

Simten Coşar

Education and Science Workers's Trade Union-Eğitim Sen

"To learn from life stories"

Hi all,

I realize how I lucky I am for not missing this valuable work, that I could participate at least at its last stage. Therefore let me start with thanks to Handan Çağlayan and Meral Akkent for introducing me to this significant, long-term work that plays the role of a historical register, and for enabling my active participation.

I have to introduce myself, first. I am a feminist political scientist; I am a signatory to the Peace Statement - We Will Not Be A Party To This Crime. In due process, I retired early. Since I have experienced many life instances early early retirement has not caused any direct structural damages on my part. On the contrary, I felt more free each and every passing day. I was liberated from institutional attachments. On the other hand, certainly, I had to encounter disadvantages to an extent. I prefer to underline my freedom rather than these disadvantages - not sure yet whether I have been doing the right thing.

When I was working at the university I defined myself first and foremost as an academic. I think this was the law of my everyday life then. The courses that I taught ranked top, for example; then came the articles that I wrote, regardless of their effect on my promotion. Apart from that, I had started to connect with women's/feminist movement in my thirties. But I always defined myself as a feminist academic.

My first step into the field that inspires this valuable work was the talk I delivered at Eğitim-Sen's seminars, organized in 2012. My talk was on feminist readings of political thought. I felt content that the participants did not seem to be concerned about the abstraction level in the talk - a

problem that I frequently faced in the academic circles. That was one precious experience I had with women from different ethnicities, working venues, and ages

This year, after a decade, as I was translating the quotations from the narrations of women from KESK I could name the reason for that fruitful sharing of knowledge: the presumed abstraction as the thought comes into sentences is because of the way we relate to actions. This made me feel good; and besides, hearing, reading, and translating so many of such activism, transformatory steps, and transformative moments are hope giving.

As the exhibition *We Were Here, We Are Here, We Will Be Here* (Vardık, Varız, Varolacağız) meets with the public today, by remembering and acknowledging Rosa Luxemburg my connection is formed as the Turkish-English translator of the quotations from the narrations of the activist women that register women's experience in history - I appreciate this form of connection. For me translation is a meaningful act, personally, inter-subjectively and in political-public terms.

In feminist positioning, there is always a cloudy relation between academia and activism - at least that is what I could say about Turkey, third generation feminist activists in North America. This cloud cannot be consumed in pages of academic texts, days-long conversations, discussion. It is there to stay. And better that it stays... There are those who say that feminist academic stance is itself rooted in activism; there are those who say that it is futile to claim feminist knowledge unless it is driven from feminist streets since academia is still male to the fullest extent possible... I think these statements do not stay on opposite sides; on the contrary, they are in tandem with each other.

That is why I believe the production of feminist knowledge can be directly defined by feminist activism through the together, collective production of feminist word in solidarity. For the same reasons feminist translation has priority for me; it is valuable - it has a critical role in terms of knowledge production in my life. For translation inherently involves connection in the collective universe of feminist activism despite competitive cultures, separations, isolation, and exclusion.

My dear friend, colleague, feminist comrade, Dr. Glden zcan, who passed away in May 2022, helped us to continue with hope in her last months with us:

... I am trying to complete a few reading and writing projects, and live my life as I know it by causing trouble, making some uncomfortable and enjoying small things as long as my energy permits.

I am not a believer of any religion. But I believe in potentials of connection and solidarity to turn impossible to possible in miraculous ways--in fact, I consider my whole existence as an example of its. So, please keep sending your good wishes, thoughts, prayers, energies, lights our way.

bunun bir rneęi olarak gryorum. yleyse ltfen, iyi dileklerinizi, dřncelerinizi, dualarınızı, enerjinizi, ışığıınızı yolumuza ekleyin.

Feminist translation has been one of the lights in my path to knowledge; it helped me to form connections and offer connecting grounds. Then once more, I feel opportunate for participating as a translator in this valuable work. For this I thank Handan aęlayan and Meral Akkent once more. And women from KESK, your struggle is hope-giving, your words are invaluable, I am lucky to have crossed paths with you. Wish I could take a step for your crossing paths in other languages.

Thanks.