

Panel II. (Discussant: Banu Gökariksel)

- *Crossing Borders in Translation: Feminist Solidarity in the Making*
Emek Ergun, Global Studies, UNC Charlotte
- *Temporal Borders and Permanent Liminalities: Viewing the first century of the Islamic-Byzantine Frontier as a chronological inflection point*
Asa Eger, Department of History, UNC Greensboro
- *Visualizing violence: masculinity and politics of race and death in Afghan/istani visual arts under military occupation*
Paniz Musawi Natanzi, Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies, Duke University

Crossing Borders in Translation: Feminist Solidarity in the Making

Emek Ergun, Global Studies, UNC Charlotte

Feminist texts constantly cross borders in translation, activating various political connections and transformations on their multidirectional routes across the globe. Yet, the specifics of such global mobilities and the impact of those translational encounters have not received much scholarly attention in feminist studies or translation studies. In her talk, Emek Ergun will discuss the political role of translation in facilitating global feminist solidarities by drawing on her reception studies that explored the transatlantic journey of Hanne Blank's *Virgin: The Untouched History* (2007) via her feminist translation – a popular feminist book that demystified the man-made histories of virginity in the context of western geographies. Comparing the US and Turkey, two unevenly positioned geographies with different virginity regimes and feminist legacies, Ergun's talk will first briefly reveal how a western feminist book was strategically mobilized to unsettle Turkey's virginity codes. Then, by answering the hypothetical question, "What if the textual travel under question were vice versa, from the east to the west?", she will provide some political lessons on how to build transnational feminist solidarities in a world of profoundly hierarchical cross-border relations and consider the political work that lies ahead of us to create a truly egalitarian and democratic global economy of translation, circulation, reception, and feminist dissent.

Frontiers as Ecological Process of Interaction: The Case of the Islamic-Byzantine Frontier

Asa Eger, Department of History, UNC Greensboro

The traditional view of the Islamic-Byzantine frontier is of a no-man's land ravaged by annual raiding from both Muslim and Christian armies. This entrenched view is a literary topos that is not reflected from the archaeological evidence. Drawing evidence from surveys and excavations across the frontier, it becomes clear that the frontier was a settled one. The landscape was criss-crossed with roads connecting settlements, large cities and urban centers, small villages, farms, monasteries, pastoral camps, and waystations. Agricultural estates and irrigation projects, both caliphal and locally sponsored, appeared as new constructions as early as the late seventh century on the Islamic thughur. In the late seventh / early eighth century new settlements indicating gradual sedentarization and increased revitalization in commerce were founded including a system of waystations linking the Abbasid and Byzantine frontiers. Environmental changes and population shifts led certain communities to adapt to new ways of

life in seemingly difficult terrains. In this settled frontier, traditional holy war between Byzantines and Muslims was but one interaction in a more complicated arena. Here settled and nomadic groups competed for resources with one another while central states attempted to control these peripheral groups. In this dynamic and settled landscape a wider range of exchanges took place between diplomats and prisoners, merchants and artists, pilgrims and religious figures. The frontier, rather than a static space, becomes a dynamic process of interaction its inhabitants and each other, and its inhabitants and its ecology.

Visualizing violence: masculinity and politics of race and death in Afghan/istani visual arts under military occupation

Paniz Natanzi, Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies, Duke University

This paper situates the oral and visual archives of the male Afghan/istani visual artists Mohammad Sabir and Mohsin Taasha examining their art labor between 2016 and 2019 and queries how the spatialization of racialized bodies, political violence and visual arts during the military occupation manifested in West Kabul and informed Hazara male artists' engagements with social, political and corporal life and death as well as with community-, nation- and international alliance-building. Afghan/istani describes here the artists' ambiguity in oral and visual archives as they question statist and raced interpellations as well as pinpoint and commemorate Hazara grief, loss and suffering in their work. I draw on semi-structured interviews conducted in 2016 in Kabul and Lahore, informal oral and visual archives gathered in West and South Asia until 2019 and feminist geopolitics and decolonial and Marxist theory. Situating Taasha and Sabir's embodied experiences, their art practice, exhibition, performance and the circulation of their work, I investigate how art producing masculinities de-centre gender while reflecting in their aesthetic, performative and curatorial art practice on embodied and communal experiences of political violence and war. I argue that thematically, symbolically and spatially both artists at times construct, affirm or destabilize raced border ecologies in West Kabul under the US-led NATO military occupation and a nominally sovereign national government. At the same time, the men's embodied and affective knowledge-producing labor on social, political and corporal life and death in the field of contemporary arts is subject of monetary and non-monetary structures of value-creation asserted throughout the years by different actors in the Hazara community in West Kabul and by cultural institutes, embassies and organizations from occupying states in the war mode of neoliberal capitalism.