IDENTITY NEGOTIATIONS IN

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL DOCUMENTARY:

THE CASE OF *I AM MY MOTHER'S DAUGHTER*

MELİKE SUNGUR

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ABSTRACT

IDENTITY NEGOTIATIONS IN

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M.A. in Film and Television

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This study aims to examine the identity politics in the Turkish-German autobiographical documentary *I Am my Mother's Daughter* by Seyhan Derin (1996, Germany). The main focus of the study is to analyze the construction of female subjectivity and the autobiographical subject in the film. By moving from the Turkish-German minority identity, identity politics in the documentary film will be further studied in relation to Western discourses on Third World difference. The way the film constructs gender identity will be analyzed from the perspective of the theories on culture and identity.

Key words: autobiography, gender, diaspora, hybridity, transnational, nation, subjectivity, difference, identity, culture, feminism

ÖZ

BEN ANNEMİN KIZIYIM ÖRNEĞİ ÜZERİNDEN

OTOBİYOGRAFİK BELGESELDE

KİMLİK SORGULAMALARI

Sungur, Melike

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Bu çalışma, Seyhan Derin'in *Ben Annemin Kızıyım* (1996, Almanya) isimli Türk-Alman otobiyografik belgeselinde kimlik politikalarını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Esas olarak, bu filmde otobiyografik öznenin ve kadına ait öznelliğin nasıl kurulduğu çalışılacaktır. Türk-Alman azınlık kimliğinden hareketle, bu belgesel filmin sunduğu kimlik politikaları Batı'nın Üçüncü Dünya farklılığı üzerine oluşturduğu söylemler açısından ele alınacaktır. Ayrıca, *Ben Annemin Kızıyım* belgesel filminde toplumsal cinsiyet kimliğinin kuruluşu, kimlik ve kültür kuramları çerçevesinde analiz edilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: otobiyografi, toplumsal cinsiyet, melezlik, çokulusluluk, ulus, öznellik, farklılık, kimlik, kültür, feminizm

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE PUPPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to analyze the identity politics in the autobiographi-cal documentary, *I Am My Mother's Daughter* (1996), from the perspectives of gender, identity and critical cultural theories. The analysis will focus on the negotiations of identity to locate the constructions of female subjectivity in the film by autobiographical accounts, and thereby the constructions of gender and the shifting meaning of nation as crucial factors in the formation of identity. This thesis will discuss the politics of self-representation in rela-tion to the in-between standing of second-generation diasporic identities, in constructing female subjectivity.

Ideology and genre approaches will be employed to analyze the identity pol-itics; the construction of the gendered subject and the female subjectivity in the film, *I Am My Mother's Daughter.* The analysis will focus on the ways in which the film constructs the subject by using the means of ethnography, biography and autobiography with an aim of questioning the discourses of nation and gender in constructing female subjectivity in diasporic narration. The theoretical framework will be based on the theories of autobiography, the subject, the female subjectivity, and on the politics of self-

representation by diasporic narratives in the context of recent debates on identity, culture and the discourse of Third World difference.

I Am My Mother's Daughter narrates the story of the diasporic history of a family; departing from the personal story of the filmmaker Seyhan Derin, the film is structured through interviews, rewriting the familial history of the diasporic experience from the perspectives of the women in the family. The filmmaker as a second-generation Turkish-German woman, taking a look at diaspora from the perspectives of women and across generations; the film in question stands at the intersection of recent debates about identity and culture, and questions of gender/nation/ethnicity. Given this context, we need to situate this study within the previous literature on diaspora narratives and define the scope of the study and methodologies that will be used in film analysis. In addressing this, first a brief review of the studies on Turkish-German cinema will serve to situate the study in reference to previous literature, and to conceptualize the importance of the gendered readings of autobiographical narratives of women. And secondly, we need to contextualize the tension between the politics of diasporic narratives and the Western discourses on Third World difference in order to understand the politics of autobiographical narratives by women from diasporic sites in negotiating in-between identities.

Debates over 'neo-neo German'[1] cinema began with the emergence of the films by the second-generation Turkish-German filmmakers in the 1990s. From the earlier stereotypic representations of the Turkish workers, new Turkish-German cinema debates are informed by theories of hybridity as a departure from 'cinema of duty'[2]. In this male-dominated industry, there are few women's films that received recognition from mainstream cinema primarily due to gender inequality - doubled in the case of women and minorities - reflected in the film industry. Furthermore, as Barbara Mennel points out that the women filmmakers choose alternative methods of production and distribution to mainstream methods, such as festivals, and forms such as documentaries that provide a ground for critical discussions. As Mennel further discusses, besides inevitably being caught up within the funding and distribution inequality, these methods of distribution and presentation by women filmmakers are chosen to highlight the ideological accounts of gender, culture and identity. In short, the parameters of funding and distribution politics determine the guidelines of the women's films; as Mennel argues, the framework of the narratives is determined by the dominant ideology in the discourses of diaspora, nation, Turkishness, or the re-

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[1] Recent films by second and third generation Turkish-German directors such as Fatih Akın, Thomas Arslan, have been theorized and defined as the neo-neo German Cinema. Critics suggest that New German Cinema during the 1980s saw the stereotypic representations of the Turkish minority in Germany; Turkish worker images (gastarbeiter) represented as culturally and socially marginalized. Comparing these early films and the contemporary films, critics draw attention to the changes in representation; from mute and victimized objects to hybrid subjects introducing new subjectivities. See for example Göktürk (2001).

[2] The term 'cinema of duty' is adapted from – Sarita Malik, 'Beyond 'The Cinema of Duty'? The Pleasures of Hybridity: Black British Films of the 1980s and 1990s,' in *Dissolving Views: New Writings on British Cinema*, (1996) to Turkish-German cinema by Deniz Göktürk (2001). Göktürk defines discursive space of the earlier cinema of the1980s on Turkish minorities in Germany, and Turkish-German cinema of the time as ' cinema of duty' where minorities are represented at the margins of the society. And she further theorizes that with the contemporary films by second and third generation Turkish-German directors, 'cinema of duty' has been appropriated by the 'celebration of hybridity'. Göktürk (2001).

presentation of the minority. Within this context, Mennel (2002) states that minority women's films become an ideological space with contradictory discourses of staying within the funding guidelines and exceeding those for individual expression. Therefore, it is crucial to take contemporary films of Turkish-German women filmmakers from a gendered perspective within the critical film theory emerging on the Turkish-German cinema.

Autobiographical narratives of diasporic experiences by women's perspectives from various sites have been included in the critical theory establishing the genre of 'immigrant autobiography'[3]. Similarly, literary works by Turkish-German Emine Sevgi Özdamar and Zafer Şenocak have been subjected to study[4], particularly within cultural and literary studies, in the context of autobiographical and diasporic narratives. However, the filmic autobiographies by Turkish-German women are only just beginning to receive similar attention. Among these autobiographical films by second-generation Turkish-German men and women filmmakers are, *Gülüzar* (1994) by Hatice Ayten, *Mein Vater, der Gastarbeiter* (1995) by Yüksel Yavuz, *Wir haben vergessen zurückzukehren* (2001) by Fatih Akın, and *Ein Fest für Beyhan* (1994) by Ayşe Polat.

To review the studies on minority women's films in Germany that discuss the previously mentioned films: Barbara Mennel (2002) in her article *Local Funding and Global Movement: Minority Women's Filmmaking and the Ger-*

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[3] See for example, Kaplan (1998), and Wong (1998).

[4] See for example Huyssen (2003).

man Film Landscape of the Late 1990s discusses the parameters of funding in minority women's filmmaking in Germany. By comparing the films *I Am My Mother's Daughter* and *Everything Will Be Fine* (1997), Afro-German diaspora film, Mennel elaborates the relation between funding parameters and their cinematic representation focusing on the narration of movement. In her article *Kanaka sprak? German-Turkish women filmmakers,* Giovannella Ferrara Rendi (2006), conducts a comparative analysis of recent films by Turkish-German women and men filmmakers, and earlier films on Turkish minorities. Rendi mainly focuses on the films by Seyhan Derin and Ayse Polat, and defines the major issue of their work as following: they are representative as counter-narratives to the traditions of 'cinema of duty' by the re-narration of journey as a major theme in their works. Definitely, there are studies discussing Turkish minority cinema and comparative analysis of representations of Turkish minority women in Germany, as noted earlier, but these are the major studies that focus on the Turkish-German women filmmakers and their autobiographical narratives. Thus, the focus on the politics of minority women's filmmaking is important in discussing the identity politics of Turkish diaspora from a gendered perspective.

I argue that my approach to the film is crucial for providing better understanding on the discursive space of non-Western autobiographical narratives of women within the politics of Turkish- German diaspora in the negotiation of identity in relation to the discourse of Third World difference. To elaborate further, the film in question will be taken as a 'Third-Worldist' narrative, where the filmmaker as a second-generation Turkish-German

holds an in-between position with regard to cultures and nations on one hand, and on the other hand, holds a position across generations by the film's narrative. By 'Third Worldist' narratives, referring to Shohat's term (2006), the framework accounted is the situation of the recognition of works from diverse locations in the world within the recent dicussions of hyridity, decolonization or multiculturalism. The scope of the Third Worldist narratives used in the study embraces diverse subjects such as diasporic, hybrid, multicultural that stand as minoritized, marginalized or in-between. Within this context, we are rather referring to a situation: Third Worldist narratives as a site for questioning the politics of identity and standing within the questions of politics of identity. Here, it is to be noted, that various terms such as non-Western, Third World, hybrid, multicultural, diasporic are used to define in-between subjects by different theories of post-colonial, hybridity and multi-culturalism. Wherefore, there will be shifting uses of the terms, when referring to views of different theorists.

Furthermore, the film will be analyzed in reference to the Western constructions of Third World discourse in the means of re-negotiations of the essentialist discourses on Third World difference. In other words, the crucial relation between the Western discourse and the Third World difference will be a point from which to understand the politics of self-representation in Third Worldist narratives in re-appropriating Third World difference. It will be argued that 'nation' is crucial in understanding Third Worldist narratives within their political positioning in relation to Western discourses on Third World difference. The film in question will be analyzed in the means of re-

negotiating the shifting meanings of nation in the construction of gender identity. Finally, Third Worldist narratives, in re-defining generic accounts of autobiographical narratives, negotiating between autobiography and bio-graphy, personal and collective, biography and ethnography, documentary and fiction, will be a point from which to analyze the formal elements of the film in question.

At this point, we need to clarify basic key terms and concepts in relation to our study, and where we situate the film within these definitions. 'Third World difference' will be used, throughout the study, in reference to West-ern and Euro-centric constructions of the Third World discourse. By Western and Euro-centric, we are referring to perspectives that construct a discur-sive space that homogenize and marginalize the Third World through essen-tialist methodologies. Similarly, the relation between 'Western Feminism' and the construction of 'Third World women' will be questioned in reference to Western feminism's essentialist discourses of the 'Third World women' that establish universal dichotomies and polarized images of the 'Third World women'. Within this scope, we are going to utilize Talpade Chandra Mohanty (2002) and Trinh Minh-ha's (2002) arguments and further argu-ments within the scope of debates on multicultural subjectivity and decolo-nization for our foundation. And finally, the term 're-appropriation' refers to the understanding of Third Worldist narratives in negotiating the Western and Euro-centric discourses on Third World difference. Thus re-appropriation refers to the politics of Third Worldist narratives in the means

of complicating, redefining, and re-negotiating Western discourses on Third World difference.

1.2 GENERAL FRAMEWORK

On Women's Early Personal Narratives: 'The Personal is Political'

> Naming is the active tense of identity, the outward aspect of the self-representation process, acknowledging all the circumstances through which it must elbow its way… (Smith&Watson 2003:5)

Personal narratives have been a major form of representation in the politics of gender and identity for women and minorities in raising their voice from early to contemporary works in literature and film to photography and video art. Autobiographical acts of women have become a major site for problematizing the discourses embedded within the politics of identity where new subjects and subjectivities are constructed. Women's autobiographical narratives have formed a counter-canon in literature and autobiography criticism, where the genre is redefined as a counter-genre within the male-dominated canon. Various disciplines such as psychology, cultural studies, literary studies further extended the women's autobiography criticism by theorizing female subjectivity and difference, and introducing new concepts, such as 'relationality'[5], crucial in the construction of women's gender identity. Contrary to the male-oriented conception of autobiography as a site for

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[5] The concept of relationality is introduced and discussed within the theories of female subjectivity in women's autobiographical narratives, specifically within theories of difference; ego psychology. See for example, Nancy Chodorow (1978); she suggests that different from male, female ego is constructed by more fluid boundaries and thus female subjectivity can be understood by the relationality of female ego boundaries. See also Susan Stanford Friedman's work (1998), which builds upon Chodorow's theories.

the individual coherent being, through women's autobiography the conception of subject matter has changed parallel to changes in theories of various disciplines.

Women's personal narratives have become a major ground for both feminist artists and feminist theorists from which to question identity politics. 'The personal is political' dominated the early feminist narratives and feminist theories of the 1970s. During the women's movement of the time, one major activist concern of the narratives was to raise consciousness about women's issues and encourage social change; they were to deconstruct the gender roles and bring attention to gender inequality. The narratives played a significant role in creating positive role models, through redefinitions of women, and in forming this counter-canon. Counter-histories, through which women rewrite their own histories from their own perceptions, brought to light a lost history. Counter-histories allowed women to take back their place in history. However, earlier feminist narratives and theories were criticized for constructing a universal woman from a Western, Euro-centric approach, which imagined a homogeneous cultural category. They were criticized for their essentialist methodology.[6] They were criticized for ignoring the experiences from other parts of the world, and for creating es-

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[6] See for example Nancy K. Miller (1991) and Domna C. Stanton (1984), which they built upon and extended the experiential model of women's autobiography of Second Wave feminism. Miller and Stanton extended the essentialist and exclusionary models of earlier theories, and by further theories of subjectivity in women's autobiography criticism introducing multiple differences. Furthermore, works by women of color were introduced in the model by theories of difference criticizing Euro-centric approaches; see for example Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2002), Caren Kaplan (1992)

sentialist dichotomies between men and women by their displacement of their subjects from their location and historicity.

From Personal To Cultural: The Politics of Self-Representation in 'Third Worldist Narratives'

Today we see a shift not exactly from personal to political, but from personal to cultural, where women's personal experience has become the 'politics of location'[7] within the autobiographical narratives from non-Western sites. In the 'rediscovery of ethnicity'[8], personal narratives have become a powerful discursive space from other parts of the world, for people who have long been silent. As they begin to retell their own histories, new identities and new subjectivities are introduced. As seen, the decline of nation states, and the evolution of the nation concept, the crossovers of the borders, and ever-expanding virtual reality, mobility has become a major theme. The conventional understanding of nation and borders has become more fluid and blurred.[9] Within the recent debates on multiculturalism and theories of postcolonial and hybridity, personal narratives of the Third World have become a crossroads for exploring the questions of ethnicity, gender and nation. Thus, this thesis aims to examine the film *I Am My Mother's Daughter* in the light of the recent debates on culture and identity.

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[7] Caren Kaplan (1998) discusses that 'politics of location' is crucial to the model of post-colonial critics of autobiography.

[8] Stuart Hall (2002) draws attention to the self-representation from other parts of the world in the recent political atmosphere, which he defines as the 'rediscovery of ethnicity' where concepts like roots, home, and local have been re-defined.

[9] The issue has been discussed by various disciplines and theorists, specifically, recent theories on identity and culture by transnational feminism, post-colonial and diaspora studies. See for example Caren Kaplan (1998), Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2002), Ella Shohat (2006).

To elaborate on the notion of the shift to cultural by non-Western autobiographical narratives, I will refer to Caren Kaplan's views. Kaplan defines the emerging politics from personal to cultural, as cultural autobiographies, and in the politics of cultural autobiographies, she notes that "instead of a discourse of individual authorship, we find a discourse of situation; a politics of location." (Kaplan 1998: 208) According to Kaplan, these autobiographies are formed through the power differences and conflicts between the Western and the non-Western, and become a site where identity is renegotiated within the context of hegemonic relations and resistance to the dominant culture. Therefore, cultural autobiographies, as Kaplan suggests, emerge from bringing together autobiography criticism and autobiography itself, the two 'unmixable elements' (ibid.). Thus, cultural autobiographies are discourses on the politics of location, which binds the individual and the community, and makes it necessary that personal histories be read within the politics of location. Moreover, as Kaplan suggests, reading and writing strategies are embedded within this 'coalition politics' (Kaplan 1998:212). Within this framework, the film in question will be discussed with regard to the politics of identity and as a site for negotiating the discourses of gender and the meanings of nation as crucial factors in the forming of identity.

Western Discourses on Third World Difference

In order to situate the politics of location, we need to clarify our approach to the hegemonic relations and power differences in relation to non-Western autobiographical narratives and thus to our study. Comparing the 1970's Western political documentaries and contemporary non-Western documen-

taries, John Hess & Patricia R. Zimmerman (2006) suggest that the notion of nation was challenged in the earlier works through an emotional bonding with a 'utopian community'. Ella Shohat (2006) suggests contemporary non-Western autobiographical documentaries complicate the notion of nation by their very political standing; the political standing of the recent works by non-Western suggests a multi-layer resistance within and outside its local politics, beyond their national borders. This suggestion of multi-layer resistance both within and outside emerges from their positioning between hegemonic relations, by the crucial relation within the Western discourses of the Third World difference, Western feminist discourses on Third World women. Talpade Mohanty (2002), theorizing this crucial relation, criticizes Western feminist texts and their essentialist methodology for creating polarized images of the Third World women in which Western feminism becomes the very subject of the Third World discourse. Mohanty (2002) further suggests that the methodology of Western feminism reduces the Third World women to object status by creating a homogeneous cultural group removed from their politics and specificity of their location and history. Finally, Mohanty (2002) draws attention that the essentialist methodology of Western feminism on Third World discourse, interlocks the revolutionary aspects of feminism that it should hold.

Therefore, the political positioning of Third World narratives necessitates the construction of resistive discursive spaces in opposition to the Western discourses of the Third World, and in opposition to the hegemonic relations of gender within the local politics. Within this context, we will be suggesting

that the politics of the film in question will go beyond the boundaries of the local, imagining a global audience. It will be argued that the political positioning of the film in question necessitates going beyond the national borders, and beyond local. We need to read the film in question within the context of the discourses that the film elicits, in close relation with Western feminism and Third World difference.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The first chapter of the thesis, the theoretical framework consists of three main sections. In the first section of the theoretical framework, we will review identity theories and contextualize the Western discourses of the Third World difference in order to understand the politics of self-representation in Third Worldist narratives. Furthermore, the Western discourse of Third World difference in the context of power politics will be a reference point in reading the film in question for deconstructing the polarized images of the Third World women.

In the second section, theories of female subjectivity in women's autobiographical narratives will be discussed. Autobiography theories will be introduced within an interdisciplinary approach to the changing understanding of subject and subjectivities by the gendered readings of the genre. This chapter will be illuminating in studying the subject matter and how it is constructed in autobiographical accounts from a view of gender theories in order to understand the politics of women's self-representation.

In the last section, the politics of identity in Third Worldist films by women will be explored in detail in relation to the construction of gender identity and in relation to the redefinition of the meanings of nation. Third Worldist films, where multi-subjects and subjectivities are negotiated within local and global politics of resistance, will be reviewed in order to contextualize female subjectivity in Third Worldist narratives.

The second chapter consists of the analysis of the film *I Am My Mother's Daugther.* In the light of the theoretical framework discussed in the last chapter, the analysis will focus on the construction female subjectivity by questioning the re-definition of generic accounts of autobiography and documentary, by exploring the re-negotiations of the meanings of nation in the construction of gender identity and by exploring the re-appropriation of the Third World difference.

Finally, in the conclusion, the arguments will be revisited in summing up the findings on the film analysis by the gendered readings of Third Worldist autobiographical narratives, and further approaches will be suggested for future research.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 IDENTITY POLITICS AND THIRD WORLD DIFFERENCE

The aim of this chapter is to introduce fundamental views on identity politics, focusing primarily on Third World discourse to draw a framework for the chapters on autobiography and documentary practice and criticism of Third World. In this chapter of the study, we are going to establish a socio-political context for the politics of identity in order to understand better the politics of self-representation in Third Worldist narratives in relation to Third World discourse. Theories on identity and Third Worldist narratives will be articulated with the aim of establishing the socio-political context of the ethnicity and gender issues. Furthermore, the conflicting forces between the Third World and the First World, in other words, the hegemonic relations that shape the crucial layering between Western feminism and the representation of the Third World women, globalism and the Third World discourse on difference and ethnicity, Eurocentrism and multiculturalism where new identities are negotiated in this new world order will be reviewed.

Stuart Hall defines the current state of the world as the 'rediscovery of ethnicity' (Hall 2002:184) once absorbed and destroyed by global culture. In the global postmodern politics, people rediscover ethnicity, and works from the margins of the global have become a space of debates regarding identity and culture. It should be noted that there is a crucial relation between politics of self-representation from the margins and the global postmodern politics. Hall notes that new subject positions are emerging. With the de-

cline of the nation-states, globalism is not English anymore, but American; it is across languages and beyond national boundaries, where it goes above or below the nation-state, which forms the global and the local. New forms of globalism are still in conflict with older forms, as well as within itself, which gives emergence to the current global postmodern situation. And further, Hall suggests in the decline of the center, and in the face of the decentered hegemonic relations, "differences begin to pull away". (ibid.)

Hall encapsulates the situation in which global postmodern is at stake as ready to recognize and absorb all differences and diversities, and claims that it derives its very power from the differences it recognizes. Contrary to English-centered Thatcherist globalism, the new globalism, according to Hall, is no longer one big enterprise to impose a monolithic culture, "but much more decentralized and decentered forms of social and economic organization" (Hall 2002:181) which is;

> …living with difference, wondering with at pluralism, this concentrated, corporate, overcorprate, overintegrated, overconcentrated, and condensed form of economic power that lives culturally through difference and that is constantly teasing itself with the pleasures of the transgressive other. (Hall 2002:181)

At this stage, in the celebration of diversities within global postmodern state, the politics of self-representation from margins of the world has become a powerful space. There are two dimensions to the issue, one is in resistance to the appropriation of the margins by older forms of globalism with the struggle to gain voice and space of their own while simultaneously undergoing the re-appropriation of the positioning of diversities and differ-

ences as a celebration in the new forms of globalism. So, the self-representation of margins caught within this conflicting relation in the state of global postmodern, negotiates new subjectivities, re-appropriates, and redefines difference. Hall further notes:

> Paradoxically, marginality has become a powerful space. It is a space of weak power, but it is a space of power, nonetheless… what is creatively emergent in the contemporary arts, will find that it has something to do with the languages of the margin, and this trend is increasing. New subjects, new genders, new ethnicities, new regions, and new communities- all hitherto excluded from the major forms of cultural representation, unable to locate themselves except as decentered or subaltern-have emerged and have acquired through struggle, sometimes in very marginalized ways, the means to speak for themselves for the first time. And the discourses of power in our society, the discourses of the dominant regimes, have been certainly threatened by this decentered cultural empowerment of the marginal and the local. (Hall 2002:183)

From this point of view, the margins and their self-representation have also been commodified by the global postmodern, but are still a powerful space as Hall acknowledges. In the 'rediscovery of ethnicity', minorities begin to re-represent their homelands that they once left or never seen, with the voice and space that they gain. Hall defines this new global positioning of diversities and the politics of their self-representation within conflicting forces as "I can't speak of the world, but I can speak of my village. I can speak of my neighborhood. I can speak of my community". (Hall 2002:184)

While Hall (2002) in his article, takes a look at the condition of the embracement of diversities from the point of globalism and localism, Trinh T. Minh-ha in her illuminating work (2002) takes a view on the grounds of the postcolonial condition. Minh-ha defines the politics of non-Western narra-

tives by their standing as 'neither the outsider or the insider'. And Minh-ha further argues that non-white filmmaking and its territories are defined by West with an account as "an insider can speak with authority about her own culture, and she's referred to as the source of authority in this matter – not as a filmmaker necessarily, but as an insider, merely" (Minh-ha 2002:417). She continues, and says that "it is a paradoxical twist of the colonial mind. What the outsider expects form the insider is, in fact, a projection of an all-knowing subject that this outsider usually attributes to himself and to his own kind". (ibid.)

Minh-ha (2002) embeds her theory on self/other conflict within the power relations, and according to Minh-ha the question of identity comes along with the question of the self/other relationship. The boundaries of the self-representation of the Third World is defined by the self/other relationship; "she who knows she cannot speak of them without speaking of herself, of history without involving her story, also knows that she cannot make gesture without activating the to-and-fro movement of life." (Minh-ha 2002:418) And certain notions that come along with difference, like subjectivity, is attributed to certain others like the 'woman', or the 'native' who are all others and otherized by the dominant ideology. As she elaborates:

> Hegemony works at leveling out differences and at standardizing contexts and expectations in the smallest details of our daily lives. Uncovering this leveling of differences is, therefore, resisting that very notion of difference that is defined in the master's terms and often resorts to the simplicity of essences. (Minh-ha 2002:416)

Summing up the discussions on the politics of self-representation from the margins of the dominant ideology, we should note that difference, identity and power politics are all interwoven, and always situated in the discourse. Thus, the discursive space of self-representation from the margins should be elaborated in reference to the Third World discourse, and within the context of power politics embedded in order to understand better the re-negotiations of identity in non-Western works. Similarly Hall suggests,

> Modern theories of enunciation always oblige us to recognize that enunciation comes form somewhere. It cannot be unplaced; it cannot be unpositioned; it is always positioned in a discourse. It is when a discourse forgets that it is placed that it tries to speak for everybody else. (Hall 2002:185)

On the other hand, on the politics of self-representation from the margins, Talpade Chandra Mohanty (2002) takes an approach from a gendered reading. Criticizing specific Western feminist texts on the Third World women and their experience, Mohanty draws attention to the Western constructions of Third World difference in which the Third World women are represented as victims of the patriarchy. By criticizing the texts for constructing one monolithic Third World women, and a universal man, where the women are always subordinated, she deconstructs the texts for having essentialist and universalist approaches to men and women in the Third World excluded from their historicity and politics of location. She claims that it creates a situation of interlocking revolutionary acts that feminism should actually withhold.

Referring to the term 'ethnocentric universalism', Mohanty aims to deconstruct the discursive spaces where the Third World women is constructed, and she suggests that "Western feminist writing on women in the Third World must be considered in the context of the global hegemony of Western scholarship" (Mohanty 2002:258). Through criticizing the representation of Third World women in Western feminist texts, she argues their methodologies in analyzing, constructing and suggesting resolutions to the model that constructs Third World women, through binary relations of power. She also suggests that they themselves are trapped in their own methodologies, which offer no resolution, but they construct a situation of an endless conflict. Their methodology, she suggests, constructs the Third World women through understanding them "as subjects outside social relations, instead of looking at the way women are constituted through these very structures" (Mohanty 2002:272).

Mohanty further notes that the methodology of Western feminism, then, reduces the Third World women to their object status, and the Western feminists themselves become the very subjects of the re-writing of this alternative history. It is assumed in Western feminist texts that the Third World women are already constituted and are a group with similar interests, with the result that the women are represented as victims, powerless and apolitic. She draws her readers' attention to both culturally and historically reductionist approaches, which isolate the institutions of the society and its relational network. Indeed, Mohanty stresses that within this relational network, social institutions should be taken into account instead of constructing the

women as the universal victimized objects. Thus, gender identity is actually formed by these relations of kinship structures, the act of mothering which women are producers of. The reductionist and universalist approaches of Western feminism on the Third World women, according to Mohanty, causes the limitation of "theoretical analysis as well as reinforces Western cultural imperialism" (Mohanty 2002:273). By stressing the problems of the construction of Third World women in Western feminist texts, she further notes that,

> The application of the notion of women as a homogenous category to women in the Third World colonizes and appropriates the pluralities of the simultaneous location of different groups of women in social class and ethnic frameworks; in doing so it ultimately robs them of their historical and political agency. (Mohanty 2002:271)

In this context, Robert Stam (2002), on the other hand, asks an interesting question: then who will decide who can speak for whom? It is not just simply a question of who should speak for whom, but it is necessary to read the representations within the discourse it is constructed. So far, we have provided an overview of how the discourse of difference is constructed by Western approaches on Third World difference. And we have elaborated the constructedness of Third World identity and culture as discourses within the power politics in which they are assumed to be taken as naturalized facts. It is not a simple matter of race and ethnicity and who shall be the voice of one's community, it is the power exercises inherent in the discourse as seen in the construction of the Third World difference by essentialist Western approaches or by a gendered reading, the Third World women through the universalist frames in Western feminist texts. Placing the multicultural project

against Eurocentrism, and defining the problems that neoconservatives construct against the multicultural project, Stam conceptualizes the general framework of the project as follows;

> In the wake of centuries of colonial domination, multiculturalism aspires to decolonize representation not only in terms of cultural artifacts but also in terms of power relations between communities 'behind' the artifacts. Its task is double, at once one of deconstructing Eurocentric and racist norms and of constructing and promoting multicultural alternatives. The multiculturalist project unleashes virulent polemics because it calls for decisive changes, changes in the way we write history, the way we teach literature, the way we make art, the way we program films, the way we organize conferences, and the way we distribute cultural resources. (Stam 2002:189)

Stam, further suggests that multiculturalism is not about communicating through and beyond borders, but is about the inequality of the power relations. It is not about accepting difference, but about changing the difference in power relations. He argues that multiculturalism is very much intertwined with Eurocentrism, that multiculturalism should criticize Eurocentrism and construct itself in reference to a Euro-centric understanding in order to deconstruct the very Euro-centric discourse. Otherwise it is going to be just a model of what Hall suggests, the 'postmodern flux of diversity' (Hall 2002:184) just absorbing differences for the sake of its own existence within the state of post-modern globalism. By addressing the neoconservative views on multiculturalism, Stam re-frames that multiculturalism is not against Europe, but it is against Euro-centrism and the universalization of its norms; the natural right assumed to dominate others. Criticizing the dialectical hierarchy constructed by Eurocentrism of the 'West and the Rest' and an understanding of "our nations, their tribes; our religions, their su-

perstitions; our culture, their folklore; our defense, their terrorism" (Stam 2002:193), Stam argues, Euro-centric discourse naturalizes and normalizes the dichotomized discourse and the hierarchical power relations embedded between. Finally Hall asks:

> Is this the final moment of a global postmodern, a moment in which it gets hold of everybody, of everything, where there is no difference that it cannot contain, no otherness it cannot speak, no marginality that it cannot take pleasure out of? (Hall 2002:182)

After reviewing the politics of identity within the Western constructions on Third World, it is crucial to focus further on the subject matter and the subject positioning of the non-Western in the politics of their self-representation. Regarding the politics of self-representation as discussed earlier, Minh-ha suggests "otherness becomes empowerment, critical difference, when it is not given but re-created" (Minh-ha 2002:418). Similarly Hall (2002) draws attention to the transformation of the politics of the self-representation of non-Western. Hall suggests that it has become a powerful discursive space with transformational accounts of resistance, or counteracts, where the latter of diversity has been taking on a different form in global cultural discourses. Minh-ha (2002) brings an interesting view on this transformation and she argues that the politics of the subject positioning of the 'other' is inherent in her being both an insider and an outsider. According to Minh-ha, when the insider is not solely an insider anymore, in other words when 'she' begins to look from both inside and outside, which Minh-ha defines as the 'undetermined threshold place', 'she' breaks the simple dialectic of inside/outside. And Minh-ha, on the politics of the construction of the subject in this 'undetermined threshold place', argues that:

> This inappropriate other or same who moves about with always at least two gestures: that of affirming I am like you while persisting in her difference and that of reminding I am different while unsettling every definition of otherness arrived at. (Minh-ha 2002:418)

Minh-ha further theorizes that the difference does not just simply work between the outsider and the insider, as two distinct subjects, but it is inherent in each subject as the insider or the outsider. Therefore, "I is not unitary, culture has never been monolithic and is always more or less in relation to a judging subject" (Minh-ha 2002:418) . The space of the 'inappropriate other', Minh-ha argues, then, becomes a space where the dichotomies of objectivity/subjectivity, inside/outside, self/other are re-negotiated.

> In short, what is at stake is a practice of subjectivity that is still unaware of its own constituted nature, hence, the difficulty to exceed the simplistic pair of subjectivity and objectivity; a practice of subjectivity that is unaware of its continuous role in the production of meaning, as if things can make sense by themselves, so that the interpreter's function consists of only choosing among the many existing readings, unaware of representation as representation, that is to say, the cultural, sexual, political interreality of the filmmaker as subject, the reality of the subject film and the reality of the cinematic apparatus. And finally, unaware of the inappropriate other within every I. (Minh-ha 2002:419)

In the illumination of the debates over identity and the Third World difference, we need to address the question of how it will be situated in the case of the Turkish minority in Germany, specifically the second generation Turks living in Germany. Reconsidering Mohanty's (2002) view on the approach of Western Feminism in constructing a discourse of universal Third World women, we need to ask if we can consider a similar relation for the Turkish minority women living in Germany. When the headscarf as a symbol of identity for Turkish women is considered, we see that essentialist discourses

of traditional and religious culture result in the marginalization of the women and stand as a difficulty in the integration of two societies, German and Turkish.

In the view of Katherine Pratt Ewing (2006), theories of multiculturalism and hybridity are just one Western discourse that aims at avoiding the creation of parallel societies, and she claims that it makes the integration even more difficult, creating cultural polarizations. Hybrid identity discourse, according to Ewing, is seen as a mediator by the German public discourse, between two societies. With regard to the policies of the modern state in Germany and the discourse of hybridity in popular culture and news media in relation to Turkish minority in Germany, Ewing claims that:

> In this discursive environment, in which cultural difference is dichotomized and social activists have denounced multiculturalism as a policy that encourages the maintenance of a parallel society, a popular solution to the problem of integration has been a celebration of hybridity, an idea originally popularized in the United States and Britain…In German public discourse, the trope of hybridity operates as a mediator between the irreconcilable opposition of Turkish and Islamic traditional values with modern democratic values. A prime figure of mediation is the modern Turkish youth who manages to succeed in German society as a cultural hybrid. (Ewing 2006:266)

According to Ewing, the discourse of multiculturalism approaches the Turkish minority in Germany as a homogeneous group with similar interests. Multicultural or individualistic policies of the state result in marginalizing ethnic and religious culture, generating an essentialized group, creating polarized images of the Muslim Turkish immigrant woman. Ewing further suggests that:

> Polarized images of the Muslim woman as victim are a product of this process. Within this discourse, the Muslim woman is readily cast as the embodiment of the "other" to the liberated Western woman. She is oppressed by her "culture" and in need of liberation by enlightened Western saviors. (Ewing 2006:267)

As pointed out earlier, Ewing argues that within the discourse of hybridity and multiculturalism, the subject is taken as pre-constructed by the policies of social work or human rights associations, and a homogeneous cultural category is created, excluding micropolitics of the everyday lives of individuals from the practices of the social work. In other words instead of taking them as individuals, they are essentialized to a homogenous cultural group. Arguing on the policies of the social works, specifically for Turkish minorities in Germany, Ewing claims that,

> Migrants were no longer dealt with in their social roles as workers or family members or whether they were unemployed, homeless, pregnant, school failures, alcoholics, or drug addicts, but as bearers of a cultural identity and therefore representative of their national culture. (Ewing 2006:272)

Arguing Deniz Göktürk's theory of 'pleasures of hybriditiy' (Göktürk 2001:131), Erwin suggests (dis) pleasures of hybridity. Erwin argues that theories of hybridity do not level out the dichotomic representations of Turkish minority,contrary to Göktürk's claims, but constructs a homogeneous cultural category within the discourse of the dominant ideology. The representation of Turkish youth in neo-neo German cinema that has given way to the celebration of hybridity, according to Ewing, constructs a more fluid space, but although these films suggest for flexibility, still the image of the oppressed woman remains a dominant representation. She further suggests

that the in-between identity of the hybridity theories, construct the discourse of "almost German, but with a difference." (Ewing 2006:275) In her discussion of *I Am My Mother's Daughter*, Ewing claims that the director Seyhan Derin, from the German view, plays the figure of the successfully integrated, mediator figure between the two cultures, the rural Turkish culture and the German urban culture. Referring to Elsaesser's arguments, Ewing claims that Turkish diaspora films are produced within the guidelines of the funding which is often the German government, and thus the discourse is produced within the guidelines of the dominant ideology.

Barbara Mennel (2002), similiarly, discusses the funding and distribution methods and their impacts on the contemporary films by minority women in Germany. Produced as a graduate project, *I Am My Mother's Daughter*, the film is funded by the director's school, Munich Film and Television Academy, which had thus determined the framework of the project as an autobiographical one to narrate three generations of women and the effects of immigration. Mennel, suggesting that "the important topics of female migration and Turkishness are reduced by the essentializing funding parameters to one autobiographical account", (Mennel 2002:49), further elaborates that this is an example in which the funding conditions had determined the guidelines of the narrative. At the same time, she presents the film as an example that moved beyond those parameters. Mennel also suggests that the performance of hybridity, as opposed to Göktürk's views on the departure of 'cinema of duty' in minority filmmaking (Göktürk 2001), had become the new duty. However, Mennel proposes that the film, moving beyond the

parameters of the funding, introduces a multifaceted view of the issue by the voices of the multiple subjects. In addition, similar to Mine Eren's analysis on the film, she proposes that the ambiguity of the geographies between Germany and Turkey, the use of both fiction and non-fiction sequences, all suggest that the film exceeding its funding, both by exceeding the traditional generic accounts of documentary and the politics of identity.

2.2 SUBJECTIVITY IN WOMEN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

2.2.1 An Overview of Autobiography Theory

In this section of the study, autobiography theory will be discussed within a historical and interdisciplinary framework to map the changes in the conception of the genre and its relation to gender studies, feminist theory, postcolonial and postmodernist theories today. In this part, the fundamental conceptions of subject matter in women's autobiographical writing will be introduced. Thus we intend to map the changes focusing specifically on the axis of subject matter from the view of various disciplines as cultural studies, literary studies, psychoanalysis. This overview will provide a better understanding of the conception of the genre today, with the changes across disciplines and in the evolution of its history. Within this scope, our aim is to question the fundamental relation between gender theories and the genre itself. As Shari Benstock points towards this crucial relation, "the very requirements of the genre are put into question by the limits of gender-which is to say, because these two terms are etymologically linked, genre itself raises questions about gender" (Benstock 1998:151).

Smith and Watson, defines women's autobiography as being "now a privileged site for thinking about issues of writing at the intersection of feminist, postcolonial, and postmodern critical theories" (Smith&Watson 1998:5), and continues: "if feminism has revolutionized literary and social theory, the texts and theory of women's autobiography have been pivotal for revising our concepts of women's life issues" (ibid.). According to Smith and Watson, the increase in gender, ethnic, and area studies also gave rise to the diverse experiences now included in the canon and its critical theory. And Smith and Watson indicate the importance of the 1980's when the women's autobiography started to form a countercanon, and critics recognized it as a new field. Drawing attention to the crucial relation between feminist theory and women's autobiographical narratives, Smith and Watson note that "the interest in women's autobiographical experiences as both an articulation of women's life experience and a source for articulating feminist theory has grown over several decades and was acknowledged as a field around 1980" (Smith&Watson 1998:5).

1980's feminist readings of women's autobiographies grounded the tradition of critical theories on male and female differences of style and content in their works of personal narratives. First wave feminist critics claimed to take the women's experience and their personal narratives as the core text of feminism, which forms their experiential model. Estelle C. Jelinek (1980) raised questions of content and style of difference in male and female narratives. Conceptions of discontinuity, non-linear and oral narratives are introduced as opposed to coherent self male autobiography critics, the multi-

voice, and the conception of fluid construction of subject were among the questions raised by the first stage of women's autobiography theorists who helped transform academic studies. Collectivity of 'we' as opposed to the individualistic conception of 'I' in traditional autobiography theory was also an issue raised around this era.

> Clearly, the analysis of second wave feminism, which read women's lives as inextricably embedded in patriarchy- understood as a general, ahistorical, transcultural system of social organization through which men maintained domination over women- informed the experiential model of women's autobiography. (Smith&Watson 1998: 10)

The model of women's autobiography developed during the first stage by Second Wave feminism, was criticized for its gender essentialism, and for its focus on textuality. This criticism extended the theories of textuality through the referentiality conception. The experiential model of Second Wave feminism was criticized for its exclusionary methodologies. They were criticized, first of all, for excluding the experiences of women of color in the canon, and for their essentialist methodologies excluding the specification of location and historicity. Critiques of Second Wave feminism's methodology suggested that the women's autobiography theory "should not simply invert the exclusionary logic of the dominant tradition". (Smith&Watson 1998:10) But most importantly, arguments that extended the model of Second Wave feminism by theorists like Nancy K. Miller (1998), Domna C. Stanton (1998) suggested reading strategies of a gendered difference.

Theorizing the female subjectivity, women's autobiography criticism by the late 1980s, proposed reading for difference. Theories of difference brought a new conception of subject and subjectivity by various approaches. Notably Nancy Chodorow (1978) proposed gendered readings of ego psychology, by stressing on relationality of women in constructing difference. She focused on mother-daughter relations and proposed fluid ego boundaries of women, introducing new approaches of female subjectivity. On another account, rereadings of Lacan and works by French feminists reconfigured the subject and subjectivity by psychoanalytical approaches from a gendered reading. Theorizing on Lacanian approaches to language and subject, theorists provided for female subjectivity in the model of split subject, refiguring the understanding of coherency and linearity in traditional autobiography. Though relational ego and Lacanian split subject theories introduced new subjectivities in the discipline, they were criticized for their methodologies in universalizing sexual difference.

Rereadings of Althusser and Foucault, among are Felicity Nussbaum (1998) and Leigh Gilmore (1994) revised the concept of subjectivity, by materialist approaches focusing on the specification of location and history in the readings of women's autobiographical narratives. They stressed ideology and power relations embedded in the construction of the subject, which they proposed for readings of difference in theorizing female subjectivity. By the advent of postcolonialism and postmodernism studies, the theory of women's autobiography had been taken to a more international and global level, introducing the experiences from diasporic sites. The articulation of mate-

rialistic conditions of women and the conception of subjectivity has brought a new understanding of difference in women's autobiographical writings and readings. Benstock (1998) defines the challenges of postmodernist theories, reading the texts of women's autobiography as changing the conceptions of subject, from the personal to cultural, where politics are made readable. Sidonie Smith (1998) and Francoise Lionnet (1989) introduced fundamental works into the critical theory of women's autobiography by including models of multiple differences, and expanded the theories with multi-disciplinary approaches. The inclusion of sub-genres of personal narratives by women helped the expansion of the counter-canon introduced by the early theorists. The articulation of historical and location specificity, and the ideologies of social and political, absent from earlier models, within which the gendered identity is constructed, gave rise to changes in the conceptions of generic accounts; rather than a model based on the difference of male and female from a Eurocentric approach, counter theories brought the issues of a decentered difference of multiple subjectivities.

2.2.2 Female Subjectivity and Autobiography

In this section, we are going to elaborate on women's autobiography theory and the conceptions of subject and subjectivity in more detail. As discussed earlier, women's autobiography theory has been formed with reference to dominant autobiography theory that takes individualistic conception of subject as its main grounding. Transforming the conception of individualism of male oriented Western canon, women's autobiography theory suggested a gendered reading. Through interdisciplinary approaches, women's autobio-

graphy theory studies the female subjectivity in the construction of subject in the autobiographical narratives of women introducing new conceptions of relationality, collectivity, performativity for gendered reading within theories of difference, transforming the individualist models of dominant autobiography theory. Thus, Susan Stanford Friedman argues the problems of individualistic models;

> The fundamental inapplicability of individualistic models is two-fold. First, the emphasis on individualism does not take into account the importance of group identity for women and minorities. Second, the emphasis on separateness ignores the differences in socialization in the construction of male and female gender identity. From both an ideological and psychological perspective, in other words, individualistic paradigms of the self ignore the role of collective and relational identities in the individuation process of women and minorities. (Friedman 1998:72)

Shari Benstock (1998) focusing on Virginia Woolf's writings, employs a psychoanalytic approach. While criticizing the individualistic conceptions of autobiography theory, she brings a new understanding for differences of women and men's autobiographical works. Through her readings on Georges Gusdorf's (1956) theory of coincidence, Benstock notes that the theory suggests that the self and the image are coherent in the autobiographical writings, forming a conscious and coherent self and subject. Benstock further discusses the relation in language between the conscious and unconscious, the self and the image, in relation to women's autobiography theory. As she elaborates; the writing and reading strategies of individualistic models on autobiography theory and practice takes subject and the construction of subject by language as coherent and conscious. And thus, the

writing strategies embedded in such works aim to construct the coherent subject. Rereading the works, Benstock notes that:

> The whole trust of such works is to seal up and cover over gaps in memory, dislocations in time and space, insecurities, hesitations, and blind spots. The consciousness behind the narrative I develops over time, encompassing more and more of the external landscape and becoming increasingly aware of the implications of action and events, but this consciousness-and the I it supports remains stable. The dissection of self-analysis premises the cohesion of a restructured self. (Benstock 1998:152)

Benstock takes language as a symbolic system that "constructs and is constructed by the writing subject", and adds that "it is also the space of writing which bears the marks and the registers the alienating effects of the false symmetry of the mirror stage" (Benstock 1998:146). With regard to Gusdorf's (1956) theory of coincidence where the unconscious and the conscious perfectly coincides constructing the coherent subject, Benstock argues that, according to mirror stage theories, the subject is always split, and double through mis-identification with self. Applying Lacan's theories of self, Benstock notes that "there is no clearly defined barrier between the conscious and the unconscious" (Benstock 1998:149), and it is through language that the subject is divided. Arguing against Gusdorf's theory of coincidence, Benstock claims that the model suggests that knowing himself, where the unconscious and the conscious, the self and the writing subject coincides, is the major ground to autobiography. Benstock's model suggest a female subjectivity; defining the differences of women and men's autobiographical narratives, she theorizes that female writing shapes itself where she is aware and constantly reminded of her otherness, and through which the subject is constructed through this double.

Susan Stanford Friedman (1998), in theorizing female subjectivity, draws attention to the notion of relational self, and the construction of self with the interaction of others, mother and the father in the forming of gender identity. Criticizing Georges Gusdorf's (1956) model of autobiographical self in founding the theory on Western white male, Friedman argues that the role of the collective and relational is central to the subjects of minority and women in the construction of gender identity and in return to the subject construction in women's autobiographical writings. Friedman criticizes Gusdorf's theory for its basis on individualism, claiming that the self-recognition and creation is different for women, minorities and the non-Western, and this difference should be taken into account. Friedman notes that according to Gusdorf, "autobiography is the literary consequence of the rise of individualism as an ideology" (Friedman 1998:75), with historical ground of European empires, enlightenment, and industrial revolution and finally the isolated being. In the readings of James Olney (1980), Friedman (1998) argues; similar to Gusdorf's model, Olney also bases his theory around the uniqueness of the self and experience where autobiography itself can be possible.

Friedman (1998) argues that although psychoanalysis grounding its theory on the healthy ego, it does not pass the boundaries of individualistic self; where the healthy ego is defined by the separation from others, from identification to separation. Friedman draws attention to Nancy Chodorow's (1978) psychological model of gender socialization in theorizing female subjectivity in women's autobiography. In the readings of Chodorow' model,

Friedman notes that fluid ego boundaries and Chodorow's focus on the mother-daughter relation is crucial in challenging the relational gender identity. And Friedman quotes Chodorow about her model on the relational ego:

> Growing girls come to define themselves as continuous with others" with "a more flexible and permeable ego boundaries", on the other hand "boys come to define themselves as more separate and distinct, with a greater sense of rigid ego boundaries and differentiation." (cited in Friedman 1998:77)

Psychoanalytic approaches to women's autobiography theory, re-configures the relation between subject and language, suggesting a different positioning for women in the formation of the subject. Refiguring the male oriented readings of psychoanalysis, ego psychology theories and Lacanian re-readings, introduced female subjectivity revising the theories of subject from a gendered reading. And these approaches helped transforming the dominant autobiography theory and its notions of the coherent subject. Though the psychoanalytic approaches to female subjectivity in women's autobiography theory introduced new subjectivities, they were criticized for universalizing sexual difference. Thus, materialist approaches to readings of women's autobiography stressed the specification of location and history, and the importance of the articulation of the social and political ideologies, through which the gendered identity is constructed.

Articulating Sheila Rowbotham's (1973) model in the construction of gender identity, Friedman indicates the importance of interdependence, identification and community- excluded in the models of Olney (1980) and Gusdorf (1956)- as the fundamental elements in the development of the women's

identity. Friedman indicates that for Rowbotham's model, which is grounded in political formations of ideology and the institutions in the construction of gender identity, woman is never a unique entity but always defined in a group by the male culture. In the readings of Rowbotham, Friedman (1998) elaborates that, 'she' is the projection of an image of a WOMAN, still it is also the same case for men; that white Western man is also an image, but the women are constantly reminded of their otherness in the ideology of their being. Further exploring Rowbotham's model, Friedman notes that according to Rowbotham, as opposed to individualistic models, group identity, community, collective consciousness should be taken into account when building models of self-consciousness and self-definition. Going a step further, Friedman notes that Rowbotham bases her ideological model on collective consciousness, shared identity and group identity intersecting with individual identity and takes the solidarity of the group as a source for collective consciousness, as revolutionary action. Friedman discusses that, according to Gusdorf, the dominant culture creates either conflicting subjects of resisting beings when subjects are not compatible by the ideology that they are within or the coherent self where the self and the image perfectly coincides and it is where the autobiography is possible. On the other hand, Friedman notes that Rowbotham takes an account of a positive outcome; where the self does not end up with alienation but helps for the development of a new consciousness.

Notably, Felicity Nussbaum (1998) draws attention to the cultural and social institutions and the ideology embedded in the analysis of subject matter in

women's autobiographies. Nussbaum, in earlier models of individualism, takes a different account and in her article on eighteenth century autobiographical writings, argues that Western white male autobiographies are also social-political constructs of their era (like the church and Christianity). So there is no individual autobiography, and as Nussbaum suggests, it is always political, thus it is always socially, politically and historically constructed within resistance and contradictory discourses. She further suggests that it is never an ahistorical universal white man's autobiography, but one that withholds the discourses of its institutions in the era, whether the works of men or women.

Nussbaum (1998), in theorizing female subjectivity, redefines the conception of the autobiographical subject within ideology and power relations in the construction of the subject, and utilizes Louis Althusser's (1971) theory of power and ideology to compose a conception of the decentered ideology within the construction of the subject. Nussbaum stresses on the materiality and the multiplicity of ideology, and continues; "it is here, in the contradictions within the materials of culture, that we may locate the oppositional subject necessary for a materialist feminist politics" (Nussbaum 1989:164). She discusses that the psychoanalytical readings of Lacan do not include the conception of ideology in the formation of identity and the individual's construction in language, thus that they are produced within ideology. Nussbaum elaborates that it is ideological pressures that makes seem the putting together the different positions to make a whole of a unified subject.

Thus materialist approaches criticize subjectivist psychoanalytic readings for their account of the universalist conception of subject, she further notes:

> Lacan's discourse of universal difference, of binary opposition that replicates a transhistorical heterosexual sex/gender system with its fixed hierarchies, poses serious difficulties for feminist criticism because it cannot address the material condition of oppression based on gender…one consequence of the subject's entering into the culture's language and symbol system is a subjectivity placed in contradiction among dominant ideologies while those ideologies simultaneously work to produce and hold in place a unified subject. (Nussbaum 1998:162)

Nussbaum (1998) criticizes Althusser's (1971) theory for not focusing on the gender problem in challenging the interest of the revolutionary aspects in transforming ideology. By a gendered approach Nussbaum adapts Althusser's theory of ideology, which brings a new understanding of power relations as a counterargument for monolithic conceptions of power. And she re-phrases Althusser, "recent theories of ideology, then, may regard ideology as a "material matrix of affirmations and sanctions", as a system of assent to regulation, produced within ideological struggle" (cited in Nussbaum 1998:164). In other words, ideology is not the hegemonic power exerted on one class by the dominant class, polar, or symmetrical conceived in earlier theories, but rather it is decentered, scattered, contradictory, and asymmetrical. Nussbaum further argues; "though class may be more intensely constitutive for men, or gender more crucial for women, at particular historical moments, these are applied asymmetrically, and conceives from the struggle rather than the exertion" (Nussbaum 1998:163).

Nussbaum (1998) notes, Althusser's model refigures many other ideology theories that internalizes the conception of monolithic power, hegemonic force, and thus hegemony is not just a reflection of economic interests as conceived in reductionist readings of Marxist model. She rephrases Althusser's arguments;

> Ideological practices, he argues, are inscribed in the rituals of and other material practices of everyday existence. The agency for these practices is widely scattered because ISAs are not the product of any one class or monolithic power group". (Nussbaum 1998:163)

Theorizing female subjectivity in autobiography, Nusssbaum argues, "autobiographical writing is a discursive and material practice in which gendered subjectivity is constructed, confirmed, and sabotaged. Such texts may work simultaneously for and against the ideologies of identity which prevail" (Nussbaum 1998:165). She states that the contradictory discourses cohabit in texts, engendering the conception of subjectivities. Through this, diaries and journals hold a critical position in the history of autobiography, and its theory for transforming traditional conceptions of autobiographical writing. Arguing the importance of diaries and journals, transforming the traditional codes of autobiography, Nussbaum notes, "by eschewing known narrative codes and opting discontinuity and repetition, diaries and journals often attempt to seem spontaneous, and thus avoid assigning meaning or a hierarchy of values" (Nussbaum 1998:165). Finally, Nussbaum suggests that disidentification, resistant or counter subject positions emerge when subjects are not compatible within the ideology struggle, which makes the in-

visible ideology visible, and through new subject positions can come into creation.

Sidonie Smith (1998), on the other hand, takes a performative approach to the conceptions of resistance and disidentification of subjectivity theories. Rather than a stiff model of resisting, counter, or disidentified subject positions, emerging from incompatibility within the ideology, she suggests that multiple discourses and subjectivities within the subject are performed in the space of autobiography. And Smith defines the autobiographical as "amnesiac, incoherent, heterogeneous, interactive" (Smith 1998:110), which she suggests emerges from the failure for the unified subject. The space of autobiography is thus where the autobiographer, the narrator, and the subject of narration are both the same and not the same, further create the fragmented multiple identities of narration.

Smith (1998) argues that the subject is always multiple, and never coherent. She points out that the politics of the multiplicity of the discourses that the subject carries. Within this context, she quotes from Judith Butler's analysis "to be a good mother, to be a heterosexually desired object, to be a fit worker" (cited in Smith 1998:110) acquires different demands, and that "the coexistence or convergence of such discursive injunctions produces the possibility of a complex reconfiguration and redeployment" (ibid.). The autobiography, Smith suggests, is formed by giving voice to certain identities, and silencing others, and thus constant inclusions and exclusions, identification and disidentification is at play throughout the narrative. She suggests that the autobiography becomes a space of performativity

"through tactical disidentifications the autobiographical subject adjusts, re-deploys, resists, transforms discourses of autobiographical identity" (Smith 1998:111).

2.2.3 Questions on Immigrant Autobiography

Caren Kaplan (1998) suggests that autobiographical works by non-Western, are constructed by the discourses of autobiography and autobiographical criticism, and which are "conventionally unmixable elements" (Kaplan 1998: 208). In other words, contemporary postcolonial and transnational condi-tions today form the autobiography and its theory. She suggests that non-Western autobiographies rather being the 'individual autobiography', the autobiography site itself becomes a discourse of a political situation. There-fore, withholding political generic accounts, the out-law genres, the resis-tance literature, exceeds the conventional laws of the genre. Kaplan indi-cates the importance of the shift from personal to cultural, where the indi-vidual is specifically tied to certain communities at certain historical periods. And she argues that:

> Out-law genres renegotiate the relationship between personal identity and the world, between personal and social history. Here, narrative inventions are tied to a struggle for cultural survival ra-ther than purely aesthetic experimentation or individual expres-sion. (Kaplan 1998: 212)

Interpreting the conception of resistance, Kaplan (1998) suggests that the resistance necessitates itself from historical accounts, and counter-genre will emerge within asymmetrical accounts of power relations. Post-colonial theorists address challenging questions about the kinds of alternative iden-

tities that the colonized subject introduces, writing and speaking from a Western established genre and before a Western established model of identity. Sau-Ling Cynthia Wong (1998), on the other hand, theorizes the immigrant autobiography, arguing on the relational subjectivity model in autobiography theory. She argues that the relational subjectivity model comparing and contrasting the male and female writings of autobiography, the major difference is defined by the dialectic of relational as opposed to individual. In other words, female subjectivity is determined as relational and the male subjectivity as constituted by individuality. Thus, the opposition in the native and the Western withholds the same difference grid as the female and male oppositions. Wong asks if the native's writing is positioned as relational, then the native woman's writing should be regarded as doubly relational; like if woman to man, is as native is to Western, then women are erased in the second relational model. And through she draws attention to the reductionist models of autobiography criticism in which female subjectivity in immigrant autobiography become unexplainable, she suggests that immigrant autobiography is subject to change parallel to the change in the immigrant's experience. By questioning the methodology of Western established autobiography criticsm, she claims that the model is rather a universal and Eurocentric one, and according to Wong, should be taken within these very contexts of historicity and politics of location. Wong suggests a model of an intertextual one that immigrant autobiography is embedded in their own histories, discourses and subjectivities, rather fixing their voice.

> Rather than seeking totalizing system in which autobiographers speak from a priori fixed positions and follow a finite set of trajectories. I believe it is less confining and more productive to con-

ceive of multiple, provisional axes of organization: different salient features are revealed when an autobiography is read with different intertexts. (Wong 1998: 308)

Kaplan (1998) suggests that new strategies of writing and reading should be applied for autobiographical narratives and the discipline where the 'law of genre' is subject to change to correspond with the change towards transnational and contemporary postcolonial times. Defining resistance literature as the marginalized of the canon, products of political conflicts between Western imperialist culture, and non-Western resistant movements, thus she states that resistance literature blurs and complicates the boundaries of "many of elite literature's laws" (Kaplan 1998:209) in this way. Like the superiority of individuality, chronological ordering and testimonality as formal discourse are redefined by the canon of resistant autobiographies. Furthermore, Kaplan elaborates the role of the resistant autobiographies as following;

This view of Third World women's writing as dynamic and synthetic unravels the polar opposition between Western feminism and non-Western women. Harlow deconstructs the gender-specific modernity of Western feminism as well as the monolithic, anti-modern nationalism of non-Western women to propose transnational affiliations among liberation movements. (Kaplan 1998: 209)

Deconstructing the nostalgia of fieldworker and the 'other', Kaplan (1998) notes resistant autobiographies redefine the essentialist myths of authorship and identity. The transnational condition of this literature, she notes in the production, circulation and reception complicates this relation of the other to Western discourse. Furthermore, she suggests that "feminists who alert to power dynamics in identity politics will find in resistance literature

and out-law genres useful models of multiracial, multinational, multiethnic, and polysexual struggle" (Kaplan 1998: 211). In a similar account, by the changing conceptions of the genre of autobiography within the global socio-political context, Francoise Lionnet (2001) states:

> If most theorists and literary critics acknowledge the social and disciplinary changes that have taken place in the last 20 years, it should also behoove scholars of autobiography to be attuned to new forms of self-presentation, to recognize that the field has come into its own, and that it has been reshaped by the intellectual and cultural changes brought about by multiculturalism, feminism, and theories of hybridity. (Lionnet 2001: 308)

Among the new politics, autobiographical narratives from other parts of the world have taken recognition, and have been situated in counter-canons, complicating the traditional formal elements of the genre itself. As we discussed earlier, by the advent of post-colonial and post-modernism studies, the autobiography theory has taken a more global account with the inclusion of different subject positions in the emergence of new identities. Within these politics, non-Western women's autobiography and its criticism are two-fold, speaking and writing from a Western established genre, Eurocentric approaches to immigrant autobiography on one hand and Western feminist theories on female subjectivity on the other. And thus, this political positioning of non-Western narratives takes them to global level with their articulation of their local politics. As we have noted earlier, and as Hall (2002) suggested, the native can only speak of its local culture, and as Minh-ha (2002) noted, the minority speaks only by her otherness. Among these dichotomies we need to articulate a transnational subject, and most importantly, works that imagine and construct a global audience. The poli-

tics of self-representation for minorities have gone beyond their otherness, beyond their local culture; they speak within the space of identity politics of a more fluid space of nation, culture and identity. If we look closely to the parameters of production and distribution-as Shohat (2002) notes that non-Western works should be taken as a transnational activity-we see that contemporary self-representation while complicating the traditional formal elements of the genre; they also construct an audience/reader on a global account.

2.3. GENDER, NATION, AND 'THIRD WORLDIST' FILMS

In this section, the aim is to draw a theoretical framework of women's documentary filmmaking from its emergence in the 1970s to the coming of Third Worldist works. The 1970s tradition of re-representations of women and re-writing of women's history in constructing alternative discourse and narrative to the conventions of society will be examined in relation to questions of gender. Further articulation of the theories discussed in the identity section aims to understand the political positioning of Third Worldist works by women, when gender and minority question is raised simultaneously. Third Worldist films by women, in terms of their emergence will be discussed in reference to the feminist movements and earlier films of women in the 1970s in constructing and negotiating discourses of nation and gender. Furthermore, Third Worldist films will be questioned in terms of bringing alternative discourses to Western narratives of the Third World standing in a political space between nations, between Western and Eastern, where questions of nation/race/gender are at stake.

We will first start with a short review of women's documentary filmmaking and its close relationship with women's movement from the beginnings of the 1970s. We will examine its politics in terms of the social movements of the era, and the techniques in establishing innovative styles in the history of documentary. As Patricia Erens elaborates, the major aim of the earlier documentaries by women is to raise consciousness and trigger change in society. she states that "in documenting the lives of ordinary women, the films emphasized a message that would later echo through much feminist writing: the personal is political" (Erens 1988:556).

1970's and the feminist movements had changed society in many ways; women gained a voice and found ways to express themselves. According to Elssaeser (1989), through the 'Frauenfilm', as he elaborates in his book *New German Cinema*, rather than staging heroic and distant individuals, women had put their bodies, and all that is personal, in order to acquire the very politics of identity. By criticizing the mainstream models, they had changed and exceeded the previously established medium. So, in a way, it is the combination of theory and practice, in their works, utilizing conventional models, they criticize the conventions, and exceed the conventional medium. As he states "their films, when dealing with experiences specific to women but also with social problems in generally, combined a sense of urgency with strategies that aimed at solidarity through self-representation" (Elsaesser 1989:184). Besides the women already working in the industry gaining a space to express through their own voices in a male dominated industry, a group from the women's movement with the aim to raise con-

sciousness and bring social change led to feminist filmmaking in the 1970s. Film portraits from the era, documenting the lives of ordinary women, and women's issues, played a major part in remaking the women's image, by re-representation. In situating the autobiographical documentaries of the movement in the personal, Erens (1988) states that "as film portraits developed, several filmmakers began to use cinema as a means of examining their own lives and relationships, replacing the traditional journal, diary, essay or novel" (Erens 1988:557). Films with major themes of women's history have brought innovative styles in the means of ideology and genre; culminating with the cinema verite technique and exploring alternatives, with a historical approach, these films aimed at documenting the women's struggle to gain their rights. With direct interviews, a narrator, and collected archive materials, these films were to portrait with reconstructing history from women's perspective.

Ann Kaplan (1988) claims that the women's filmmaking must be counter filmmaking, without utilizing the strategies and techniques already established by the dominant filmmaking. Erens (1988) defines the major aspect of these counterhistories by women that they "focusing on little-remembered events, the filmmakers were putting women back into history, creating a woman's history, and making connections with contemporary feminist activities" (Erens 1988:558). Finally, feminist film criticism has raised questions concerning the medium itself, and the cinema verite technique that is utilized in women's documentaries in the means of spectatorship and the message it aims. The films were potentially problematic, as discussed

by feminist critics, in that the personal experience represented construct a discourse of a universal woman "with its presumption of unmediated truth- a presumption that may actually mislead viewers by implying that the person or situation portrayed is representative of the people or circumstances being discussed" (Erens 1988:560). Questions that were raised led to experimental documentary making by women that implement alternative forms and techniques. In addition to innovative techniques that question the medium itself, alternative means of exhibition and distribution also played a major role in women's documentary filmmaking.

Bill Nichols (1988), in his work *The Voice of Documentary*, theorizes on the elements of voice in documentary from an ideological aspect. He defines the innovative style of the experimental documentary making by women as:

> These new self-reflexive documentaries mix observational passages with interviews, the voice-over of the filmmaker with intertitles, making patently clear what has been implicit all along: documentaries were always forms of re-presentation, never clear windows onto reality; the filmmaker was always a participant-witness and an active fabricator of meaning, a producer of cinematic discourse rather than a neutral or all-knowing reporter of the way things truly are. (Nichols 1988:49)

By emphasizing on the importance of interviews in constructing counterhistories in the women's documentaries, Nichols states "interviews diffuse authority. A gap remains between the voice of a social actor recruited to the film and the voice of the film" (Nichols 1988:55), as compared to the use of voice-over narration that creates the problematic of "authoritative omniscience or didactic reductionism" (Nichols 1988:56).

> We are encouraged to believe that these voices carry less the authority of historical judgment than that of personal testimony- they are, after all, the words apparently ordinary women remembering the past. As in many films that advance issues raised by the women's movement, there is an emphasis on individual but politically significant experience. (Nichols 1988:54)

On the other hand, Third World feminism and women's filmmaking have taken a different path from the movements in the West, in terms of their emergence and ideology. Ella Shohat in her article, *Post-Third Worldist Culture: Gender, Nation and the Cinema*, defines their political and ideological positioning as following:

> Challenging white feminist film theory and practice that emerged in a major way in the 1970s in first World metropolises, post Third Wordlist feminist works have refused a Eurocentric universalizing of 'womanhood' and even of 'feminism'. (Shohat 2006:40)

Women of color have indeed followed a very different pattern from the expected (rather than generated from Western feminism) due to the very reason of their different political positioning in the world's hegemonic order. Shohat (2006) elaborates that the tradition of cinematic counter-telling of the Third World where also women films collaborated, emerges within the political atmosphere of the post-war collapse of the European Empires and the establishment of independent nation-states. As she states:

> In the face of Eurocentric historicizing, the Third World and its diasporas in the First World have rewritten their own histories, taken control over their own images, spoken in their own voices, reclaiming and reaccentuating colonialism and its ramifications in the present in a vast project of remapping and renaming. (Shohat 2006:39)

In the construction of discourse by women in Third World films, in earlier stages, revolution was hand in hand for the women to gain power. Therefore, feminist struggles find their place while anticipating Eurocentric feminism on one hand and not engaging in the discourse of global sisterhood of Western feminism within anticolonialist and antiracist movements. On the other hand, anticolonial movements where women were engaged in the revolution have challenged the discourse of the Third World's nationality. As Shahot states "Third World filmmakers (men and women) have been forced to engage in the question national precisely because they lack the taken-for-granted power available to first World nation states" (Shohat 2006:43). Arguing on the earlier films, she claims that "gender contradictions have been subordinated to anticolonial struggle: women were expected to wait their turn" (Shohat 2006:45). Standing at the very core of the nation/race/gender question, Third World feminists, while contributing to the discourse of anticolonial resistance, have also theorized the difference of men and women concerning colonialism and national resistance. Comparing the films of the 1990s, and the early Third Worldist films, Shohat claims that earlier films engaging in the revolutionary aspects of these counter-narratives of the Third World was articulated with the discourse of anticolonialism. On the other hand, Post Third Worldist films of the 1990s stand as a "simultaneous critique both of Third-Worldist anticolonial nationalism and of First-World Eurocentric feminism" (Shohat 2006:40). In other words, women's counterhistories of Third World reflect different patterns, from Western feminism and anticolonial movements, in terms of constructing resistive discourses both within and outside.

According to Shohat (2006), the question of national is crucial to the Third World women's films. Standing between anti-colonial nationalism and Euro-centric feminism, and within these simultaneous critiques, Post-Third Worldist films engage in conflicting discourses within local and global. Therefore we need "to contextualize feminist work in national/racial discourses locally and globally inscribed within multiple oppressions and resistances" (Shohat 2006:40), in order to understand the geopolitical positioning of post Third Worldist discourse produced by women's films. As Shohat argues, while standing in a fluid space, feminist struggles of the Third World and the contemporary films by women, as much as they challenge the anticolonial nationlists and the discourse of nation, also deconstruct the familiar standing of nation as a 'unified entity', "so as to articulate a contextualized history of women in specific geographies of identity" (Shohat 2006:40).

In their article, *Transnational Documentaries: A Manifesto*, John Hess and Patricia R. Zimmerman (2006) also make a similar point regarding the new understanding of the notion of nation. Comparing the earlier revisionist documentaries of the 1970s with contemporary works today, they argue that they "reassume the nation as a unified entity" (Hess&Zimmerman 2006:104), and they say "these films dive into a hidden area of repressed history, such as that of gays, women of labor, with the goal of widening and expanding the concept of nation" (ibid.). Articulating the notion of nation within their argument on transnational documentaries and their political positioning in their manifesto, they ground their theory on the re-definition of nation. The 1970s revisionist documentaries, according to Hess and Zim-

merman, followed the tradition of John Grierson, which embeds the idea of nation as a unified entity. And Grierson project challenges identification through emotional bonding with a 'utopian community' represented, which prioritizes the notion of spectatorship, finally challenging the concept of nation. As they further elaborate:

> We can find another corollary to the assumption in 1970s and 1980s revisionist documentary that the nation might be reformed by repositioning spectatorship. These films support national reformation by implicitly working with the idea that identification with the text and the characters in the text is a good thing, that the spectator occupies a valuable position. (Hess&Zimmerman 2006:104)

In order to situate the notion of 'transnational', Hess and Zimmerman define the term within the context of political documentary practice with 'utopian projection' to become as redefined with the emergence of the new political globe that the World is in now. As they argue, the crucial relationship between the political documentary practice and the nation has taken a new positioning in the 'post-cold war era' and within 'transnationalized cultural economy', introducing redefinitons of nation on a more fluid ground, rather than the fixed definition of nation as 'us versus them'. (Hess&Zimmerman 2006:102) The manifesto suggests for the re-definition of nation instead of taking the notion as an essentialist given, the transnational documentaries, they argue, blurs the discourse of dialectics as the First World and the Third World through new conceptualizations of nation.

> Transnational documentaries reclaim and rehabilitate modes from these older films-tracing interactions between and around cultures; performing histories; imagining new subjectivities and alliances; mapping conflicts as multidimensional: traversing fantasies and material limits, cultures and political economies; formu-

lating new analytics; and locating new emancipatory places.
(Hess&Zimmerman 2006:102)

With regard to these redefinitions, Shohat argues that the texts to be read are never 'purely feminist' or 'purely nationalist' (Shohat 2006:53); they stand on this slippery ground of representation introducing new forms of resistance, plurazing the notion of nation. Analyzing the formal elements of contemporary works of Third Worldist films, Shohat, suggests that they complicate the conventional boundaries of personal and communal, documentary and fiction, biographic and ethnographic. On a similar account, Mine Eren, with regard to the documentary *I Am My Mother's Daughter,* emphasizes the continuity in shifts between the geographies of Germany and Turkey, questioning the very idea of national identity by the transitionality theme in the film. Eren argues that the oral histories of the women generations in the film question the national identity as unified and coherent representing a multi-layered narration.

In the articulation of the chapters on identity politics and documentary practice, it has been briefly studied how Third World difference is constructed, and where the Third Worldist films stand now in comparison to this construction. In other words Third Worldist films complicating this construction through the re-articulation of nation, gender and the Third World difference have been contextualized. In other words, there are two aspects to our film analysis; the first one is the construction of Third World difference, from a view of globalism, Eurocentrism, or Western feminism. The second one concerns that the usual meaning of nation and gender issues

have been complicated through the very political standing of transnational identities. At this point we need to further define two important terms or concepts crucial to this study; one is what do we mean by Third Worldist films, and the second is how we articulate the term transnational in this study. But, before that we need to focus on the specific relation between nation and diaspora with regard to micropolitics of Turkish immigrants living in Germany.

Andreas Huyssen's (2003) work on the relation between nation and diaspora will be referred where he elaborates diaspora memory. He calls attention to the fact that there had never been a colonized and colonialist relation between Turkey and Germany, thus the politics of immigrant culture that concern identity, nation, and ethnicity can not be situated by the politics of postcolonial discourse.

> Germans and Turks are not historically bound by a colonial relationship which would give them something like a shared history…There was never a colonial relation between Germany and Turkey, which rules out a straight postcolonial approach to Turkish-German literature. (Huyssen 2003:155)

Discussing the changing conception of nation, nationality, and nationhood, and the very relation between diaspora and nation within the global discourses and changing geopolitics, Huyssen offers an alternative view and states that "one may even suggest that whole nations are becoming diasporic in relation to their past under the pressures of global media and the maelstrom of the postnational" (Huyssen 2003:158). It is the political atmosphere, he argues, that the current international conflicting forces be-

tween the West and the Muslim world inevitably end up in the discourse of universal human rights in challenging the idea and the practice of the domination of the civilization among other parts of the World, thus generating a conflicting relation between the 'transnational human rights activism', and the national or local discourses. Defining the politics of nation discourse and its crucial relation within diaspora, Huyssen suggests, "often enough it is precisely the national mechanism of exclusion by a majority culture that generates and strengthens this diasporic counter-nationalism" (Huyssen 2003:150). Furthermore, with regard to these politics of the state of the minority culture, he argues that the diasporic culture is categorized as a homogeneous group perceived as threatened or victimized by the host culture.

Criticizing the traditional use of diaspora, one that is constructed around 'Heimat', loss and nostalgia, Huyssen claims that past becomes privileged in the notion of diaspora within cultural approaches, which is not the case for the second and third generations of Turkish immigrants. The major concern for new generations in the question of identity, according to Huyssen, is not about past, but it is more about the present, and the culture they live within. As he elaborates:

> The traditional understanding of diaspora as loss of homeland and desire to return itself becomes largely irrelevant for the second and third generations who, contrary to Senocak himself, are no longer conversant in language and culture of the country of their ancestors. Whether or not they were to describe themselves as diasporic subjects (which Senocak, I sense, will not do), the key problems lie in their relation to the national culture they live in rather than to the imaginary of roots in the culture of ancestors.

> It is primarily a problem of life in the present and the negotiation with the host culture. (Huyssen 2003:162)

Huyssen, defining the traditional use of diaspora and therefore culture and its relation to nation as reductionist, he argues that the emphasis on loss in the discourse of diasporic culture and nation constitutes dichotomies where the aim becomes to guard identities and borders. He states, thus, "the more national the surrounding culture becomes, the more will the migrant also be pushed towards issues of identity, ethnicity, and belonging" (Huyssen 2003:162). Therefore, he suggests for a change of conception in the use of diaspora, as parallel to the changing conceptions of the understanding of the nation and the national in the global senses, the notion of diaspora, with the changing conception, "one that denaturalizes its notions of memory and culture" (Huyssen 2003:151), where the relation between diaspora and nation should be redefined, and within themselves.

Revisiting the term transnational and how it relates to the question of nation and diaspora in Third Worldist films, we refer to Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden;

> The concept of transnationalism enables us to better understand the changing ways in which the contemporary world is being imagined by an increasing number of filmmakers across genres as a global system rather than as a collection of more or less autonomous nations. (Ezra&Rowden 2006:1)

Ezra and Rowden note that the transnational stands between the global and the local, and most attentively, stand as practices that complicate the definition of home, the concepts of belonging and immigration with the increase

in mobility, and transnationality of borders. Rather investing in the discourse of loss, they emphasize the mobility of the cultures, constructing a more global audience. As Huyssen (2003) argues, the traditional use of diaspora, which forms itself around home, and conventional understanding of nation and borders, is not enough to understand the experience of second and third generation Turks. This is primarily because they stand in a rather different relationship with the host culture and their local culture in comparison to their parents and grand parents, and due to the changing conceptions of nation and borders parallel to changes in economical and socio-political accounts that become more transnational than ever. Through these changing politics of nation and borders in a global account, and looking closer to the micro-politics of second and third generation minorities and their relation to their host culture, we see conflicting discourses cohabit in their autobiographical narratives. Within these changing conceptions, the traditional use of diaspora and nation is not adequate in understanding how it becomes a space of complicating the pre-constructed discourses in the narratives of new generations. Therefore, for our analysis, we are going to look from the point of conflicting discourses cohabiting in texts, and how they complicate the usual uses of diaspora and nation.

3. IDENTITY NEGOTIATIONS IN *I AM MY MOTHER'S DAUGHTER*

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter of the study, the film analysis will be undertaken by the articulation of the debates elaborated in the theoretical framework. The analysis is structured in four sections; in the first section, the main focus is to conceptualize the structure of the narrative in the means of the construction of the autobiographical subject in the film. After establishing a general framework on the aspects of the construction of the multiple/subject, in the second section, negotiations of gender identity in the film will be further discussed by these multiple subject positions, negotiating collective and individual. In the third section, the discourse of the film in re-appropriating Western discourses on Third World women will be analyzed. In the last section, the aim is to elaborate the discourse of the film in complicating the meaning of nation and diaspora through the analysis of the dialectic relation of the image and the text in the narrative of the film.

The director, Seyhan Derin, was born in 1969 in Caycuma, Zonguldak, to a rural family. When her father started work in Germany, in 1972, the whole family moved to Germany, where she grew up and took her film education. The autobiographical documentary *I Am My Mother's Daughter* is produced as Seyhan Derin's graduation project and as such is funded by her school, Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen in Munich. The film *I Am My Mother's*

Daughter is the story of three generations of women recounting the history of their immigration. As put by several critics and the director herself, the film goes beyond the guidelines of the funding and the journey between Turkey and Germany. The film is structured by the interviews done by Seyhan Derin with her three sisters, she interviews her mother, and her grandmother, with establishing shots from their everyday lives. The film starts with the director's journey with her mother from Germany to Turkey, to the family's village where Derin was born. Mother and daughter search for the familial story through recounting the past and the affects of the immigration from the perspective of the women of the family.

3.2 THE MULTI/SUBJECT AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE NARRATIVE

> …situated in a specific time and place, the autobiographical subject is in dialogue with her own processes and archives of memory. The past is not a static repository of experience but always engaged from a present moment, itself ever-changing. Moreover, the autobiographical subject is also inescapably in dialogue with the culturally marked differences that inflect the models of identity and underwrite the formation of autobiographical subjectivity. (Smith&Watson 2003:9)

The film, rewriting the diaspora narrative of the family through the interviews by Derin, presents us multi-view across generations. Thus, interviews hold a crucial position that will be elaborated further in the analysis. Through the role of the filmmaker, Derin, as both herself, narrating her own story, and as an interviewer narrating her mother's story, the film negotiates between biography and autobiography. In the interview on the production of the film by Angelica Fenner (2006), Derin indicates that interviews are a successful resolution to the problem of being both behind and in

front of the camera, as a director and as an autobiographical subject. Rachel Gabara (2003) on the analysis of African autobiographical documentary discusses the theories and counter-theories of the impossibility of the immigrant autobiographical film. First, Gabara argues in reference to individualistic approaches to autobiography by theorists like Georges Gusdorf and James Olney, that the autobiography can only be possible through the formation of the coherent subject. The individualism theories on autobiography further argue that only the political and social history of the West make it possible for the isolated being, and thus the coherent subject, to come into formation, making possible the autobiography as a genre. Within this context, Gabara asks by his analysis of the film *Allah Tantou* (1991), on the impossibility as a genre, when the coherent subject is not possible, in this African autobiography. And secondly, Gabara presents the discussions by Elizabeth Bruss (1976) and Phillipe Lejeune (1986) on the impossibility of filmic autobiography, and Gabara rephrases: "since the person behind the camera can never be at the same time the person in front of the camera, the narrating "I" of autobiographical writing can have no equivalent in film", and therefore the coherent subject (Gabara 2003:336). With regard to the impossibility of the translationality of the narrative autobiography and the film medium and the impossibility of the immigrant autobiography, Gabara analyzes the deconstructive elements of the immigrant filmic autobiography as following:

> With its material, visible split between director or filmer and actor or filmed self bemoaned by Bruss and Lejeune, troubles our conventional notions of coherent identity and provides us with new forms in which to explore and represent fragmented subjectivity. (Gabara 2003:337)

As noted earlier, through the discussion of theories of difference in theorizing female subjectivity in women's and immigrant autobiography, there is always a gap between the narrator 'I' and the narrated 'I', and the subject is constructed by the multiple positions, performing fragmented identities and subjectivities. Parallel to these discussions, in *I Am My Mother's Daughter*, we see multiple positionings of the subject, negotiating between biography and autobiography, through constructing herself as an autobiographical subject telling her own story, and recasting her mother's story. Going beyond the individual family story, the film negotiates between individual and collective, ethnography and biography through Derin's positioning as an interviewer. Through interviews on issues concerning marriage and women's labor, the film raises questions on gender inequality. These negotiations point to multiple layers of narrative, with multiple positionings of the autobiographical subject in the film. Further, we see the filmmaker as a director in the setting where she coaches the little girl (can be interpreted as the Derin's childhood) during the shooting of the fiction scenes; the director cuts into the diegesis. Thus the alienating gap, and the shifting roles of the subject throughout the narrative complicate the conventional autobiography and the individualistic conceptions of autobiography theory, positioning the spectator within the fragmented subjectivities.

The film presents us with an eclectic formation of genres and narratives. The interviews are crucial as analytical tools for the major structure of the narrative as well as the letters read by Derin and her father. The letters

play a major role in the narrative, in giving voice to multiple subjects and creating multiple subject positions. Contrary to conventional voice-over of traditional documentary, interviews, as Nichols (1988) states, play a major role in diffusing authority in the feminist documentaries of the 1970s. Though, as noted earlier through the discussions of Hess and Zimmerman (2006), feminist films of the 1970s following the Grierson Project, construct a utopian community through which the spectatorship's emotional bonding is emphasized, and as a result the 'nation' is challenged. On the other hand, Shohat (2002) argues that in Third Worldist films, contrary to the feminist documentaries of the 1970s, the meaning of nation is re-defined when the gender and minority questions are raised simultaneously. Within a parallel approach, interviews and the multi voice-over by letters in the film, stand as breaking the didactic narrative of the documentary, and further breaking identification through multiple subject positions. As Mennel further states regarding the multi-voice-over in *I Am My Mother's Daughter*: "meaning emerges from multiple positions instead of being imposed by one voice, as in traditional documentaries" (Mennel 2002:55).

The film begins by looking through the family album while Derin's nephew reads a letter in Derin's apartment, written by Derin for his father. the camera fades to the passport photograph, and Derin's voice-over in reading the letter for his father. The letters, addressing the members of the family, establishes the individual family history, and progresses through the photographs from the family album and the scenes where the family album is looked and talked upon. In this sense, the dialogic structure of the docu-

mentary establishes the views across generations and across cultures, revealing the diaspora narrative from an individual family history towards a cultural experience. As noted by Caren Kaplan (1998) on resistant autobiographies, the autobiography space becomes very political, where it blends the personal and the cultural, in-between the individual's and the social history. By using this approach, the dialogic structure of the film will be examined throughout the analysis, as a context through which gender, diaspora, nation and the Third World difference are re-appropriated and re-negotiated.

3.3 NEGOTIATING GENDER IDENTITY, BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE

On analysis of the aspect of the film's articulation of the individual and the collective identity, standing between biography and ethnography- but still complicating the boundaries of conventional ethnographic narrative- is crucial in understanding the construction of gendered identity. Through the film's narrative, the emphasis on everyday life women's work, and on social networks such, as marriage and kinship structures are reminiscent of earlier feminist films of the 1970s. But on the other hand, this creates a distinction between situating the immigrant experience and the woman in its socio-cultural context and by its emphasis on locality through which the women are produced and as producers of in the construction of gender identity. As argued earlier, early feminist theory on autobiographical narratives of women was criticized for its essentialist approaches which excludes the specificity of location and history in their models. In this sense, the film's narrative

re-negotiates the relation between individual and collective identity. Furthermore, the film complicates the conventions of ethnography; blending the individual and the collective, it re-negotiates the relation within the mythical conceptions of the ethnographer and her 'other' and the essentialist myths of authorship and identity.

As noted earlier, through the discussions of Friedman (1998) on the autobiographical acts of women, group identity or shared identity is crucial in understanding the construction of gendered identity. Further, the individual identity intersects with community identity in the formation of gender identity, where the women are defined by the frames of the cultural institutions of the social within a double-consciousness. Friedman defines this double-consciousness as "the self as culturally defined and the self as different from cultural prescription" (Friedman 1998:76). Parallel to these discussions, we need to consider the emphasis on the cultural institution of marriage in the film. Conventional ethnographic shots are established, through an anonymous wedding scene in the village, which further progresses the theme of marriage. Through interviews conducted by Derin with her mother, with her sisters in a casual gathering, and her 'sisters' in the village the marriage institution is further questioned. By providing multiple voices, the conception of marriage is questioned by not creating essentialist dichotomies between geographies, but with patterns of intersecting and diverging thoughts on the myths of the society; it is through this that we see a cross-cultural construction of collectivity discourse. By the thematic establishment of marriage in the narrative, the film complicates the conventions of docu-

mentary by standing between personal and collective, ethnographic and biographic, and on the other hand constructs a discourse of collective identity through a "gender specific framework" (Eren 2003:44).

As emphasized by Derin in the beginning of the film, through its emphasis on the inequality of gender roles the film goes beyond a journey between Germany and Turkey and beyond the questions of diaspora and home constructed in conventional diaspora films. Through the oral history of her mother, the film re-tells the diaspora history by situating her mother's diasporic experience within a socio-historical context by the emphasis on locality that shapes the experience of the women living in a hierarchical world of the patriarchy. Within this socio-cultural context, the film goes beyond the autobiographical or biographical narratives, and focuses on a collective gender identity. Further, the interviews with the women in the family's home village, on structures of kinship, women's work, arranged marriages are crucial in understanding the construction of collective gender identity. Through these testimonials, the experience of the village women, and the gender roles are re-appropriated by redefining them in their social networks and the politics of the locality, without the victimization of the rural women. As it is argued earlier, the Western essentialist discourse constructs the Third World women by their subordination within a homogenous cultural group isolated from their specificity of location and history. The filmmaker as subject standing by the pre-constructed discourses, the film re-appropriates the Western representations of the victimized 'other' through the politics within their local, social and historic specificities.

3.3 THE RE-APPROPRIATION OF 'SILENCE'

> Within the context of women's speech, silence has many faces. Like the veiling of women, silence can only be subversive when it frees itself from the male-defined context of absence, lack and fear as feminine territories. On the one hand, we face the danger of inscribing femininity as absence, as lack, and as blank in rejecting the importance of the act of enunciation. On the other hand, we understand the necessity of placing women on the side of negativity and of working in undertones, for example, in our attempts at undermining patriarchal systems of values. Silence is so commonly set in opposition with speech. Silence as a will not to say or a will to unsay and as a language of its own has barely been explored. (Minh-ha 2002: 416)

In Minh-ha's discussion (2002)of the construction of Third World difference and the Third World women, she notes that the veil, silence and subjectivity are the concepts that are held as the practices of difference, to define dominance and subordination of Third World women. But she argues in opposition to the concepts attributed by Western discourse to the Third World women as an indication of subordination of the women, like veiling, and unveiling represents liberation. Minh-ha deconstructs the conventional dichotomies of the Western discourse, arguing that veiling can also be as liberating as unveiling, depending on the context of the act. Unveiling can be taken as a discourse of resistant if it is read through its multiple meanings rather than through the essentialist dichotomies of the Western discourse. Within this context, the film re-appropriates the notion of silence that is usually attributed to the Third World women by Western discourse in representing the subordination of women. The saying of 'I don't know, you know the best' underlined throughout the film by the women in the family is re-appropriated and resolved as a means to a positive outcome, as an act of resistance and survival, as also noted by Eren. The re-appropriation of si-

lence as a positive outcome is narrated by the changing perception of Derin on her mother that progresses as a major theme through the film. Derin noted in her interview by Fenner (2006) states on the structure of the narrative:

> So even though I had a structure during the actual shooting, I was supposed to just forget it and go forward. The first question he asked me in the cutting room was, "Did you discover anything? And what is it that you've discovered?" And I realized that I could summarize in one sentence what I had discovered: my mother is not who I had previously perceived her to be. And we built the whole film around that.

In the beginning of the journey in the village, in Derin's voice-over, she tells her wish to know more about her mother and her personal history, which she has never explored. Derin tells about her wish to better know what her mother goes through indicating that which Derin could not accept for herself. By these testimonials, Derin sheds light on the patriarchal hierarchy that her mother experiences. Through the narrative, Derin tells how her perception has been changed after the journey they have gone through. Further, the saying of 'I don't know, you know the best' underlined throughout the film by Derin's mother, is attributed to non-Western women's subordination within a cultural category. Throughout the film's narrative, the concept is re-appropriated within local politics as a positive term, through the emphasis on its function as a survival artifact, rather than a cultural bearing. The ideology of the film therefore stands by the negotiations between the global and the local politics, as a resistive act both within and outside the locality- by a resistive act against the hierarchical structure

of the patriarchy embedded in local politics, and by a global account in re-appropriating the Turkish rural woman, in constructing a global audience.

3.4 THE FAMILY ALBUM, NEGOTIATING THE PERSONAL AND COL-LECTIVE MEMORY

> In different ways interweave family stories with photographs from family albums and historical and familial documents or memorabilia to disrupt essentialist notions of identity. In such texts, photographs, rather than being stable visual markers of ethnic or racial identities, unsettle the fixedness of family history by depicting multiple, disparate, even contradictory versions of it. (Smith&Watson 2003:26)

By this rewriting of women's history of diaspora from a female perspective to uncover a lost history, the film plays between personal and collective memory through the archive images from personal and collective histories negotiating between public and private images. Therefore, it is important to look at the relationship between the images from archives of personal/collective album with the filmic text in order to understand the negotiation of the meaning of nation and disapora. The relationship between the filmic text and the images acts as a means to the deconstruction of historical discourses, through a re-contextualization of the conventional meanings. Further, the discourse of difference that acted upon as arbitrary; the dialectic fixed categories of identity are re-defined. As Mine Eren (2003) suggests, regarding the negotiation between the memory of personal and collective in the film: "the crosscutting of personal memory and history suggest a female subjectivity as Derin reconstructs the theme of migration from her perspective within fictional narrative" (Eren 2003:47). With regard

to the relationship between the text and image in the film, it is crucial to understand the negotiations between personal/collective in the sense of making the ideologies visible and readable. In the first scene of the film, we see the passport photograph of the mother and her four daughters, crossed over, connoting the borders and the body crossings. The text inscribed on the passport image is Derin's voice-over reading the letter addressing her father about the very experience of the affects of the immigration on the whole family with regret and reproach. The contradictory relationship between the image and the text is further emphasized by the articulation of the archive footage showing scenes from when the first Turkish workers arrived in Germany. This very contradictory relation between the images from the collective memory and the filmic text complicates the notion of the promised land, and further makes the ideologies of the images readable.

Smith and Watson, referring to this dialectical relation, state "at particular historical moments the opposition of image and text (or word) inscribes ideological forces that make certain differences readable and significant" (Smith&Watson 2003:26). Further archive footage of the modernization of the Turkish woman with Kemalist revolutions, are contrasted with present images of the Turkish women from rural and urban areas. Eren argues that through this dialectical relation the aim is to construct a meaning that emphasizes the failure of the women's modernization. Furthermore, it complicates the ideology of nation's official memory in representing the essentialist image of the modern Turkish woman and its constructedness. As Smith

and Watson elaborate this relation between personal and communal memory in re-negotiating the constructed ideology, they state:

> …at the contextual interface of documentary or ethnographic practice, a dynamic relay between personal and communal memory reconfigures the relationship of forms of communal memory and reworks the nation's official memory of a group as devalued or invisible. (Smith&Watson 2003:28)

In the use of the photographs and archive footage, the film plays between the personal and the collective, questioning the ideology of the representations that images withhold as a ground where meanings are negotiated. As Mennel (2002) suggests, the difficulty of the spectator side in positioning the time and place between the two geographies, Germany and Turkey juxtaposes the ambiguity of the diasporic memory. Furthermore, she notes that the emphasis on mobility by the transitionality of the borders hints at the ambiguous meaning of borders, belonging and home, and blurs the conventional readings of diaspora and nation. Furthermore, within this context of negotiating between personal and nation's official memory in re-writing the diaspora history, the film juxtaposes the constructedness of the notion of nation as a fixed category.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In this part of the study, the aim is to sum up and discuss the findings by the film analysis, the specificity of the approaches of the study, and to elaborate further approaches for future research.

The major purpose of the study has been to analyze a Turkish-German autobiographical documentary from a gender perspective to understand the politics of self-representation in diaspora narratives. Seyhan Derin's *I Am My Mother's Daughter* is taken as subject of analysis for that the autobiographical site provides a ground for understanding the representation of gender identity in the means of the construction of female subjectivity. And further diaspora narratives provide a ground for understanding the politics of identity in relation to questions on culture, nation, and ethnicity.

This study has been undertaken first to see how the construction of diasporic gender identity in the film re-negotiates the Western discourses on Third World difference. And secondly, with the aim to contribute to the recent studies on contemporary Turkish-German cinema from a gender perspective to raise discussion on newly emerging minority women's films in the politics of autobiographical representation.

In analyzing *I Am My Mother's Daughter*, the main aim has been to see how the film re-negotiates the essentialist representations of the Third World women constructed by Western discourses, and besides how the film re-

defines the meanings of nation in crucial to diaspora narratives from women's perspective. As well as one major focus of the analysis has been on how the film re-defines the Western traditions of autobiography and documentary in constructing the subject and the female subjectivity.

By this framework, in the light of the discussions, the analysis offers that the film interplays between forms of autobiography, biography and ethnography in re-defining the traditional narratives of documentary and autobiography. Thus the performance of multiple subjects in the forming of identity re-defines the individualistic conceptions of subject and further re-elaborates the didactic narration of voice-over in traditional documentary.

In this context, the film negotiates between personal and collective, memory and history of communal and personal, ethnographic and biographical. As a major cinematic formulation, the dialogic structure of the film with multi-voice-over, the meaning is created by multiple-subject positions. Within these fragmented subjectivities, the ideologies that are invisible become readable and open to negotiating meanings; the film re-negotiates the meanings of nation and diaspora calling into question the nation's official history by blending the collective memory and the individual diaspora history of Derin family.

The film finally, plays between ethnography, biography and autobiography in the means of constructing collective gender identity departing from the individual story of Seyhan Derin and her mother. The construction of collec-

tive gender identity in *I Am My Mother's Daughter* is crucial in the re-telling of diapora story from women's perspective; the narrative of the film re-locates the local politics and thus through re-appropriates the representation of the victimized Third World women.

In finalizing the discussions, the film stands by the interplay of local and global politics, and therefore, it is crucial to look at minority women's auto-biographical narratives from a gender perspective on one hand, and on the other hand, in reference to global discourses constructed on Third World in further understanding of the politics of identity in diaspora narratives. Therefore, the pre-constructed theories on Third World narratives, the Third World subject and subjectivity have been vital in making analysis on the film in revealing the multi-layered and contradictory discourses on gender and nation.

For further research, it is crucial to take comparative analysis on autobio-graphical films by Turkish-German directors of men and women in order to locate 'difference' and theorize female subjectivity constructed in the texts in reference to the emergence of contemporary Turkish-German cinema. On another basis, the cross-cultural comparative analysis on minority women's filmmaking is further important in understanding the identity politics with regard to the specificity of location and history.

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