



Forschungskolloquium Gender Studies FS 2019

Queering Turkish Identity in *On the road to Baghdad*

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Mittwoch, 08.05.2019, 18:15–19:45

Asien-Orient-Institut, Raum RAA-E-08

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Güneli Gün's "picaresque novel of magical adventures borrowed and stolen from the Thousand and One Nights", where Hürü starts her journey from Istanbul to Baghdad in the 16th century but ends up travelling back in time to 8th century and finding herself at Abbasid Baghdad, provides a queer representation of its heroine. The novel presents us Hürü and Shahrazad as the embodiments of their ethnic cultures in binary opposition, Turkish / Central Asian-originated heroine vs Middle Eastern anti-heroine. The two heroines of the novel display the tacit traces of how the Turkish identity constructs itself as opposed to Arabic identity through woman body. However, in the novel, the ideal Turkish female character Hürü is attributed a fluid gender identity, which keeps changing through the narrative, while the representative of Middle Eastern culture, Shahrazad, has a fixed gender role and identity with all characteristics of femininity. The question to be answered is how and why queering a female protagonist contributes to Turkish identity narrative of the nation-state in this novel.

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