

Plenary Panel Four: Marlene Kadar and the Next Generation

Moderator: Eva C. Karpinski

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Unmaking of a Narrative Landscape: Life Writing with Refugees

My paper presents the process of a cross-genre life writing inspired by Marlene Kadar's work. I argue that life writing serves best for my book on Syrian women refugee narratives collected in North America, Europe, and Turkey, as a dynamic and productive literary form because it provides me the textual freedom for experimenting with interviewer's self-inscription and representation along with the narrators' without ascribing a hierarchical role or structure. I have used the term "oral history" to describe my work in response to meet the standards of mainstream and discipline-oriented academia and grant applications; however, I also refer to it as "documentary literary prose" to which life writing serves as an umbrella term. Among the refugee representations I aim to challenge through my writing are of victimized, vulnerable, subordinate Syrian women.

“Desconstrução de uma paisagem narrativa: escrita da vida e refugiadas”

Meu artigo apresenta o processo de escrita de uma biografia de gênero híbrido inspirada na obra de Marlene Kadar. Argumento que a forma mais apropriada para meu livro sobre as narrativas de refugiadas sírias na América do Norte é a escrita da vida, uma forma literária dinâmica e produtiva que me dá a liberdade textual necessária para fazer experiências com a autoinscrição e a representação das entrevistadas e narradoras, sem que para isso sejam atribuídos papéis ou uma estrutura hierárquica. Descrevo meu trabalho como “história oral” para atender aos padrões da academia tradicional, disciplinar, e dos requerimentos de bolsa; porém também me refiro a ele como “prosa literário-documental”, um termo específico para “escrita da vida”. Entre as representações que procuro desafiar com meu livro estão as de mulheres sírias vitimizadas, vulneráveis e submissas.

[Traduzido por Beatriz Vital - vitalb@riseup.net]

Ozlem Ezer obtained her BA in English Language and Literature at Bogazici University, Istanbul; MA in Women's Studies at Middle East Technical University, Ankara; PhD in Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies at York University (Canada), post-doctoral studies at GEXcel – Centre for Gender Excellence in Linköping University (Sweden). She is currently a visiting scholar at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at UC-Berkeley. She collaborated with Human Development Resource Foundation in Istanbul for the initial stages of her oral history project with the Syrian refugee women between January and July 2016. She will record further interviews with Syrian women activists in

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Europe and North America, and work on her book on life stories during her residency at CMES.