

Designing scripts and performing Kurdishness in diaspora: the online-offline nexus

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, I highlight everyday life concerns occupying the minds of the younger generation diasporic Kurds and how they find new ways, at the intersection of the online and offline communities, of solving issues that intimately are connected to who they are. Theoretically, I place myself outside the debates stuck between views on online and offline as either contradicting or mirroring each other, and argue for a nexus that is productive and creates new possibilities. Through operationalisation of key concepts from feminist studies (performativity and scripts) I display how participants in the online forums on Viva Kurdistan delve into questions of Kurdishness, and in the exchange of personal experiences and opinions new understandings within the context are produced that ultimately induce transformations of the self. Theoretically this is of interest because we see how these spaces intertwine when we look at driving forces behind the seizure of the qualitative qualities that new media offer.

KEY WORDS

new media, performativity, diaspora

INTRODUCTION

This paper, drawn from an ongoing research project,¹ presents new ways of articulations and performativities by young Kurds in diaspora, and is located at the intersection of online and offline environments. The dynamic reviewed here is how ‘Kurdish discourses’ are influenced by the processes of settling in new countries, and by the impact of exposure to ‘new’ media upon Kurdish youth, Kurdish identity, and transnational belonging.²

Generally speaking, it has become commonplace in existing theoretical debates on diaspora and new media to discuss (strong) transnational links to origin countries and the internet’s exploitation of time and space to reinforce national identities across distances and unite scattered populations (i.e. Miller and Slater 2000, 2006; Eriksen 2006). Simultaneously, identity has been put forward as fluid and ‘always under construction’ (Hall 1993: 362), yet has remained fixed and unchangeable within much academic writing. Media use by diasporas, and diasporas’ transnational links to the ‘origin’, have been overly explained by the ‘displaced’ or ‘uprooted’ immigration character. This creates not only an invisibility of diasporic dynamics in the given settlement society, but also an essentialisation and a dichotomy between immigrants and non-immigrants, as recognition of heterogeneity has been overlooked, even in the post-internet era. What it means to be a Kurd depends on the locality under analysis, and while experience prior to migration or exposure to the internet³ are important, other factors influence being ‘Kurdish’ or describing ‘Kurdishness’.

My first argument proposes a link between people’s way of expressing themselves through a particular generation of media and the understanding of our ‘selves’ and our performances. The article therefore goes well beyond the debates of whether new media and social communities matters or not. They *do*, but *how* they matter is critical. My second argument implies that there is a nexus between online

and offline environments, whereby neither is contradicting nor a pure reflection of the other.

The paper is structured as follows: after a brief explanation of the conceptualisation of ‘performativities’ and ‘scripts’ employed in this work, some key empirical themes will be presented. The first strand deals with extracts from online discussion threads on the website Viva Kurdistan.⁴ The second strand includes material from face-to-face interviews.⁵ The task then is to comment on how desired elements and sometimes obligations of performance change perceptions of Kurdishness when they travel between online and offline.

TRANSLATING IDENTITY: PERFORMATIVITY AND SCRIPTS

In my work I discuss identity as ‘free-floating and not connected to an essence but instead a performance’ (Butler 1990: 6), and as repetitions of what we do and express. The theorisation of performativity is inspired by Judith Butler, who approaches this mainly from a feminist tradition, highlighting how gendered identity can be done as well as undone by repetition of practices and discourses (*ibid.*: 45). In her definition, ‘[p]erformative acts are forms of authoritative speech [...] statements that, in the uttering, also perform a certain action and exercise a binding power [...]’ (Butler 1993: 225). Viewing (gendered) identity as performative then means that identities are constructed by the ‘very ‘expressions’ that are said to be [their] results’ (Butler 1990: 45). The concept of performativity, which allows me to see what someone does at a particular time rather than ‘who’ someone is, can show multiplicity and hybridity within the diasporic context as well as within ways of communicating. However, in order to understand the ‘very expressions’ that are the ‘results’ of who one is, the performative power of illocutionary⁶ acts rests upon encounters of the online (what they say) and the offline (what they do). The moment of performativity is thus, in Butler’s words, ‘condensed historicity’ (1997: 36). It should be noted

that, in contrast to Butler's focus on gender, my emphasis shifts gaze to other dimensions such as ethnic and collective aspects of diasporas.

Script Making

A way of penetrating the performative power of illocutionary acts is to make use of *scripts*. My use of the term is derived from Butler's metaphor: 'Just as script may be enacted in various ways and just as the play requires both text and interpretation, so the gendered body acts its part in a culturally restricted corporeal space and enacts interpretations within the confines of already existing directives' (Butler 1988: 526). While Butler draws parallels between acts and performativities of gender identity and theatrical acts, I use the concept of script, designed before arriving to the scene (online community) as well as during the online-ness, as a methodology in how they are acted upon in the performativities of Kurdishness with particular interest in expressions of culture, language, generation and class. The conceptual outline can be regarded as psycho-social in that 'the script survives the particular actors who make use of it; but which requires individual actors in order for be actualized and reproduced as reality once again' (*ibid.*: 526).⁷

ARRIVING TO THE ONLINE SCENE: DELVING INTO IDIOMS OF KURDISHNESS

Where are you from? If you receive that question in a normal situation, it is common that you answer that you are a Kurd. What happens if you ask that question to yourself? Do you see yourself primarily as a Kurd? Can you see yourself as an individual without any categories? Who are you? (*Where are you from?* SF, 20 July 2010)

This post from a discussion thread⁸ on Viva Kurdistan frames to a large extent the essence of my research, which also intersects and departs from previous work on issues of identity construction (i.e.

Franklin 2004; Miller and Slater 2000). It touches upon the defining dichotomy of the identity discourse – namely, the constructionist versus essentialist approach. While the questions posed in the extract above can be understood as intertwined with the physical and non-physical characteristics of a person, they can also refer to the context in which one is asked the questions. A ‘normal situation’ can thus symbolically reflect milieus of the online and offline, in which discussions about these issues indeed fluctuate dependent upon the setting and the company in which we find ourselves.

Based on the online postings, the following sections aim to show just a few of the many scripts that are designed by the participants online. What are of interest in the context of this paper are the divergences in scripts and subsequently the understandings of what constitutes Kurdishness. These divergences both resource and distance Kurds vis-à-vis the Kurdishness they enact in offline environments. The script extracts below address three themes of demonstrated interest to the forums’ participants: i) political affairs, ii) cultural capital, and iii) gender and sex roles.

Script I: ‘The Kurd is Political’ Viva Kurdistan – A site of resistance

Firstly, I have identified Viva Kurdistan as a site of resistance.⁹ The community is an important place where young Kurds can go and deliberate issues that concern them. Using this space to express views and opinions on political affairs is among the strategies diasporic Kurds have for maintaining a link to their home country.¹⁰ Based on my analysis of the postings, there are reasons to argue that the community of Viva Kurdistan enables itself to constitute a site of resistance and can open up liminal spaces from which participants can challenge, criticise and resist regimes, and engage in external or internal power struggles. Here, the context of internal issues, which is not as prevalent on the ground (i.e. in daily offline experience) or in other social networking

sites, is where this work departs from earlier understandings of Kurdishness and the role internet forums can play in its construction and articulation. In the selected themes, I will discuss the mechanism of *internal othering* and illustrate how different attachments – political, social, economic, linguistic, etc – beyond ethnicity can influence and regulate acts and practices of an individual.

I call you turk and half turk because I know your hate against barzani/pdk/alarengin.¹² (*Historical perspective: Abdullah Öcalan and Massoud Barzani cooperation!* SF, 28 February 2010)

Previous research has mainly dealt with *external* issues, such as the relationships between Kurds and authoritarian states, or how Kurds have found ways to build unity and a sense of national and ethnic commonality. The above extract shows the *internal* othering. Name calling – such as “non-Kurd”, “traitor”, and “Turk” – is a practice of exclusion challenging the existence of a single unified “Kurdishness”. This othering takes place in different layers, as will be shown in later excerpts. The mechanism of internal othering¹¹ serves as a way of responding to perceived degrees of Kurdishness, and influences the scripts that participants then implicitly (or explicitly) design for how to operate in order to be identified as an ‘authentic’ Kurd.

Script II: ‘You are not Kurds if you don’t know your language’

As a Kurd in Sweden it is natural that we follow the Swedish norms, traditions, that one becomes “pretty Swedish”. I don’t see this as a problem, no Swede has ever denied the right to my culture, my language and my history. What is tragic is those Kurds living in Sweden that talk Turkish, and watch their TV programs and become their cultural client. [...] You are not Kurds, if you do not know your language. (*It’s not “just”, it is more important than the armed struggle*, SF, 20 June 2010)

Language is viewed here more as a way of maintaining a link to history and of refusing to give in to the forced assimilation strategies of authoritarian states, and less as a means of communicating with other Kurds. The offline interviews I conducted with site participants confirmed this; some of the interviewees do not have the opportunity to speak Kurdish on a regular basis. Some might even have difficulties with the mother tongue as it is constantly challenged by other languages. However, not forgetting the Kurdish language appears to be important, intertwined as it is perceived to be with culture and a sense of belonging: a certain richness of connection to the 'origin' is lost when a person is unable to speak the language of their ancestors.

As the extract shows, the Kurdish language is often situated in opposition to its 'antagonistic languages' (such as Turkish), and with reference to the past as well as present oppression of the Kurdish language by various national regimes. In that sense, language is not merely a position from which one speaks, but it is also an absolutely necessary resource in what one has to say and how one is defined.

Script III: 'Is it OK?' Marital obligations and Gender Roles

This section explores how issues of gender roles and sexual concerns are being negotiated on Viva Kurdistan to challenge the stereotypical thinking of Kurdish women and men. These homogenous categories are being re-negotiated at the intersection of Western and Orientalist discourses. When the participants discuss marital duties, the fixed notions of – predominantly – women also appear deeply linked to notions of the nation.

Growing up in Sweden or the UK, these young Kurds are influenced, whether through school, media or other institutions in society, by elements in culture and traditions that are different from their parents'. Thus, in thinking through some of the topics, such as sex and gender roles, these online discussions engage predominantly those young Kurds who are presumably 'stronger' carriers of a consciousness of the

different cultures and norms. As my interviews corroborate, the online community has created a greater opportunity to explore these questions.

The following extracts can be found in between the discourses of Westernness and ‘civilization’ on the one hand, and ‘Third World’ and ‘backwardness’ on the other.¹³

To all who criticize her for showing double moral, she is not to blame, but the system’s mentality that permeates the Kurdish culture. The culture hinders people to be free to pursue individual ambitions. It’s not her fault that she cannot be honest about her sex life (Kurds have obviously not yet reached the sexual renaissance). Change the culture, liberate yourself. (*Western individualism and sexuality*, SF, 26 April 2010)

Participants draw on the intersections of gender and ethnicity, producing different kinds of categories and articulating alternative norms. In these threads, young women converse about themselves as objects of Kurdish historical and cultural traditions. They reflect on their status as subjects of Western societies that challenge existing categorisations of Kurdish women vis-à-vis the Western vision of femininity and autonomy and vis-à-vis Kurdish men and their individuality.

Related to the sex and gender role scripts, and their influence on feeling Kurdish, is a more strategic approach towards marriage articulated by some site participants. Discussions around mixed marriages are based on ethno-cultural arguments, and resistance to marriages to other collective groups is based on both historical experience of forced assimilation and future imaginations of the nation. Online discussions of marriage become linked to the national struggle in which the parents of site participants were involved and, in a gesture of long-distance nationalism (Anderson 2006), the Viva Kurdistan members continue this struggle in the diaspora.

That girl would be a traitor if she would marry him.¹⁴ (*Love and enemy*, EF, 9 July 2010)

It is a shame that we mix ourselves with other people and that the Kurdish nation dies [...] (*Kurdish girl and a black guy*, EF, 9 May 2010)

The comments above reflect the double standards of nationalism and feminism with regard to sexuality. Kurdish women become the symbolic indicator of the failure of the Kurdish struggle: having sexual encounters or marital intentions with the ‘wrong type’ are the pitfalls that that a Kurdish woman ought to avoid. Marriage and the woman’s role are indeed intimately linked to the (imagi)nation and the *motherland*, and the picture of this struggle is tied to family, gender and sexuality. Any marriage to the ‘enemy’ is a divorce from the homeland.¹⁵

OFFLINE DELINEATIONS

This section presents segments from offline interviews with Viva Kurdistan participants. The interview topics correlate with the site’s online discussions themes, and I discuss below how the interviewee comments offline either confirm or depart from the discussions online.

A window to the world

My online ethnography and offline interviews together show how some young Kurds, presently growing up in Europe, face challenges to their sense of national identity. At home they are told to be a certain kind of Kurd; then they go to school and are met with the settlement country’s social, cultural, and symbolic norms; and then, when they go online to the Kurdish community Viva Kurdistan, these two different discourses often converge and clash.

My dad, he is the one that fuelled my nationalism and he is the one that really made me feel Kurdish etc. But then, his views are so different from mine, his views towards women especially, whereas my Kurdish friends here have the same views as me. We...me and my friends feel much more comfortable around a group of English

people than we would around a group of Kurds from Kurdistan.
(Male, 19, UK)

Previous research (e.g. van Bruinessen 1992; Eriksen 2006) concludes that the internet has become an important medium for strengthening collective identities and that Kurds appear to be one of the most active nationalistic groups online. However, a generational shift, in which younger generations also identify with and develop nationalistic sentiments towards their (or their parents'/parent's) settlement country, seems to have been overlooked.

Online, Kurds envisioning a 'united Kurdistan' is a common encounter. However, this sense of the 'imagined community', which Anderson (2006: 6) speaks of in the context of broadcast media, can be envisioned not so much because people will not meet or know each other as Anderson explains, but precisely because people now actually can meet online and be exposed to diversity. New media has exposed the diversity that print and broadcast media concealed. Therefore, I argue that the 'imagined community' needs to be redefined in the context of new media. One interviewee explains this diversity aptly, reflecting on how Viva Kurdistan serves as his window to the world and especially to Kurdistan:

On Viva Kurdistan, you see a lot of splits with Kurds, sort of microcosm of countries. [...] Because I was fed with that, as Kurds we are one. As Kurds we should instinctly click together, and we should instantly be friends. Viva Kurdistan is a portal that I could see that it wasn't like that, that we were different, we did feel different, we had different thoughts. (Male, 19, UK)

The community has opened up to the potential of understanding what the differences among Kurds might involve. Nonetheless, this is not only about discovering the character of that diversity, but also about how this is changing participants' perceptions of the nation, the self, and the personal relationship to Kurdish diasporas.

I would definitely say that Viva Kurdistan had an influence, made me think it's larger than just being Kurdish, we are all human beings. I could get on with a person who is English much better than I would with a Kurd, but Kurdish nationalism dictates when in a fight, if the Kurds and the English are fighting; I should back up the Kurds. And I just thought, what sense does that make? Our blood is not the same; however we want to say it... (Male, 22, UK)

This extract suggests that Kurdish nationality precedes other nationalities. This is a view shared by many young Kurds. In just a couple of cases, interviewees explicitly argued that Viva Kurdistan has actually changed their understandings of nationalism.

Kurd as Kurd, no matter how it looks or thinks. One's nationality can never be changed, it's nothing you can convert to. It's one's skin colour. (Female, 19, Sweden)

[...] That's why I'm very cautious with my Kurdish even if I know that I'll never forget it. I do home language, I listen a lot to Kurdish music, I read Kurdish poetry. And if there is a Kurdish festivity, I'd like to attend. (Female, 19, Sweden)

While many participants initially spoke of Kurdishness as essentialistic and fixed, it became more obvious, as the second extract demonstrates, that certain strategies were indeed calculated in the practices of everyday life. The maintenance of Kurdishness had more to do with *doings* rather than *beings*. One of these doings, just as the online debates have already shown, is linked to the aspect of language skills.

Another thing is the language. I feel more that Kurds who don't speak Kurdish are more detached from the culture. They are detached from it, because, if they can't watch the tv, they don't understand what the music is about. (Female, 25, UK)

While language use has been identified as a strong performance of Kurdishness by all site members I interviewed, maintaining it in the

diaspora has its difficulties:

They [parents] talk with me in Kurdish, I respond in Turkish or Swedish. But I try with Kurdish when I can. When I was younger I could speak, but somewhere along the way it disappeared. (Male, 23, Sweden)

Many of these young Kurds were either born or grew up in diasporas, and many of them have never even been ‘back’ to their origin countries. Indeed, the empirical material shows strong nationalistic sentiments towards the origin, but has simultaneously shown how these are contested by new belongings that need to be examined in studies on diasporas and their use of the internet and computer-mediated communication.

I say that I’m Kurd. But at the same time it feels, you know... I’m born here anyway, have lived here all my life..so, I’m Swedish too. (Male, 23, Sweden)

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This article has explored how offline and online communities interconnect and make way for exploring Kurdishness in a way that has not been perceivable in the pre-internet era, and has been only marginally discussed in internet-era academic research, which focuses overwhelmingly on diasporic formations as homogenous. The themes highlighted have been of importance to the young participants in my study, and have travelled between the online and offline spheres. I have used the concept of ‘performativity’ rather than ‘identity’. Although the latter is often dealt with in a post-modern constructionist way by academics, too often ‘identity’ continues to connote fixity grounded in biology. I have also used the concept of ‘scripts’ as an extension of discussion ‘threads’, allowing me to discern elements that are crucial for these participants to include in their acts and performativities.

By focusing on individuals' points of view, this paper has made the online-offline nexus visible by going beyond the features of a physical crossing point and into the multifaceted structures of interpersonal interactions that take place in both spaces. This is of interest theoretically because, by looking at the qualitative characteristics that new media offer, it allows us to see *how* these spaces interlock. This has to do with technological features as well as the acts and representations by users of new media. Having shown the overlapping experiences between on- and offline, individuals have been allowed to make their own re-definitions on their own terms. Although these domains are discussed in two distinct terms, the boundaries have become increasingly blurred. It is relevant to highlight three concluding comments at this point.

First, the concepts of performativity and scripts have been useful in distinguishing how changes in social acts and attitudes can be kicked off by the diversity offered by computer-mediated communication. Against the repertoire of political, social, and cultural concerns that permeates day-to-day undertakings by Kurds in diaspora, the vital role of a shared online community has been shown. Second, the online community serves as a place where participants are exposed to divergence that otherwise would not have been seen offline. This diversity is not negative; it is an aspect that has been explored in relation to aspects of belongingness and commonality among diasporic groups. The diversity of visitors to the online sites has to a great extent changed *what* and *how* Kurds discuss, enabling varied and dynamic debate, as opposed to offline environments in which what is discussed is much more dependent upon who is present. This precisely complements what the participant in the initial extract presented in this paper suggested: *who you are* is influenced beyond defining factors (physical features) of ethnicity, and (nonphysical features) political affiliations, and includes the milieu and those surrounding you. The online community does not offer an alternative or an extension to the offline community, but

is rather *a part* of life that intersects with offline experience. Here, the significance of Viva Kurdistan is calculated not only by reference to frequency of log-ins or day-to-day use, but by how the site assists its users in meaning-making and self-definition.

Third, and lastly, the online community works as a site for designing scripts, and how these are either counter or support offline norms. The stories of the participants show multifaceted experiences. The participants, whether have become more radicalised, essentialised or distanced in their Kurdishness, have all been influenced in an intense way that has changed their perception of who they are.

NOTES

1. This chapter is part of my PhD research 'Old Diasporas-New Performativities? Being a Kurd in diaspora'. The comparative study explores how younger generations of diasporic Kurds, in Sweden and the UK with reference to the homeland populations, re-articulate their Kurdishness, firstly at the intersection of online and offline environments, and secondly at the crossroads of new belongings of settlement countries and old belongings of origin countries. I suggest that by looking at the online interactions, by young diasporic Kurds in a close up study, we arrive at a more complex view of concepts of identity and diasporas, which in turn has implications for senses of belongingness and questions of citizenship.
2. The Kurdish people, estimated up to 30 million (van Bruinessen 1992), with a history characterised by oppression, division of a homeland, and malicious attempts to assimilate or delete the Kurdish national identity, find themselves in an exceptional situation in a political context and therefore make an important case to look at in terms of new media, internalisation of 'the Kurdish question', and diasporic identity transformations. Furthermore, Kurdish diasporas are often included in other 'ethnic' diaspora which creates an invisibility that occurs in the present academic context in which Kurds are conflated with the wider categories of 'Turkish speaking' (Aksoy and Robins 2003: 367). Generally, in current discourses, different versions of diasporas can be discerned, e.g. labour and economical migrants, political refugees, etc. (Tölölyan 1996). These groups, with regard to their different motives for dispersal have different influences on their diasporic and transnational activities, which furthermore

- affects the construction and behaviour of diaspora, which in turn connects to the methodological matter in what reality-status people are ascribed. This research argues for a contextualisation of 'diasporas' that takes push and pull factors into consideration.
3. It is widely discussed that broadcasting has been very central to the development of national societies and communities within Europe, how it has produced a national imaginary (Anderson 2006) and has made people feel a part of the same national community. Among Kurds this was especially possible with the birth of the internal satellite channel MED-TV, which was a major successful project that crossed and blurred boundaries in terms of uniting Kurdish populations in diasporas, followed by numerous transnational activities. The channel has established relations horizontal between Kurds and they were viewed not as audience members but as citizens of a Kurdish state (Hassanpour 1995: 82). Kurdishness has in that regard been viewed homogenously vis-à-vis external and suppressing authoritarian states (Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria).
 4. This transnational and text based community with audio-visual features, created more than five years ago, is composed of eight forums representing different European countries/languages, including the Kurdistan-based forum. Depending on what kind of parameters are set, the figures of the amount of members varies (Franklin 2003: 468), if by number of accounts, then over 60,000, if by Google Statistics, then around 25,000 (Interview with Amer Salih, founder of Viva Kurdistan, 24 June 2009). Three forums have been studied in a close-up approach- the Swedish and the English, with reference to the Kurdish forum. The age range of participants is 18 to 30 years old.
 5. The methods employed in the research is based on a triangulation of online ethnography, online survey and in-depth interviews with the participants those country/forums. The participant observation online spans at least one year of regular visits between January and December 2010, and a pilot research started July 2009. The interviews include 18 participants from each forum. 23,600 posts were collected in total during my online ethnography, and the selection from that are based on key words related to the research questions and their frequency and thickness. As a participant observer I therefore kept track on what people have said about issues of Kurdishness. The techniques for analysing the conversations follows those of other ethnographic methods (Ignacio 2005: 11), in this case content analysis: repeated readings, coding, writing memos, and discovering themes.

6. Referring to the multiple meanings in a speech act; to act when saying something and oriented to reach consensus.
7. While I also refer to the term 'thread', which researchers (i.e. Franklin 2004; Ignacio 2005) have employed in their online ethnographies, as a description of the structure of the discussions, I use the concept of 'script' to extend the mere discussions beyond exchange of information and instead illustrate how the performances of Kurdishness are intrigued by these scripts of acts. For instance, the announcement of attending a Kurdish event, concert or demonstration can be included in these scripts of how to perform Kurdishness. The task then becomes to scrutinize and elucidate the ways these are being transformed at the crossroads off online and offline worlds.
8. A thread starts with an initial post and as participants respond in the thread, the messages are grouped into a thread (Franklin 2004: 207), and since a thread is differentiated by topic (Ignacio 2005: 18), I have categorised the threads according to these topics (e.g. Kurdish language, politics/election in home country, Islam/religion, etc.). All excerpts have been reproduced precisely as they appeared on the screen. The quotes presented here are followed by thread title, abbreviated forum name (SF for Swedish Forum, EF for English Forum), and finally the date. Based on ethical considerations and with respect to participants' anonymity, nicknames have not been included in the postings. I adopted an overt role as a researcher, participants and founders of the community were informed about my intentions in order to gain their consent and assure them confidentiality.
9. In this context it is worth mentioning that the aspect of anonymity, many times linked to the lack of sophistication in these online settings and the debates of 'virtual and actual' worlds, has played a role in so far that the participants have been able to discuss sensitive topics that they would not have offline. In this respect, anonymity has worked as a catalyst for the many free spoken discussions to take place.
10. Political topics (discussions dealing with for instance General elections, which took place in all different settings during the online ethnography, Sweden, the UK, and Iraq) has been by far one of the most repeated and 'thick' themes on Viva Kurdistan.
11. In my work I talk about external and internal othering. External refers to the construction of being a Kurd against non-Kurds (mainly Turks, Persian, and Arabs), while internal othering is based on inclusion

and exclusion among Kurds themselves. This has recently been discussed by Barzoo Eliasi in his thesis (2010), based on interviews with young Kurds in Sweden. However, this work departs in terms of comprising different layers of othering and within the different themes from the online discussions.

12. Massoud Barzani is the president in the Kurdish region of Iraq, and also the leader of the political party PDK. Ala Rengin is the official flag, it is questionable though if Kurds in the Kurdish region of Turkey acknowledge the flag.
13. Within postcolonial studies (i.e. Spivak 1999), feminists have criticised the view of 'Third World' women and state that Western supremacy is constantly confirmed by victimizing women in 'Third World'.
14. 'Enemy' here refers to Turks, Arabs, and Kurds, which stretches beyond political aspects and also is including sexual involvement.
15. i.e. Yuval-Davis (2001: xi) talks about women as 'bearer of the collectivities'. While the bureaucracy has been mainly displayed as the producer of the nation, Yuval-Davis (2001: 2) highlights the important role of the woman as reproducing the nation biologically, symbolically, and culturally. A reason explaining this is that the woman and the family has been located within the private sphere and therefore has not been viewed as politically important.

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