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Introduction

During the last couple of decades, Turkish economy, society, and culture have undergone intense hybridizations under influences no longer easily characterized as importations of a Western modernity. In February 2001, the liberalized market economy instituted within, if not by means of, the repressive political environment following the 1980 military coup produced a major crisis bearing all the marks of a full-scale integration with global capitalism. The consequences of this economic crisis are currently being experienced in the form of sharply escalated rates of unemployment and poverty. The increasingly more visible manifestations of poverty in urban settings coexist with material and symbolic displays of what Tanıl Bora calls a “neoliberal chauvinism of prosperity” personified in “Euro-Turks.”

Ayşe Buğra’s description of the changes in the place of the economy in contemporary Turkish society shows that the current dissolution of “society-specific arrangements, which, until recently, were able to prevent the worst forms of social exclusion and poverty” cannot be interpreted as a sign of modernization in the sense

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of the replacement of such arrangements with the rules of the competitive market, formalized labor relations, and formal mechanisms of redistribution. While the new orientation toward a globalized market renders informal relations of reciprocity such as family support incapable of continuing to function as systems of social protection, the same types of informal relations are mobilized to deregulate the labor market, to facilitate flexible production, and to accelerate the use of public resources to support private sector development. The emergence of “Euro-Turks” is largely due to the fact that “liberalization and deregulation have provided ample opportunities for the mobilization of networks for private gain, and what was critically labeled as populism has given way to downright corruption.” The currently experienced shocks of Turkey’s insertion into the global market are thus not accompanied by a promise of evolving toward what used to be a Western model of justly and rationally regulated configurations of economic and social life.

While the Westernized prosperous elite was busy distinguishing itself from the impoverished lower classes it viewed as a hindrance to membership in the EU, a predominantly right-wing coalition government including the radical nationalist MHP (Nationalist Movement Party) recently surprised both the Turkish public and the European authorities with a speedy enactment of a number of significant legal reforms required by the EU. Soon after, in October 2002, the EU released its latest report on Turkey’s progress toward accession to membership. It praised the new reforms but also cited several antidemocratic practices and human rights violations as serious obstacles in the way of starting membership talks. Although Turkey’s possible membership in the EU continues to be a contested issue, and although several representatives of the state challenged the accuracy of the claims in the report, the standard objection to the EU’s demands as interferences with Turkey’s internal affairs was not voiced as loudly as it would have been even a few years ago. It seems to have lost much of its appeal in a widely shared knowledge and acceptance of the permeability of national borders.

Tamir Bora’s taxonomy of nationalist discourses in Turkey becomes especially interesting in this context. It registers the rising appeal of a liberal “neonationalism” largely shaped by an ideology of economics. This brand of nationalism sees the self-interest of the nation in merging with the globalization process, defining Turkishness as an “intrinsic” capacity to har-

monize with universal standards. This “sterile, narcissistic, and hedonistic” nationalism coexists with official, racist, and Islamic varieties, each involving “articulations, osmoses, and ‘syntheses’ alongside its ‘Eastern’ and ‘Western,’ ethno-essentialist and civil aspects.”

Against this background, the sense of belatedness and the fear of inauthenticity that accompanied the traumatic late-nineteenth-century encounter with the Western model have become complicated by a bewildering sense of simultaneity with the rest of the world. Analyses in terms of Turkey’s geographical and cultural situation “between two worlds” are becoming increasingly untenable in a world that seems all too “single.” The immediately perceivable dependence of people’s lives upon the uncertainties of a global economic system is not the only reason for this untenability. More important, the timeless spatial model in which Turkey is purportedly situated between two roughly symmetrical worlds, the “East” and the “West,” does not accord with the ways in which economic, political, and cultural alternatives are imagined and articulated in the Turkish public sphere.

The “West” is a permanent, if shifting, signifier in the language of this public sphere, and it exerts a powerful pressure on the imagining of modern Turkish identity, both positively as a developmental ideal and negatively as the figure of alienation. But there is no corresponding presence of something called the “East” as an alternative paradigm of identity. Although Islam is the one phenomenon automatically associated with an “Eastern” identity by “clash of civilizations” discourses, such an association is far from being necessary and meaningful in conceptualizing the role Islam continues to play in the definition of different identities in the Turkish public sphere, or in the volatile oppositions and alignments among different lifestyles, different economic and political interests.

Turkey is neither caught between nor a successful synthesis of an “East” and a “West.” It is, rather, a country in which many of the fundamental social divisions have been experienced, articulated, concealed, or displaced in a cultural/ideological vocabulary mobilizing the “West” in different power and justification strategies. An imagined state of “non-Westernness” or “not-yet-Westernness” has served to found national identity upon a sense of lack and has not yet been remedied under the custody of elites and institutions cast as guardians of a narrow range of features of Western modernity. Today, as this authoritative paradigm of Westernization has largely

exhausted its capacity to generate social cohesion and legitimation, it becomes possible and necessary to confront the fault lines running through what Meltem Ahıska calls “the historical fantasy of the modern” that is identified with the “West” in Turkey.

This collection of articles aims to do this through a number of different but related strategies. The first is to ask what mechanisms of repression supported the construction of the fantasy; that is, the exclusions and displacements involved in the modernizing elite’s highly selective appropriation of a limited set of ideals associated with European modernity.

Viewed in this way, the “secular” character of the Turkish state does not support the cliché about Turkey’s exceptional role as a bridge between the Islamic world and the secular West. It appears, rather, as a specific appropriation of one ideal of Western modernity, only partially realized through the exclusion or adulteration of such other ideals as democracy and individual autonomy. The shape this specific appropriation takes is largely determined by the fault line separating the state from the society and the pressures exerted upon this divide by the dialectics of domination and autonomy structured along it. The continuing importance of this fault line in contemporary Turkey is addressed most directly in Ahmet Insel’s interpretation of the results of the general elections that took place as this issue went into production, and in Ümit Cizre and Menderes Çınar’s analysis of the role of the military in shaping the country’s political landscape. Insel sees the AKP’s (Justice and Development Party) victory as having created the possibility of lifting at least some of the inhibitions imposed on the political development of Turkish society by the statist, authoritarian regime established after the 1980 military coup. Along similar lines, Cizre and Çınar discuss how the Turkish state’s “visible distaste for politics as a societal activity” is operative in the military’s ability to close public debate about religion and secularism, “pitting the rhetoric of ‘contemporariness’ against ‘Islamic anachronism’” and proclaiming itself the primary agent of the Westernizing/civilizing Kemalist project.

Andrew Davison’s reconsideration of Turkey’s identity as a secular state addresses the question of what mechanisms of repression support the construction of the fantasy. Davison points out the ways in which the new Turkish Republic’s secularizing reforms “actually created a new structure of control and oversight between the state and Islam in which the republic’s founders sought to use the powers of state to interpret, oversee, and

administer religious doctrine and practice.” He describes how the Kemalist state promoted the principle of secularization as an essential requirement of “catching up” with the modern West while interpreting and practicing it in such a way as to support its own version of “true” Islam and to maintain what it considered the right relations between religion, state, and society.

The displacements produced by the collisions and transformations of Islam, Turkishness, and the “West” both in Turkey and in an international context support Meltem Ahıska’s assertion that “a new theoretical conceptualization is necessary in order to comprehend the historical interdependence between Turkey and the West.” Ahıska attempts to lay the groundwork for such a conceptualization by exploring the figurations of the West as a phantasmic element in the imagining of modern Turkish national identity. She stresses the temporal paradoxes that arise from the Occidentalist conceptions that locate Turkey in both a temporal stasis and a permanent crisis, making the experiential reality of its present impossible by defining that present only through its relation to an immutable past that must be annihilated and a future that must be caught by a radical leap.

The echoes that the notions of Islam and secularization find in Haldun Güllalp’s and Katherine Ewing’s articles illustrate further displacements of these notions along other fault lines in widely disparate contexts. Güllalp provides an interesting example of religion’s capacity to take on multiple meanings in everyday life and political behavior in Turkey. Rejecting the assumption that Islam represents an intrinsically non-Western essence that needs to be rigidly circumscribed or outgrown on the way to modernization, Güllalp suggests that both the people’s and the dominant ideology’s conceptions of Islam are shaped along the widening fractures separating social and communal identities, especially those determined by class. A lower-class woman can associate practices such as wearing the headscarf with lifestyle and identity rather than religion, while categorizing an Islamist political leader as not a good Muslim because he can afford to have his children educated abroad. Similarly, Islam often stands in for class identity in Kamalist state ideology, since, “according to official dogma, the nation’s trajectory from Islamic traditionalism to Western modernity is to be replicated in the lives of individual Turks who come from rural backgrounds to the big city and aspire to upward mobility. As they move up the class ladder, they are supposed to shed their Islamic cultural traditions and become Westernized.”

According to Katherine Ewing, a similar transformation is expected of Turkish Muslims in Germany. They are supposed to shed their Islamic identities, seen as incompatible with Germanness, as they become integrated into German society. German nationalist discourses transport the political and social tensions around Islam and secularism within Turkey to the German public sphere and map them onto the previously existing tensions surrounding German national identity. In this way, “the precariousness of the notion of ‘German,’ its ambivalent links to a disavowed Nazi past,” are covered over, and the visible, practicing Muslim becomes the “phantasmic, abjected other” of Germanness while the “hybrid” culture of secularist Turkish-Germans is celebrated as a demonstration of the new multicultural identity of Germany.

In a collection of cartoons by Behiç Ak, whose daily cartoon strip is published in *Cumhuriyet*, the paradoxes and absurdities—fantasies, as it were—are confronted and dismantled by AK’s distinctly personal wit and understatement.

Bruce Kuniholm’s consideration of Turkey’s future in the world while “the fault lines that help to frame the tectonic shifts in Turkey’s evolving identity are unquestionably being redrawn” is clearly distinguished from these phantasmic constructions of temporality. Kuniholm’s careful delineation of the regional and global dynamics determining Turkey’s concrete alternatives for the future is enhanced by the insights the other articles in this first section of the issue provide into the past and the present of its economy, politics, and culture. After all, as Kuniholm points out, the best way to evaluate projections about the future is to judge them “not on *how* they turn out but on *the quality of our thinking about how they might turn out.*”

Levent Soysal’s more general interrogation of the “culturalist” paradigm for constructing immigration and integration stories about Turkish-Germans complements this perspective. He suggests that this paradigm is blind to the transnational dimensions of contemporary migrants’ existence as well as to the “rapid incorporation of migrants into legal and societal institutions, regimes of rights and membership, and economies of ownership and inequity in Europe.” This blindness turns Turkishness and Islam into reified parameters of difference and identity and uses the Turk as the ultimate signifier of the migrant who “is tied to an unyielding past, the past of his home and culture, and a persistent present, the present of his host place, his bureaucratic shackles, and his otherness.”

Ahiska's elaborations of Occidentalism and its paradoxes, both temporal and representational, inspire the second strategy that this collection uses to confront the fault lines running through the Turkish configurations of the modern: the turn to literature. The second part of this double issue is devoted to articles on Turkish novels and poetry not simply because they provide thematic illustrations of the denial of an Ottoman past and the development of ideals about Turkishness as a result of an ambivalent encounter with the Western model. Although they certainly do provide such illustrations, these articles attempt to do more. They approach literature as a special register of the conundrums and the aporias involved in the construction and representation of the subjectivities of a peripheral modernity. They trace the oppositions between the original and the imitation, the indigenous and the foreign, the public and the private, the traditional and the innovative along the fractures *within* the subjectivities constituted through the literary and epistemological crises generated by belatedness.

Hülya Adak's remarkable treatment of *Nutuk* [The speech], the "sacred" text of Kemalist ideology and nationalist historiography, as a literary narrative resonates with the notion of national allegory. Adak characterizes *Nutuk* as the self-narrative of the "new individual" representing his life as complete, unified, and exemplary by inscribing it in the narrative of the nation. *Nutuk's* fantasy of "a unified nation and unified self, interchangeable and intertwined," an "'I-nation' above the problematics of narrative representation," forms the reverse image of the deeply fissured selves depicted in modern Turkish novels. Adak sees the explorations of *bildung*, interpersonal dimensions of identity, the agency of the people, and the permeability of ego boundaries in the autobiographical narratives of Halide Edib as critical responses to the hegemonic narcissism of *Nutuk*.

Necmi Zeka's critique of modern Turkish poetry's "imprisonment in language" through the literary establishment's narcissistic elevation of Turkish to the status of a uniquely poetic language producing superior but untranslatable poetry could be considered an interesting variation on the theme of the illusory nature of self-enclosed native traditions.

Both the figure of the carriage and the problem of genre find modified echoes in Jale Parla's delineation of the car narratives in Turkish novels as constituting a subgenre dominated by the thematics of "the machine in the psyche." These narratives of "possession and dispossession, maturation and infantilism, narcissism and fetishism, fragmentation and self-destruction"

unfold the ironies of Turkish modernization through the use of machines “as metonyms of incompleteness and lack, on the personal-psychological level as well as the cultural-aesthetic.” According to Parla, the significance of the carriage or the car as a cultural object in these narratives and in the lives of Turkish people during the entire period of modernization results from the fact that it offers a semiprivate space in which to negotiate, usually without success, the newly emerging and volatile boundaries between the public and the private.

Sibel Irzik considers the possibilities and limitations of “national allegory,” the defining form of Third World literature according to Fredric Jameson. She follows the implications of regarding allegory as the expression of a healthy lack of a split between the public and the private in Third World cultures. Irzik points out the authoritarian thrust in the demand for an identification between private and national destinies and reads a number of modern Turkish novels as both fulfilling and nullifying this demand, “acknowledging but also attempting to overcome the contortions that language, narrative, and individual lives have to go through under social conditions that provide neither a protected private sphere within which individuals can have at least the illusion of sovereignty and freedom, nor a public sphere in which their demands for sovereignty can be freely negotiated.”

Orhan Koçak’s chronicle of “the catastrophic births of modern Turkish poetry,” which uses Harold Bloom’s theory of the anxiety of influence to conduct a “geoculturally” informed study of how poetic influence works in the context of Westernization, is a complicated example of articulating the problems of modern literature through the notion of belatedness. Koçak points out the at least initially “outlandish” nature of “attempting to transfer the ideas of the author of *The Western Canon* to quite alien terrain, where they would seem to lose much of their relevance, and by way of a type of concern which has been branded as ‘the culture of envy’ by the author of those ideas.” But in showing how the poetic movement called “the Second New” turned “the positional weaknesses of modern Turkish literature, its off-centeredness and its belated novitiate, into the formal law of great poetry,” Koçak deconstructs the notion of belatedness even as he places it at the center of his argument. This is a double move most of the articles in this issue make in various ways.

Nurdan Gürbilek probes “the desire to be the other and the fear of losing one’s self in the other” through the late-nineteenth-century novelistic figure

of the snob and then asks, “What if the place called *inside* consists of an outside? . . . What if what is called *Turkishness* itself involves at the very origin the currently irremovable rift between a snobbish self and an authentic one?” Gürbilek suggests that the breaking down of the carriage in Rezaizade Ekrem’s *The Carriage Affair* is paralleled by the breaking down of the Western representational form that is the novel precisely because of this rift, this necessity to represent the self only through the impasses of a form that is foreign to the self, to signal at an interiority only through its impossibility.

A much more radical undermining of identity narratives is at work in Oğuz Atay’s *Tutunamayanlar* [The disconnected], the 1972 novel many of the literary critical articles in this issue reference. Suna Ertuğrul reads this novel as marking the impossibility of subjectivity as the ground of meaning in the face of a confrontation with modernity experienced as a loss of world. She then goes on to assert that *Tutunamayanlar*’s articulation of cultural difference as that which refuses to be appropriated by the modern project does not reveal something only about Turkey, but also something about modernity itself: “The experience of ‘belatedness’ is not being late to a historically determined essence; it is the recurrence of the essential lack of ground that defines the modern project.” As an experience of the loss of origin, the loss of transcendental structures that guarantee meaning, “modernity is always belated vis-à-vis itself.” If this is the case, what is called “belated modernity” may be, from the perspective of Western modernity, the “inside” consisting of an “outside.”

Ertuğrul also sees Oğuz Atay’s taking the modern crisis to its limits as a demonstration that “there is no outside to modernity in the sense of native and aboriginal traditions or non-Western narratives that can open up the possibilities of an alternative to Eurocentric modernity.” At a more general level, Meltem Ahıska’s critique of theories of alternative modernities reiterates Ertuğrul’s point. One could claim, however, that there is a possibility opened up by the attempt to go beyond the East-West divide. The fault lines that run so visibly through the self-constructions of a belated modernity may be cracks through which the epistemological, cultural, and political contradictions of the West also become visible, revealing modernity as a still incomplete project.

The problematic relationship between the public and the private is taken up in Erdağ Göknağ’s discussion of ambivalence toward social responsibility in Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar’s *Those outside the Scene*. Göknağ sees the

indecision of Tanpınar's characters between "East" and "West," modernity and tradition, Ottoman past and Turkish national future as these characters' "form of bourgeois protest," their form of forging private selves out of a "debilitating state of ambivalence."

Davison's, Gülalp's, and Ewing's references to the incomplete conceptualizations and practices of secularism in the West "reveal modernity as a still incomplete project." So, too, do Soysal's and Ewing's criticisms of migration stories that are geared toward maintaining national order and containing anxieties about national identity. Ahıska makes this revelation more explicit when she states that her aim "is not simply to go beyond the East-West divide; instead, it is to re-member the historical divide as constitutive of both the 'Western' and 'Eastern' modernities." In a similar move, Gürbilek brings Rezaizade Ekrem's *Bihruz* together with Flaubert's *Emma*, making use of René Girard's theory to reveal in the figure of the snob the imitated nature of all desire. She also sees Oğuz Atay as "working through the literary problems of belatedness and affectation, problems not only of belatedly modernized literature, but all literature, itself always belated to what we call individual experience."