

Editorial**Disability and Multilingualism: A Global Perspective**Sona Kazemi¹ and Hemachandran Karah²¹ Mills College, California, United States² Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Chennai, India

Another issue of our long envisioned, and politically imperative issue of the Global Perspective Section of the journal is here. As we had imagined this section, we hoped to create a space for multilingualism as a framework, political endeavor, accessibility commitment, and a cultural setting where languages appear more than an identity marker or private possession of a community. Creating this section, we have hoped to complicate what it means to be, become, and remain disabled under exploitative social relations and oppressive historical continuities and discontinuities. To this end, we have strived to create a space that challenges what we think as “normative” disability expression, “normative” disabling conditions, and “normative” generational traumas mobilized by colonial, fascist, theocratic, and imperialistic legacies.

In the previous issue we included a story in Turkish by Nibel Genc, a political activist imprisoned in Turkey since 1994 defending the freedom and autonomy of Kurdish people. In this issue, we have included the English version of the story, translated by Elif Genc, a Kurdish feminist who was connected to us by Ruken Isik, another Kurdish feminist sister. Nibel’s story is forwarded by a feminist solidarity statement by Ruken Isik, Elif Genc, and Zeyneb Genc (Nibel’s sister) to underscore the significance of solidarity and alliance in echoing institutionalized voices such as Nibel’s that the Turkish state has long tried to silence.

Nibel Genc’s fiction story “The Engraved Lighter” is about a great-grandfather who survived the 1938 Dersim massacre with his son, whom he managed to rescue from the hands of the Turkish soldiers. When they were caught and waiting for their fate to unfold, another prisoner gave his engraved lighter to the great-grandfather just before the prisoner was shot.

Stories like Nibel’s, besides possessing literary merits, have the power to challenge what we already know about resisting unequal power relations such as incarceration, colonialism, patriarchy, and ableism. The story is that of struggle, humility, and interdependence, all values that social movements for autonomy and agency share. It is critical we realize that disabled people’s struggle for freedom, access, autonomy, and equality is connected to Indigenous people’s anti-colonial struggle for self-determination.

To locate and echo Nibel’s voice as a Kurdish woman political prisoner, to find another Kurdish feminist sister who expressed willingness to translate the story to English, and to finally materialize it in this issue, has taught us one more time the importance of multilingual engagement with social struggles. The journey of connecting the institutional dots, creating transdisciplinary conversations, building feminist and crip solidarity, and developing a multilingual analysis, has been a pedagogical journey for us. It has also

indicated that solidarity is a real possibility to address the gaps in the field concerning the global southern peoples' experiences with trauma/disability/disablement/injury, and not just a euphoria. This process is reflected in this issue and in Nibel's story in two languages, one language in which she wrote the story, and another, the language her feminist sisters translated her story into so the world can hear her voice. This facilitation for Nibel's voice to be heard, via multiple layers of solidarity, is and should be central to our transnational disability studies project in this journal because it provides "access" to the silenced voices at the margins of degenerative public spaces like prisons and hospitals.

The feminist and multilingual engagement with a feminist Kurdish woman's voice, who is currently imprisoned, aims at defetishizing disablement/injury by unmasking the naturalization of injury in certain spaces and among certain people. We argue that a transformative approach to transnational disability studies should be emancipatory in a sense that it not only does explain (not just describe) the social relations and processes involved in injuring bodyminds, but also possesses a revolutionary potential for ending those relations and stopping violence. By including Nibel's story in both Turkish and English in this issue, we hope to bring alive new rhetorics of translation.

Further, the dual linguistic presentation we hope may invoke at least three modes of activism:

1. Readers of Turkish may see newer political meanings emerging beyond their cultural geography.
2. English readers, on the other hand, may become familiar with registers of debility that are not usually available to them.
3. When put together this way, the original, and the story in translation do not perform as mere mirror images of each other. In some sense, they orchestrate what we call 'solidarity-speak'. During a solidarity speak adventure, languages in question do not compete with each other. Instead, they treat every translation endeavor as yet another feat of enrichment and moral openness.

References

Genc, N. (2017). The Engraved Lighter. *Misir Kocanlarini Kizartan Koku* [The Smell That Turns the Corn Cobs Red]. Nota Bene Yayinlari.



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