[17] Trend that sees the city of Genoa in first place in the Italian average.

3. An educational path of architectural representation

It could be interesting to compare the professional reality with the successes effectively achieved by women during their studies in architecture. For this reason, we have analysed the whole educational path of architectural representation disciplines at the University of Genoa: the course *Representation Workshop 1* in the first year of the degree in the Science of Architecture and the course *Methods of Representation for the Project* in the second and last year of the master's degree in Architecture.[18]

The first course provides aspiring architects with the basics they need for drawing, including the knowledge and application of methods of representation; the recognition of the character of architectural drawings throughout the history of representation and in the contemporary world; and the conception of a style of representation according to the objectives of communication, via the hybrid use of digital and traditional techniques.

The second course makes an in-depth analysis of the available advanced digital tools, offering a theoretical and practical path that will lead students to a knowledge of the scientific fundamentals (geometric, visual, and perceptive) and the technical methods of using updated tools for creating models, drawings, and images (parametric modelling, photo insertion, rendering, panoramic photography, video).

For our purposes, we compared the different tests and results obtained by the students, paying attention to the differences between women and men. Recent research has detected some preliminary spatial skills broken down into different components, such as spatial perception and visualisation, mental rotation, spatial relations, and orientation (Coluccia, 2004). It was observed that the best results were obtained by students with previous experience in construction and drafting, as well as the type of secondary education received and mathematical ability or preparation (Gorska et al., 1999). Construction games and videogames are mostly played by young boys rather than girls, and this could have affected the initial tests, although a thorough preparation in descriptive geometry can balance this initial gap.

4. Course statistics

National statistical data is reflected in university courses, and is analysed through targeted tests carried out at the beginning of the course *Representation Workshop 1* and the report on the final assessments obtained in the course *Methods of Representation for*

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[18] The first course was taught in 2021/22 by C. Càndito with the teaching support of A. Meloni, and the second by C. Càndito, I. Celoria, and M. F. Mancini.

the Project. The analysis stems from a rather simple examination of the students' abilities and how often the best results are obtained by female students; this characteristic, as previously anticipated, is not subsequently manifested in the working world, where the most prominent figures are men.

The survey we describe has a qualitative and not a statistical value, given the small number of people involved compared to the numbers required to define a statistical trend. At this stage, if the results reveal any significant aspects, the data obtained allows us to draw interesting conclusions about the capabilities of the space and about the results obtained at the end of the final examination. In relation to the first-year course, many aspects can contribute to the successful negotiation of the tests and the understanding of the initial phases of the course. The school of origin is certainly a relevant factor, because, depending on the type of studies undertaken, it is possible to already have more or less specific information on the course topics. Three main kinds of high schools have been identified: Humanities, Scientific, and Artistic[19] (Fig. 3a).

The school of origin, however, remains a factor related to gender and sees a much higher percentage of girls choosing a scientific or artistic direction, while more boys choose the humanities: 19% of boys choose humanities but only 12% of girls (Fig. 3b). The percentages, however, reveal a large number of students from classical studies, who therefore have never dealt with the theme of drawing. This may lead to lower grades, at least during the first period of the course.
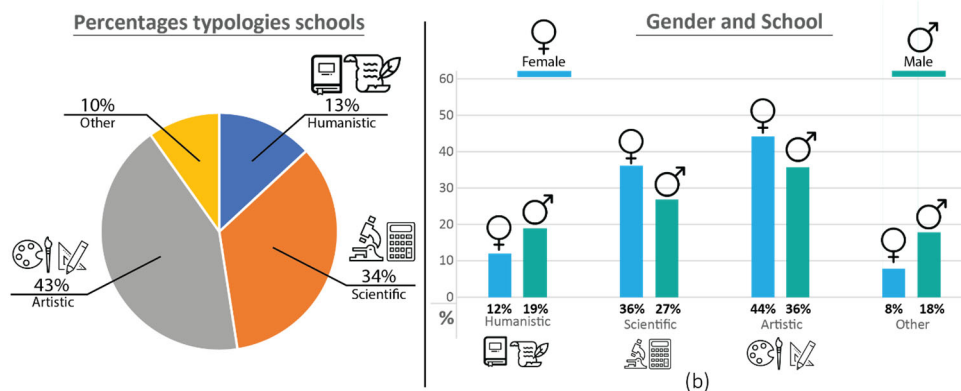
Fig. 3. The main kinds of high school: a) Percentage breakdown of secondary schools; b) Gender breakdown for each type of high school.

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[19] The disciplines deal with the specific subjects of drawing and representation according to a progressive classification that corresponds to a high value for notions provided in the artistic disciplines, while in the humanities the contribution can be traced exclusively to the general study of the history of art.

The administered tests were divided into two parts, the first consisting of six exercises to be performed online, while the second part was carried out in the classroom and consists of two exercises. The proposed exercises investigate, through questions of increasing difficulty, the student's ability to understand the geometry of simple solids and their spatial arrangement. Questions relate a three-dimensional form to a coded representation method: axonometric drawings are associated with orthogonal representation (Fig. 4a), or vice versa (Fig. 4b), but there are also tests in which recognition of the respective images is required according to the fundamental laws of Euclidean geometry (Fig. 4c).

The questions formulated may seem simple at first glance; however, they have been developed following scientific and methodological studies related to teaching and are also found in the broader context of image reading and perception. The similarities between the possible answers makes the question, in some cases, illusory; the ambiguity is a relevant component that makes the exercise complex. Image and illusion are two important aspects and protagonists of multidisciplinary studies that cannot be explored in this chapter.

In total, the number of participants in the online test was 59 (100%), divided into 41 females (69.5%) and 18 males (30.5%). The maximum score was 6 points and the average score was 4.69 points. The highest score was achieved by only a limited number of people, of whom 10.2% of all the participating women got the highest score.
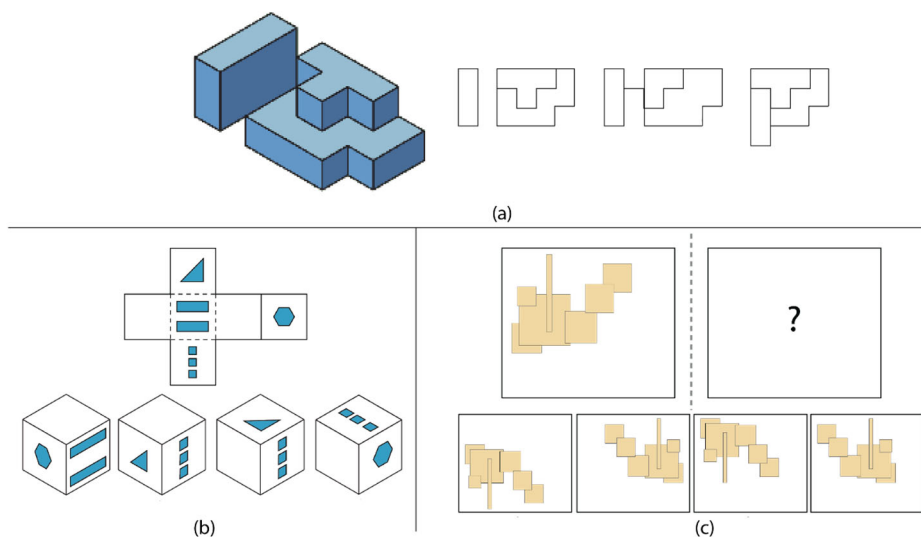

Fig. 4. Online test.

The final two questions were set through a paper test in which the pupils had to redesign some parts of the exercises (Fig. 5a). In particular, they were asked to recognise the elements that make up a composition of solids and to identify the possible relationships (union, intersection, and difference…) between two volumes made visible only through dashed lines (Fig. 5a). The results of this test show that only 19% of the total number of students achieved the highest grade (A) (Fig. 5b). The analysis of these shows that the female students did better: 21% of the girls answered correctly, but only 13% of the boys (Fig. 5b). What is interesting is what can be deduced from the relationship with the school of origin which, in contrast to what might be imagined, does not include people with a purely artistic background: 75% in fact come from scientific disciplines, while the remainder come from the humanities.

Overall, the administered tests reveal a tendency for for a higher percentage of the female students to obtain good results, revealing an aptitude for studying and understanding space. These considerations do not find direct confirmation in the results obtained by the students at the end of the course, but are in line with results obtained in previous years by the two genders (Fig. 6a).

This trend is not limited to the first year; it can also be seen in subsequent years, and specifically in the last year of the master's degree in Architecture. The results of the exams reveal, at least in part, the tendency and skills of young designers who are now nearing the end of their university training. The trend, in fact, confirms that over the years the female students number emerge in percentage compared to the male. Yet, despite this, the architectural world is still associated with the male gender (Fig. 6b).

This data provides a tangible example of the situation within the courses we have followed, and allows us to further raise awareness of a theme that aims to achieve equality between people and abandon the prejudices that characterise the architectural context at the end of the university period.
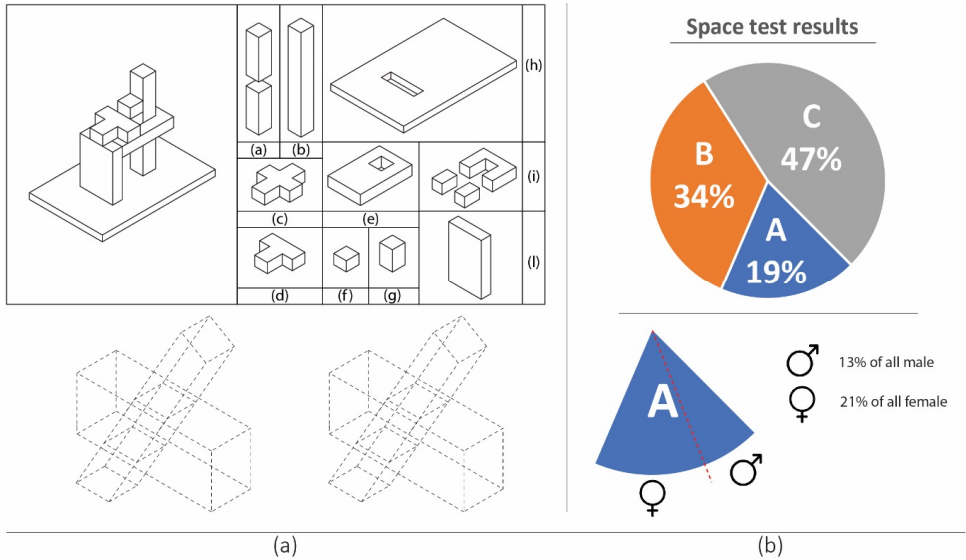
Fig.5. Paper spatial test: a) Proposed exercises: recognition of the elements that make up the structure of solids (above), recognition of the main relationships between the two solids (below); b) Test results.
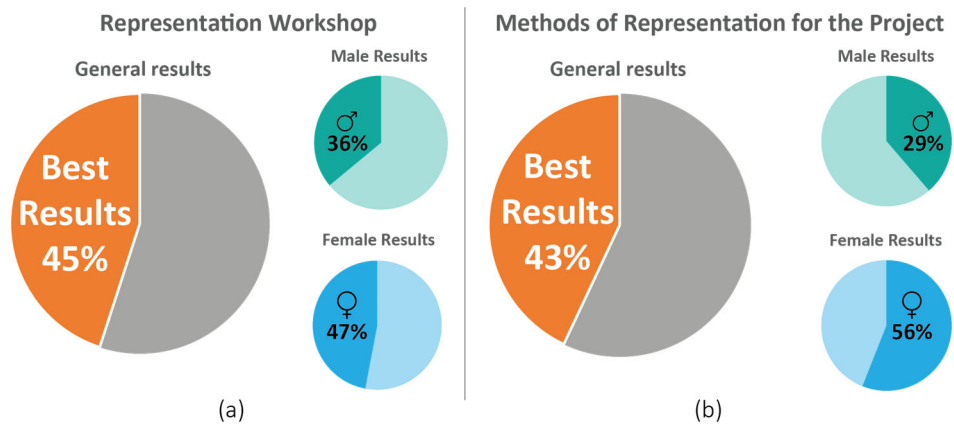
Fig. 6. Final assessments: a) Representation Workshop 1; b) Methods of Representation for the Project.

5. Conclusion

This study aims to highlight the relationship between women and the architectural world from a historical and contemporary perspective. The contribution is part of a broader research project concerning the study of spatial perceptions differentiated by

gender and various abilities, and which is here focused on the field of university education.

The text highlights the critical issues that throughout history have hindered female architects, resulting in strong male chauvinism within this discipline. Despite the events of the past, currently, from a numerical point of view, it is possible to observe a constant increase in the proportion of female representatives within the architectural world, However, the disparities remain in other phenomena, such as that of the gender pay-gap. First, we analysed the literature concerning gender comparison in the field of recognition and configuration of space. Then we focused on the degree courses in architecture at the University of Genoa to compare the results obtained by male and female students in the field of architectural representation. The participating students were subjected to some tests whose results were then evaluated and interpreted.

Although this is a preliminary study, based on limited duration and numbers, it can already be seen that, during different stages of training courses, the results are significant and reveal the ability of women to succeed and achieve better results than men. Making these results known allows us to begin the process of delving more deeply into the matter in order to more and more consciously address the problem of the unjustified gender disparity in the architectural field. This process can contribute, after a hundred years, to debunking the prejudice enunciated by such an important figure as the architect Walter Gropius.

Acknowledgements

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Feminist Contributions to Evolutionary Models of Sexual Selection

Valentina Carlone

Technological University Dublin, Ireland

Introduction

Much of the history of biology has overlooked or misrepresented the role of female organisms in the evolutionary process. Since the end of the 20th century, numerous feminist scholars have argued that the biological sciences have often invoked gender metaphors that researchers have tended to interpret literally rather than figuratively. For example, biologist Ruth Hubbard (1990) highlights the close parallel between Darwin's description of males as active, promiscuous, and competitive and females as selective, coy, and passive and the characteristic gender values of the Victorian era. Thus, a specific gender symbolism is reflected in the construction of scientific metaphors that reproduce the relationship between men and women in Western societies.

Another paradigmatic example is the description of the dynamics between male and female gametes in reproductive biology.[20] Scientist Bonnie Spanier discussed and demonstrated how the language of biology carries misleading and biased metaphors when describing the process of fertilisation:

> Active sperm and passive eggs were alive and well in the outmoded views of fertilization in the first edition of *Molecular Cell Biology*. Fertilization involves the fusion of the head (largely the nucleus) of the sperm with the entire unfertilized egg (with its nucleus and a much larger amount of cytoplasm). Just as scientists have inaccurately credited the ejaculation of sperm and the motility created by the sperm's tail with the power that propels sperm to egg, ignoring the critical role of vaginal contractions and sweeping waves of cilia lining the fallopian tubes, the textbook describes the sperm as the active agent in fertilization. The sperm "penetrates" and is "explosive"; in contrast, the egg

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[20] Example found in the 1965 edition of a textbook by Nobel Prize winner James Watson *et al.* (1962).

membrane "fuses with the sperm membrane," with a "depolarization of the egg plasma membrane," and a "rapid release of calcium."

> Contrary to the image of the sperm doing all the work by penetrating the egg surface with digestive enzymes packaged in the sperm's acrosomal cap, fusion of the egg and sperm membranes involves the activation of the sperm's enzymes by secretions from the female reproductive tract *and*, in some cases, by the protrusion from the egg's surface of microvilli that draw the sperm into the egg cell.... The fusion of egg and sperm does initiate many changes, as the textbook suggests, but the egg is actively involved in ways not even hinted at. For example, microcinematography of fertilization in some species shows a startling and instantaneous change (it could be called "explosive") in the surface of the egg involving a dramatic rearrangement of the egg cell's surface layers. Textbook language such as "the release of the calcium ions in particular is important in activating the egg for further development" tends to cast the egg in a passive role, yet it is the egg that is releasing the calcium ions at its own surface!...

> (Spanier, 1995: 59–61)

Traditionally, the union of egg and sperm has been perceived via the so-called 'prince charming/sleeping beauty' model. This model depicts the sperm as a fictional hero fighting against the hostile environment of the uterus to win the prize: the female egg. In contrast, the egg is portrayed as passive and inert; it waits, unaware, until it is penetrated by the winning spermatozoon that brings life. Feminist researchers have challenged this narrative by demonstrating that the female gamete is not passive, and that the uterus is not a hostile environment to the passage of sperm. This example suggests that the use of gender stereotypes and metaphors in biology may have had an impact upon the understanding of fertilisation. More generally, according to some feminist researchers, gender stereotypes and metaphors may have influenced methods, research topics, and the selection of scientists working on projects. Moreover, in some cases, presuppositions about gender have had a negative impact on the content and direction of biological research and the social perceptions generated by it.

What is sexual selection?

In nature, most plants and animals reproduce sexually. The main advantage of this reproductive mode is the reassortment of genetic material and the production of genetically different offspring. Genetic variability is an advantage for a species because it allows adaptation to different environmental conditions. Sexual reproduction involves two organisms, usually a male and a female, and consists of the exchange of two different sex cells, the gametes. The fusion of the two gametes produces a third

individual, genetically different from the parents. In many species, the difference between males and females is manifested through certain conspicuous physical traits that are present in males but lacking in females. Some examples of these phenotypic differences are the coloured plumage of the males of many bird species, the horns of some male mammals, the frequency and diversity of the songs of some amphibians or, simply, the differences in size between individuals of the two sexes (Andersson, 1994).

It was precisely by observing these characteristics that Darwin proposed a distinction between natural selection and sexual selection in his book *The descent of man and selection in relation to sex* (1871). Unlike natural selection, which favours traits that increase the probability of an individual's survival, sexual selection is based on advantages that lead to greater reproductive success. In Darwin's words, this is the 'the advantage which certain individuals have over other individuals of the same sex and species, in exclusive relation to reproduction' (1871: vol. 1, p. 256). This process does not necessarily imply an increase in the animal's physiological or mechanical efficiency or longevity; on the contrary, it involves distinctive characteristics of the male that often appear cumbersome and exaggerated and may compromise his survival. In order to justify the appearance and maintenance of these seemingly maladaptive traits, Darwin proposed mechanisms other than those of natural selection. Sexual selection can justify the existence of secondary sexual traits which guarantee greater reproductive success even though they may be conspicuous and thus disadvantageous for the survival of the individual that bears them. A classic example is the large, eye-catching tail of a male peacock. Its weight, bulk, and bright colours are a potential obstacle to the male's survival, since they turn him into easy prey. However, this characteristic is also a clear indication of the excellent quality of the specimen's genes. Firstly, the long, colourful feathers suggest a healthy, virile male. Secondly, the male's ability to survive despite his bulky tail is a true indication of his fitness and strength. Since females do not choose a mate randomly, but often prefer those with more developed secondary sexual traits, individuals with these traits have a greater reproductive advantage (Andersson, 1994).

According to Darwin, sexual selection operates through two mechanisms: 1) intra-sexual competition and 2) female choice. The first mechanism is the active competition observed between males of the same species for females. Competition between males for 'possession of the opposite sex' results in the evolution of sensory and locomotor characteristics called armaments that benefit the male in the physical struggle with competitors and lead to the selection of characteristics useful for survival. The second mechanism, described earlier, operates when females choose which males to mate with based on certain traits exhibited by the latter. This inter-sex choice favours males that are more attractive, or exhibit ornamental traits. Secondary sexual traits do not necessarily play a direct role in the fight for females and are not strictly involved in the

act of reproduction, but they do play a central role in intra- and inter-sexual competition. According to Darwin, female choice has led to the development of beauty without utility, and 'the most refined beauty may serve as a charm for the female, and for no other purpose' (1871: vol. 2, p. 92).

Two different models of the evolution of female choice have been proposed in the literature. The first is Fisher's model (1915) of uncontrolled selection. This model justifies the existence of exaggerated ornamental traits in males by adopting the idea that, by mating with males endowed with these characteristics, females continue to produce male offspring carrying these traits and female offspring exhibiting the preference for ornamentation. According to this model, there is a correlation between ornamentation and preference: male offspring enjoy high reproductive success because females prefer them. Females continue to choose males based on their secondary sexual characteristics, leading to their rapid evolution. The second model, known as the good genes hypothesis, justifies female choice based on the genetic benefits to the offspring. The costs associated with the presence of secondary sexual characteristics guarantee the genetic quality of males. For the female, therefore, the possibility of mating with a male with good genes translates into a high probability of producing healthy and genetically better offspring and of passing on her genes to future generations.

What is anisogamy?

In addition to noting the presence of secondary sexual characteristics, Darwin also observed that, in many species, males fertilise many females, whereas females tend to be considerably more selective in their choice of partner. The reason for this behavioural difference is said to be anisogamy – the different sizes and numbers of gametes produced by males and females during their lifetimes. While the male can continue to produce a large number of gametes throughout his life because they are small and inexpensive, the female has a limited number of gametes whose unit cost is much higher (Andersson, 1994). Therefore, the best reproductive strategy for the male is to fertilise as many females as possible, while the female must carefully choose the male with the best genes.

Inspired by the work of Charles Darwin, plant geneticist Angus John Bateman (1948) hypothesised that the variance in reproductive success would be greater among males than among females. Bateman's hypothesis was based mainly on experiments with fruit flies belonging to the species *Drosophila melanogaster*. Based on 64 experiments, he found that, while 21% of the males failed to fertilise any females, only 4% of the females failed to produce offspring. In addition, the most successful male could produce almost three times as many offspring as the most successful female. He also discovered that the variance in reproductive success among males was always considerably greater than

among females. Based on these results, Bateman came up with his hypothesis: while the male can always profit from numerous matings, the female does not benefit as much and is thus less interested in mating than the male. Female reproduction does not benefit from multiple matings because it is limited by the number of eggs a female can produce, whereas the male benefits from inseminating as many females as possible and is limited only by the number of females he can fertilise. According to Bateman, the pressures of selection, induced by competition among individuals of the same sex for representation in the gene pools of successive generations, almost always act more intensely on the male than on the female. This asymmetry in reproductive potential leads to an almost universal dichotomy between the sexual nature of males and females, which has been incorporated into modern thinking on sexual selection. Indeed, in his 1972 paper 'Parental investment and sexual selection', biologist Robert Trivers drew on Bateman's article to develop his Theory of Parental Investment (PIT). Trivers suggests that the sex that invests less in its offspring is bound to mate with the sex that invests more. This theory of female sexual selectivity is based on the concept of anisogamy and the female's perceived need to protect her considerable investment in each of her gametes. As mentioned above, the male produces a large number of spermatozoa and benefits most by disseminating them indiscriminately. Thus, anisogamy places greater sexual pressure on the male, which leads to the evolution of exaggerated male sexual characteristics and different conventional roles for females and males.

Furthermore, Trivers argues that females invest more than males in reproduction and the development and care of offspring. As a result, females are more demanding of mates and become an even more limited resource for males. Again, it follows that males are motivated to mate with as many females as possible, and females are motivated to resist the attempts of males in the hope of choosing the best possible mate.

Final remarks: a feminist interpretation

As philosopher Carla Fehr (2011) argues, the traditional theoretical perspective on sexual selection is an elegant model, but applying it to concrete cases requires certain assumptions upon which to base it. Primatologist Sarah Hardy (1986) and biologist Ruth Hubbard (1990) have identified and discussed three different hypotheses. In the following paragraphs, I offer a brief and non-exhaustive illustration of Hrdy's and Hubbard's position concerning these.

The first hypothesis is that male investment in generating offspring is small compared to female investment. As explained in the previous section, according to the PIT, the difference in size and number of male and female gametes explains the different mating

strategies of males and females in the process of sexual selection. Female gametes are larger and costlier than male gametes, so if one considers the gamete size, male investment is lower. However, the PIT has come under criticism from feminists. For example, Hubbard notes that the traditional hypothesis subtends a metaphor that applies economic concepts to biological phenomena. The phrase 'parental investment' and the descriptions of sperm as 'cheap', eggs as 'expensive' and females as 'scarce resources' are evaluatively dense metaphorical concepts. Although metaphors play a positive role in scientific reasoning because they can advance theorising, feminists argue that gender metaphors are often not recognised as metaphors but as literal, factual descriptions. According to Hubbard, it is essential to recognise and problematise metaphors in order to avoid coming to hasty and incorrect conclusions.

Returning to the critique of PIT, some feminist biologists have argued that, in order to characterise and measure parental investment, one should look beyond the individual gametes to include the total amount of resources required to produce sperm, the energy required to develop and maintain secondary sexual characteristics, the energy expended in competition between specimens of the same sex, the energy invested in defending a territory, and the parental effort exhibited by male specimens of some species. If all these factors are considered, male parental costs turn out to be higher than they initially appear.

The second hypothesis is that there is greater variance in male than in female reproductive success. As described earlier, Bateman found that the difference between the most successful and the least successful male in reproduction is always considerably greater than the difference between the most and least successful females. From these observations, he concluded that, while a male can always benefit from mating and thus exhibits promiscuous behaviour, females gain little from multiple matings. Although this hypothesis has been tested in many species, many researchers have questioned its universality because it has never been tested in a thorough comparative analysis of the entire animal kingdom. As Hrdy notes, the anisogamy paradigm has led researchers to neglect the full range of possible sources of variance in female reproductive success. Recently, it has been observed that the variance in female reproductive success in some species is greater than previously assumed, even greater than that of the males of the same species. Hrdy mentions, for example, that not all females conceive and reports the case of marmoset monkeys, where the presence of a dominant female within the group inhibits ovulation in her subordinates.

Moreover, in some species, pregnancies are not always carried to term due to violence perpetrated by other females, as in the case of baboons. Hrdy notes a lack of research attention being given to how females terminate their investment in reproduction and how physiological conditions and social status influence their reproductive capacity.

Feminist biologists assume that this disregard for female behaviour is encouraged by gender metaphors that reflect and reinforce stereotypes and contribute to androcentric assumptions and deterministic accounts of male and female behaviour and capabilities.

The third hypothesis reflects the idea that the only evolutionary advantage of sexual relations for females is fertilisation. However, Hrdy argues that the notion of female promiscuity has been insufficiently considered in biology. She also notes that, especially among primates, there are more reasons for mating than simply collecting sperm from a genetically fit male. Since Hrdy's research on promiscuity, several hypotheses regarding the benefits of mating for females have been put forward. Some of these hypotheses continue to be related to reproduction. For example, in unpredictable and changing environments, a female's reproductive success may be enhanced over her lifetime if she produces offspring with different fathers. Other hypotheses, however, are not directly related to reproduction. Examples include the hypothesis that multiple mating and orgasms are physiologically beneficial to females. In addition, some support the hypothesis that females of some species have sex with subordinate males to prevent them from leaving the social group.

Although the rhetoric of the shy woman and the promiscuous male has abated, it remains common in many narratives of sexual selection. The concerns expressed by feminists regarding the role and effects of gender metaphors are tied to the notion of evaluatively thick concepts proposed by feminist philosopher Elizabeth Anderson. These concepts include both empirical and evaluative content. Anderson (2004) argues that gender metaphors are often not recognised by scientists as evaluative, and may lead to biased conclusions. The difficulty in recognising biases and metaphors may be due to internal homogeneity within research groups, where the research methods, the choice of topics, and the results obtained may all reflect the prejudices of those producing them. Recently, research into sexual selection has embraced a more comprehensive range of views. Hrdy indicates that this change in perspective has occurred in conjunction with the increase in the number of female researchers in biology, which has led to: 1) an increased focus on females and their behaviour, and 2) an increased awareness of gender metaphors in the biological sciences. This is not to say that the attitude taken by feminist researchers is not evaluative, but, as Anderson makes clear, the important difference between the feminist approach and the traditional approach is that feminist researchers have clearly recognised this evaluative component.

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Post-Coup Queerness in Turkish Cinema: Gender, Sexuality, and Psychomachia in Kartal Tibet's *Şabaniye*

İlyas Deniz Çınar

Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

Introduction

In May 2022, popular streaming service Netflix released a series entitled *The Life and Movies of Erşan Kuneri*. Written and directed by the Turkish comedian, actor, and screenwriter Cem Yılmaz, the series is part of Yılmaz's comedic oeuvre, established in 2004 with his film *G.O.R.A.: Bir Uzay Filmi* [*G.O.R.A.: A Space Movie*], which depicts the life and career of a fictional Turkish director, producer, and star named Erşan Kuneri, who is known for his pornographic films. In *G.O.R.A.*, Kuneri was jailed by the military during the 1980 Turkish coup d'état. The Netflix series picks up right after Kuneri's release from jail and follows his journey to become a serious filmmaker. Subject to many current and future debates on parodying the sexist and exploitative aspects of the old Turkish film industry, discursively known as Yeşilçam (named after a neighbourhood in the centre of Istanbul where production companies were located), in a rosy fashion – and the place of production values in Turkish comedies within the current-day climate of local and global streaming industries – the series *Erşan Kuneri* presents an interesting case study that will occupy scholars of Turkish screen for years to come. For the purposes of my chapter, I briefly analyse the third episode of *Erşan Kuneri*, which provides the background for a deeper exploration of queer identifications and crossdressing in Turkish cinema following the 1980 coup. My particular focus is on Kartal Tibet's 1984 film *Şabaniye*, which stars and revolves around the oeuvre of another famous Turkish comedian, Kemal Sunal.

Tired of his public image as a director, producer, and star of pornographic films, Erşan decides to make a new name for himself by trying out different film genres. His third effort, *Kooperatif Kemal*, is a parody of Turkish social realist village films which finds the Kuneri character playing a big city schoolteacher, Kemal, who is appointed to

countryside duty in a distant village in Anatolia. Kemal soon falls in love with Nazlı, daughter of the village's chief Fehmi Ağa (Zafer Algöz), who is played by another male comedian, Çağlar Çorumlu. Perceived by critics and audiences as the best episode of the series, this episode makes fun of Kemal's elitist sexual binarism, implying that Nazlı is either an openly trans female or a cross-dressing male who can exist very well in the Turkish rural diegesis envisioned by this mock film. As a parody of Turkish Yeşilçam films, the timely release of *Erşan Kuneri* raises an important question: what were the sexual politics and performances of Yeşilçam films made after the brutal coup of 1980 when it came to self-individuation? What are their political limits, and what can anachronistic readings of such films yield in terms of their queer potentialities?

In this chapter, I analyse Kartal Tibet's 1984 comedy *Şabaniye* to explore these questions and investigate how sexual energies and gender identities resurface through filmic representation. Focusing on the movie's central plot, which is driven by a cross-dressing performance, I scrutinise *Şabaniye* by examining the film's gender politics. Considering the movie within Turkey's post-coup societal psychomachia, I discuss the film's queer gender dynamics and sexual politics by exploring its narrative and form. Unpacking how the central cross-dressing performance is mediated by the film's mise-en-scène and cinematography, I argue that *Şabaniye* is a symptomatic reaction against the oppressive politics of the junta years and the ensuing neoliberal project followed by the Turkish government. Analysing the film through the lens of film and performance theories, I also spotlight the ephemeral quality of cross-dressing and its function in the movie. Although Kartal Tibet, who is also a star of Yeşilçam, directed another movie starring Kemal Sunal in 1985, entitled *Sendul Şaban*, which similarly challenges normative gender roles, in this chapter, I am not exploring the broader auctorial reflexes of Yeşilçam directors. Rather, I am retaining a tighter analytical and critical focus, directing attention towards the queer dynamics and gender politics in *Şabaniye*. Before delving into this analysis, however, I must first historicise the social and political circumstances that surrounded the film's production and influenced it as a cultural text.

The Historical Backdrop of Şabaniye

The first half of the 1980s was a tumultuous period in Turkish history, which began with a brutal military coup. The public sphere was heavily polarised and politicised between conservative and socialist groups, which led to the brutal intervention of the Turkish military. Its elite officers had historically eyed up and intervened in Turkish political leadership, in the country's legislative, executive, and juridical dimensions. In order to stabilise the political climate, address the deep economic crisis, and silence dissenting political voices and ideologies, the military regime invested in closely

regulated products of mass entertainment such as television, sports, and cinema, and actively directed the public's attention towards them. According to Raşit Kaya and Barış Çakmur, this "period of total control of mass media and rigid censorship" was a direct product of the coup, which sought to "completely transform the socioeconomic and political structures of Turkey" (2010: 529). These hegemonic efforts were legitimised by a new Turkish constitution that "imposed strict limitations on the exercise of democratic rights and freedom" (Kaya and Çakmur 2010: 529). Accordingly, the military junta regime, led by Kenan Evren, sought to *repress* any kind of politics (personal and public) from the societal consciousness with its heavy censorship of all forms of media. Observing this period, and the effects of this repression of Turkish mass media, Kaya and Çakmur argue that the civilian regime, led by Turgut Özal, that took over after the coup in 1983 effectively built upon these foundations to establish its own neoliberal 'hegemonic project' that looked to liberalise the mass media under the auspices of 'big business' (2010: 530).

Briefly surveying the cinema of this era, Savaş Arslan writes that "[f]rom the late 1980s to the early 1990s, during 'the dark years' of cinema in Turkey, Hollywood films dominated both in theatres and on television, gradually creating a demand for more sophisticated filmic narratives and higher production values" (2009: 86). But what did some of the films that were released during these 'dark years' have to say about the repressed Turkish society? Commenting on the Turkish film industry in the mid-1980s, Arslan also writes that "[t]he [*Yeşilçam*] films of the 1980s were questioning themselves and at times, this questioning was esoteric and excessively self-reflexive" (2011 241). This 'esoteric' and 'self-reflexive' tendency that Arslan observes in the films of the 1980s coincided with the rule of the military regime and Özal's neoliberal project, and I interpret it as a 'return of the repressed' in a Freudian sense: the re-emergence (under the watchful eye of the military) of forcibly repressed elements in the Turkish societal unconscious (Freud, 1957). One avenue by which this psychological outburst found expression was in the film *Şabaniye*.

Unmasking Şabaniye

Şabaniye is part of a larger series of unrelated comedy films starring the famous Turkish actor Kemal Sunal and his archetypal character Şaban. Şaban is a dim-witted but kind-hearted comic relief character who was first brought to life as part of the high-school comedy series *Hababam Sınıfı* [*The Chaos Class*] (dir. Ertem Eğilmez, 1975), based on the works of author Rıfat Ilgaz (1911–1993). Gaining popularity in this film, and its three sequels made between 1975 and 1977, as Nerd Şaban, this creation became, in Derek Johnson's coining, a "star-brand character" (Johnson, 2008). The figure of

Şaban, and Kemal Sunal's star-text, was utilised by filmmakers and studios to form its own pseudo-franchise.

The protagonist of 21 films made between 1974 and 1985, Şaban was portrayed as a neurodivergent, naive-but-strategically-sly, kind-hearted, and helpful figure in these unrelated farcical tales. These movies did not follow the narrative arc of a connected and cohesive story world. Rather, based on the narrative structure of Keloğlan stories from traditional Turkish literature, they were founded on syntagmatic and paradigmatic dichotomies as Şaban either survived absurd ordeals against the forces of evil or climbed the economic ladder from a rural and/or low-income economic position to upper-class status via a series of amusing events (Bayram, 1989, 2002). In these films, Şaban ultimately maintained his moral codes or restored his innate social and spiritual attributes. This premise, and how Şaban often achieved it through funny-but-virtuous means, attracted the masses to cinemas, and thus led to the popular appeal of the character. *Şaban* films still enjoy a popular afterlife in Turkish audiovisual culture as television networks frequently air reruns of them. Additionally, *Şaban* movies are now widely available on digital platforms like YouTube, in addition to various Turkish streaming sites.

The name 'Şabaniye', the feminised version of the name Şaban with the added suffix of '-iye', depicts Şaban as a similarly witless character aspiring to be a vocal artist and musician, playing the *saz* (a stringed instrument famous in the Middle East) at the nightclub where he and his mother, Hatice (Adile Naşit), work. *Şabaniye*'s plot hinges on a rural and patrilineal blood feud that threatens Şaban's life. To safeguard him from his pursuers, Hatice dresses him in the costume of a female nightclub singer very early in the movie. The rest of *Şabaniye*'s narrative follows this initial action as Şaban's cross-dressing and gender-swapping performance in his new identity, Şabaniye, leads *them* into stardom as a vocal performer. Savaş Arslan underlines how much *Şabaniye* borrows from rural migration melodramas and succinctly summarises the film as follows:

A late Yeşilçam film, *Şabaniye* is a loose remake of the comedy *Tootsie* (Sydney Pollack, 1982) featuring Şaban…The film is a parody of the high and late Yeşilçam genre of singer melodrama, which featured loosely written melodramatic texts specially constructed as a vehicle for a famous singer who played one of the lead roles. This film recounts the discovery of a talented character from poor, rural roots who becomes a wealthy singer. (2012: 26)

True to its romantic comedy genre, the film also forms an eventual love triangle between Şabaniye/Şaban and two members of the family that is pursuing him: Şehmuz (Erdal Özyağcılar) and Nazlı (Çiğdem Tunç). Şabaniye's "poor *mise-en-scène*, shooting [cinematography], editing and post-production" (Arslan, 2012: 26) ultimately brings

the plot and Şaban's performance as Şabaniye to the forefront and allows the movie to affect its audiences more with its narrative than its dynamic cinematography.

I find it necessary to pause here and note how cross-dressing and gender swapping, as forms of sociality, factor into *Şabaniye* from a historical perspective. The acts of cross-dressing and gender swapping are key performances and tropes in the history of comedy and sexuality across many media. These performances offer subversions and parodies of rigid and constrained forms of cis-heteronormativity, which, for Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, represent "the institutions, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent – that is, organized as a sexuality – but also privileged" (1998: 548). As Jonathan Katz also asserts, heterosexuality as "an official, dominant, different-sex erotic ideal" is very much "a modern invention" (1996: 14). In her study of 'genderperformativity', Judith Butler also notes that performances like drag and cross-dressing can be employed as tactics to reveal "the imitative structure of gender itself" and dismantle the norms of heteronormativity (1999: 175). This sort of cis-heteronormativity was calcified by 19th century Victorian society (Foucault, 1978), and these 'repertoires' of cross-dressing and gender swapping – in Diana Taylor's (2003) conceptualisation of the term as the embodied transfer of cultural memory – enable both discursive avenues and physical practices that challenge the dictums of the modernist understanding of sexuality.

Sexual politics in the history of Turkey were similarly shaped by this turn, starting with the modernisation phase of the late Ottoman period. While it was shaped by the moralist ethos of Islam, which severely inhibited and controlled female sociality and sexuality, the Ottoman Empire, especially among its ruling male elite, was very open to the practice that today would be categorised as cis-homosexuality or bisexuality (Traub, 2008: 24). Serkan Ertin also notes the prevalence of cross-dressing *zenne* ('woman' in Farsi) dancers in Ottoman courts, spotlighting the commonality of cross-dressing and gender swapping as forms of gender-fluid attraction and entertainment (2012: 262). Nevertheless, the Europeanisation and modernisation politics that followed during and after the period known as *Tanzimat* (reformation) that took place during the middle of the 19th century muted and repressed these forms of sexuality and communal sociality (Ze'evi, 2006).

The end of World War I, and the transition of the Ottoman Empire into the Republic of Turkey following the Turkish War of Independence (1919–1923), continued a similar modernisation-as-Europeanisation project by updating the format of this project around methodological nationalism and secular reforms of Kemalism. These were the ideas that the general of the Turkish armies and the first president of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938), believed would develop the nation and make it 'on a par with' Western states. As Spencer Hawkins notes "Western societies became

exemplary for the new Turkey, and while the state promoted democracy, women's rights, and secularism, it demanded that its citizens adopt a more Western-looking personal style" (2018: 101). In order to achieve these standards of being 'Western-looking', Kemalist reforms changed many of the fundamental structures dictating daily life, such as the official script, calendar, measurement system, civic laws, and dress codes.

Some proponents of Turkish nationalism, like Ziya Gökalp (1876–1924), the ideological founder of Turkish nationalism who had a key influence on Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's social reforms, paradoxically uncovered the cross-dressing practices of ancient Turkish male shamans (1968: 112). Yet, despite touching on these findings, the bulk of Gökalp's efforts when it came to theorising the acceptable gender and sexual performativity of the Turkish people focused on the 'chivalry' of males towards females in Ancient Turkish societies (1968: 113). Thus, these historical findings, shaped by methodological nationalism, were framed in such a way as to posit modernist heterosexual performance codes for the Turkish public. Nevertheless, these biopolitical reforms were ultimately forced onto the public in a top-down fashion, and those who chose not to follow them were severely punished; leading to historical resentments, grievances, and injustices that are still unresolved today.

Despite these biopolitical interventions, cross-dressing and gender-swapping performances remained a key repertoire of music, entertainment, and comedy as celebrity figures like Zeki Müren and Huysuj Virjin (Sefi Dursunoğlu) flourished and entertained the masses with such displays (Selen, 2012; Hawkins, 2018). *Şabaniye* ultimately follows in the footsteps of this genealogy. In terms of presenting displays of cross-dressing and gender swapping, the film does not offer a revolutionary intervention into the existing forms of filmic comedies, either on a global scale or in the canon of Turkish film. Still, *Şabaniye* is notable for placing cross-dressing and the constant fluidity of gender identity centre-stage during such a repressive period: the first half of the 1980s in Turkey. In fact, *Şabaniye* is the only film during this era, namely the five-year period immediately following the coup d'etat, to tackle such a theme and explore these forms of subjectivity while the trauma of the brutal coup was still fresh within the society's psyche.

In the film, Şaban is initially presented to us as a 'queer' individual who lacks the power and heteropatriarchal masculine potency of classic Yeşilçam heroes; he is interested only in his phallic substitute, his saz, which was left to him by his deceased father. According to Teresa de Lauretis, who first inaugurated 'queer theory', the critical theorisation of the term proposes three endeavours: challenging and rejecting heterosexuality and heteronormativity as the dominant norms of subjectivity, marking the separate terrains of sexual subjectivity and their respective scholarly explorations, and accentuating the

importance of race and ethnicity in the formation of sexuality (1991: iii–xi). In film studies, scholars have employed queer theory to negotiate the place of queer authorship and its textual impact (Dyer, 2003; Morrison, 2007), the connection between star-texts and queerness (White, 1999; Johnson, 2008), the inferences that queer film texts relay to audiences (Dyer, 2002a, 2002b; White, 2021), and the relationship between the romantic comedy genre and queer affective economies (Francis, 2021). Here, in my interpretation of the Şaban/Şabaniye character, I employ the term 'queer' not to refer specifically to Western categories of sexuality, but rather as an analytical tool to explore, in David Halperin's words, subjectivities that are "at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant" (1997: 62).

After Şaban's queer way of life (his interest solely in his saz and amateur singing career) is threatened by Şehmuz and Nazlı, two siblings whose family is a sworn enemy of Şaban's dead father, Şaban is forced into a cross-dressing performance as a nightclub singer posing as his fake sister: Şabaniye. As the movie progresses, however, this cross-dressing performance evolves into a pseudo-drag performance as Şaban willingly utilises his stage name personality out in public, especially while talking to his lover, Nazlı. A poignant example of this occurs later in the movie, when Şabaniye, who is sharing the same hotel room with Nazlı for a performance in İzmir, calls Nazlı from the hotel lobby as her lover Bayram. The hotel receptionist witnesses Şaban/Bayram's assertive masculinity and his romantic prowess throughout this whole conversation, yet he is awestruck that it is coming from the person, apparently a woman, who is standing right in front of him. After he charismatically finalises the conversation and sets up a date with Nazlı, Şaban/Bayram returns to his performance as Şabaniye, saying "Thank you, sweetie" to the receptionist and pinching his left cheek (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Şaban performing all of their identities in one scene.

As an ironic comedic intervention, Şaban's loss of masculine power and their cross-dressing performance is depicted as an opportunity to acquire power, fame, and a phallus as a means of getting closer to his/her object of romantic and sexual desire: Nazlı. Overall, these queer moments are only used to reaffirm the heteronormative sexual politics of the Turkish film industry and its classic plots. Nonetheless, these representations and their 'erotics', as well as employing them to buttress heteronormativity, are nothing endemic to the Turkish film industry. Discussing Western mass media, Alexandar Doty, in similar fashion, writes that:

> queer erotics are already part of culture's erotic center, both as a necessary construct by which to define the heterosexual and the straight (as 'not queer'), and as a position that can be and is occupied in various ways by otherwise heterosexual and straight-identifying people. (1993: 3–4)

While there is a small number of Turkish films exploring queer subjectivities such as homosexuality or transsexuality (Yayla, 2019), the trend to constitute desirable heterosexuality vis-à-vis queer identities is still observed in Turkish mass media today, especially within popular network television series. However, since the beginning of the 2000s, independent and documentary cinema has provided space for fresh explorations of queer subjectivities that do not seek to exploit these representations to reinforce heteronormative orders (Candemir, 2016).

Şaban's performance as Şabaniye can also be interpreted as an example of what Mary Ann Doane calls the filmic "masquerade". Borrowing this term form the British psychoanalyst Joan Riviere (1883-1962), Doane employs notion of the "masquerade" as one of the three modes of female identification with the filmic presentation (Doane, 1991: 25). According to Doane, Riviere employs this term to highlight the *performance* of femininity to mask depictions of masculinity in female or feminine bodies; or, the embellishment of the performance of femaleness to undergird the constructed nature of femininity (Doane, 1991: 36). Hence, the masquerade is formulated as a reactive tool of acting in a 'womanly' manner, whereby femininity "could be assumed and worn as a mask, both to hide the possession of masculinity and to avert the reprisals expected if [a woman is] found to possess it [masculinity]" (Doane, 1991: 38). Influenced by this notion, Doane suggests that the masquerade enables the female spectator to distance herself from the image of femininity present on the silver screen as she recognises that female representation in film is an extravagant performance of femininity. Using the mask as a metaphor for this display, Doane argues that:

> The effectivity of masquerade lies precisely in its potential to manufacture a distance from the image, to generate a problematic within which the image is manipulable, producible, and readable by the woman. (1991: 32)

Doane also highlights another mode of identification for the female spectator, which she names 'transvestitism' (1991: 24). In this mode of female spectatorship, the female audience necessarily identifies with the male characters since the whole structure of classic filmmaking centres upon an androcentric way of perceiving the filmic image (Mulvey, 1996). As Doane notes, this mode of female identification with the filmic presentation leads to "a tendency to view the female spectator as the site of an oscillation between a feminine position and a masculine position, invoking the metaphor of the transvestite" and adds that:

> Given the structures of cinematic narrative, [the woman] who identifies with a female character must adopt a passive or masochistic position, while identification with the active hero necessarily entails [...] a certain 'masculinization' of spectatorship. (Doane, 1991: 24).

Throughout the first half of the movie, Şaban's love interest, Nazlı, is marked by a similar 'transvestism' as she is framed around phallic props and mise-en-scène that marks her as one of the antagonists of the movie (Figure 2). Through Şaban's dual masquerade – that is, acting as both the overtly feminine Şabaniye and the super-masculine Bayram, as exemplified in the hotel phone call scene – Nazlı is rapidly pulled into a heteronormative realm of desire and identification with the story, ultimately settling her within the normative heterosexual tropes of the romantic comedy genre. This character arc occurs through the close friendship that emerges between Nazlı and Şabaniye. To befriend Nazlı, and ultimately disclose his romantic feelings to her, Şaban (as Şabaniye) puts on an excessive display of femininity when she is with Nazlı. This exorbitant display of femininity also serves the narrative direction and character development of the movie, as Şaban(iye) constantly moves through a feminine space in order to fulfil both their own desires and the desires of their audience: romance and comedy. Teresa de Lauretis observes that film narratives, especially classical ones shaped by the continuity editing conventions of Hollywood, mostly follow a male hero who navigates a female space which is the "end result of narrativization" for profilmic (what the camera captures), diegetic, and audience desires (1984: 138–140). Although de Lauretis ultimately uses these points to deconstruct Laura Mulvey's claims that films are solely built upon cis-male-centric spaces, her points, when juxtaposed with

Figure 2 A collage of Nazlı (Çiğdem Tunç) in masculine clothing such as tuxedos and hunting outfits, holding phallic props such as revolvers and rifles.

the narratives of cross-dressing romantic comedies like *Şabaniye*, point to a certain malleability and gender fluidity in filmic displays of sociality and sexuality.

Şabaniye's plot further illustrates my claims in this respect. Şaban, by cross-dressing as Şabaniye, first steps into a female space. After meeting Nazlı, and desiring her romantically and sexually, Şaban commits fully to this female space and displays a Doaneian masquerade, with the narrative end-goal of Nazlı in mind. Creating another alter ego after this, they (Şaban/Şabaniye) try to navigate this female space as Bayram while utilising Şabaniye, who gets close to Nazlı as her brother Şehmuz's love interest, to guide Nazlı towards Bayram (who is actually Şaban). Finally, in the final step, they – the synthesis of Şaban, Şabaniye, and Bayram – address Nazlı for the first time in their genderfluid form. Thus, by inhabiting a female space, Şaban(iye) takes on a journey of both self-discovery and performance, during which they don many differing masks of sexuality.

The Gender Politics of Şabaniye

According to Mary Ann Doane "[m]ale transvestism is an occasion for laughter; female transvestism only another occasion for desire" (1991: 25). Şabaniye and Nazlı succeed in supporting this observation: the former functioning as the chief enabler of comedy

while the latter is positioned as the ultimate object of romance. Yet, Şaban/Şabaniye's male transvestism and cross-dressing also attracts huge sexual charge throughout the movie, as the owner of the nightclub Dursun (Turgut Borali) and Şehmuz are both enamoured by Şabaniye's masculine attractiveness, beauty, and talent. The moments during which Şabaniye's trans form is revealed or hinted at by diegetic characters within the film, however, disrupt this paradigm. One such instance occurs in the queer moment between Şabaniye and the hotel receptionist. A more significant example takes place during the movie's climax, in which Şaban/Şabaniye/Bayram reveals their true identity. In the closing scene of the movie, in which this hybrid Şabaniye formation reveals their identity and love for Nazlı, Şaban(iye) effectively addresses their diegetic and nondiegetic audiences from a transliminal position (Figure 3). According to Victor Turner, 'liminality' is a temporal and spatial regime of in-betweenness in which any type of stable or recurrent conditions are culturally recognised while subjects are on the verge of personal or social change through ritual (1969: 127). In their last performance, as a ritual, by removing their wig and revealing their momentarily genderfluid form – a personal change for Şaban/Şabaniye and a social change for the post-coup audiences of Şabaniye's final performance – Şaban(iye) opens up to Nazlı without any artifice for the first time in the movie.

In this scene, Şabaniye enters the stage (and the frame) to conduct her final singing 'ritual' from an eye-level angle. The camera is established at this angle specifically to capture Şabaniye and her audience amidst a performative ritual and a social contract: the applause that

Figure 3: Şabaniye unmasking himself and revealing his true identity to his diegetic audience, including Nazlı and Şehmuz.

ensues as the performer takes to the stage, which invites both the performer and the audience into their respective performances. As Şabaniye gracefully bows to greet her audience, the camera establishes a shot/reverse shot between Şabaniye and Nazlı and then returns to the eye-level establishing shot just behind the 'prime seats' in which Nazlı and Şehmuz are sitting. As Şabaniye silences the crowd and begins telling his life story (as Şaban), the camera establishes a zoom on her which ends up with a medium shot. Zooming in and zooming out, as cinematographic techniques, tend to be immediate self-reflexive indicators of the artificiality of the filmic image and generally direct the audience to the very constructedness of a film. This zoom serves a similar purpose, signifying a journey deep into the mind of the character as Şabaniye starts speaking her mind. Accordingly, with this story, Şabaniye pours his heart out and *comes out* to his crowd – and, more importantly, to Nazlı – as Şaban, not Bayram or Şabaniye. The camera zooms out with Şaban's forward movement (almost mimicking a dolly zoom out) and establishes itself once again behind the 'prime seats' where Nazlı and Şehmuz are sitting.

In this ritual, Şaban/Şabaniye's liminal coming out, we witness *Şabaniye*'s cinematography at its most dynamic as the film underlines how momentous this coming out is. In this liminal instance, the camera creates a psychological interiority and proximity between Şabaniye and her non-diegetic audience, as well as showcasing how Şabaniye's male femininity fully exposes the performative constitution of gender identities. Overall, the whole characterisation of Şaban, positioned in-between his alter egos Bayram and Şabaniye, places him in a liminal position, and it is this transliminal and queer position that is eventually 'rewarded' at the end of *Şabaniye*'s plot. This narrative direction is further highlighted when Nazlı cannot bring herself to shoot Şaban to enact her ancestral vengeance – instead returning the latter's declaration of love in the final minute of the movie.

On the whole, *Şabaniye*'s central plot revolves around non-normative displays of gender and sexuality. Furthermore, this plot is continued by Şaban's utilisation of cross-dressing to create himself new, but ultimately cis-centric, corporeal orientations that conform to binary gender categories. However, during certain scenes and with its climax, *Şabaniye* highlights that gender is a malleable and performative structure. This is evidenced by the way in which Şaban can only make his declaration to Nazlı, his *coming-out*, while still dressed up as Şabaniye. One may rightfully challenge this interpretation as what Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus call a 'symptomatic reading': the analytical overreading of the latent meanings and content behind texts that is associated most closely with schools such as psychoanalytical film theory (2009: 3). However, with this cinematographically dynamic moment, which is saved for this

critical and climactic scene, *Şabaniye* supports its latent narrative semiotics with its surface-level filmic syntax.

While the film ultimately squeezes all of these significant events into the final three minutes of its runtime, which reveals the economic and narrative limitations of the film, the fact that it can contain, and indeed end on, such a display is a foresighted gesture given the sociopolitical context surrounding *Şabaniye*'s production during the repressive post-coup years of Turkey. The fact that *Şabaniye* builds its filmic narrative around cross-dressing, while not revolutionary within the broader cultural history of Turkey, is a significant achievement considering the era during which the movie was made. Moreover, *Şabaniye*, as an example drawn from the popular cinema culture of Turkey, presents itself as a substantial text for analysing Yeşilçam-era Turkish films from both queer and gender studies perspectives, alongside the formal analytical categorisations provided by film studies.

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Picture from Lund University (Sweden)

Section 2: Abstract

Establishment of an Autoethnographic Self-Narrative Method when Researching the Availability of Abortion in the Context of Gender Studies

Deniz Altuntaş

Gender and Women's Studies Research Centre, Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract

In Turkey, abortion without restriction as to reason is currently legal for up to 10 weeks. Nevertheless, subjects seeking access to abortion services encounter many challenges at both public[21] and private[22] hospitals. According to a report by Kadir Has University, the availability of abortion without restriction as to reason at public hospitals is very low; at private hospitals, while available, it is restricted, both economically and through the imposition of various conditions. In this context, research on access to abortion services at private hospitals in Turkey faces a number of qualitative challenges due to traditional patriarchal societal norms, based on different identities and belongings such as age, marital status and place of residence, which lurk behind the quantitative data.

In this article, an evaluation is made of the results of 454 private hospital interviews, which were the main structure of field research conducted by Kadir Has University in November–January 2021. Semi-structured interviews were conducted over a certain role of the interviewer, excluding subjectivity and different intersectionality status. Semi-structured interviews are used to obtain qualitative data, and we can deepen the topic with new questions depending on how the conversation develops. This article was

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21 Legal But Not Necessarily Available: Abortion Services at Public Hospitals in Turkey – 2020, Kadir Has University, The Gender and Women's Studies Research Centre, November 2020, https://gender.khas.edu.tr/sites/gender.khas.edu.tr/files/inline-files/Abortion-Report-2020-ENG-new.pdf

22 Not yet published.

prepared on the basis of the results of this research. It underlines the subjectivity of the feminist position by considering the concept of situated knowledge introduced by Donna Haraway at the epistemological level. This is important because the researcher's position and experiences are socially constructed and, in this context, all identities and belongings are important for the findings of the research, which is unique. The subjectivity of the researcher and the subjectivities reproduced within the scope of the research play an important role in revealing different stories. In this regard, in these interviews, as someone who really needs an abortion without restriction as to reason, I might hesitate to ask questions, I might not be able to make a phone call, I might fight with the call centre on the phone, I might swear, I might hang up, I might cry; in short, I might give more or less subjective or political responses. However, the communication continues with conversational answers that are appropriate for a particular role in the context of the research. The focus here is not only the feelings or pure experience of a person who wants to access abortion services, but the differentiation in the barriers faced according to different cases in the face of current pronatalist policies. It is also not very realistic for a person who wants to access abortion services to call 454 hospitals. Thus, this article aims to fill this important gap between quantitative and qualitative data. The findings identify and analyse the limited access to abortion at private hospitals by means of storytelling. The aim is to criticise the problem of '*legal but not available: abortion services*' revealed by the quantitative data and to illustrate the process using a qualitative method, *autoethnography and self-narrative methods*, as a researcher with a *situated knowledge* position in gender studies.

This autoethnographic study, prepared in the social context of Turkey, reflects the reality of the challenge encountered by subjects who want to access abortion without restriction as to reason through the mystery client method. Even though the identity of the subject in the sense of the person seeking an abortion of the research using the '*mystery client method*' is confidential, this article maintains its reality in the social context of Turkey.

Keywords: Autoethnography, gender studies, abortion, self-narrative, situated knowledge

A Gendered Space of Contest: The Converted Hagia Sophia Mosque

Sare Nur Avcı

Architectural and Urban Studies MSc programme, Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract

The converted Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque has been a provocative stage for embodying state policies on its cultural significance. After the conversion, new symbolisations have been introduced into the heritage's physical space by the management of the monument. Furthermore, users actualise a 'spectacle of Hagia Sophia' by their practices in and responses to this controlled space. During prayer and visiting times, movement between the refurbished zones expresses gender blindness and surveillance in space and renders the ambiguity in concurrent performances of worship and exhibition. From this perspective, grounding my investigation in Kilian's (1998) public–private framework, I examine the experience of Hagia Sophia through a spatial reading based on my visits, arguing that the state's international recognition and tourism objectives screened by a 'conversion spectacle' are revealed through users' responses to the current ordering of space.

Keywords: Hagia Sophia, mosque, conversion, gendered space

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Author: Sare Nur Avcı is an architect and researcher interested in representational spaces, city spectacles, and scenography. She received her Bachelor of Architecture degree from Bilkent University Department of Architecture in 2021 and is currently continuing her studies in Istanbul, on Kadir Has University's Architectural and Urban Studies MSc programme. She is a researcher in the research project 'Gendered Dynamics and Urban Life of Skilled Labour Migration'.

Domestic Masculinity Revisited: Spatial Negotiations and a New Division of Care Labour among White-Collar Couples in the Post-Pandemic Hybrid Work Environment

İlkay Baliç

Gender Studies Program, Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract

It has been two years since the unexpected outbreak of a global pandemic forced white-collar urbanites into a new form of labour: working from home. Marked by endless online meetings, the pandemic brought a new challenge to our understanding of the public/private divide, with public work infiltrating private space through screen cameras and domestic noise. As the world moves towards a 'post-pandemic' era, many private companies have decided to convert permanently to hybrid and flexible forms of working, which have proved to be an efficient way of managing performance. Current research shows that these developments have reinforced the unequal division of domestic labour, leading to the rapid withdrawal of white-collar women from the workforce, named a 'shecession' by the US Institute for Women's Policy Research director as early as May 2020. Only two months into the pandemic, the world had already started to discuss the gendered economic and social effects of this new paradigm.

This study aims to examine this new dimension of inequality, with an emphasis on masculinity. How are care labour and space renegotiated among professional couples in Istanbul? How do men narrate their increasing presence in domestic space in relation to masculinity? Are men's professional space and time prioritised, or do men seek a fair/er distribution of domestic labour? Through in-depth interviews conducted with ten white-collar male professionals from Istanbul, the study explores: 1) The spatial

negotiations of workspace at home; 2) The division of time dedicated to care labour (caring for children, parents, or others in the event of illness) and to work; and 3) The implications of these changes on the power relations between couples. While analysing the qualitative data, I use grounded theory and mind maps of interior space to investigate further how the pandemic has affected men's definitions and performances of masculinity, and the ways in which the boundaries between private/public space have shifted in this new hybrid domestic setting.

Keywords: Gender, Space, Home, Work, Masculinity, Covid-19

Building a Gender-Balanced Security Culture for Constructive Cyber Security

A. Salih Bıçakcı & Ayhan Gücüyener Evren

Department of International Relations, Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract

Despite cyber security's growing popularity, cyber security research rarely considers gender inclusion. The gender gap in the cyber security field is remarkable, both in the number of cyber security professionals within the rapidly growing job market and in the representation of cyber security policy, diplomacy, standards, and norm-making. For instance, according to Microsoft's numbers, only 17% of the cyber security workforce is female (Microsoft, 2022). In addition, socially constructed biases mean that 'men are seen as a better fit for technology fields', including the cyber security field (Windows Central, 2022). Moreover, cyber security threats affect the genders in different ways. In particular, gendered attacks are rising since female and LGBTQI+ users are more exposed to censorship, digital harassment, and cyber bullying (IDRC 2022). Another key problem is misperception: Cyber security's technical and technological aspects are seen as 'gender-neutral' and this assumption creates a blind approach regarding the biases in existing cyber security practices, standards, legislation, and policies (Tropina, Shires and Millar, 2021).

Numerous reports have documented an increasing need to address the gender gap in the cyber security jobs market and ensure that women are equally represented on the governance bodies of cyber security decision- making organisations (Mhajne and Whetstone, 2021). Yet, despite these efforts, the underrepresentation of women in cyber security research and its root causes remain unexplored. As the cyber security threats increase within our digitalised and interconnected society, ensuring gender equality in cyber security research becomes ever more vital. However, socio-psychological parameters such as gender stereotypes, lack of leadership, and male-dominated cultures persist in both workplaces and academia, creating significant entry barriers for women scientists in cyber security research.

Cyber security technology design is gendered. It prioritises masculine practices over feminine ones. Some studies have suggested that 'male bias in the community of editors who manage scientific journals and conferences' in the computer sciences leads to the unequal visibility and participation of women in cybersecurity research (New York Times, 2019). That study also underlines that 'differences in parental support, access to computers between girls and boys and the number of female models' shapes future inequalities even during the pre-college period. Consequently, women's underrepresentation in cyber security research and careers is associated with the perception that women are less productive and less successful in cyber security careers and research.

Taking this perspective, this paper aims to focus on the root causes of women's underrepresentation in the cyber security field. This approach also raises further questions: How can we build a gender-balanced cyber security perspective? What are possible ways to restructure gender balanced security approach, and gender perspectives within the sector? Overall, we intend to build a functional model for the cyber security community in order to encourage the engagement of more women in the cyber security field and ensure more multigendered cyber security policies and practices.

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Gender Dynamics of Economic and Social Upgrading and Downgrading in Global Value Chains: The Role of Embeddedness and Governance in Turkey`s Apparel Industry

Inci Bilgin

International Relations Programme, Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract

There has been a recognised need for a gender dimension when analysing global value chains (gvc) and global production networks (gpn). This was addressed by a recent study putting forward the global (re)production networks [G(r)PN] framework. However, the gender dynamics of firms' economic upgrading and workers' social upgrading has yet to be understood. This study adopts the G(r)PN framework, along with upgrading and governance theories from the GVC literature, to analyse the gender dynamics of economic and social upgrading and downgrading through a case study. This case study includes three different trajectories: (1) economic upgrading with social upgrading; (2) economic upgrading with social downgrading; and (3) economic downgrading with social downgrading. The principal objective of the study was to investigate the conditions that enable or hinder gender-equitable economic and social upgrading within global production networks. A qualitative methodological approach – consisting of semi-structured interviews (with factory managers, human resource managers and other key informants) and focus group discussions (with workers) – were used to understand and explain the role of embeddedness and governance in achieving gender-equitable upgrading outcomes in Turkey's apparel. In this context we discuss, firstly, the definitions of economic and social upgrading; secondly, gender dynamics as an essential aspect of global production networks; thirdly, the role of the economic and social embeddedness of global production networks in gender dynamics; and fourthly,

the impact of governance/power relations on gender-equitable upgrading. The specific questions that drive the research are: *Why do the processes of economic and social upgrading and downgrading in global value chains bring gender-inequitable outcomes? Does the economic and social embeddedness of global production networks shape the gender dynamics of economic and social upgrading and downgrading? Under what conditions are gender-equitable outcomes achieved? Can interlayered governance in global value chains leverage more gender-equitable outcomes for workers?* The findings can contribute to a better understanding of the potential role of interlayered governance for gender-equitable economic and social upgrading.

Keywords: gender, upgrading, embeddedness, governance, global value chains, global production networks

Learning and Practising Architecture: What a Gap!

Cristina Càndito & Alessandro Meloni

Department of Architecture and Design, University of Genoa, Genova, Italy

Abstract

This contribution aims to analyse the phenomenon of gender differences in the discipline of architecture, helping to raise awareness in the world of architecture about this complex issue.

It can be observed that men are more likely to occupy the most important positions and hold the status that is currently defined by the term Archistar, in line with a prejudice that has deep roots in patriarchal culture. The first section of this text presents evidence of instances where male architects have become well-known at the expense of their female collaborators, despite the fact that, in some cases, the latter have been the main authors of their joint works. Today, fortunately, this trend has declined. However, gender differences remain and manifest in different ways. Therefore, the second section develops a numerical analysis related to university education and the profession of architect. In the third section, we introduce the themes and methods that are the subject of our specific analysis, which is linked to the training courses held at an Italian university, in the city of Genoa. This section also includes an in-depth analysis of the statistical literature and introduces a comparative assessment of male and female students' skills in management and recognition of space. The fourth and final section describes the data obtained from our analysis of the results following specific tests, and the final results observed in the university courses analysed.

Although this is only a preliminary study, the results reveal that female students have significant ability to distinguish themselves from their male counterparts, not only from a numerical point of view, but also by achieving higher ratings. This research is at an early stage and is part of a still embryonic field in which the specific available literature is very limited. The study of these arguments therefore becomes central to this research, and seeks to help eliminate certain prejudices.

Keywords: Education, Representation learning, Gender Gap, Architects, Spatial abilities.

Feminist Contributions to Evolutionary Models of Sexual Selection

Valentina Carlone

Technological University Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

Abstract

This contribution offers a critical analysis of feminist epistemological thought. Feminist scientists have long been concerned with understanding the complex and multifaceted relationship between gender and biology. They have sought to identify the multidimensional ways in which biological research is often informed by unjustified assumptions about sex and gender, including gender stereotypes. They have investigated the contribution of scientific research to women's subordination, the social causes of women's subservience, and the putative natural inferiority of women as the science understands it. A particular gender symbolism may have influenced methods, research questions, and the choice of scientists for projects. Additionally, in certain instances, gender preconceptions have had a detrimental effect on the focus and direction of biological research and the societal impressions it produces.

In this paper, I address some of the feminist interventions on evolutionary patterns of sexual selection. The structure of the paper is as follows. In §2, I present the theory of sexual selection developed by Darwin. In §3, I address some of the more recent studies that have been inspired by Darwin's observations. Finally, § 4 is devoted to some feminist observations on the evolutionary models described in the previous sections.

Keywords: feminist epistemology, biology, metaphors, contextual values

The Effects of Gender and Gender-Equality Course on University Students' Gender Stereotypes*

Ayşe Rezan Çeçen, Senem Ezgi Vatandaşlar, Çisil Dinç, & Kübra Savaş,

Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University, Muğla, Turkey

Abstract

This study examines the effects of an awareness-raising intervention, provided through the Gender and Gender Equality course given to Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University students as an elective course during the 2020–21 academic year, on the gender stereotypes held by the students. Gender stereotypes lie at the root of many serious problems, including violence, with an impact on both women and men. It is vital to raise awareness of gender stereotypes among university students. The effects of the Gender and Gender Equality course were examined using a quasi-experimental design involving a pre-test/post-test control group. Quantitative data was collected through the Gender Stereotypes Scale and qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews. The study aimed to investigate whether the course led to changes in the attitudes of the students who took the course. Both the qualitative and quantitative results showed that the intervention was effective in reducing students' gender stereotypes. Thanks to this course, awareness of gender stereotypes was increased; different types of violence were comprehended better; the importance of the language used, the choice of words, and the effects of common but sexist discourses were better understood; and the participants' motivation and desire to change their own behaviour increased, especially in terms of gender roles in romantic relationships, empathy towards other people, and awareness of gender inequality in business life. The results are expected to contribute to the development of gender equality and the prevention of violence, primarily among university students, but also in the wider society. The development of healthier thinking styles among emerging adults, who will form the society of the future, is expected to contribute to the welfare and healthy

functioning of society. Therefore, it is recommended that such courses be given to university students in the interests of ensuring gender equality and preventing violence.

Post-Coup Queerness in Turkish Cinema: Gender, Sexuality and Psychomachia in Kartal Tibet's *Sabaniye*

İlyas Deniz Çınar

Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract

Kartal Tibet's *Şabaniye* is a 1984 film starring Turkish actor Kemal Sunal and his famous comedic character Şaban. It depicts the adventures of a man in disguise, who cross-dresses to avoid his nemeses. Made four years after the brutal 1980 Turkish coup d'état, the film is a product of popular Turkish cinema of the time known as Yeşilçam. Considering the movie within Turkey's post-coup societal psychomachia, in this article I discuss the film's queer gender dynamics and sexual politics by exploring its narrative and form. Focusing on the movie's central plot, which is driven by cross-dressing, and unpacking how this performance is mediated by the film's mise-en-scène and cinematography, I argue that *Şabaniye* is a symptomatic reaction against the oppressive politics of the junta years and the ensuing neoliberal project. Analysing the film through the lens of film and performance theories, I spotlight the ephemeral qualities of cross-dressing and its functions in Turkish cinema.

Keywords: queer, gender, performance, comedy, Turkish cinema, military coups

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Gender and Collaborative Learning Approaches in Engineering Education: A Phenomenological Analysis

Sandra I. Cruz-Moreno[23] , Shannon Chance[24], Brian Bowe[25]

Technological University Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

Abstract

The underrepresentation of women in STEM has been widely recognised (Bohon and Nagle,2019; Hatmaker, 2013; Dancy et al., 2020). However, there has been relatively little analysis of women's experiences in higher education within STEM fields. Analysing qualitative

longitudinal data can provide insights into the evolution of students' learning and socialisation processes, as well as contextual factors influencing women's choice to persist with or leave their courses. Approaches to improving the conditions for women in STEM undergraduate courses include encouraging peer-to-peer and collaborative pedagogies and programmes (Eisenhart and Allen, 2020; Hatmaker, 2013; Bohon and Nagle, 2019; Smith et al., 2021; Fox, Sonnert, and Nikiforova, 2011) as paths towards improving learning capacities, motivation, and group integration.

In this context, this on-going research project examines the extent to which collaborative learning methods, including problem-based learning (PBL) pedagogies, support women in engineering education at TU Dublin and sister institutions in Poland and Portugal. The studyuses phenomenology as the primary methodological framework guiding data collection and analysis. An existing longitudinal dataset of 72 interviews, initiated in 2014 by the research team (Chance and Bowe, 2014; Chance and Williams, 2016), has been fully analysed to identify positive and negative aspects

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[23] PhD student

[24] Supervisor

[25] Supervisor

of both formal and informal PBL experiences among the sampled women. Analyses of existing longitudinal interview data are complemented with focus-group interviews involving additional women studying engineering, as well as a survey to further extend the value and generalisability of the findings quantitatively.

Although the underlying assumptions of PBL and other collaborative learning strategies might state that women benefit from these approaches, they also present challenges that reflect gender bias in group dynamics, where unrecognised tasks and soft skills, such as project management, group coordination, and communications, are frequently assigned to women (Fowler and Su, 2018; Hirshfield, 2018). Exploring female students' attitudes, experiences, and beliefs qualitatively during their education in engineering can help to build a categorisation of socialisation processes in PBL that do indeed support female students during their studies. Such research can also help in reassessing the adequacy of strategies that could be interfering with their self-confidence and constructs of belonging.

Keywords: PBL, collaborative learning, socialisation processes, STEM education, teamwork

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Critical Perspectives on İSMEK (Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Art and Vocational Training Courses) and Its Relation to Creative Production Networks of Istanbul

Sezgin Karcan Kaya

Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract

This research consists of the initial findings from my thesis, entitled 'Critical Perspectives on İSMEK (Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Art and Vocational Training Courses) and Its Relation to Creative Production Networks of Istanbul'. The thesis aims to analyse the creative production networks of the metropolitan city of Istanbul through an empirical study in the context of urban education and public services, and uses Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality's İSMEK as a single case. The intention is to show how İSMEK, a public institution, can act as a powerful actor for social and cultural change. Therefore, I have examined İSMEK's role as an enabler in supporting creative production and creative economies in the city with the aim of uncovering its potential to create a community through skills development, economic benefits, added value, and creative society.

The research has benefitted from a recent European Commission report which underlines the importance of the cultural and creative industries as an important pillar for sustainable growth and human capital. Additionally, the report proposes the formation of sustainable relations between creative and cultural sectors, regional and national authorities, institutions, universities, and other relevant stakeholders, and advises the setting up of platforms and courses for vocational training and skill sets to promote sustainable growth and human capital (European Union, 2021, p. 38). Thus, this research uses İSMEK as a case to understand the relationship between local stakeholders and creative and cultural economies.

I have aimed to reveal the potential of İSMEK, a publicly funded institution, to enable a social transformation in the urban context and the relations between local economic and social development, community-building, and creative education. Also, I have investigated whether the education, skill set, and knowledge that the individual receives from this institute can become a new economic value-added asset for the city, and whether the course graduates can use their self-earned capital to become involved in local economic development.

Additionally, although the courses are not specifically reserved for them, women form the majority of İSMEK trainees (Girard, 2018, p. 139). Therefore, I have also examined the policies and collaborations developed for women within the scope of the research. Consequently, this research has a gender-specific aspect based on the experiences of and interactions between myself as a female researcher and the mostly female course graduates. Examining the same research question as a male researcher and surveying different course graduates may lead to different dynamics based on gender relationships.

For these reasons, I have conducted empirical research on İSMEK through surveys and semi-structured interviews, while also benefitting from İSMEK's information bulletins, brochures, journals, books, and the data available online.

Keywords: İSMEK, creative production network, social transformation, creative labour, creative and cultural industries

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The Impact of De-Europeanisation on Turkish Women's Organisations

Nazlı Kazanoğlu

Nişantaşı University , Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract

During the course of its Eastern enlargement, the European Union (EU) has come to acknowledge the importance of civil society actors' roles during the harmonisation process of both the new member states and the candidate states. To this end, the EU has paid significant attention to strengthening civil society organisations (CSOs) in those new member and candidate states, including Turkey. It has provided both technical and financial support to these countries to contribute to their Europeanisation and democratisation processes. In the Turkish context, Turkish women's organisations have been successfully facilitated due to the opportunities that the accession process brought about. They took maximum advantage of the greater emphasis placed on civil society actors by the EU and have intensified and broadened their activities as well as their collaboration partners. Now, however, in the twentieth anniversary year of its official candidacy, a significant backlash against the EU accession of Turkey can be observed. Since 2007, the AKP has been hesitant about even continuing the EU-membership project. In 2011, this flagging enthusiasm of the AKP government in terms of Acquis adaptation and implementation reached its peak, so that notable Europeanisation scholars have argued that Turkey has been going through a process of de-Europeanisation. This slipping of EU membership down the political agenda has made life much harder for women's organisations, not only in terms of their lobbying and networking practices but also their very survival. Therefore, they have been compelled to adopt new strategies and new resources for their lobbying and networking. This research is thus an endeavour to explore and explain the new lobbying, networking, and collaboration repertoire of women's civil society organisations (WCSOs) from across the seven administrative regions of Turkey.

Keywords: Europeanisation, De-Europeanisation, Gender Equality, Turkish Women's Organisations

How Do Masculinities Affect War? Looking at the Ukraine Crisis through a Gender Lens

Elif Ezgi Keleş

 International Relations (English) Department, Nişantaşı University, Istanbul; PhD Student in İzmir Katip Çelebi University, Izmir, Turkey

The existence of a relationship between militarism and male domination has long been argued by prominent feminist scholars in the discipline of International Relations (IR). The growing literature on war, gender, and militarism studies; critical military studies; masculinity; and war studies is concerned with finding gendered logics behind war and militarisation processes. By scrutinising the gender patterns of aggressive state behaviours (ultimately wars), feminist and queer academics have revealed that masculinities are crucial to understanding the construction, process, and results of wars. Accordingly, the war machinery, and its ideological roots – militarisation processes and military operations – are directly associated with masculinities (in particular, certain masculinity types known as hegemonic masculinity and militarised masculinity). Correlating with this, militarised masculinities are studied both theoretically and empirically; albeit these studies mostly focus on the damage and discrimination directed against women in masculine-dominated wars. Considering the related literature critically, there is a tendency to take the concept of masculinity for granted, while the different variations of masculinities are mostly neglected in the context of war and military studies.

Aiming to contribute to the related literature gap, this paper investigates the roles and impacts of different masculinity types (or different masculinity-typed leaders) on war. In other words, this paper tries to answer the research question: 'How do different types of masculinities affect the construction, processes, and results of a war?' In our search for an answer, in the first section literature on war, gender, and militarisation are critically discussed. The second section provides a case study, which presents a useful tool to explain the main argument of the paper. Here, the case of the Ukraine Crisis of 2022 and its leaders (Vladimir Putin and Volodomir Zelenski) is selected. This presents an exceptional and appropriate case involving both a hegemonically masculine leader (Vladimir Putin) and a male leader who is seen as effeminate (Volodimir Zelenski). After the case and its leaders are introduced, each leader's character, speeches, tweets, and body language (during the ongoing war) are analysed using an interpretivist approach. In the last section, the effects of different masculinity types on war processes and their results (including probable damage) are analysed.

Keywords: Gender, war, masculinites, Ukraine, Russia *This abstract was omitted but not presented.

Myths of Veiling in Turkey: Women's Struggle to Take Off the Headscarf

Sumeyye Koca

Political Science and International Relations PhD Programme, Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract

Since the headscarf ban in universities and public institutions was lifted in 2013, the headscarf has been neither a controversial political question nor a contested social issue in Turkey. This research, however, scrutinises the changing dynamics of the headscarf question based on women's struggle to take off their headscarves against their pious families' wishes and the re-politicisation of Islam in public life. The framework of the research is limited to the current political context of Turkey, in which the ruling party (the Justice and Development Party) has re-politicised Islam in an authoritarian way. It has done so in order to regulate both the private and public spheres and to redefine the ideal social imagery for women in a religious-conservative way. Drawing on qualitative research data consisting of semi-structured, in-depth interviews with eight women who were previously veiled, urban, and university-educated, the research focuses on gendered experiences of the practice of un-veiling. The goal is to analyse the personal and social intricacies behind women's decisions to take off the headscarf. The research concludes that: i) the rejection of the headscarf, or a 'stigma symbol' (Göle 2003), demonstrates that the headscarf became a social overburden of a group identity, and these women no longer wanted to carry the most visible aspect of pious identity upon their bodies; ii) un-veiling can be framed as a claim of individuality that challenges social expectations of consistency between a woman's visible identity and her behaviour in public life, and iii) un-veiling is a claim of invisibility by women who are dissociating themselves from the group identity in the politicised Islamic context of Turkey.

Keywords: un-veiling, re-politicisation of Islam, individuality, invisibility, body

Facing Gendered Islamophobia in the Era of *Islamo-Gauchisme* Accusations: The Case of Italy and France

Marta Panighel

University of Genoa, Genoa, Italy

Abstract

Drawing upon my PhD thesis, which explores gendered Islamophobia (Zine, 2006) in Italy, this paper focuses on strategies employed to counter Islamophobia through a comparative case study: namely, the experiences of Italian and French Muslim women. The *République*'s struggle against 'overt religious symbols' is a meaningful case study not only for the consequences it has generated in France across thirty years, but also for how it has influenced the debate in several European countries. This paper focuses in particular on the connection between the French and Italian cases, with the intention of verifying whether there is an Italian specificity in the construction of Islamophobic discourse or in the constitution of a counter-narrative by concerned subjects.

The image of Muslim women conveyed by the media tends to be filled with bias and stereotypes, in line with what Mohanty (2003) has called the monolithic representation of the 'Third World woman'. This representation reproduces a certain form of structural racism: Muslim women are always perceived as Other, and described as incompatible with Western values. Obviously, this representation has a strong structuring in terms of gender, since the Muslim man is described as violent and/or a terrorist (Puar, 2007) and the Muslim woman as a helpless victim who needs to be saved (Abu-Lughod, 2001). Several studies have attempted to trace the continuity between contemporary imagery about Muslim women and gendered Orientalism (Yeğenoğlu, 1998; Khalid, 2014).

This paper conducts a discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995; Van Dijk, 2008) of media and political discourse in both countries. Focusing on two pivotal aspects – the contemporary discourse on Muslims and Islam; and the political strategies employed by French and Italian Muslim women to face gendered Islamophobia – the paper

attempts to understand whether and how it is still possible to counter Islamophobia at a time when critical knowledge, especially anti-racist knowledge, is under severe attack at a transnational level (Schubert, 2021) and the accusations of *islamo-gauchisme* are used to target anyone who tries to oppose anti-Muslim racism.

Keywords: Gendered Islamophobia; Muslim women; Orientalism; Islamo-gauchisme.

*This abstract was accepted but not presented.

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Using a Gender Lens to Examine the Field of Design: Design, Education, Methods, Sustainable Production

Valeria Piras & Sara Iebole

University of Genoa, Genoa, Italy

Abstract

The field of design, from research to practice, through the production of different kinds of artifacts, both tangible and intangible, is responsible for the perpetuation and materialisation of stereotypes and oppressions. It conveys cultural models that are closely linked to the subjectivity of those who create the designs, and thus embraces social constructs based on pre-established models with perennial immobility.

The role of designers therefore becomes fundamental, as they have the responsibility to share with a wide audience thoughts that, explicitly or implicitly, carry with them a particular subjectivity. This will inevitably have consequences for the context into which that subjectivity is incorporated.

When observing the role assumed by the designer from the perspective of socially sustainable production, it therefore becomes interesting to observe the design discipline by starting from gender studies concepts. This is true both from a content point of view, analysing the gender gap within the design system, and, from an intersectional perspective, analysing the oppressions generated by this system in terms of the biases contained within processes, design tools, and artifacts. Methodologically, it is valuable to start from the methodologies of feminist pedagogy and compare them with those used in design education.

In order to address both content and methodology, this research is divided into two parallel experiences of analysis in the field:

- firstly, insertion into the Italian company Barilla; in this corporate context, the examination of the project will be filtered through the lens of gender studies, making it possible to develop new concepts capable of subverting the

patriarchal vision that, still today, perceives gender as a dichotomous system based on an oppositional and complementary man/woman model;

- secondly, at the Swiss university FHNW Academy of Art and Design, the fieldwork consists of participation in didactic experimentation, part of the cycle 'Educating Otherwise', a research project that seeks to put design education under an intersectional lens.

The two research experiences, and the data collected, will be compared, allowing us to obtain an overview of the discipline of design in its entirety, with the aim of consolidating awareness about the role that gender studies can play in the design field. The final step will then be project-based, with the aim of thinking about a multi-faceted educational and project-based path applicable to the educational context of design in Genoa.

The Displaced, Disabled, and Queer Body: Negotiating Precarity during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Gonca Şahin

Gender Studies Programme, Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the vulnerability of all human beings to particular forces and disasters, regardless of our differences. Yet, the pandemic has also shown that certain groups have become more vulnerable than others. Often rendered invisible are the people who move across borders with precarious legal status, the people who do not have able bodies, and the people who do not fit into dominant norms of gender and sexuality. This study aims to provoke a discussion on the question of *who counts as human* from the perspectives of the experiences of displaced, disabled, and queer people through one single case. This is the story of Ahmad, a disabled gay refugee from North Africa who resided in Turkey between the years 2018 and 2020. This study looks at how he negotiated his life circumstances during the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic until he left Turkey, at the intersection of his experiences with displacement, disability, and sexual identity. Employing Judith Butler's concepts of *precariousness* and *precarity* and feminist intersectionality, this study addresses the questions: How do displacement, disability, and sexual identity intersect to exclude certain bodies from a liveable life? How do they intersect to constitute and sustain precarity during a crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic? What form of precarity is produced during the pandemic at the intersection of these three dimensions?

Located at the intersection of forced migration studies, disability studies, and queer studies, this study aims to provide an initial intervention into the experiences of disabled, queer non-citizens in the hope of sparking future discussion and research. It also seeks to bring the fields of disability, forced migration, and sexuality closer to enable a critical and productive exchange between these fields. As the literature

demonstrates, the containment policies and securitisation of borders by the global North have blocked displaced people's access to international protection in the global North and have created protracted refugee situations in the transit zones across the peripheries of the global North. This securitisation of borders has caused precarious circumstances for people stuck in those transit zones. As a transit country that straddles the European periphery, Turkey is one of these examples. Some displaced people become more vulnerable than others to the precarity produced across the peripheries, such as disabled and queer individuals. In the case of Ahmad, life in the transit zone generated new forms of vulnerability. The COVID-19 pandemic intensified the precariousness of his life circumstances. This precariousness in transit came to a point at which return to the conditions of persecution in his country of origin became a more desirable option. Although the medical system worked well for him before the pandemic, his experiences during COVID-19 reveal the lack of preparedness of medical services and humanitarian interventions around disability issues.

Keywords: displacement, queer, disability, precarity, COVID-19

*This abstract was omitted but not presented.

Conscious consumption: Narratives of female empowerment and global development in the fast fashion industry.

Mariko Takedomi Karlsson

Human Ecology Division, Department of Human Geography, Lund University, Sweden

Abstract

My research is concerned with the co-optation of sustainability, feminism, and social justice within and by the fast fashion industry in Sweden. This stems from a desire to understand the acceleration of sustainability discourses and narratives built by brands (through communication, advertisements and marketing, and sustainability reporting) and how this shapes consumption. Through an analysis of the discourses of sustainability, feminism, and social justice in the fast fashion industry in Sweden, my PhD research aims to critically examine the current sustainability solutions offered by fashion companies and explain why those proposed solutions are at best unsatisfactory and at worst contribute to the problem. My research tries to understand the connection between gender and sustainability in the realm of fashion and consumption, as well as more broadly and conceptually.

When it comes to the discourse of sustainable fashion, I argue that the dominant narrative is a neoliberal one that is both techno-optimistic and uncritical of consumerism. In my research, I also investigate the role played by gender in the logic of so-called 'sustainable consumption'. Moreover, I argue that gender is an essential lens through which to understand sustainable consumption and fashion. This is partly because fashion and clothes are so intimately tied to desire and performativity, and gender is the best toolbox to deal with those elements. I argue that the way in which women's subjectivities are constructed in fashion discourse creates a dichotomy between empowered conscious consumers, and empowerment-seeking workers. This creates an assumption that, through the act of consumption, informed and benevolent consumers can help to create a sustainable and socially just global future. This

intensifies the dichotomy between the global North and the global South in a way that is not reflective of reality, while also creating a harmful hierarchy. In my research, I argue that encouraging so-called sustainable consumption is ultimately an ineffective way of making the fashion industry socially and ecologically sustainable.

Keywords: sustainability, fast fashion, feminism, consumption, social media

Watching a Place with the Eye of an Outsider: Developing New Spatial Perspectives through Oral History

The Case of Female Flower Sellers in Beyoğlu

Cemile Nihan Turhan

Department of Architecture, Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract

The aim of this study is to obtain new perspectives by using oral history and participatory observation in atransition district such as Beyoğlu, on which there has been so much research. To do so, I seek traces of the flower, the voice, Beyoğlu, otherness, and, finally, silence. In light of these, we look at the transformation of Beyoğlu, as a space of otherness, into a blind field in the narratives of two female flower sellers. Through their choices of what to tell or withhold in their own narratives, these two women show that a place can be experienced in different ways. While 'walking' can be used as a complementary method to strengthen a narrative with the ability to create thresholds, it also touches some controversial areas with its structure. Nowadays, the notion of 'being a flaneur' within its masculine conceptualisation – which sees women as social subjects, rather than explorers of the city, as well as the embodiment of the 'subaltern', which is still used as a marginalisation tool despite the large body of research on it – needs a much more fluid and changeable redefinition. The fact that everyone can be subordinated at one time or another gives people the opportunity to be a flaneur/flaneuse and connect with others, regardless of their social identity. Therefore, as a researcher, the streets that I walk can sometimes make me a flaneuse as well as a subaltern. Being aware of this can prevent us from considering places as empty boxes or romanticising them only through their historical changes. Thus, it becomes possible to see the political and economic dynamics underlying this transformation. The way to overcome this spatial blindness may sometimes lie in the oral history narrative of a female flower seller.

Keywords: oral history, blind field, flaneuse, Beyoğlu, otherness, urban sociology, gender

The Situation of Women Engineers in Turkey's Labour Market

Selen Utar

Kocaeli University, Kocaeli, Turkey

Abstract

This presentation aims to understand the situation of women engineers in Turkey's labour market. The ratio of women scientists and engineers in Turkey is above the European average according to statistics, but their position in the labour market is quite unequal. Therefore, this relatively high rate compared to other countries does not mean that Turkey offers a non-sexist labour market for women engineers and scientists. There are many reasons for this, such as the university entrance system in Turkey, which is different from that of European countries, and the fact that women concentrate on 'soft' engineering departments that do not require fieldwork such as food, environment, textiles, or industrial engineering. These are some of the reasons for this high ratio. Women who graduate from engineering departments such as machinery, electronics, or construction, which we can call 'hard' engineering areas that require a fieldwork, are given job descriptions closer to administrative duties and are exposed to internal segregation. Basic science departments, such as physics, chemistry, and mathematics, are mostly preferred by those who wish to become teachers in Turkey.

Many companies are implementing employment policies that will increase the number of female engineers within the scope of social responsibility campaigns. These address the sexist problems and practices faced by female engineers in the labour market. In addition, many NGOs are carrying out a range of useful projects related to this issue. However, although these campaigns and projects provide solutions to small-scale problems, they do not offer permanent solutions to the overall problem, which can be expressed nationally or even internationally. The absence of long-term, comprehensive policies aimed at solving fundamental problems, such as the sexist educational structure, means that it is difficult to see a bright future for the situation of female engineers in the gendered labour market in Turkey.

The strongest of the reasons behind these problems are undoubtedly the educational system and the increasingly authoritarian and conservative power discourse in Turkey. In this presentation, I attempt to make visible the local problems experienced in the Turkish labour market as well as the problems faced by women engineers in many countries. The problems of women engineers in Turkey are revealed through the results of field research, and proposals for solutions are presented.

Keywords: women engineers, technofeminism, STS, labour studies

Pictures from University of Genoa (Italy)

GENDER EX

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