

FEMINIST RESISTANCE TO VIOLENCE: COVERAGE OF RADICAL FEMINIST MEDIA IN TURKEY*

Hanife Aliefendioglu
Eastern Mediterranean University

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to analyse how the radical feminist media cover the issue of violence against women and how it relates violence in a general context from militarism and state violence. *Pazartesi* and *Amargi*, two radical feminist magazines, play a significant role in the Turkish alternative media. Although the feminist critique of violence primarily covers violence against women, the feminist movement and media with the breeze of third wave feminism are not indifferent to the problem of state violence and militarism, and represent conscientious objection and the anti-war movement.

KEY WORDS: Violence against women, militarism, antimilitarist feminism.

RESUMEN

Este artículo intenta analizar cómo los medios de comunicación radicales cubren la temática de la violencia contra las mujeres y la vinculan al militarismo y la violencia de estado. Se destacan dos revistas feministas radicales, *Pazartesi* y *Amargi*, las cuales juegan un papel importante entre los medios alternativos turcos. Aunque la crítica feminista de la violencia cubra primordialmente el tema de la violencia contra la mujer, estas publicaciones, no ajenas al feminismo de la tercera ola, prestan atención igualmente a la violencia de estado y al militarismo, y presentan una postura crítica de objeción y oposición a la guerra.

PALABRAS CLAVE: violencia contra las mujeres, militarismo, feminismo antimilitarista.

The contemporary feminist movement in Turkey first emerged in the late 1980s with street rallies against domestic violence. This has been a very successful and effective campaign accompanied by many activities setting the agenda of the movement until today. The priority of the movement in the second half of the 1980s was raising public awareness of domestic violence and sexual harassment. The feminist movement in Turkey went a long way in combating violence against women both as a concept and practically¹. By the end of the 1980s and the 1990s, the feminist movement tended to form sustainable and long lasting organisations which Bora and Gunal have noted as a «period of institutionalising» and «project



based feminism»². Since then, gender equality and violence against women have been uniting focal points of the women's movement and the feminist media in the country. The contemporary women's movement in Turkey has evolved from «egalitarian feminism» to «feminism of difference». Those who take the first stand do not question militarist culture and state violence in Turkey. They comfortably articulate secular Kemalist ideology and Turkish nationalism I would categorise radical feminist media as a representative of «feminism of difference».

The representation of women and gender issues in the media have become major focal points for the feminist movement, and this, in turn, has also led to greater gender sensitivity in the mainstream media which tend to sensationalise cases of violence against women. Today the radical feminist media in Turkey have connections with three emerging dynamic movements. Firstly, the second and the third wave of feminism in Turkey have made feminists more aware of their differences in terms of ethnicity and their political or religious standing in addition to emphasising their common goals. Secondly, in the 1990's, feminist literature and women's studies courses and programs trained a new generation of feminists inspired by post-structuralist and post colonialist studies. Thirdly, after the internal division of feminism, the socio-political dynamics of the country, made feminists more aware that women from different backgrounds may have a common platform to act together for gender equality against the patriarchal male coalition. Starting from the 1990's, the feminist movement no longer has only one strong homogenous voice with the emergence of Islamist, Kemalist and Kurdish feminism, in other words feminism of difference. It is possible to say that there are many women's groups and many feminisms in Turkey today. Since the 1990's, the feminist movement in Turkey has more international and global contact with governmental and non-governmental organisations³.

Violence against women, including domestic and sexual violence; rape; incest; virginity tests and prostitution has been taken as a broad concept by the feminist media. Sometimes premarital and extra-marital sexual contact; adultery; living alone; and wearing or not wearing a head scarf, makes a woman a potential target of violence. The perpetrators of violence may be family members (particularly in the case of honour killings); school principals; administrators in educational and public institutions; and police officers, who may see themselves as responsible for ensuring the chastity of women by maintaining and exercising control over a woman's body and female sexuality. However my aim is to show in this article how

* I am grateful to James Edwards, for helpful comment and suggestions term of grammar and language.

¹ N. SİRMAN, «Aile İci Sıddet Tanımlamasının Zayıflığı». *Amargi*, vol. 20 (2011), pp. 15-16, p. 15.

² A. BORA and A. GÜNAL, «Önsöz», in A. BORA and A. GUNAL (eds.), *90'larda Türkiye'de Feminizm*, Ankara, İletişim, 2002, pp. 7-11.

³ H. ALİEFENDİOĞLU, «Feminist challenge to violence: Difference of two feminist magazines, *Pazartesi* and *Amargi*», in T. İLTER, N. KARA, M. ATABEY, Y. ARSLAN and M. ORUN (eds.), *Communication in Peace Conflict in Communication*, Famagusta, EMU Press, 2007, pp. 127-132, p. 128.

specific conditions of the country, have made the feminist media cover violence as a multidimensional and complicated phenomena with ethnic and militarist aspects.

The Jamaican diplomat and scholar Lucille Mathurin Mair noted in Nairobi at the third UN conference of women in 1985, «...violence follows an ideological continuum, starting from the domestic sphere where it is tolerated, if not positively accepted. It then moves to the public...»⁴. This is the framework in which I would like to discuss the issue of violence in the feminist media.

As a peace journalist J. Galtung has stated, «...violence is any act that limits human self realisation»⁵. Again, as Michael Howard puts it, militarisation is the perception of militarist values as main cultural values of all society⁶. In Turkey the daily culture has been militarised so heavily that it is getting hard to talk about civil practices. Human Rights Watch's annual report notes that police initiated violence cases are increasing in the country⁷. As Cockburn suggests militarised masculine culture has put a mental and physical gender line between women's and men's lives⁸. I will expand the antimilitarist reaction of feminist media in the course of the article.

In this article I aim to show the gradually changing perspective of the feminist movement (and the feminist media) on violence that extends their perspective to state violence and its specific forms. I will use the contents of *Pazartesi* and *Amargi* as two leading radical feminist examples in the alternative media in Turkey⁹. Feminist media (in collaboration with the feminist movement) have developed some sensitivity towards such issues as militarism, terrorism, state violence, and ethnic violence since the 1990s. In turn the expanding sensitivity to violence of the radical feminist media also expands audience groups from women to the groups like LGBTTs, and male initiatives questioning masculinities and other gender issues. Although women's suffering has much in common with those areas, it can be said that the feminist media have turned their focus from «domestic violence» to «symbolic violence», «a culture of violence» or «public violence».

It should be noted here that the feminist media in Turkey have never fallen into the trap of representing cases of violence against women (especially murders and honour killing) as individual disorders or mental problems as the mainstream

⁴ V. MOGHADAM, «Violence, terrorism and fundamentalism: Some feminist observations». *Global Dialogue*, vol. I, num. 2 (2002), pp. 66-76, p. 71.

⁵ J. GALTUNG, «Peace journalism-a challenge», in W. KEMPF, H. LUOSTARINEN (eds.), *Journalism and the New World Order: Studying War and the Media*, Goteborg, Nordicom, vol. II (2002), pp. 259-272.

⁶ M. HOWARD, *War and the Nation State*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1978.

⁷ E. DEMIR, «Artan Polis Şiddeti Rapor Oldu». *Amargi*, vol. 12 (2009), p. 60.

⁸ C. COCKBURN, *The Line: Women, Partition and the Gender Order in Cyprus*. London, Zed Books, 2004.

⁹ There are two new feminist magazines in Turkey: *Feminist Yaklaşımlar* (Feminist Approaches) is a four monthly electronic magazine. See <http://www.feministyaklasimlar.org> *Feminist Politika* (Feminist Politics) is three monthly hard copy magazine published by a socialist feminist collective. Since I have covered the leading examples of feminist media I have not included analysis of these magazines: these can be studied in another article.



media usually do, but as political issues. However the feminist media to some extent have taught the mainstream media to handle honour killings and domestic violence more carefully. Currently there is the systematic murder of women taking place in Turkey. Male violence killed 217; women in 2010; 17 women in January 2011; 28 women in February 2011; and 24 women in March 2011. Many of the murderers were former husbands or partners of those women¹⁰. The reaction of women against the murder of women and honour killing is becoming more noticeable and more systematic. On the International Day of Violence Against Women, The Women Platform came up with slogans such as: «We are rebelling against the murder of women» and organised guerrilla activity covering a building with this banner. They also protested Turkish Prime minister, R. Tayyip Erdogan who gave a speech in *Womanist Conference* and said that he did not believe in gender equality. They raised banners saying «As it is said we are not equal we get murdered more» and «The love of men kills 3 women every day»¹¹. Ankara Women's Platform members protested the murder of women by wearing black clothes of mourning and stating «life is our right, honour is your problem!»¹².

Many major legal changes regarding violence against women in Turkey have taken place in the framework of Turkey's EU membership. Between 2001-2004 the Civil Code, Penal code and Labour Law have been amended in the Turkish Parliament¹³. In the amendments sexual violence against women has been described as a «crime against the individual» rather than a «crime against society»¹⁴. Many other new regulations such as banning virginity tests, sexual harassment in the work place and marital rape have been included and defined in the amended Penal Code¹⁵. During the amendments Turkish women's organisations established a monitoring committee to follow up on the changes¹⁶. Both secular, egalitarian and radical feminist and women's organisations supported gender equality related issues in EU negotiations period not because they are EU obligations but because Turkey needs these changes regardless. Işık, a Turkish feminist activist, in an interview notes that the Turkish agenda of EU membership provided a good opportunity for women to lobby for regulations and changes relating to violence against women¹⁷. The European Commission's Turkey Progress Report gives credit to some recent development but also

¹⁰ «Erkek siddetinin nisan 2011raporu» retrieved from <http://www.bianet.org/bianet/insan-haklari/130165-erkek-siddetinin-nisan-2011-raporu> 19 June 2011.

¹¹ H. ESMER, «25 Kasım gündemi. Nefes al ve İlerle...». *Amargi*, vol. 19 (2010), pp. 61-62.

¹² «Ankara'da Kadın Cinayetlerine Siyah Protesto» *Amargi*, vol. 17 (2010), p. 73.

¹³ G. ALDİKAÇTI-MARSHALL, «Preparing for EU membership: Gender politics in Turkey», in S. ROTH (ed.), *Gender Politics in the Expanding European Union: Mobilisation, Inclusion and Exclusion*, Providence, Berghahn Book, 2008, pp. 199- 210, p. 200.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 201.

¹⁷ A. BORA, «Değişmek de Değiştirmek de Kolay Değil, Şiddetle Mücadelede Nereden Nereye Geldik: Nazik Işık Anlatıyor». *Amargi*, vol. 14 (2009), pp. 30-33, p. 32.

draws attention to two important issues¹⁸ a) the increase in honour killings and lack of sheltering for women who are victims of violence¹⁹; b) lack of resources and measurable targets in implementing the national action plan on gender equality and violence against women²⁰.

PAZARTESI: POPULARISING THE POLITICAL AND POLITICISING THE POPULAR²¹

Pazartesi was published for the first time in 1995. It has introduced «political intervention» into the agenda and has enjoyed a very high circulation²². *Pazartesi* is an early example of Turkish alternative media from a radical «marginal feminist perspective»²³, which brings together Islamist, Kurdish and Turkish feminists from different classes and regions for the first time. In this sense *Pazartesi* contributed to the public debate on the culture of difference and has raised a feminist voice on the Kurdish problem and on Islamic practices by representing women's voices from diverse backgrounds. That was the period where feminism in Turkey became feminisms. This division made the radical feminist movement and the media more inclusive, and open toward all minorities among women in Turkey.

Furthermore, *Pazartesi* brought together, within its radical feminist critique, not just the conservative and neo-liberal policies from a feminist perspective, but also popular culture. Popular cultural products and names are the raw materials of *Pazartesi*'s political discourse. *Pazartesi* sometimes carried out a feminist analysis of high profile pop singers, anchor-men and TV programmes. As Yesim Arat emphasises, *Pazartesi*, has «challenged the borders of the political» on the one hand, and politicised popular culture containing feminist criticism on the other²⁴.

Pazartesi also brought a new journalism practice initiated by feminist women. According to Seçkin, *Pazartesi* has taken an uncompromising position on women's activities rather than adopting professional journalistic objectivity²⁵. *Pazartesi*'s edi-

¹⁸ EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *Turkey 2010 Progress Report*. Brussels, 2010.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 22.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 26-27.

²¹ *Pazartesi*, meaning Monday, refers to the day on which the early founders met every week, is run by a group of women who were active in the socialist revolutionist movement before the 1980s. The same group had published two important but short lived publications, *Feminist* and *Socialist Feminist Kaktüs* between 1988 and 1990. See www.pazartesidergisi.com. After a short break, *Pazartesi* has returned to publication in November 2003 and from January 2006, after the issue no. 106, it started to publish special issues on themes such as motherhood, sexuality and labour. Since 2007 *Pazartesi* has not been published.

²² Y. ARAT, «Rethinking the political: A feminist journal in Turkey: *Pazartesi*». *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol. 27 (2004), pp. 281-292, p. 290.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 282.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵ B. SEÇKİN, «100. Sayı Yine Düşük Yollara». *Pazartesi*, vol. 100 (2005), pp. 4-5, p. 4.



torial priorities can be understood from its first issues, for instance its back cover is almost always allocated to messages against violence²⁶.

Pazartesi's perspective or portfolio is not limited to domestic violence but also explores the violence applied by the authorities and security forces: some women were kidnapped and harassed by «unknown» people in the second half of the 1990s. Most of those women have leftist and Kurdish backgrounds in various organisations. By giving importance to such news *Pazartesi* courageously took a stand against all kinds of institutionalised violence which actually fills a gap in the media in general.

Women who are caught in the midst of an ethnic conflict in the South East of Turkey have been placed on the pages of *Pazartesi*. It regularly reports on the victimisation of women in the Kurdish regions due to the armed conflict. The editorial of the 100th issue of *Pazartesi* also commented on the armed conflict in the South-East as follows: «This magazine has tried to take sides against the war that has been taking place before all of us. ...As much as fighting against gender blindness, this magazine has tried to increase awareness against the otherisation of the oppressed nation's women»²⁷. Now there are additionally Kurdish women's journals, a women's movement and Kurdish women studies literature.

AMARGI²⁸

Amargi describes its main function as an: «expanding political theoretical feminist magazine» which makes it different from *Pazartesi's*, which depicts «the feminist interpretation of popular culture». Being aware of anything done by women and for women is not, by itself a feminist act for *Amargi*. *Pazartesi*, in this sense at least at the beginning, was more women's magazine rather than feminist magazine. In other words, *Amargi* makes a distinction between women's activities and feminist activism. The motivation of *Amargi* derives from its feminist interpretation of hard news or the political agenda of the country.

In each issue, *Amargi* deals with a specific theme on subjects as wide ranging as: the headscarf problem; the body politic; the modernism project of creating an «other» in Turkey; local elections; women's participation in local governments; prostitution; sexual slavery; the masculine double standard on moral codes toward women's honour; gendered citizenship rights; poverty; project-based feminism; sexual orientations; motherhood and aging. As the first editorial of the magazine stated:

²⁶ Here are some examples from back cover page headlines of *Pazartesi*: «Who is going to calm us down!», «We won't forget, we won't let it be forgotten, we won't forgive!», «Let's make it (Violence Against Women) stop!», «I hear, I see and I do not stop speaking out!». Almost 40 per cent of the magazine's issues have examined crime and violence against women on the front or back cover pages.

²⁷ B. SEÇKİN, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

²⁸ *Amargi* is a Summerian word, meaning «freedom» and «returning back to mother». See <http://www.amargi.org>. *Amargi* is a women's institute established in 2005 with a quarterly magazine that carries the same title. It is a non hierarchical women's group debating masculine reason or patriarchy in philosophy, political life and daily practices.

those who benefit from feminist theory through an analysis of the empowerment of women, women's human rights, and the struggle against poverty, etc. «should not feel marginalised».

Parlar and Mutluer in *Amargi* remind readers that the recent history of Turkey reads like a «diary of violence»²⁹. They add that the normalisation of violence in Turkey represents a manipulation initiated by the status quo. as they put it: «If the public opinion had not normalised violence in the South East of Turkey , that violence would have been called war». As a response to this ongoing violence in Turkey, in November 2007, 122 women from different professions sang a declaration entitled «we have made a commitment to peace»³⁰.

The second issue of *Amargi* was devoted to militarism and the expanded borders of militarism from army service to the depiction of masculinity³¹. Selek³², in *Amargi*, underlined that the feminist anti-war stance should not be limited to policy making for oppressed peoples, and that women should discuss the way they march in rallies, the use of flags and banners, and what they wear. According to Selek, men do not openly describe their military service experiences; «They do not talk about how they feel diminished under the cruel slaps of militarism and life»³³.

As Cynthia Enloe notes, militarisation is a deeply gendered process in which certain forms of masculinity and femininity work. In other words, militarisation needs the approval of both genders while privileging men against women³⁴. As Enloe puts it, militarised manoeuvres cannot be successful unless they receive women's approval³⁵. Militarism can work harmoniously with other forms of oppressive systems like nationalism and racism. Militarised areas separate both lands and minds by barbed wires, mines or ideologies³⁶. As Saigol has remarked, within militarised cultures, concepts such as «strategy», «action plan» and «target» become regular words within other modern-civil institutions as well. Eventually, militarised-violence remains invisible

²⁹ N. PARLAR, M. MUTLUER, «Gündeme Feminist Bakış». *Amargi*, vol. 2 (2009), p. 47.

³⁰ For more information <http://www.vaktigeldi.org>.

³¹ P. SELEK, «We need feminism and anti-militarism». *Amargi*, vol. 2, (2007), pp. 27-29, p. 27.

³² A Turkish court acquitted Pinar Selek on terrorism through bringing allegations related to national security charges. She had been cleared three times before, however the authorities continue to push for criminal sanctions against Pinar Selek. She has been accused of causing explosion at an Istanbul Spice Market in 1998 that killed seven people. However for many international and local intellectuals and activists Selek's real crime was to have been in contact with Kurdish separatist groups as part of her academic research. Selek's case is an internationally monitored human right violation. Prosecutors have appealed the not-guilty verdict, many people have signed the petition saying that they are witnesses of Selek's innocence and international human rights organisations warned that according to the European Convention on Human Rights, everyone has the right to a fair trial in a reasonable time.

³³ P. SELEK, «Oyunun Adı: Patates Gazisi». *Amargi*, vol. 12 (2009), p. 12.

³⁴ C. ENLOE, «Bananas, bases and patriarchy in women militarism and war», in J.B. ELSTAIN and S. TOBIAS (eds.), *Essays in History Politics and Social Theory*, Maryland, Rawman Littlefield Publisher Inc, 1990, pp. 189-206.

³⁵ C. ENLOE, *Manevralar: Kadın Yasamının Militarize Edilmesine Yönelik Uluslararası Politikalar* (S. Çağlayan, trans.). Istanbul, İletişim, 2006, p. 45.

³⁶ C. ENLOE, *op. cit.*, 1990, p. 2000.



since it is deeply internalised by societal daily practices³⁷. Women's problems with security «reveals a complex interrelation between militarism, war impoverishment and unequal distribution of resources and unequal life choices» according to Pettman³⁸. Both *Pazartesi* and *Amargi* have published such writers, activists or organisations on their pages like Cockburn, Enloe, Women in Black, Greenham Common Women, and Winpeace. «Men-military» versus «women-protected» binary opposition as Pettman suggested creates a gender relation where women directly or indirectly support militarisation³⁹. «Danger comes to women in many forms, and often at or close to home. Chivalry and 'protection' never guarantee safety»⁴⁰.

FEMINISM, MILITARISM AND HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY

Representation is a central question in cultural theory, «both as a political and as an epistemological» outlook⁴¹. To me, feminist media outlets are born of the need to make marginalised groups' voices heard⁴². Media discourse is also driven by all existing discourses⁴³ and it is intertextual⁴⁴. Representing the variety of violence within the framework of third wave feminism, radical feminist media expands the definitions, forms, patterns and analysis of gendered violence in the country and globe. This is more so in *Amargi* than *Pazartesi*.

In Turkey where military service is obligatory, public opinion recently has been introduced to the concept of conscientious objections. Conscientious objectors are being arrested and imprisoned by military authorities. Starting from the second half of 1990s, female conscientious objectors spoke out in the feminist media. In the news entitled «Yes women object too» antimilitarist women talk in *Pazartesi*⁴⁵. A female conscientious objector Nazan Askeran says «I do not want to be a threat to any living creatures who will inhabit the planet in the future... I do object to this militarist mentality which surrounds our lives». İnci Ağlagül says «As I remain silent I would be part of the guilt»⁴⁶.

³⁷ R. SAIGOL, «Militarizasyon, Ulus ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet: Sidetli Catisma Alanlari Olarak Kadin Bedenleri», in A.G. ALTINAY (ed.), *Vatan, Millet Kadınlar*, Istanbul, İletişim, 2000, pp. 213-245, p. 217.

³⁸ J. PETTMAN, *Worlding Women: A Feminist International Politics*. Sydney, Routledge, 1996, p. 147.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 148.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁴¹ K. GANGULY, «Accounting for others: Feminism and representation», in *Women Making Meaning New Feminist Directions in Communication*, New York and London, Routledge, 1992, p. 62.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ M. MACDONALD, *Exploring Media Discourse*. London, Arnold, 2003.

⁴⁴ N. FAICLOUGH, *Media Discourse*. London, Arnold, 1995.

⁴⁵ N. YURDALAN, «Kadınlar da Reddeder». *Pazartesi*, vol. 103 (2005), pp. 26-27.

⁴⁶ E. GEDİK, «Kadınlık ve Vicdani Red Üzerine Notlar». *Amargi*, vol. 2 (2007), pp. 38-39.

Another form of military related violence covered by the radical feminist media is fed by the debates of motherhood. Ethnic violence in Turkey created a dichotomy of «mothers of martyrs» versus «mothers of guerillas» each excludes the others⁴⁷. *Saturday Mothers* is a civil disobedience movement led by women who have quietly sat in protest in Istanbul since the 27th of May 1995, against arrests and killings associated with the Kurdish problem, making this the longest continuous protest in Turkey. Many women have been politised within the search for their missing children. According to Yurtsever this experience pushed women to question their traditional gender roles⁴⁸. As Sirman noted, motherhood is the way for women to earn their rights of citizenship by providing soldiers or fighters for militarist and nationalist projects⁴⁹.

Another form of violence can be named as state supported violence. Turkish activist and lawyer Eren Keskin says violence is a state policy in Turkey, not only torture by the security forces but also attorneys, doctors, judges who ignore the evidence of violence have been contributing to the existing violence culture. Despite reports by women of rapes carried out by security forces in Turkey, Keskin states that not one single person has so far been prosecuted⁵⁰.

It is no coincidence that as feminist analysis and criticism has developed, militarism has been questioned more. The feminist media discourse could not have been indifferent to all the surrounding discourses. By this, I mean, the feminist movement inevitably found itself involved in an anti-militarist discourse which questions the use of masculine violence as being protective to women. Considering militarism is attached to masculinities it is not surprising that feminist criticism deals with militarism and nationalism in this highly militarised culture.

Transnational feminisms are engaged in bridging dialogues and alliances in the world for peace, security and conflict resolution⁵¹. Third world feminism like the examples in Turkey has developed and formulated culturally specific «feminist concerns and strategies»⁵². The feminist media in Turkey tend to see violence against women not as a culturally specific problem, but as part of the global patriarchal oppression. In addition to this the feminist media do not give credit to the discourse «women are naturally peace makers». However as Ülker noted in Amargi feminists are antimilitarist since they are against all kind of violence⁵³. They underline the global and regional nature of the violence against women throughout the Middle

⁴⁷ E. GEDİK, «Savaşın Geride Bıraktıkları: Anneler». *Amargi*, vol. 15 (2009), p. 29.

⁴⁸ L. YURTSEVER, «Neden Cumartesi, Neden anneler?». *Amargi*, vol. 13 (2009), p. 14.

⁴⁹ N. SİRMAN, «Cuma Cumartesi ve Pazar Anneleri». *Amargi*, vol. 15 (2009), pp. 19-20.

⁵⁰ E. ÖZDEMİR, «Bizler de egemenimize Benziyoruz. Eren Keskin ile Söyleşi». *Amargi*, vol. 14 (2009), pp. 45-48, p. 46.

⁵¹ V.M. MOGHADAM, «Violence, terrorism and fundamentalism: Some feminist observations». *Global Dialogue*, vol. 1, num. 2 (2002), pp. 66-76, p. 72.

⁵² C.T. MOHANTY, «Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourse», in C.T. MOHANTY, A. RUSSO, L. TORRES (eds.), *Third World Women and Politics of Feminism*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1991, pp: 51-80, p. 51.

⁵³ G. ÜLKER, «Kadınlar Barışı Neden Savunur?». *Amargi*, vol. 14 (2009), p. 14.



East. Today, the feminist media are getting more and more eager to analyse such violence-related issues as militarism, terrorism and post-colonialist relations.

The discourse of the mainstream media is fed by power relations, status quo politics, and ideological issues. In this sense, the mainstream media play a very important role in militarising society by sanctioning violence, nevertheless Turkish feminists see «the deep connection between violence and politics»⁵⁴.

The feminist media in Turkey has been transformed within the country's «culture of violence» so that the issues of all groups of oppressed women such as Kurdish women, minority non-Muslim women, and LGBTT people are covered. In the late 1990s Turkish feminism became more engaged in anti-militarism and in the ethnic conflict in South Eastern Anatolia. In other words, the feminist media have shifted their focus from women's issues to more gender-related issues that are part of the culture of violence in Turkey. This is seen more in *Amargi* since it is a more third wave feminist publication in terms of content in comparison to *Pazartesi*.

The feminist media have also become more generous in representing gender identities which are subjected to violence, nationalism and militarism. All sexual orientations and preferences are now more and more visible in the feminist media. Men and women who question masculinities⁵⁵, homophobia, conscientious objectors, different identities and groups of men and women are being represented. Altınay in *Amargi* remarks that when other gender identities join their forces with feminism, sexual politics goes towards a creative and liberal analysis⁵⁶.

Alfred Vagts, by dividing civil militarism and military militarism, defines the former one as the army's influence on civic life, celebrating and integrating military values in political and social life.

Vagts⁵⁷ notes that «militarism expands in 'peace time' rather than war time». Civil militarism embraces hierarchy and attaches masculinity to violence and femininity to the need of protection⁵⁸.

CONCLUSION

Having lived in a highly militarised culture, both in the army and the civil society sense, the ears of Turkish feminists are wide open to the calls of all non-violent and anti-militarist groups and initiatives like anti-war activists, pacifists,

⁵⁴ J. KEANE, *Siddetin Uzun Yuzyili* (Reflection on Violence). Ankara, Dost, 1996.

⁵⁵ A group of men have established an initiative called «We are not Men» protesting violence against women after the rape and murder of Italian artist Pippa Bacca in March 2008. They have organised a workshop called «the abuser inside us» see: S. ASLAN, «Erkeklerden 'Biz Erkek Değiliz' Eylemi». *Amargi*, vol 10 (2008), p. 44; Ü. ÖZAKALIN, «Sorgulayan Erkeklerin Ağzından Taciz ve Tecavüz». *Amargi*, vol. 14 (2009), p. 48.

⁵⁶ A.G. ALTINAY, «Ebruli/Trans/Aşkın Feminist Siyaset». *Amargi*, vol. 11 (2009), p. 9.

⁵⁷ A. VAGTS, *A History of Militarism, Civilian and Military*. New York, Meridian books, p. 15.

⁵⁸ See M. SHAW, *Post-Military Society: Militarism, Demilitarization, and War at the End of the Twentieth Century*. Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1991. Also see C. ENLOE, *op. cit.*, 1990.

and anti-globalists. There are many young feminist activists who are engaged in anti-militarism and related issues. Selek and Altınay state that Turkish society needs peace and peace needs a feminist perspective⁵⁹.

Feminism in Turkey, by enlarging its focus of violence, is getting to know political activism better and better and bringing together different groups and identities. Unlike the egalitarian feminism, feminism that recognises the differences among women and focusing on the analysis of gender within general power relations will bring a wider front of action. This new feminism and media stand on gender differences rather than discrimination against women. I believe that feminism and all alternative equality-seeking movements will lead to a «radical pluralist democracy» that may give voices to those who are pushed to the margins, suppressed and subordinated, such as gays, lesbians, environmentalists, women, black people and so on, without privileging any one group over the others and by not putting a hierarchical relationship between them.

⁵⁹ P. SELEK, *Surune Surune Erkek Olmak (Struggling to be a man)*. Istanbul, İletisim, 2008. A.G. ALTINAY, *The Myth of Military- Nation; Militarism, Gender and Education in Turkey*. Istanbul, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

