

AYŞE DÜZÜN KARAMUSTAFA'nın dikhatnesi

Shedhalle

Sayın HALE TENGER

Ayşe Durkabaşa - Sociology Department

March 13, 1996

Dikhatine ---

Dear Ayşe

Thanks for your thoughtful comments. I have included most of your suggestions which were very valuable. They pointed out that I have focused too much on my perspective. What else do you expect from a European woman? I have specified in various places that you met specific women in specific situations and that taking it from there, you draw maps and create a different image of the city. I have to admit the thing on Turkish and Kurdish-women is alot clearer in German because it remains clear that the project intends to contradict stereotypical images of these women with a much more differentiated (particular) representation. It does precisely not mean that there is one type of Turkish woman. Your comment about the process of revising your images of women through the encounter with the migrants is very much to the point. I didn't realize that this was such an important aspect. In German we make very different sentence constructions. Please feel free to make several sentences or reword it differently. I don't think it needs to be a verbatim translation.

We do fairly theoretical work here at Shedhalle so the wording of the text is not unusual for this place. And of course there are a few things that are important on this end to formulate. For instance for a project at the Shedhalle it is important to place the meaning of the "undertaking Kültür" in terms of the art practice as well as in terms of postcolonial discourse. There I clearly distinguish between what the project Kültür does here and what you as a group do in the project. Those are two things. Since there are not that many institutions in German-speaking Europe which reflect on these issues, I think that it is an extremely important task to address the art discourse here as well. Yet it needs to be explained clearly what the project intends to do there. Both needs to be said.

I have been criticized for using the term postcolonial in relation to a country which is actively practicing colonialism. But in order to do a project like this one, I do make use of postcolonial theories myself which make me aware of all kinds of power relations. In different projects I try to address different aspects of postcolonial critique. This project manages to do a number of things, I believe. Because postcolonial discourse is so much about relationships, this project proposes an intensive collaboration instead of analysing problems from far. Hence the focus of the critique is directly on structural conditions and interaction, not merely on representational ones. This is an important point in the self reflection of ones institutional practice which has been such an important discussion in the late 80ies and into the 90ies in the arts.

By introducing a differentiated discussion which you lead within the context of Istanbul between academics and migrants, the clichés that Swiss people may have will be made obsolete. So on the representational level, the project sets out to contradict cliché images of Turkish and Kurdish women in Europe. Eventhough the project is not overtly directed towards a critique of Western Art or of Western stereotypes of Turkish women, the way the project is structured and laid out, it will contribute to do these two points. All these reflections are still in the project, even if the video interviews of these women are saying very simple things about daily life.

I hope you can agree with the edited text and will be able to do a translation of it. I look forward to your next fax.

Best, Ursula

Kültür

a gender project from Istanbul

Opening April 13th, 19 p.m.

With *Foreign Services* the Shedhalle engaged in the postcolonial discourse for the first time. The project focused on a reformulation of the relation of cultural center and periphery and a rework of the notion of marginality. These questions are again relevant in relation to the Turkish metropolis, where the tension between what we call the modern, democratic, western center and the postmodern, migrated, illegal realities on the borders is constantly growing. *Kültür* places itself within this field of tension. The project situates itself on the periphery, in a certain sense, and designs (draws) from there a different image (or map if you wish) of the city which is generated by the living spaces and conditions of those women who live and work there. The participating artists (female word for artists in German) and sociologists have travelled repeatedly to the shanty towns of Istanbul and, in the encounter with the migrants, revised their own images of women, which have been mainly formed by a western education. How the particular Turkish or Kurdish women position themselves in this urban, cultural and economic context is the focus of the workshop which started in Istanbul and continues in the Shedhalle with this exhibition.

The critique of *Kültür* does not limit itself to the level of representation, it starts at the structural preconditions for an exhibition in the West. This (critique) begins with the act of moving the authoritative quality standards of "Western high art" to the side, in favor of a consideration of the situation "Istanbul" and a redefinition of the relation to the institution Shedhalle. *Kültür* has been conceived in close collaboration with the artists and sociologists in Istanbul who, in an experimental process, have realized a project together for the first time.

Participants: Tül Akbal, Yasemin Baydar, Ayse.....

Subjects: experience and use of public space, migration, the relation between textile work and fashion consume, cultural censorship on the example of transvestites and MKM (Mesopotamian cultural center), the feminist agenda of the women's movement in the 80ies and today.

April 13 - 20

The participants are present in the Shedhalle, finalize the publication and talk with visitors. For longer talks and visits please advise in advance.

May 13 - 17

Workshop by Hale Tenger with Turkish and Kurdish women migrants in Zurich.

Kültür intends to participate at the counter-conference of Habitat II in Istanbul, June 96.

855 22 79

272 75 46

island, June 20

Karin intends to participate at the conference of Habitat II in

Zurich

Workshop by Helle Tengst with Turkish and Kurdish women migrants in May 13-17

talk with visitors. For longer talks and visits please advise in advance.

The participants are present in the sheds, include the publication and April 13-30

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a gender project from Istanbul

Karin

Opening April 13th 10 pm

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