

**UNDERSTANDING THE LOCALIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL
NORMS: WOMEN’S HUMAN RIGHTS NORMS IN TURKEY**



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ABSTRACT

UNDERSTANDING THE LOCALIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL NORMS: WOMEN’S HUMAN RIGHTS NORMS IN TURKEY

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This study explores the norm localization dynamics and processes in order to better understand how international norms diffuse and take root in diverse local socio-cultural contexts. While the mainstream norm scholarship in International Relations has extensively studied the diffusion dynamics at the international and state levels, it has neglected the distinct dynamics of local contexts and the agency of local norm entrepreneurs in norm diffusion. However, localization is vital for norm diffusion because the creation of new norms and the states’ socialization are necessary but not sufficient for norm internalization and practice at the local level. For successful norm diffusion, international norms must resonate at the local level. Focusing on the diffusion of women’s human rights norms, this study investigates the norm localization in the context of combating violence against women. Utilizing data

derived from the in-depth-interviews, participant observation and fieldwork, this study investigates the norm localization in two socio-culturally distinct localities (i.e. Trabzon and Antakya) in Turkey. Findings reveal that localizers are key to successful norm diffusion. Norm localizers appropriate the international norms and then act as active intermediaries between the global, national and local levels. Moreover, localization is not an automatic or smooth process, but a conflictual one. Rather than being passive receivers of international norms, localizers reinterpret and translate norms to make them more resonant, understandable and effectively usable in their particular localities. They target strategic local groups as objects of norm diffusion, and develop several tactics in translating abstract international norms into the local context and practice.

Keywords: Norm Diffusion, Norm Localization, Violence against Women, Antakya, Trabzon

ÖZ

ULUSLARARASI NORMLARIN YERELLEŞMESİNİ ANLAMAK: TÜRKİYE’DE KADININ İNSAN HAKLARI NORMLARI

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Bu çalışma, uluslararası normların sosyo-kültürel olarak farklı yerel bağlamlarda nasıl yayıldığını ve kök saldıgını daha iyi anlamak için normların yerelleşme dinamiklerini ve süreçlerini incelemektedir. Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplindeki anaakım norm çalışmaları, yayılma dinamiklerini, uluslararası düzeyde ve devlet düzeyinde ayrıntılı olarak ele alırken, yerel bağlamların ayırt edici dinamiklerini ve yerel norm girişimcilerinin norm yayılımındaki aktörlük rolünü göz ardı etmişlerdir. Ancak, yerelleşme normların yayılması için son derece önemlidir; çünkü yeni normların oluşturulması ve devletlerin sosyalizasyonu, normların yerelde içselleştirilmesi ve uygulanması için gerekli olsa da yeterli değildir. Normların başarılı bir şekilde yayılması için uluslararası normların yerel düzeyde yankı bulması gereklidir. Kadının insan hakları normlarının yayılmasına odaklanılarak, bu

alıřmada kadına ynelik řiddetle mcadele baėlamında normların yerelleřmesi arařtırılmaktadır. Bu alıřma, norm yerelleřmesini Trkiye’de sosyo-kltrel olarak farklı iki yerelde (Trabzon ve Antakya), derinlemesine mlakatlar, katılımcı gzlem ve alan alıřmasından elde edilen verileri kullanarak incelemektedir. alıřma bulguları gstermektedir ki yerelleřtiriciler bařarılı norm yayılımı iin kilit konumdadırlar. Norm yerelleřtiricileri normları sahiplenmekte ve akabinde kresel, ulusal ve yerel arasında aktif aracılık iřlevini grmektedirler. Ayrıca, yerelleřme otomatik ve sorunsuz bir sre deėil, atıřmalıdır. Yerelleřtiriciler, edilgen bir řekilde normları olduėu gibi almak yerine, yeniden yorumlamakta ve normları kendi yrelerinde daha karřılık bulan, anlařılabilir ve etkin řekilde kullanılabilir kılmak iin dnřtrmektedirler. Yerelleřtiriciler aynı zamanda norm yayılmasının nesneleri olarak stratejik yerel grupları hedef almakta ve soyut olan uluslararası normları yerel baėlama ve pratiėe evirmek iin eřitli taktikler geliřtirmektedirler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Norm Yayılması, Norm Yerelleřmesi, Kadınlara Ynelik řiddet, Antakya, Trabzon



To all women

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BSWA	Black Sea Women Association (<i>Karadeniz Kadın Derneği</i>)
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEDAW Committee	CEDAW Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
DEDAW	Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
DEVAW	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women
GR No.19	CEDAW Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women General Recommendation No.19
GR No.35	CEDAW Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women General Recommendation No.35
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICSECR	International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights
IR	International Relations

Istanbul Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
JDP	Justice and Development Party, Turkey
Law No. 6284	Law to Protect Family and Prevent Violence against Women
KA.DER	Association for Supporting and Training Women Candidates
KESK	Confederation of Public Employees Trade Union
LWCA	Trabzon Life Women Center Association (<i>Trabzon Yaşam Kadın Merkezi Derneği</i>)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PSWA	Antakya Purple Solidarity Women Association (<i>Antakya Mor Dayanışma Kadın Derneği</i>)
SMO	Social Movement Organization
ŞÖNİM	Violence Prevention and Monitoring Center (<i>Şiddet Önleme ve İzleme Merkezi</i>)
SRVAW	Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences
TANs	Transnational Advocacy Networks
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNSCR 1325	UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

VAW

Violence against Women

YWSSSA

Yeşilpınar Women Social Support and Solidarity
Association (*Yeşilpınar Kadın Sosyal Destek ve Dayanışma
Derneği*)



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Motivation and Purpose

Where, after all, do universal rights begin? In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerned citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.¹

International norms, defined as “the shared expectations or standards of appropriate behavior accepted by states and intergovernmental organizations that can be applied to states, intergovernmental organizations, and/or non-state actors of various kinds”,² matter not only in the conduct of international politics but also in the daily lives of individuals, communities, societies. Particularly, the human rights norms of equality, non-discrimination, dignity pursue a universal moral agenda to rule out suffering, poverty, oppression, discrimination, inequality, violence, insecurity in people’s lives. Yet, the human rights records illustrate that the real world situations seldom resemble to the ‘universal’ moral idea(l)s and action plans

¹ Eleanor Roosevelt, “The Great Question,” remarks delivered at the United Nations in New York on March 27, 1958. Quoted in Scott Horton, “Roosevelt on Human Rights in the Small Places,” *Harper’s Magazine*, December 22, 2007. <https://harpers.org/blog/2007/12/roosevelt-on-human-rights-in-the-small-places/>.

² Sanjeev Khagram et al., “From Santiago to Seattle: Transnational Advocacy Groups Restructuring World Politics,” in *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks, and Norms*, ed. Sanjeev Khagram, et al. (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2002), 14.

codified into the international legal instruments or to the declarations representing the commitments of international community. Therefore, it is misleading to assume that the ‘good’ international norms always possess an inherent persuasiveness quality and universality that ensure and sustain norm internalization/socialization all over the world.³ International norms, to have a real impact, need to be diffused, to be transmitted through various channels from one terrain to another, from the international or regional platforms where these norms emerge to the state level, and ultimately to the local/grassroots level, to the world of individual person. Moreover, international norms do not diffuse automatically or smoothly. Norm diffusion requires active and creative norm entrepreneurs (i.e. agency) as transmitters, promoters and practitioners/performers of international norms.

In the discipline of International Relations (IR), the research on norms, the diffusion of international norms and their effects gained impetus with the rise of social constructivism in IR in the 1990s.⁴ Looking closely to the research agenda and contributions of the constructivist norm scholarship, the first wave constructivist norm studies succinctly demonstrated the relevance and impact of international norms (i.e. non-material structures) on the social relations in general and on the international relations in particular.⁵ The second wave of norm scholars addressed the diffusion of international norms. Risse and Sikkink summarize well the mainstream research agenda: “we are concerned about the process through which principled ideas (‘beliefs about rights and wrongs held by individuals’) become norms (‘collective expectations about proper behavior for a given identity’) which in turn influence the behavior and domestic structures of states”.⁶ Importantly,

³ Annika Björkdahl and Ole Elgström, “The EPA-Negotiations: A Channel for Norm Export and Import?,” in *Importing EU Norms Conceptual Framework and Empirical Findings*, ed. Annika Björkdahl et al. (Cham, Heidelberg, New York, Dordrecht, London: Springer 2015), 135.

⁴ Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,” *International Organization* 52, no.4 (Autumn 1998): 889-890.

⁵ Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996); Peter J. Katzenstein ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

⁶ Thomas Risse and Kathryn Sikkink, “The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms into Domestic Practices: Introduction,” in *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change*, ed. Thomas Risse et al. (Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1999), 7.

informed by the constructivist premise of ‘the mutual constitution of agents and structures’, the norm diffusion scholars developed diffusion models (e.g. norm life cycle, boomerang, spiral and cultural match models) to explore the actors, stages and causal mechanisms of the domestic socialization of international norms as well as they endeavored to explain the variation in the impact of international norms across states.⁷ It is important to note that in these norm diffusion models, the states are taken as the primary and ultimate targets of norm socialization. The domestic non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are articulated as part of the transnational advocacy networks (TANs) and assumed to play a key role in activating the international attention and pushing forward the diffusion ‘cycle’, ‘boomerang’ or ‘spiral’ through advocacy and monitoring the governments’ compliance. The literature succinctly illustrated that materially less powerful norm entrepreneurs and TANs can exercise agency in world politics and in norm diffusion processes, and thus can shape the identity and interests of states and international organizations.

The starting point and the initial research motivation of the current study is a crucial gap in the mainstream constructivist norm diffusion literature. While the mainstream norm scholarship in IR has extensively studied the international and state levels and highlighted the agency of TANs, it has largely neglected the norm diffusion dynamics and processes at the local level. This gap in the literature is puzzling because if norm emergence is the starting point, then the local level is the end point or destination of norm diffusion. In other words, norm emergence and states’ commitments are just the beginning of the norm diffusion story or norms life cycle. A new, unpredictable and perhaps much more ‘challenging’ parts of the story unfold at the local level when norms touch the ground. Moreover, what happens when the internationally-defined and travelling norms touch the ground in diverse socio-cultural local settings is quite vital in terms of understanding why some norms fail and others are more salient and widely internalized, and which factors enhance or impede the successful diffusion of international norms. Otherwise stated, for a

⁷ Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,” 895-909; Risse and Sikkink, “The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms,” 17-36; Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, New York and London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 12-38; Jeffrey Checkel, “Norms, Institutions and National Identity in Contemporary Europe,” *International Studies Quarterly* 43, no.1 (March 1999):87-91.

better understanding of success or failure of norm diffusion, we also need to take into account the social construction of norms at the local level as well.

As Chapter 2 -literature review- discusses in detail, the model-based approaches to norm diffusion suffer from several limitations in capturing the ongoing norm contestation and norm construction at the local level. The most relevant limitations are as follows: the rigid and static definition of international norms; the state-centric approach to the domestic socialization of international norms; underestimating the agency of sub-national/local actors (e.g. local NGOs, individual activists, platforms, movements, local governments) as active and creative norm makers; and the definition of local/domestic structures (e.g. culture and socio-political context) as static filters or barriers that condition the norm socialization in new terrains.

Having a better understanding of the social construction of international norms in new terrains requires having a better comprehension of the dynamics, processes and agents at the local/grassroots level. Unfortunately, as the chapter on literature review details, the mainstream norm diffusion literature in IR has neglected this crucial realm. This study aims to fill this gap by utilizing the conceptual and theoretical framework of the burgeoning norm localization perspective to norm diffusion. To put it more clearly, the purpose of this study is to explore the dynamics and processes of the localization of international norms in order to better understand how international norms travel and take root in particular local socio-cultural contexts.

Norm localization is an essential part of norm diffusion because for successful norm diffusion, this particular international norm should be widely internalized and put into practice. In other words, the pre-existing norms at the local level might have robust legitimacy and might encounter with international norms. The international norms can have real impact on the lives of people and transform the pre-existing socio-cultural norms and habits only when they are voluntarily embraced and performed at the local level. That is that, international norms are needed to be localized.

In this study, norm localization refers to a process in which international norms are appropriated, reinterpreted, and translated into practice at the

local/grassroots level. The local agents are key to norm localization because they are globally and nationally connected and locally embedded intermediary actors. The process is initiated by the local norm entrepreneurs in order to make a particular society more receptive to a 'new' norm, to bring international norms responsive to the realities on the ground, and ultimately to bring about normative change in line with the international norms. It is a process of translation of a transnationally circulating norm into the local cultural context and practice so as to make it resonant, responsive, acceptable and usable on the ground.⁸

The limited attention to the local context and local agency in the mainstream norm diffusion literature in IR constitutes a serious limitation because as the above conceptualization also suggests norm localization is an essential part of norm diffusion. It is simply because the emergence of new norms at the international/regional level and the endorsement of those norms by state actors (i.e. governments, state bureaucracy and political elites) do not automatically create norm internalization and practice at local and grassroots level. Obvious but often ignored crucial point is that the context of norm diffusion and agents matter.

Norm localization perspective offers in-depth understanding of the norm diffusion in a particular locality. As such, the localization perspective improves the norm diffusion literature by bringing both the local agents and local structures back in. Importantly, localization perspective defines norms (be it international norms or local socio-cultural norms) as 'processes' or 'reference points', puts premium on local context and local agents, and views diffusion as a social practice. As such it offers us greater leverage in comprehending the ongoing construction of norms and the complex/dynamic dialogue and resonance building processes at work when 'abstract' norms are translated into particular local terrains.

⁸ Amitav Acharya, "How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism," *International Organizations* 58, no. 2 (2004): 239-275; Sally Engle Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into Local Justice* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2006); Koen De Feyter, "Localizing Human Rights," in *Economic Globalization and Human Rights*, ed. Wolfgang Benedek et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 67-92; Peggy Levitt et al., "Doing Vernacularization: the Encounter between Global and Local Ideas about Women's Rights in Peru," in *Feminist Strategies in International Governance*, ed. Susanne Zwingel et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 127-142.

It is also important to stress that norms as a ‘travelling’ discourse span across boundaries and the spatial spread of norms can be local or global or anything in between.⁹ Thus, this study’s emphasis on the local social contexts and local agency does not necessarily mean to over-privilege the local at the expense of transnational, regional, national or other sub-contexts, which are all interconnected and might well be the sites of generation and practice of ideas and norms. The reason why this study focuses on the local level is that local dynamics such as geographical, socio-political, economic, cultural context and the human agency in the local realm matter in terms of the diffusion of international norms. Hence, in terms of expanding our understanding of the norm diffusion processes, it is worthwhile to examine local settings, norm contestation and construction dynamics and processes, and the agency of norm entrepreneurs.

1.2. Research Questions

Having such a purpose and motivation, this study raises the following broad research questions: How international norms are appropriated and translated into practice in distinct local contexts? To ask differently, how international norms are localized, and what are the processes and dynamics of norm localization?

The more specific research questions that this study addresses in exploring the dynamics and processes of norm localization in particular local contexts are as follows:

- Who are the key actors/ agents of norm localization? Through which channels do local norm entrepreneurs appropriate international norms?
- Under which structural conditions do norm localizers attempt to diffuse international norms?
- What kind of strategies and tactics do norm localizers develop in translating the international norms into practice? What strategies and

⁹ Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 265; Mark Goodale, “Introduction: Locating Rights, Envisioning Law between the Global and the Local,” in *The Practice of Human Rights Tracking Law between the Global and the Local*, ed. Mark Goodale and Sally Engle Merry (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 8.

instruments do they utilize as they try to translate internationally-defined norms into the local context?

- And finally, what might be the broader theoretical and practical implications of this particular analysis of norm localization? To ask differently, what insights can we derive from this particular study in terms of the theoretical debate on norm diffusion dynamics and processes? What policy suggestions can we derive from this study?

1.3. Localizing Women's Human Rights in Combating Violence against Women

In exploring the norm localization, this study focuses on the diffusion of women's human rights norms of gender equality and non-discrimination in the context of combating violence against women. The gender based violence against women (VAW) as one of the most crucial issue and action area of women's human rights advocacy as well as a highly contested and culturally sensitive issue provide a valuable site for analyzing norm localization processes and dynamics.

Compared to the specific category of civil and political rights and right violations, the recognition of gender based VAW as a violation of human rights is a late-comer. As the Chapter 4 explains in detail, the interaction between women's advocacy and United Nations (UN) initiatives since the mid-1970s has become the engine of framing and establishing the VAW as a form of discrimination and a human rights issue.¹⁰ The centerpiece of the human rights framework and discourse in combating VAW is the implementation and internalization of the international norms of gender equality and non-discrimination, which provide the basis for the *de facto* and *de jure* realization of the women's human right to live free from violence.

Importantly, over the past three decades there has been significant progress in agreeing on the international standards and norms for combating and eliminating

¹⁰ Gülay Çağlar et al., "Introducing Feminist Strategies in International Governance," in *Feminist Strategies in International Governance*, ed. Susanne Zwingel et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 1-19; Niamh Reilly, *Women's Human Rights: Seeking Gender Justice in a Globalizing Age* (Cambridge, Malden: Polity Press, 2009), 69-92.

VAW. International and regional legal and policy instruments have clarified the State obligations and the States' compliance have been regularly monitored by the international committees and rapporteurs.¹¹ As maintained by Kardam, today it is possible to talk about a women's human rights regime or global gender equality regime with its legal instruments, norms and standards and compliance mechanisms, which sets the new logic of appropriateness in combating VAW worldwide.¹² In the same vein, the activists, NGOs, social movements from diverse socio-cultural contexts have enthusiastically appropriated women's human rights framework in their efforts to struggle with everyday practices and forms of violence.¹³

Despite the existence of international normative standards and the ongoing advocacy, the reality is that today VAW has been still a global endemic. The global estimates indicate that at least one third of women in the world have been experiencing violence.¹⁴ As the United Nations Special Rapporteur Rashida Manjoo highlights, "the lack of accountability for violations experienced by women is the rule rather than the exception in many countries".¹⁵ Therefore, preventing and eliminating the VAW is an ongoing and uphill struggle. In many parts of the world, the VAW is still treated as a private sphere issue. As gender based violence is deeply embedded in the systems of power, culture, kinship, religion, nationalism, and warfare, this violence is legitimized as an everyday, normal issue rather than a human rights violation. Most women and girls generally lack the knowledge of non-discrimination and gender equality norms and their rights as well as have limited access to protection and justice mechanisms.¹⁶ Moreover, in many parts of the

¹¹ United Nations, *Ending Violence against Women from Words to Action, Study of the Secretary General* (New York: United Nations Publication, 2006), 7-13, 85-100.

¹² Nüket Kardam, "The Emergence of a Global Gender Equality Regime," *International Journal* 57, no.3 (2002): 411-438.

¹³ Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence*, 1-2.

¹⁴ World Health Organization (WHO), *Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women: Prevalence and Health Effects of Intimate Partner Violence and Non-partner Sexual Violence* (Italy: WHO, 2013).

¹⁵ United Nations Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences*, Rashida Manjoo, A/HRC/23/49 (14 May 2013), 19. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/51b86a684.html>

¹⁶ Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence*, 1-2.

world, state authorities –despite their declared commitments- have been reluctant to legislate and implement women’s human rights and failing to act in due diligence.¹⁷ Stachursky succinctly summarizes the contemporary crisis of norm implementation as follows:

Despite the successful process of norm creation at the international level, the actual realization of these new norms at the grassroots level has proven far more difficult to achieve and continues to pose a serious challenge to global and local women’s human rights activists. At present, therefore, human rights theorists and practitioners are trying to come to terms with a crisis of implementation.¹⁸

The prevention and elimination of VAW necessitate a movement from “words to action” and the genuine implementation/internalization of international norms and standards by the States, by the communities and individuals.¹⁹ In this line, the localization perspective might offer new insights into how women’s human rights norms travel and take root in new terrains through the re-construction of norms in terms of the realities and needs of the right holders and norm promoters. Applied to the norm dynamics of women’s human rights to eliminate VAW, the localization perspective suggests that women’s human rights norms, the mechanisms, standards and action repertoires developed for preventing and ending the VAW do not automatically circulate or travel in a vacuum. Rather, international norms are appropriated by ‘the’ people who combat against human rights violations at the local level, and are translated, through various ways and at different degrees, into local terms and cultural contexts. As such, the in-depth analysis of the localization process in distinct local contexts might provide feedback and new insights, which would be helpful and effective in combating VAW (e.g. how to bridge the cultures and rights, the creative and effective local practices that would be utilized in other localities).

¹⁷ United Nations, *Ending Violence against Women from Words to Action*, ii; United Nations Security Council, *Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences*, Rashida Manjoo, A/69/368 (1 October 2014), 16. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/543673ae4.html>

¹⁸ Benjamin Stachursky, *The Promise and Perils of Transnationalization* (New York and London: Routledge, 2013), 3.

¹⁹ United Nations, *Ending Violence against Women from Words to Action*.

1.4. Research Method

Designing the current norm localization research in line with the qualitative case study method has unique advantages. As explained by Patton qualitative inquiry aims at “inductively and holistically understand human experience and constructed meanings in context-specific settings”.²⁰ In pursuing qualitative case study the researcher typically focuses on to explore relatively small number of illustrative and information rich cases (i.e. bounded systems, context specific settings) which provide holistic, in-depth and contextual understanding of the phenomenon under interest. In other words, through the use of small number of cases, the researcher focuses on how things work (e.g. norm diffusion, norm localization) in certain settings or contexts, at certain times and with certain agency.²¹

In empirically exploring the processes and dynamics of norm localization, this study focuses on two socio-culturally and geographically distinct local contexts in Turkey, namely Trabzon and Antakya provinces. To put it more clearly, Trabzon and Antakya cases will serve to explore and understand the dynamics of norm localization in two distinct local contexts. As Chapter 5 explains the case selection strategy more in detail, given the particularities of Trabzon and Antakya, the in-depth exploration of norm localization processes and dynamics in these two local contexts in Turkey provide rich empirical data and valuable insights into how norm localizers and structure(s) interact and co-constitute each other in translating the women’s human rights norms into local practice.

A qualitative case study inquiry of norm localization dynamics and processes necessitates going into the field, where the particular instances of norm localization unfold, and getting close enough to the local norm entrepreneurs and their daily activities, context specific circumstances to explore and understand what

²⁰ Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2002), 69.

²¹ Robert E. Stake, *Qualitative Research: Studying How Things Work* (New York, London: The Guilford Press, 2010), 13-16.

is actually happening on the ground. During the fieldwork in Trabzon and Antakya between May 2016 and July 2017, this study collected the original data primarily utilizing the participant observation and 35 in-depth interviews with the local actors covering the local public authorities and social workers, and the local women's human rights NGOs, and feminist activists in Trabzon and Antakya. The chapter 5 explains in detail the data collection techniques (i.e. in-depth interviews and participant observation) and data sources utilized in this study, the research strategies (i.e. triangulation of data sources, the purposeful sampling of the cases and interviewees), the data analysis process, the ethical considerations that inform this study.

1.5. Contributions

Regarding the main contributions, this study has several theoretical, empirical and practical contributions. As Chapter 8, conclusion of this study provides in detail, first of all, by illustrating the actors, dynamics and processes of norm localization, this study adds to the burgeoning theoretical research on norm localization. Related to this, by enhancing our comprehension of the translation of international norms into the local settings, this study also contributes to the theoretical literature on norm diffusion. The study also contributes our understanding of what might be the difficulties, challenges and also opportunities for the diffusion of international norms into local contexts. Empirically speaking, by providing the in-depth analysis of norm localization processes and local activists' efforts in two subnational settings (i.e. Antakya and Trabzon), this study enhances our knowledge of the diffusion of women's human rights norms into the Turkish socio-cultural space. The study also proposes several policy suggestions for global, national and local stakeholders in combating VAW. And finally this study provides insights for future research to expand the horizon of norm localization research.

1.6. Roadmap

The rest of this study is organized as follows:

Chapter 2, the ‘Literature Review’ presents the scholarly evolution of the existing IR literature on norms and norm diffusion including the main research areas, premises, models and arguments. This chapter also reassesses the norm diffusion literature in terms of its gaps and limitations in capturing the norm diffusion dynamics and processes at the local level. The review of the theoretical literature confirms the limited attention to the processes and dynamics of norm localization.

The Chapter 3 provides the analytical and conceptual framework of norm localization perspective that this study employs in exploring the localization of women’s human rights norms in particular local contexts. By combining the main ontological premises of constructivism with insights from the new social-movements literature and the practice turn in IR, the norm localization framework is developed in four important areas. These are the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of norm localization; the conceptualization of local and local context; the agency role of local norm entrepreneurs; and the social practice of international norms at local level.

Chapter 4 addresses the emergence and development of women’s human rights norms of gender equality and non-discrimination at the international level, which underpin the rights, standards, claims and advocacy in combating the VAW worldwide. The chapter begins with the process of global awareness-raising on women’s issues and women’s rights since the 1970s, in which the recognition of VAW as a human rights violation is embedded in. The second part of the chapter delves into the substance and meaning of the international norms of gender equality and non-discrimination underpinning the women’s human rights based approach in combating VAW. The third part of the chapter reviews the international legal/human rights framework in combating VAW. This part provides the women’s human rights-based approach and the internationally accepted definition of VAW including its root causes and forms, and explains the duty holders’ (i.e. states) obligations for eliminating the VAW at national/domestic level. Finally, the chapter briefly discusses the conundrums in the domestic implementation of international norms.

Chapter 5 provides the methodological approach of norm localization research. In line with the qualitative case study inquiry, this chapter explains the

main methodological issues of case selection (i.e. the selection of Turkey as background case, and the selection of Trabzon and Antakya local contexts), data collection techniques and data sources utilized in this study, data analysis process, and the ethical considerations that inform this study. This chapter addresses the research strategies (i.e. triangulation of data sources, the purposeful sampling of cases and interview informants), limitations and trade-offs are presented as well.

Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 provide the in-depth analyses of the distinct dynamics and processes of norm localization in Trabzon and Antakya local settings respectively. In terms of the research purpose and questions, each of these chapters is divided into four different but interrelated parts. The first part provides some background information about the socio-cultural contexts and the prevalent forms of VAW in Trabzon and Antakya. In other words, in the first part of the each chapter, the readers are introduced with the structural and contextual features and dynamics of these localities that affect the localization of women's human rights. The second part gives an overview of the origins and development of women's human rights advocacy in Trabzon and Antakya. Against this background, the following two parts unpack the different dimensions of norm localization by focusing on the interaction between the agents and structures in appropriating and translating the women's human rights norms into local practice. In this line, the third part focuses on the agency dimension of the norm localization including the processes related to their socialization into women's human rights. The final part of the each chapter focuses on the translation of women's human rights into local practice (i.e. the practice dimension of norm localization). This final part first addresses the objects or target groups of norm localization, and then focuses on the exploration of the translation tactics.

Chapter 8, "Conclusion", summarizes the key findings and arguments of the study and then focuses on the theoretical and practical implications of the analyses of norm localization in two unique sub-national local setting in Turkey. The chapter finally addresses the possible extensions of this particular study in future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: NORM AND NORM DIFFUSION RESEARCH IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In the International Relations discipline, the research on norms and norm diffusion processes is largely informed by constructivism. This chapter first presents the main arguments and assumptions of constructivist paradigm, which also constitutes the theoretical background of this current norm localization study. Then, the chapter presents mainstream norm and norm diffusion literature. Finally, the chapter discusses the gaps and limitations of this literature in exploring the norm localization dynamics and processes.

2.1. The Constructivist Turn and ‘Return’ to Norms in IR

The conventional IR theories, particularly neo-realism and neo-liberal institutionalism that dominate the discipline during the Cold War period (i.e. until the late 1980s), widely neglected the influence and explanatory power of ideas, values and norms on the conduct of world politics. Building on the rationalist utilitarian models, these IR theories assume that the rational actors (be they individuals or states) behave in self-interested and utility maximizing ways, and so the actors’ interests are pre-given and prior to any ideas or beliefs held by the actors.²²

²² See Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass.: Addison Wesley Pub., 1979); John J. Mearsheimer, “The False Promise of International Institutions,” *International Security* 19, no.3 (Winter 1994-95); Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, “Ideas and Foreign Policy: An Analytical Framework,” in *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*, ed. Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), 4;

It is also important to underline that the neo-realism's overwhelming emphasis on materialism or material structures also put a curb on analyzing the impact of ideas and norms on state behavior. As highlighted by Reus-Smith, "for neo-realists, the principal determinant of state behavior is the underlying distribution of material capabilities across states in the international system, a determinant that gives states their animating survival motive, which in turn drives balance of power competition".²³ Thus, for the structuralist realist paradigm, states' material capabilities predominantly determine their behaviors so as to survive in an anarchical international system.

Another dimension that creates a tendency to 'turn away' from the norms and normative concerns in IR was the behavioral turn in social sciences and the enthusiasm for using (micro)economic insights and measurement in the 1970s and 1980s in line with the positivist epistemology. In the face of the difficulties in measuring the influence of norms or normative/ideational phenomena, scholars preferred to bracket these ideational factors for methodological reasons.²⁴ As Finnemore and Sikkink stress "for decades, the mainstream IR research has been divorced from political theory on the grounds that what "is" in the world and what "ought to be" are very different and must be kept separate, both intellectually and in policy".²⁵

Neo-liberal institutionalists recognized the constraining role of ideas, values and norms in the conduct of world politics.²⁶ While this scholarship added to the literature the formation of international regimes²⁷, they widely shared the rationalist

Audie Klotz, *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle against Apartheid* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995), 13; Tim Dunne and Marianne Hanson, "Human Rights in International Relations," in *Human Rights: Politics and Practice*, ed. Michael Goodhart (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 44-45; Christian Reus-Smith, "Constructivism," in *Theories of International Relations*, ed. Scott Burchill et al. (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 189- 193.

²³Christian Reus-Smit, "Constructivism," 205-206.

²⁴ Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics," 889-890.

²⁵Ibid. 916.

²⁶ See Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984).

²⁷ Stephen D. Krasner ed., *International Regimes* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1983).

and materialist focus of neo-realism. More clearly, neo-liberal institutionalists recognized that norms as ‘standards of behavior’ would affect state behavior by serving to facilitate cooperation and coordination among self-interested states under anarchical international system.²⁸ Yet, they treated norms as intervening variables that may constrain the behavior, strategy and policy options of actors (particularly states and decision makers), but not constitute their identities.²⁹ All in all, neo-realism and neo-liberal institutionalism underestimated or widely ignored the role of ideas and international norms, and for decades locked in the so called ‘neo-neo-inter paradigm debate’ in making sense of the strategic interactions and cooperation among interest maximizing states with differing material capabilities under anarchical system.³⁰

A new school of thought in IR -constructivism- emerged in the late 1980s with its distinct ontological and epistemological lens and research agenda. Despite the fact that it is possible to talk about various strands of constructivism, within the scope of this review it is suffice to mention certain focal points uniting constructivist scholars, which also provide a theoretical background to this current research.

At first glance, constructivists criticize the neo-realist and neo-liberal theories’ ontological claims that actors (be they individuals or states) are self-interested, rational and atomistic egoists, who overrate material structures and enter into social relations only for strategic purposes to pursue their pre-defined (pre-social) and fixed interests.³¹ In contrast to these assumptions, constructivism is characterized by an emphasis on “the social construction of meaning (including knowledge) and of the construction of social reality”.³²

²⁸ Arthur A. Stein, “Coordination and Collaboration: Regimes in an Anarchic World,” in *International Regimes*, ed. Stephen D. Krasner (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1983).

²⁹ Florini, “The Evolution of International Norms,” *International Studies Quarterly* 40, no.3 (September 1996):365; Checkel, “Norms, Institutions, and National Identity,” 84; Jeffrey T. Checkel, “Review: The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory,” *World Politics* 50, no. 2, (January 1998): 328; Reus-Smith, “Constructivism,” 206.

³⁰ Florini, “The Evolution of International Norms,” 365.

³¹ Reus-Smith, “Constructivism,”193.

³² Stefano Guzzini, “A Reconstruction of Constructivism in International Relations,” *European Journal of International Relations* 6, no.2, (2000):149.

Regarding its epistemological standpoint on the social construction of knowledge, constructivism does not deny the existence of a phenomenal world or natural facts, but it puts the view that natural facts as objects of knowledge cannot constitute themselves independently of interpretation and discursive practices. In other words, the knowledge of reality is socially constructed, people interpret the world out there and these interpretations are built on, in Guzzini's words "a shared system of codes and symbols, of languages, life-worlds, social practices".³³

Constructivists also seek to shake the mainstream ontological foundations of IR discipline. They emphasize the social construction of reality and the mutual constitution of agency and structure. Several crucial implications can be deduced from this ontological move, which are discussed below at length as follows.

First, while structuralist theories (e.g. neo-realism, neo-liberal institutionalism, world system, Marxism) solely stress the importance of material structures (e.g. material structures of the balance of military power, the capitalist world economy), constructivists hold that inter-subjectively shared ideas, beliefs, values, norms, cultures, discourses, etc. also have structural characteristics and these ideational structures are as important as material ones.³⁴ As asserted by Adler, "constructivism considers intersubjective knowledge and ideas to have constitutive effects on social reality and its evolution".³⁵ According to Wendt, "material resources only acquire meaning for human action through the shared knowledge in which they are embedded".³⁶ Here, inter-subjectivity denotes that a social phenomenon –in order to exist- should be accepted by more than one person or by

³³ Ibid., 159-160.

³⁴ Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 4 (2001): 392-393; John Gerard Ruggie, "What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-Utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (Autumn, 1998): 879; Reus-Smit, "Constructivism," 196.

³⁵ Emanuel Adler, "Constructivism in International Relations: Sources, Contributions and Debates," in *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Walter Carlsnaes et al. (Los Angeles, London, Singapore, New Delhi, Washington D.C.: Sage Publications, 2013), 123.

³⁶ Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20, no. 1 (Summer, 1995):73.

a group of people who define themselves with reference to it.³⁷ Thus, as underlined by Finnemore and Sikkink, intersubjective ideas, beliefs, norms, meanings are not reducible to individuals.³⁸

Second, social constructivism does not take the interests of actors for granted. Rather, constructivists are interested in how actors develop their interests and where such interests and preferences come from.³⁹ As explained by Risse and Sikkink, in the constructivist view “actors’ interests and preferences are not given outside social interaction or deduced from structural constraints in the international or domestic environment”.⁴⁰ In Wendt’s words, “identities are the basis of interests. Actors do not have a ‘portfolio’ of interests that they carry around independent of social context; instead, they define their interests in the process of defining situation”.⁴¹ In sum, constructivists relate interests to the identities of actors. In explaining a range of social and international political phenomena, they argue that intersubjective meanings as non-material structures (e.g. human rights ideas and norms) shape identities of actors and these identities define their interests, which in turn guide action.⁴²

Third, constructivists conceptualize agents and structures as ontologically distinct yet mutually constitutive entities. In this way, they try to avoid the pitfalls of structural determinism, reductionism, and methodological individualism. For instance, in his approach to the agent-structure problem, Wendt underlines two truism about social life: 1) “human beings and their organizations are purposeful actors whose actions help reproduce or transform the society in which they live; and 2) society is made up of social relationships, which structure the interactions

³⁷ Audie Klotz and Cecelia Lynch, *Strategies For Research in Constructivist International Relations* (Armonk, New York London, England: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2007), 7-8.

³⁸ Finnemore and Sikkink, “Taking Stock,” 393.

³⁹ Reus-Smith, “Constructivism,” 197.

⁴⁰ Risse and Sikkink, “The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms,” 8-9.

⁴¹ Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (spring, 1992):398.

⁴² Risse and Sikkink, “The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms,” 8-9; Reus-Smith, “Constructivism,” 197; Checkel, “Review: The Constructive Turn,” 325.

between these purposeful actors”.⁴³ These two truisms, according to Wendt, suggest that the properties and practices of agents and social structures are not reducible to each other. Rather, human agency and social structures are interdependent and mutually constitutive.⁴⁴

These three premises of constructivist paradigm (i.e. the significance of inter-subjectively shared ideational structures such as norms; the endogeneity of interests and preferences; and the mutual constitution of structures and agents) also inform this current study on norm localization dynamics and processes.

2.2. Norms Matter in IR: The First Wave Constructivist Norm Scholarship

The first wave constructivist norm scholarship had tackled several challenges such as to develop the conceptual and ontological foundations of constructivism, and to substantiate the claim that ideas and norms really matter in IR.

An important contribution of the first wave constructivist norm scholars is that they introduced a better conceptualization of international norms. For instance, Katzenstein defines norms as “collective expectations for the proper behavior of actors with a given identity”.⁴⁵ And the other constructivist scholars follow Katzenstein’s definition with certain nuances. For instance, Finnemore defines norms as “shared expectations about appropriate behavior held by a community of actors”.⁴⁶ Klotz defines norms as “shared (thus social) understanding of standards of behavior”.⁴⁷ Khagram et al. define international norms as “the shared expectations or standards of appropriate behavior accepted by states and

⁴³ Alexander Wendt, “The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory,” *International Organization* 41, no. 3 (summer, 1987): 337-338.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 337-338.

⁴⁵ Katzenstein, “Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security,” in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein (New York: Colombia University Press, 1996), 5.

⁴⁶ Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*, 22.

⁴⁷ Klotz, *Norms in International Relations*, 14.

intergovernmental organizations that can be applied to states, intergovernmental organizations, and/or non-state actors of various kinds”.⁴⁸

Constructivists aim to demonstrate that norms do not merely shape the behavior of agents by constraining them, but norms mold behavior by constituting identities and preferences.⁴⁹ To substantiate this crucial point, the first wave constructivist scholars also identified different types or categories of norms. For instance, according to Katzenstein, “norms either define (or constitute) identities or prescribe (or regulate) behavior, or they do both”.⁵⁰ Finnemore and Sikkink highlight the intersubjective and prescriptive (or evaluative) dimensions of norms. Norms embody a quality of ‘oughtness’ and involves certain standards of ‘appropriate’ behavior that are inter-subjectively shared. Consequently, since norm-breaking behavior generate disapproval or stigma among the members of a community or a society, norms prompt actors to justify their actions.⁵¹ Similarly, Risse and Sikkink assert that “while ideas are usually individualistic, norms have an explicit intersubjective quality because they are collective expectations”.⁵² According to Gregory Raymond, international norms are sources of action in three ways. Norms might be constitutive in the sense that they define what counts as a certain activity; they might be constraining in that norms deter an actor from behaving in a particular way; or they might be enabling by allowing specific actions.⁵³

While constructivism offers interesting and innovative insights into the IR discipline, skeptics to this new approach were eager to see whether constructivists (or as also called ‘reflective school’), could be able to develop a research agenda and engage in empirical research. For instance, as president of the International

⁴⁸ Sanjeev Khagram et al., “*From Santiago to Seattle*,” 14.

⁴⁹ Checkel, “Norms, Institutions, and National Identity,” 84.

⁵⁰ Katzenstein, “Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security,” 5.

⁵¹ Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,” 891-892.

⁵² Risse and Sikkink, “The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms,” 7.

⁵³ Gregory A. Raymond, “Problems and Prospects in the Study of International Norms,” *Mershon International Studies Review* 41, no.2 (November 1997): 214.

Studies Association, Robert Keohane, expressed certain criticisms. In his 1988 speech, Keohane states that

Indeed, the greatest weakness of the reflective school lies not in deficiencies in their critical arguments but in the lack of a clear reflective research program that could be employed by students of world politics. Waltzian neorealism has such a research program; so does neoliberal institutionalism, which has focused on the evolution and impact of international regimes. Until the reflective scholars or others sympathetic to their arguments have delineated such a research program and shown in particular studies that it can illuminate important issues in world politics, they will remain on the margins of the field, largely invisible to the preponderance of empirical researchers, most of whom explicitly or implicitly accept one or another version of rationalistic premises.⁵⁴

The first wave constructivist norm scholars promptly responded to this call. One prominent example is Katzenstein's edited volume, "The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics".⁵⁵ In this edited volume, Katzenstein and his colleagues problematize the taken for granted status of national security in the dominant explanations of state interests as well as the mainstream IR theories' inability to explain the dramatic changes in world politics since the mid-1980s. The essays in Katzenstein's edited volume aim to bring a fresh look at the world by concentrating on two under-explored determinants of national security policy: the cultural-institutional context, and the constructed nature of the actors' identity.⁵⁶ More importantly, this study succinctly puts forward that norms matter even in the core area of national security. In a parallel manner, Martha Finnemore in her 1996 book "National Interests in International Society", focuses on the promotion of international norms by the International Organizations and the way in which these norms affect state identities and interests.⁵⁷ Such examples as the UNESCO and creation of state science bureaucracies after 1955; the Red Cross and states' acceptance of rule-governed norms of warfare; the World Bank and the

⁵⁴ Robert Keohane, "International Institutions: Two Approaches," *International Studies Quarterly* 32, no.4 (1988):392.

⁵⁵ Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security*.

⁵⁶ Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security," 1-4.

⁵⁷ Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*.

redefinition of development to incorporate distributional concerns, enable Finnemore to develop a systemic approach for understanding the impact of international organizations on states' socialization into international norms.⁵⁸

To conclude this section, as noted by Finnemore and Sikkink “in a discipline that denied the independent causal effect of norms, rules, and social structures of meaning generally, the first task for constructivist empirical research in IR was obviously to establish that norms (or other non-material structures) matter. Much of the earliest constructivist work focused on this task”.⁵⁹

2.3. Constructivist Norm Diffusion Literature and the Domestic Socialization of International Norms

While the first wave constructivist norm studies succinctly demonstrate that norms matter in social relations in general and international relations in particular, a new generation of norm scholarship brings to the fore its distinct research agenda on norm diffusion. In Checkel's seminal and widely shared definition, norm diffusion denotes “the transfer or transmission of objects, processes, ideas, information from one population or region to another”.⁶⁰

The second wave constructivist norm scholarship promptly exhibits the limitations of the previous studies. For instance, Risse and Sikkink argue that the previous literature pays little attention to the actual impact of norms on domestic politics, the causal mechanisms by which ideas and norms spread, and rarely accounts why the impact of international norms varies across states.⁶¹ Checkel also notices quite similar limitations. Looking to Checkel's main points, first, the neglect to specify and explore the mechanisms of norm diffusion results in correlational causal arguments: “where one establishes the existence of a global norm and then explores whether state-level practice and discourse are changing in ways consistent

⁵⁸ Ibid., 1-2.

⁵⁹ Finnemore and Sikkink, “Taking Stock,” 396.

⁶⁰ Checkel, “Norms, Institutions, and National Identity,” 85.

⁶¹ Risse and Sikkink, “The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms,” 2, 4.

with its prescriptions”.⁶² Second, for Checkel the analytical frameworks developed by the early constructivist norm scholars omit to account why the same norm could have a regulative or constitutive effect in one state, but fail to do so in others. Thus, Checkel also highlights the necessity to dwell on the variation in the norms’ domestic impact. Third, while the previous scholars stress the mutual constitution of agents and structures, according to Checkel their empirical analysis predominantly rely on successful cases where “structures (typically norms) provide agents (predominantly states or elite groups within them) with new understandings of their interests”.⁶³ Fourthly, the early constructivist norm research emphasizes the role of international norm makers including international non-governmental organizations or international organizations, but fails to incorporate the role of the domestic norm takers or domestic agency.⁶⁴

In line with these criticisms, by the late 1990s, constructivist norm scholars advance such questions as ‘how could an idea become a norm?’; ‘why, how and under what conditions international norms (i.e. human rights norms) are internalized in domestic politics and influence state actions?’; ‘how international norms diffuse into the national arena and have constitutive effects on states?’; ‘what accounts for the variation across states?’.⁶⁵ Risse and Sikkink summarize well their research agenda:

We are concerned about the process through which principled ideas (beliefs about rights and wrongs held by individuals) become norms (collective expectations about proper behavior for a given identity) which in turn influence the behavior and domestic structures of states’.⁶⁶

⁶² Checkel, “Norms, Institutions, and National Identity,” 85.

⁶³ Ibid., 85.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 85.

⁶⁵ See Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,”; Thomas Risse et al.(eds.). *The Power of Human Rights International Norms and Domestic Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Checkel, “Norms, Institutions, and National Identity,” 85.

⁶⁶ Risse and Sikkink, “The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms,” 7.

On the common premises of constructivist norm diffusion literature, Stachursky adds that “they all depart from the international level as the main level of analysis for the effects of norms”.⁶⁷ Another common point is that norm diffusion literature refrains from resorting simple dichotomies such as ‘norms versus interests’, ‘logic of consequentialism versus logic of appropriateness’, ‘norms versus power’, ‘norms versus rationality’. Rather, the empirical analysis are interested in grasping the relevance, interaction or relationship among these various factors in different stages of norm socialization.⁶⁸

Importantly, informed by constructivism, the norm diffusion scholars develop models to explore the socialization of human rights norms at the domestic level with a special emphasis on the actor constellations that link the ‘global’ and ‘domestic’ levels in promoting states’ norm internalization/compliance. In this regard, four models are worth to mention here: the norm life cycle, boomerang, spiral and cultural match models. The remainder of this section addresses these models of human rights norm diffusion more thoroughly, since it is here that there is a potential (as these models brought domestic agency and domestic context back in) as well as several limitations and gaps for the exploration of the dynamics and actors of the social construction and practice of international norms at the local level.

The norm life cycle model: Finnemore and Sikkink introduce the ‘norm life cycle’ as an ideal-typical model that illustrates the evolution and influence of international norms.⁶⁹ Finnemore and Sikkink identify three sequences or stages in a norm’s life cycle: norm emergence, norm cascading and norm internalization.⁷⁰ In the norm emergence stage, norm entrepreneurs actively build a new norm. At the international platforms, norm entrepreneurs call attention to certain principled ideas or issues, and frame them in such a way that would persuade states and influential actors to embrace a new norm.⁷¹ The norm cascade stage becomes possible after

⁶⁷ Benjamin Stachursky, *The Promise and Perils of Transnationalization*, 61.

⁶⁸Risse and Sikkink, “The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms,” 9; Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,” 888.

⁶⁹ Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,”.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 895.

⁷¹ Ibid., 897.

passing a tipping or threshold point, whereby norm entrepreneurs succeed to persuade a critical mass of states to adopt a new norm and to become norm leaders. In the norm cascade stage, norm leaders (e.g. influential states), networks and international organizations play key role as these actors promote the broader acceptance of a new norm through the mechanisms of institutionalization and state socialization.⁷² Norm internalization represents the far end of norm cascade and it is the final stage of a norm's life cycle. In this stage a new norm is widely accepted and achieves a taken for granted status.⁷³

The boomerang model: Keck and Sikkink pioneer the 'boomerang pattern of influence' model to map a relevant pattern in diffusion of human rights norms. They assert that states have responsibility to guarantee and implement human rights, but usually they turn into primary violators or they refuse to implement rights properly. The boomerang model demonstrates how domestic NGOs, social movements, activists (predominantly in repressive authoritarian states) might connect and work with Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs) to redress human rights violations in their own countries.⁷⁴

Keck and Sikkink in their book 'Activists beyond Borders' establish the importance of TANs in world politics and provide evidences that TANs can be influential in changing the policies of states and international organizations in the emergence of international norms and the diffusion of these norms into domestic practices.⁷⁵ Authors define TANs as a communicative structure, which includes "those relevant actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse and dense exchange of information and services".⁷⁶ While the international and domestic NGOs are assumed to be the quintessential actors in a transnational advocacy networks, Keck and Sikkink also

⁷² Ibid., 901.

⁷³ Ibid., 904.

⁷⁴ Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*, 12-13.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 2.

include the local social movements, foundations, the media, intellectuals, parts of regional and international intergovernmental organizations, trade unions, customer organizations, parts of the executive and/or parliamentary branches of states.⁷⁷

The boomerang model basically proceeds as follows: when the dialogue channels between the domestic groups and their governments are blocked or hampered, when governments are deaf to the human rights claims, individuals or domestic groups would choose to bypass their state and recourse to international connections and allies to activate TANs. The members of network amplify the demands of domestic groups by framing the existing situation as human rights violation that requires intervention or action. The members of network also pressure states or a relevant international organization, which in turn exert pressure on norm violating state or persuade it to change its behavior or policies.⁷⁸ In sum, through the boomerang pattern of influence, a norm violating state is put under pressure both from below and above, which in turn enables or opens the ways for the states' socialization into human rights norms.⁷⁹

The Spiral Model: In their influential book “The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change”, Risse, Ropp and Sikkink improve the boomerang pattern of influence model and propose a ‘spiral model’ of norm diffusion which incorporates socialization mechanisms and actors involved in the process of norm socialization/internalization at the domestic level.⁸⁰ In this book, Risse and Sikkink define norm socialization as “the process by which international norms are internalized and implemented domestically”.⁸¹ They distinguish three types of causal mechanisms which are necessary for the enduring internalization of norms by states: 1) process of instrumental adaptation and strategic bargaining; 2)

⁷⁷ Ibid., 6, 9.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 12-13.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 12-13.

⁸⁰ Thomas Risse et al.(eds.). *The Power of Human Rights*.

⁸¹ Risse and Sikkink, “The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms,” 5.

process of moral consciousness raising, argumentation, dialogue and persuasion; 3) process of institutionalization and habitualization.⁸²

The 'spiral model' brings together five successive phases or 'boomerang throws' in changing the behavior of states. These phases are (1) repression of authoritarian states and activation of TANs; (2) state's denial of human rights violation; (3) state's low cost tactical concessions; (4) giving 'prescriptive' status to the human rights norms through a set of state actions; (5) norm consistent behavior. The brief description of spiral model of human rights change is as follows. In the repression stage, the authoritarian regime violates human rights, denies right claims and oppresses domestic opposition groups. If domestic groups are eventually able to connect with transnational networks and provide sufficient evidence on human rights violations, emerging transnational advocacy process mount a serious challenge to the repressive state. However, in the face of increasing criticisms of democratic states and international human rights organizations, the repressive state initially would tend to deny these accusations. Risse and Sikkink find this denial stage to be of critical importance as it opens a door for the process of norm socialization no matter what the nature of discursive engagement and conversation are. Depending on the strength, mobilization and pressure of TANs, the third stage of spiral comes to the fore: having realized that its reputation is at stake or under the threat of isolation and sanctions, the norm violating government begins to adjust itself to the human rights discourse without necessarily believing in the validity of norms. The government would engage in some cosmetic changes, would give tactical concessions, and would instrumentally adapt human rights discourse in the international platforms. The increased international pressure also strengthen the domestic groups and amplify as well as give further legitimacy to their demands. If governments are persuaded to accept the validity of human rights norms, the spiral moves to the fourth stage whereby human rights ideas gain prescriptive status. It is in this stage, government may ratify international human rights conventions including optional protocols, make legislative reforms, establish state machinery for engaging human rights violations, engage in dialogue, argumentation and justification with their domestic and international critics and show efforts to improve

⁸² Ibid.

human rights conditions. If the government is continuously pushed from below and above to fulfill its commitments, the final stage of norm consistent behavior could be reached over time, whereby compliance with human rights norm becomes a habitual practice of state actors and it can safely be assumed that norms are internalized and there is no longer need to monitor or push for compliance.⁸³ According to Risse and Sikkink, “habitualization and institutionalization are necessary to depersonalize norm compliance and to ensure their implementation irrespective of individual beliefs”.⁸⁴

The cultural match model: Another branch of constructivist norm diffusion literature specifically seeks to explain the cross-national variation in diffusion of international norms and puts emphasis on the impact of domestic culture. For instance, Legro looks at warfare decisions of military bureaucracies and emphasizes the importance of ‘organizational culture’ within the domestic decision-making groups. Legro argues that culture significantly affects the reception of international norms in the sense that it “shapes organizational identity, priorities, perceptions and capabilities”.⁸⁵

Checkel in his seminal article ‘Norms, Institutions and National Identity in Contemporary Europe’ aims to explain cross-national variation in the diffusion and constitutive impact of international norms.⁸⁶ To instantiate his points, Checkel examines the degree to which norms promoted by the Council of Europe affect state-level definitions of citizenship and the social/cultural rights of minorities in Germany. Checkel introduces the concept of ‘cultural match’ (or resonance) as an intervening variable, which denotes “a situation where the prescriptions embodied in an international norm are convergent with domestic norms, as reflected in discourse, the legal system (constitutions, judicial codes, law) and bureaucratic agencies (organizational ethos and administrative procedures)”.⁸⁷ He proposes that

⁸³ Ibid., 11, 22-33.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 17.

⁸⁵ Jeffrey W. Legro, “Which Norms Matter? Revisiting the “failure” of Internationalism,” *International Organization* 51, no.1 (Winter 1997):37.

⁸⁶ Checkel, “Norms, Institutions, and National Identity,”.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 87.

domestic cultural norms and structures embedded in the liberal, corporatist, statist and state-above-society categories are variables that intervene between international norms and national level outcomes.⁸⁸ Checkel, then, scales the cultural match along a spectrum. At one end of the spectrum we have the positive match (complete congruence between international norm and domestic norms); and at the other hand of the spectrum, we have negative match (situation of no congruence) in a particular issue area. In the middle, we have a null match in which domestic arena contains no obvious normative barriers to an international norm.⁸⁹

Checkel advances a two step-argument for explaining cross-national variation in the diffusion and constitutive impact of international norms: (1) building on the identification of liberal, corporatist, statist and state-above-society cultural structures, he argues that “domestic structure predicts the mechanisms transmitting these norms to the national arena, while domestic norms shaping the preferences of key agents predict the degree to which they resonate and have constitutive effect in particular states”⁹⁰; (2) conceptualizing resonance in terms of cultural match, he argues that “null and especially positive matches increase the probability that international norms will have constitutive effects, while negative match reduces it”.⁹¹

2.4. Critical Re-Assessment of Constructivist Approaches to Norms and Norm Diffusion

The constructivist norm diffusion literature in general and the life cycle, boomerang, spiral and cultural match models in particular deliver innovative insights on the processes and actors involved in the socialization of human rights norms at the domestic level. Notwithstanding their novelties, it appears that there

⁸⁸ Ibid., 87.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 87.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 91.

⁹¹ Ibid., 91.

are a number of aspects and limitations warrant closer scrutiny for the purposes of this study.

2.4.1. Limitation 1: Static Definition of International Norms

Despite the emphasis on the social construction of norms and the relevant concern to understand the dynamics of normative change across states, the mainstream constructivist norm diffusion scholarship converges on Katzenstein's relatively static definition of norm as "collective expectations for the proper behavior of actors with a given identity".⁹² On this basis, norm scholarship assumes that a particular international norm -once created or socially constructed at the international platforms- spreads across international system or diffuses through the process of norm socialization without any modification.⁹³ It is plausible to argue that the mainstream norm diffusion literature assumes that, in Krook and True's words, "norms are 'things' that remain relatively static once created"⁹⁴, or in Zwingel's words, global norms are treated as something that is hammered in stone.⁹⁵ By and large, the mainstream literature promotes the view that the process of socialization sustains this static and unequivocal structure by inducing domestic actors (i.e. states) to internalize and implement norms domestically.

More recently, what we might call a third generation of norm scholarship has raised several criticisms against the static depiction of norm and offered revisiting the basic constructivist premises on the social construction of norms as well as the relationship between agency and structure that seems separated or get lost in research designs. For instance, Antje Wiener, who advances critical norms

⁹² Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security," 5.

⁹³ Risse and Sikkink, "The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms," 5; Mona Lena Krook and Jacqui True, "Rethinking the Life Cycles of International Norms: The United Nations and the Global Promotion of Gender Equality," *European Journal of International Relations* 18, no.1 (March 2012): 104.

⁹⁴ Krook and True, "Rethinking the Life Cycles of International Norms," *European Journal of International Relations* 18, no.1 (March 2012):109.

⁹⁵ Susanne Zwingel, *Translating International Women's Rights: The CEDAW Convention in Context* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016),16.

research in IR, claims that norms and their meanings are by default contested,⁹⁶ and she views this quality of contentedness as a norm generative social practice.⁹⁷ Zwingel emphasizes the constant evolution of international norms through interpretation, negotiation, contestation in different contexts or alternatively through the (progressive) reformulation of norms over time.⁹⁸ Krook and True argue for seeing norms as ‘process’ or as ‘works-in-progress’ rather than static constructs.⁹⁹ In other words, norms are in a constant making and remaking. In the same vein, Hofferberth and Weber propose to conceptualize norms as points of orientation and reference. Their argument is illuminating

Our main contention is that crucial constructivist insights — that norms are negotiated constantly in social interaction and that they cannot be separated from the meanings actors attach to them — has been lost in the attempt to translate broader socio-theoretical claims into neo-positivist research designs that would, supposedly, enable constructivists to challenge the established approaches.¹⁰⁰

This current study also shares that taking the norms as a ‘process’, a ‘discourse’, a ‘reference point’ or as ‘practice’ open new spaces to unravel the complex dynamics of norm diffusion and provide certain advantages in transcending the shortcomings of the initial highly static approaches to norms and norm socialization/internalization. For instance, recalling norm life cycle, boomerang and the spiral models, the norm internalization by the state actors represents the end point of domestic socialization and habitualization/de-politicization of norm is a clear indication of it. In other words, in this final stage, norms are assumed to be

⁹⁶ See Antje Wiener, “Contested Meanings of Norms: A Research Framework,” *Comparative European Politics* 5 (2007); Antje Wiener, “Contested Norms in International Law and International Relations,” *Journal of International Law and International Relations* (April 4, 2009); Antje Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, (Heidelberg, New York, Dortrecht, London: Springer, 2014).

⁹⁷ Antje Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 1

⁹⁸ Zwingel, *Translating International Women’s Rights*, 16-19.

⁹⁹ Krook and True, “Rethinking the Life Cycles of International Norms,” 105.

¹⁰⁰ Matthias Hofferberth and Christian Weber, “Lost in Translation: A Critique of Constructivist Norm Research,” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 18 (2015):76.

inter-subjectively shared and gain a taken for granted quality. However, the recent studies on norm dynamics and processes well illustrate the reality that norms are in a constant process of construction, making and remaking.¹⁰¹ That is that, norms are open to interpretation, contested, negotiated and re-negotiated in social interaction.

Though defining norms as ‘practice’, ‘discourse’, ‘process’ or as ‘reference points’ would seem to complicate the model based analysis of norm diffusion, it offers greater analytical leverage in comprehending the ongoing construction of norms, and active role of agency in interpreting and giving meaning to norms in different contexts, and the complex processes at work as norms are appropriated and translated into practice in particular local settings.

2.4.2. Limitation 2: State-centrism in the Domestic Socialization of International Norms

Another limitation arises when the targets or objects of the socialization of (human rights) norms at the domestic level are closely scrutinized.¹⁰² Although norm socialization is widely defined as “the process by which international norms are internalized and implemented domestically”¹⁰³, in determining the targets of norm socialization at domestic level the norm diffusion scholars exclusively focus on state actors (government, state bureaucracy, law enforcement agencies, judiciary, military forces, etc.) who govern the public realm. This is hardly surprising given the conventional state-centric orientation of the international (human rights) law and

¹⁰¹ See Susanne Zwingel, “How Do Norms Travel? Theorizing International Women’s Rights in Transnational Perspective,” *International Studies Quarterly* 56, no.1 (March 2012):12; Lisbeth Zimmerman, “Same Same or Different? Norm Diffusion Between Resistance, Compliance, and Localization in Post-Conflict States,” *International Studies Perspectives* 17, no.1 (February 2016); Antje Wiener, “Contested Compliance: Interventions on the Normative Structure of World Politics,” *European Journal of International Relations* 10, no.2 (2004); Antje Wiener and Uwe Puetter, “The Quality of Norm is What Actors Make of It Critical Constructivist Research on Norms,” *Journal of International Law and International Relations* 5, no.1 (2009); Matthias Hofferberth and Christian Weber, “Lost in Translation,”

¹⁰² Noha Shawki, “Global Norms, Local Implementation- How are Global Norms Translated into Local Practice?,” *Globality Studies Journal* 26 (2 September 2011).

¹⁰³ Risse and Sikkink, “The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms,” 5.

IR discipline. It seems that the constructivist norm scholarship tends to replicate this view.

Because states and state actors are given ontological priority, the diffusion of international norms is analytically bounded to political commitment, capacity and capabilities of the state (i.e. political will, political culture, the existence of political, legal, administrative state mechanisms). However, as highlighted by Stachursky, in a wider moral interpretation of human rights norms, the range of addressees is broader: “the enjoyment of human rights for individuals is possible due to the extent to which everyone (state, society, civil society, family) acknowledges and protects the rights of everyone”.¹⁰⁴

It is also this focus on the state actors as target of norm socialization directly affects the empirical application of norm diffusion models and the analysis of diffusion of human rights norms. The norm diffusion literature deliberately chooses to focus on domestic socialization of specific category of public realm civil and political rights (e.g. freedom from torture, disappearance, extrajudicial execution, arbitrary arrest, detention, universal suffrage, anti-apartheid, freedom of speech, freedom of press, etc.) whereby (some) states are the primary violator of human rights of citizens and the barrier to normative change.¹⁰⁵ However, as highlighted by feminist scholarship in the case of women’s rights, most of the time it is not the state, but individuals who violate women’s human rights and the pre-existing norms or informal institutions (i.e. patriarchy, religion, traditions, family life, gender roles) give legitimacy to right violations.¹⁰⁶ Despite the fact that international women’s human rights framework imposes duties on states to ensure gender equality, non-discrimination and elimination of harmful (traditional) practices, the process of social construction of human rights norms cannot be confined to the socialization of state actors and to the public realm. In other words, states’ socialization into

¹⁰⁴ Stachursky, *The Promise and Perils of Transnationalization*, 19.

¹⁰⁵ Stachursky, *The Promise and Perils of Transnationalization*, 5.

¹⁰⁶ See Alice Edwards, *Violence against Women under International Human Rights Law* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 51; Hilary Charlesworth, “What are Women’s International Human Rights?,” in *Human Rights of Women National and International Perspectives*, ed. Rebecca J. Cook (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 60.

(women's) human rights norms, for instance by signing international conventions, making legislative reforms and certain implementation efforts are valuable and desired steps in a given country. However, the state authorities and elites should not be the ultimate target of advocacy and norm socialization. Equally, the states' initiatives may not automatically change the behavior of individuals and transform such informal institutions as patriarchy, gender roles, family life etc.¹⁰⁷

It is important to acknowledge that in terms of the research interests and particular puzzle of a researcher, (s)he may put an emphasis on dynamics and actors at one level over others. Therefore, the boomerang and spiral models developed by constructivist norm diffusion literature as well as the empirical cases that apply these models might be defended on pragmatic grounds (i.e. research subjects, questions, methodology). Still, there is one caveat here from the point of view of this study. As argued by Ian Hurd,

The dilemma of what to problematize and what to take as given is inherent in all research, and by focusing on the complexities of mutual constitution the constructivist approach encourages scholars to be open about what is lost by their particular choices and assumptions. This at least makes possible debate over the trade-offs implicit in these choices.¹⁰⁸

In order to ensure the analytical parsimony, the constructivist norm diffusion scholarship tends to replicate the often-criticized state-centrism of IR discipline. In connection with that the literature omits the diffusion dynamics of certain categories of human rights, which require norm internalization at the grassroots level. To be sure, the argument made here is not against considering the state as a target of norm socialization. However, in such cases as the domestic socialization of women's human rights, the norm diffusion literature falls short of dealing with (or widely ignored) advocacy beyond the state and the social construction of norms at grassroots or societal level. Therefore, this study calls for complementing such state-centric perspective by taking into account the agency of non-state actors, focusing

¹⁰⁷ Stachursky, *The Promise and Perils of Transnationalization*, 4- 5.

¹⁰⁸ Ian Hurd, "Constructivism," in *Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Christian Reus Smit and Duncan Snidal (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 305

on various targets of socialization and the processes involved in the socialization of human rights at grassroots or local level.

2.4.3. Limitation 3: The Neglect of Local Agents as Active Norm Maker

Criticizing the structural biases of the first wave constructivist norm scholars, a new generation of norm diffusion scholarship (e.g. Thomas Risse, Kathryn Sikkink, Martha Finnemore, Checkel, Richard Price, Michael Barnett, Antje Wiener, etc.) have pursued to bring ‘agency back in’. Kathryn Sikkink’s assessments on the early constructivist research agenda well illustrate this point. In her keynote speech at the 2011 Millenium Annual Conference, she states that “for those of us who believe fully that structures and agency are mutually determined, too much attention has been lavished on the structural side of the equation, and far too little on the agency side”.¹⁰⁹ Sikkink maintains her insider critique as follows:

even well informed constructivists have come to think of constructivism as all about internalization, socialization, and logics of appropriateness, and the entire agentic constructivist agenda, which has focused on explaining change – on advocacy, norm building, norm entrepreneurs, strategic social construction, use of hypocrisy and self-entrapment, etc. seems to get lost.¹¹⁰

As also asserted by Björkdahl and Elgström, it is misleading to assume that the ‘good’ international norms possess an inherent persuasiveness quality that will ensure and sustain norm socialization. International norms do not diffuse automatically. Rather, the process of norm diffusion requires agency.¹¹¹ In this line, the constructivist norm diffusion literature pays due attention to the agency of norm entrepreneurs in the emergence of new norms at the international platforms (i.e. UN)

¹⁰⁹ Kathryn Sikkink, “Beyond the Justice Cascade: How Agentic Constructivism could Help Explain Change in International Politics,” Revised Paper from a Keynote Address, Millennium Annual Conference, (October 22, 2011), “Out of the Ivory Tower: Weaving the Theories and Practice of International Relations,” London School of Economics, to be presented at the Princeton University IR Colloquium, (November 21, 2011), 3. <https://www.princeton.edu/politics/about/file-repository/public/Agentic-Constructivism-paper-sent-to-the-Princeton-IR-Colloquium.pdf>

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 3.

¹¹¹ Björkdahl and Elgström, “The EPA-Negotiations,” 135.

as well as modelled how TANs from above and domestic NGOs from below would trigger the processes of socialization of human rights at domestic or state level.

The burgeoning research succinctly makes the point that materially less powerful norm entrepreneurs and TANs can exercise agency in world politics and can shape the identity and interests of states. It is far from this study's intent here to reject the importance of TANs in the diffusion of human rights norms and the validity of boomerang and spiral models. However, so far the literature has focused much on the transformative agency of TANs. Risse and Sikkink's arguments in the spiral model exemplify this exclusive focus. They claim that "the diffusion of international norms in the human rights area crucially depends on the establishment and the sustainability of networks among domestic and transnational actors who manage to link up with international regimes, to alert western public opinion and western governments".¹¹² Risse and Sikkink further argue that:

These advocacy networks serve three purposes, which constitute necessary conditions for sustainable domestic change in human rights area: 1) they put norm violating states on the international agenda in terms of moral consciousness raising. 2) they empower and legitimate the claims of domestic opposition groups against norm violating governments. Thus, they are crucial in mobilizing domestic opposition, social movements and non-governmental organizations in target countries. 3) they challenge norm violating governments by creating a transnational structure pressuring such regimes simultaneously from above and from below.¹¹³

In this framework, domestic NGOs are articulated as part of TANs and assumed to play a role in activating the international attention and pushing forward the 'boomerang' or 'spiral' through advocacy and monitoring the state's compliance with human rights norms. However, as emphasized by DeMars and Dijkzeul, the constructivist norm diffusion literature only stresses the vertical political axis of norm diffusion, in which normative power bear on state from below and above. In that sense, they truncate the agency of NGOs to fit their pre-defined research

¹¹² Risse and Sikkink, "The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms," 5.

¹¹³ Ibid., 5.

designs.¹¹⁴ This analytical focus obviously serves to narrow down the agency of domestic-local NGOs, social movements, individual activists. It also ignores processes of the identity formation/ socialization of domestic/local agency. As rightly pointed out by Shaw “even though a broad range of actors is recognized as norm transmitters, only national governments are recognized as norm adopters. We know relatively little about when, how, and why sub-national public actors and non-state actors can diffuse and implement international norms”.¹¹⁵

Importantly, Amitav Acharya directs our attention to another relevant point. Acharya contends that “this framework did not sufficiently acknowledge the role of the local civil society and NGO community as norm-makers and norm brokers, i.e. in contextualizing, redefining, and localizing transnational ideas and even developing new norms that have appeal in one or multiple local contexts”.¹¹⁶ Therefore, according to Acharya “local NGOs should not be regarded as passive recipients of transnational norms, but active agents of norm localization and construction”.¹¹⁷ In the same vein, this study also argues for giving more attention to the locally-embedded agency in the social construction of (human rights) norms from below.

2.4.4. Limitation 4: Narrow Conceptualization of Culture as Static Filter/Barrier to Norm Diffusion

In explaining the cross-national variation in norm compliance, one prominent branch of norm diffusion literature emphasizes the influence of domestic political structures or culture as a variable that condition the domestic impact of

¹¹⁴ William E. DeMars and Dennis Dijkzeul, “Introduction: NGOing,” in *The NGO Challenge for International Relations Theory*, ed. William E. Demars and Dennis Dijkzeul (London and New York: Routledge 2015), 12.

¹¹⁵ Noha Shawki, “Global Norms, Local Implementation,” 1.

¹¹⁶ Amitav Acharya, “Local and Transnational Civil Society as Agents of Norm Diffusion,” *Paper Presented to the Global Governance Workshop*, Department of International Development, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, UK, (1-3 June 2012), 1. <http://amitavacharya.com/sites/default/files/Local%20and%20Transnational%20Civil%20Society%20as%20Agents%20of%20Norm%20Diffusion.pdf>.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 2.

norms. Whereas the prominent scholars of this literature (e.g. Legro, Checkel, Cortell and Davis) succinctly put forth that domestic context matters, and the norm diffusion is more likely when international norm resonates with the pre-existing domestic structures/norms, from the point of this study they remain limited for several reasons.

First, those studies offer a highly narrow definition of culture. For instance, deducing from the Checkel's definition of 'cultural match', culture refers to "the prescriptions embodied in domestic norms, as reflected in (decision makers') discourse, the legal system (constitutions, judicial codes, law) and bureaucratic agencies (organizational ethos and administrative procedures)".¹¹⁸ In other words, culture is defined in terms of the particular attributes of domestic political system or the organizational culture of state/bureaucracy regulating the state-society relations. Judging the presence or absence of particular (democratic) attributes, Checkel identifies the liberal, corporatist, statist and state-above-society cultural structures as filters of state compliance. However, for better understanding of the norm dynamics at societal/grass-roots level, a broader and non-essentialist definition of culture should be taken into account. A broader definition should involve the ensemble of ideas, beliefs, values, meanings, symbols, habits, and (formal/informal) social institutions constructed by human beings that could both enable and constrain norm socialization.

Second, squeezing culture into the political culture of a state and seeing it as a static filter or barrier, this literature would fall into the trap of reifying the cultural relativist position, which has long steered scholars, lawyers, judges, political leaders and activists to choose either rights or cultures in theorizing, claiming and practicing human rights.¹¹⁹

Looking more closely, the cultural relativists reject the universality claim of human rights by underlining the equal validity, legitimacy and value of diverse cultures. They call for respect and tolerance for cultural differences. The cultural

¹¹⁸ Checkel, "Norms, Institutions, and National Identity," 87.

¹¹⁹ Jane K. Cowan et al., "Introduction," in *Culture and Rights: Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Jane K. Cowan et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 4.

relativists assert that rights are culturally relative and the human rights are far from being universal. Human rights rank equal with all other cultures. The modern human rights- a series of inalienable entitlements for all human beings- are only one of the moral rules and values to ensure human dignity.¹²⁰ Additionally, some cultural relativists view the human rights as a uniquely Western idea and the product of Western political history, derived from enlightenment, French Revolution (1789), the American Bill of Rights (1791). Therefore, they criticize any attempt to extend a uniquely Western ideal into the non-Western world.¹²¹

It is important to note that cultural relativism has been utilized as a powerful rhetoric in the lips of some political elites, state leaders, religious communities or radical extremists either to challenge the legitimacy of human rights norms or to escape from their international obligations or criticisms. For instance, during the Cold War period cultural relativism became an integral part of communist/socialist countries' stances in the UN or other international forums vis-à-vis 'capitalist/liberal' Western world. Starting with the decolonization period, some African states resisted to fulfill their human rights obligations on the ground of their national, ethnic or religious cultural differences.¹²² Another important repercussion of relativist argument came to the fore when some Asian states pronounced their resistance to western-cum-universal human rights in defense of 'Asian values' imagined as reified essence.¹²³ Importantly, discussions pertaining to the women's human rights are illuminating. During the global conferences, meetings, the CEDAW hearings, some nationalist, religious or fundamentalist leaders resisted or

¹²⁰ Sally Engle Merry, "Changing Rights, Changing Culture," in *Culture and Rights: Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Cowan et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 32; Rikki Holtmaat and Jonneke Naber, *Women's Human Rights and Culture From Deadlock to Dialogue* (Cambridge and Portland: Intersentia, 2011); Jack Donnelly, "Cultural Relativism and Universal Human Rights," *Human Rights Quarterly* 6, no. 4 (Nov. 1984): 400, 402, 405.

¹²¹ Merry, "Changing Rights, Changing Culture," 32; Holtmaat and Naber, "Women's Human Rights,"; Jack Donnelly, "Cultural Relativism," 400, 402, 405.

¹²² Sally Engle Merry, "Human Rights Law and the Demonization of Culture (and anthropology along the way)," *Polar: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 26, no. 1 (2003): 66; Benjamin Stachursky, *The Promise and Perils of Transnationalization*, 23.

¹²³ Cowan et al., "Introduction," 6; Merry, "Human Rights Law and the Demonization of Culture," 66.

put reservations to women's rights in the name of culture. As explained by Yakın Ertürk,

When the status of women is concerned, the issue of human rights is more often than not subjected to cultural relativity. Culture and tradition are often cited for legitimizing discriminatory practices and violations of women's human rights. It has become a common political strategy for authoritarian, non-democratic states or militant non-state power blocks to dismiss and justify violations of the human rights of women as a defense against foreign cultural bias.¹²⁴

As illustrated in the above examples, some states contest international norms or would try to exempt from their international commitments in line with cultural relativist arguments. In connection with this, norm diffusion scholarship attributes a causal role to culture in explaining the states' varying commitments or socialization into international norms (i.e. human rights). However, focusing on explaining 'what is not possible' in a given cultural context, this literature contributes little to our understanding of how international norms take root and flourish in particular circumstances and in different socio-cultural contexts.

The norm localization perspective that is presented in the Chapter 4 arguably fills the above mentioned gaps and limitations of the existing norm diffusion literature. As such it contributes to the norm and norm diffusion literature in IR by bringing the local structure and local agency back in.

¹²⁴ Yakın Ertürk, "The Challenge of Governance: Ensuring the Human Rights of Women and the Respect for Cultural Diversity," United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Managing Diversity in the Civil Service United Nations Headquarters, New York, (3 - 4 May 2001), 4, <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan001255.pdf>

CHAPTER 3

LOCALIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL NORMS: ANALYTICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

After presenting the main premises, arguments and also the limitations of the existing literature on norms and norm diffusion in IR discipline, now we can turn to the analytical framework of norm localization that this study employs in exploring the localization of women's human rights norms. By combining the main ontological premises of constructivism with the insights from the new social-movements literature and the practice turn in IR, the norm localization framework shall be developed in four important areas. These are the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the norm localization; imagining the local and local context; the agency role of local norm entrepreneurs; and the social practice of international norms at local level.

3.1. Localization Perspective to Norm Diffusion

The norm setting and norm diffusion have been conventionally treated as a top-down process.¹²⁵ Norm diffusion process starts from the international level and ends in the domestic sphere. More specifically, norm diffusion process basically proceeds as follows. The new norms emerge at the international platforms through

¹²⁵ Wouter Vandenhole, "Localizing the Human Rights of Children," in *Children's Rights from below Cross Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Manfred Liebel et al. (U.K.: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 80; Tine Destrooper, "Reconciling Discourses on Women's Rights: Learning from Guatemalan Indigenous Women's Groups," *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 7, no.2 (July 2015):1-2; Joel R. Pruce, "The Practice Turn in Human Rights Research," in *The Social Practice of Human Rights*, ed. Joel R. Pruce (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 1-17; Mark Goodale, "Introduction: Locating Rights,".

the advocacy of norm entrepreneurs. Through persuasion and consensus these norms are codified into international legal documents (e.g. treaties, conventions, declarations, charters). Once persuaded, states ratify these international legal instruments, which are then assumed to be implemented or put into practice domestically. The international courts, rapporteurs and monitoring bodies of international or regional organizations regularly scrutinize the domestic processes, pinpoint the gaps in state's implementation, and offer recommendations including the concrete interpretations of norms and expectations. If signatory states fall short of implementation and show repressive tendencies, the TANs linking domestic and international pro-human rights groups exert pressure on states from above and from below to ensure norm compliance.¹²⁶ This top-down approach to norm diffusion is also accompanied by the plethora of words and terminology, acts and goals which are nonetheless abstract and might shallowly inform the daily lives and grievances of right holders: to codify, legislate, implement, enforce, infringe, commit, fulfill, comply, monitor, evaluate, assess, measure, provide, exercise, intervene, institutionalize, socialize, etc.¹²⁷ In brief, the emphasis is predominantly placed on the international sites where the new norms emerge and develop, and the state actors as the principle agents of norm implementation (that is to say diffusion) at the domestic level.

In the last decade or so, the state-centric and formal top-down approach to norm diffusion account have been increasingly questioned and challenged by the human rights activists/practitioners and scholars who take seriously the socio-cultural realities and actual needs of right holders and norm promoters in diverse local contexts.¹²⁸ In other words, the increased knowledge on the social practice of

¹²⁶Zwingel, *Translating International Women's Rights*, 12.

¹²⁷ Joel R. Pruce, "The Practice Turn in Human Rights Research," 4.

¹²⁸ Amitav Acharya, "How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter?," Zwingel, "How Do Norms Travel,"; Zimmermann, "Same Same or Different?,"; Hofferberth and Weber, "Lost in Translation,"; Krook and True, "Rethinking the Life Cycles of International Norms,"; Antje Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*; Antje Wiener, "Contested Meanings of Norms: A Research Framework," 6; Antje Wiener, "Agency of the Governed in Global International Relations: Access to Norm Validation," *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal* (2017); Christian Bueger, "Practices, Norms, and the Theory of Contestation," *Polity* 49, no. 1 (January 2017): 126-131; Joel Pruce, "The Practice Turn in Human Rights Research,"; Sally Engle Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence*; Nüket

international norms at the local level brought to light two often ignored dynamics: the importance of the context of norm diffusion and the role of local agents as insider proponents and active norm-makers in bringing about normative change in that particular socio-cultural setting. Joel R. Pruce well summarizes the emerging quest and research agenda as follows:

A great distance from the early, narrow focus on international institutions and nation-states, a strand in human rights research today is geared towards exploring human rights practice where it happens, in new spaces and across new terrains. This requires case studies that examine the way that human rights ideas are translated for diverse audiences and vocabularies.¹²⁹

In this line, the localization perspective to the diffusion of international norms has united practitioners and scholars from diverse disciplinary backgrounds around such a novel research agenda of the diffusion of international norms from below. For instance, Amitav Acharya from the discipline of IR, who is also well known for his criticism of Western-centric and state-centric theory development in constructivist IR scholarship, aims at developing a more inclusive approach to human rights norm diffusion that gives (a) due attention to the cognitive priors in a local context that would have robust legitimacy and functionality, and (b) due recognition to the agency role of the local actors as insider proponents of human rights norms.¹³⁰ To this end, he proposes the norm localization perspective. Acharya defines norm localization as “active construction (through framing, grafting, pruning and cultural selection) of emergent universal human rights norms by local actors in order to develop a significant congruence or fit between human rights ideas and local beliefs and practices”.¹³¹

In his works, Acharya puts forward that the pre-existing beliefs, norms and practices in a regional or local context would initially create a degree of contestation, which neither allow for an immediate and wholesale acceptance of human rights

Kardam, *Turkey's Engagement with Global Women's Human Rights* (Aldershot, Hants, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Pub., 2005).

¹²⁹ Pruce, “The Practice Turn in Human Rights Research,” 13.

¹³⁰ Acharya, “How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter,”.

¹³¹ Acharya, “How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter,” 245.

ideas (as ‘new’ or ‘foreign’ norm) nor necessarily results in its outright rejection.¹³²

Acharya claims that

Central to the norm dynamic I present is the contestation between emerging transnational norms and preexisting regional normative and social orders. But unlike other scholars who have addressed the question of resistance and agency of domestic actors, I place particular emphasis on a dynamic process called localization. Instead of just assessing the existential fit between domestic and outside identity norms and institutions, and explaining strictly dichotomous outcomes of acceptance or rejection, localization describes a complex process and outcome by which norm-takers build congruence between transnational norms (including norms previously institutionalized in a region) and local beliefs and practices... The success of norm diffusion strategies and processes depends on the extent to which they provide opportunities for localization.¹³³

Localization perspective brings to the fore the possibility of complex processes of dialogue and congruence/resonance building instigated by local norm entrepreneurs. For Acharya, norm localization is an evolutionary and everyday form of progressive norm diffusion that bridges human rights ideas and local beliefs, values and practices.¹³⁴ To illustrate this process, in his later works Acharya introduces the Banyan tree metaphor. The Banyan is a large Indian tree with aerial roots reaching the ground. The canopy of Banyan tree is both a resting place for travelers and a culturally valuable space for meeting, exchange, consensus building and dispute settlement in local life. For Acharya, this large Banyan Tree with its aerial roots reaching the ground (top-down) and the rootstocks supporting and giving life to tree trunk and branches (bottom-up) represents the multiple ownership of global human rights norms.¹³⁵

The localization of human rights has also been explored in the field of anthropology. Sally Engle Merry, Peggy Levitt and their collaborators study the

¹³² Acharya, “How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter,” 242.

¹³³ Acharya, “How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter,” 241.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 241, 252.

¹³⁵ Amitav Acharya, “From the Boomerang to the Banyan: The Diffusion of Human Rights Norms Reconsidered,” Paper prepared for the Columbia University Human Rights Futures Conference, Columbia University, New York, (15 November 2013), <https://multiplexworld.com/2015/01/20/from-the-boomerang-to-the-banyan-the-diffusion-of-human-rights-norms-reconsidered/>

localization of women's human rights ideas with a specific focus on violence against women in Beijing (China), Baroda (India), Lima (Peru) and New York (USA). In each local site, two or three women's human rights NGOs were observed to see how global norms have been interpreted and deployed in their day-to-day activism and work on the ground. The research findings show that local actors appropriate women's human rights norms and translate them, in a range of ways and in different degrees, into local terms and context. They call this process of appropriation and translation as vernacularization.¹³⁶ The key dimension of vernacularization is the creative and performative agency of the people in the middle, or simply vernacularizers on the ground. These local actors appropriate women's human rights framework and translate them in engaging everyday activism and face to face interaction so as to make human rights understandable, resonant and usable.¹³⁷

Another branch of localization literature emerged in the fields of human rights and development. For instance, Koen de Feyter draws attention to the need to make human rights as locally relevant as possible in establishing the legitimacy and universality of human rights and he offers what he calls 'localizing human rights' perspective for the infusion of human rights from below. Koen de Feyter defines localization as "a process whereby the everyday experiences and human rights needs as formulated by local people constitute the starting point both for the interpretation of human rights norms and for the development of human rights action".¹³⁸ In the argument of Koen de Feyter, "there is no contradiction between maintaining human rights as a global language and allowing for variations in content in order to make human rights protection as locally relevant as possible".¹³⁹ Thus, "localization inevitably implies that a degree of plurality is accepted within the human rights discourse".¹⁴⁰ He further stresses that taking the experiences and human rights needs

¹³⁶ Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence*, 219.

¹³⁷ Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence*, 219.

¹³⁸ Koen De Feyter, "Localizing Human Rights," 68.

¹³⁹ Koen De Feyter, "Localizing Human Rights," *Institute of Development Policy and Management Discussion Paper* 2006.02, (2006):9.
<https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container2143/files/Publications/DP/2006/02-defeyter.pdf>9

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 23.

of local people, local communities and local human rights NGOs as a point of departure do not overshadow the validity of human rights norms. Rather, localization stands to strengthen and enrich human rights framework by taking into account the inputs of various societies in the world as well as human rights practice.

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Following Koen de Feyter, Tine Destrooper recaptures the key points of localization as follows: (a) it offers an in-depth exploration of how human rights plays out in the lives of people on the ground, (b) it is about processes of cultural and political change which make a society more receptive to human rights, (c) it underlines the need for flexibility within international human rights system to accommodate particularistic human rights claims which arise from people's own understanding of human rights as well as the experiences of local actors when they attempt to translate human rights into practice.¹⁴²

On closer reflection, norm localization perspective is informed by the constructivist premise on the mutual constitution of agents and structures in socially constructing human rights norms and in creating inter-subjectivity.¹⁴³ In addition, the localization perspective developed in this study brings to the fore an interesting interplay between the local agents and two different (and sometimes competing) ideational structures. The first structure is the globally circulating human rights norms, which are embraced by the local norm entrepreneurs but at the same time reconstituted through the interpretations and social practices of these local agents. The second structure is the local socio-cultural and political context that shapes the lives of people/communities. The local norm entrepreneurs by appropriating and translating human rights norms into practice intend to transform local structures from within. Moreover, imbued with constructivist insights, norm localization

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 23.

¹⁴² Tine Destrooper, "Reconciling Discourses on Women's Rights," 226.

¹⁴³ Building on Giddens' structuration theory, constructivists stress that the social world comprises neither purely atomistic and interest driven individuals nor pervasive structures that make people to operate within them with little or no choice and capacity. Instead, agency and structure dynamically interact and co-determine one another: structures are made possible by agents' practices, which are themselves constituted by their context. See Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984).

perspective also moves away from the static understanding of ideational structures, and takes both the human rights norms and local socio-cultural norms as ‘processes’ that are malleable, subject to different interpretations as well as contestation, and constantly in the making through the everyday practices of local agents.¹⁴⁴

It is also important to notice that localization perspective transcends the sole reliance on the norm diffusion through states’ socialization.¹⁴⁵ As contended by Krook and True, human rights norms diffuse “precisely because -rather than despite the fact that- they may encompass different meanings, fit with a variety of contexts, and be subject to framing by diverse actors”.¹⁴⁶

All in all, this study defines norm localization as the re-construction of international norms at the local/grassroots level by the local agents in order to make international norms resonant, responsive, acceptable and effectively usable in particular socio-cultural terrains. Central to the localization are the dynamics of local context and the creative and performative agency of local norm entrepreneurs. The process is initiated by local norm entrepreneurs in order to make a society more receptive to a ‘new’ norm, to bring about change as well as to bring global norms closer to the realities of right holders. It is a process of appropriation and translation of a transnationally circulating norm into local cultural context and practice so as to make it resonant, responsive, acceptable and usable by the targeted right holders. This suggests that the creation of new norms and states’ compliance and implementation are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the local ownership and social practice of human rights norms. In order for human rights to have a real impact on the lives of people and transform pre-existing socio-cultural norms and stigmas, human rights need to resonate with the concerns and realities of the situated right holders. In other words, global norms are needed to be localized.

It would be useful to end the conceptual discussion with a crucial warning. Norm localization does not mean that when a particular norm diffuses into a particular local context, it loses its content and meaning. Such a process and/or

¹⁴⁴ Peggy Levitt et al. , “Doing Vernacularization: the Encounter between Global and Local,” 127.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 130

¹⁴⁶ Krook and True, “Rethinking the Life Cycles of International Norms,” 105.

outcome would not qualify 'successful' norm diffusion. Rather, it would mean norm distortion. In case of localization, international norms are not really distorted because local norm entrepreneurs are loyal to their substance and essence.

3.1.1. What is Local? Imagining the Local Context

The way we think about the 'local' matters. For instance, in our daily conversations, the term 'local' as an adjective is used to describe various things pertaining to or characterized by a place or a position in space: local food, local custom, local government, local symbol, local social movements, local NGOs, local festivals, local dress, etc. In IR discipline, one can also observe the use of 'local' within a set of levels descending from international (or global) to regional, from regional to national, and from national to local, in which the 'local' level usually denotes to the smallest size, or scale of a research unit. Furthermore, in the field of globalization studies, we can identify divergent and often dichotomous claims surrounding the definitions of the 'global' and 'local'.¹⁴⁷ Given to space constraints, suffice to say that much of the claims evoked in the definition of global and local go far beyond the use of local as an adjective or scale, but implicitly or explicitly related to power and ontological priority. The striking and indeed deeply problematic examples stem from the perspectives that perpetuate the distinction between global and local: local as reactive to homogenizing forces of globalization; as insulated space; as a separate self-contained realm; as culturally bounded; as site of particularity; as lack of mobility, whereas global stands for mobility, speed, interconnectedness, world-wide links and relations across all key domains of human activity.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ For a detailed account of globalization see William I. Robinson, "Theories of Globalization," in *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization*, ed. George Ritzer (USA, UK, Australia: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 125-144.

¹⁴⁸ Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*; Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London, California, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005); Zwingel, "How Do Norms Travel,"; Merry, "Transnational Human Rights and Local Activism: Mapping the Middle," *American Anthropologist* 108, no.1 (March 2006):39-40.

This study does not delve into an attempt to give an alternative definition of local. Rather, the point is, in Mark Goodale's words, "the sites where human rights unfold in practice do matter, and these sites are not simply nodes in a virtual network, but actual *places* in social space".¹⁴⁹ Doreen Massey also adds that "all social (and indeed physical) phenomena/activities/relations have a spatial form and a relative spatial location".¹⁵⁰ It is to say that socio-spatial context of norm diffusion matters. Hence, instead of claiming universality of international norms (e.g. human rights) at the abstract level or squeezing norms into the international law and other legal instruments, it is important to take seriously the social practice of norms that unfolds in discrete social spaces and time as constitutive of the norms and their universality.¹⁵¹ Another central point is, as put forward by Massey, "space and place are important in the construction of gender relations and in struggles to change them".¹⁵² Thinking in this way, it is necessary to consider the variations in the construction of social relations as well as struggles to change them in different socio-cultural spaces/places.¹⁵³

Then, how to imagine local? The 'local' space could well be a neighborhood, a village, a town, a city or a metropole, which provides us the socio-spatial context of norm diffusion. Then, the 'local social context' could be imagined as the site of everyday life, face-to-face interaction, culture and the agency in which international norms are given meaning to, re-negotiated, practiced and sometimes challenged or contested. Koen de Feyter and Stephan Parmentier also insert that

Human rights crises emerge at the local level. It is at the local level that abuses occur, and where a first line of defense needs to be developed, responses also need to be developed, first and foremost by those that are threatened. It is when people face abuse in their personal experience and in their immediate surroundings that they 'have' to engage in collective action for the defense of their rights, and it is at this time that the efficacy of mechanisms of protection

¹⁴⁹ Mark Goodale, "Introduction: Locating Rights," 13.

¹⁵⁰ Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*, 265.

¹⁵¹ Mark Goodale, "Introduction: Locating Rights," 5-10.

¹⁵² Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*, 179.

¹⁵³ Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*, 178.

is tested. It is at the local level that the power to enjoy human rights either proves vital or illusory.¹⁵⁴

In brief, in understanding the diffusion of international norms from below or social practice of norms, the ‘local’ should be treated as a crucial and distinct realm of analysis.

3.1.2. Norm Localization and the Agency of Local Norm Entrepreneurs

Localization perspective not only calls for a shift in focus from the international/global level whereby the new norms emerge to the local level where the norms are interpreted and practiced, but also puts premium on the agency role of local actors as ‘insider proponents’ of the norms.¹⁵⁵ The notion of agency is associated with ideas such as choice, will, purposiveness, intentionality, reflexivity, creativity, learning and transformative capacity.¹⁵⁶

The earlier literature on norm diffusion widely focused on the agency role of TANs, which operate across states, continents and time zones to pursue a universal moral agenda. Moreover, given the state-centrism of international law, IR discipline in general and of norm diffusion literature in particular, the socialization of state actors (i.e. governments, bureaucracy, political elites) and the state-led implementation (i.e. diffusion) of international norms were given primacy. These analytical biases overshadowed the role of the local or sub-national civil society, NGO community or individual activists “as norm-makers and norm brokers, i.e. in contextualizing, redefining, and localizing transnational ideas and even developing new norms that have appeal in one or multiple local contexts”.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Koen de Feyter and Stephan Parmentier, “Introduction: Reconsidering Human Rights from Below,” in *The Local Relevance of Human Rights*, ed. Koen De Feyter et al., (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 1.

¹⁵⁵ Acharya, “How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter,” 249.

¹⁵⁶ See Mustafa Emirbayer and Ann Mische, “What is Agency?,” *The American Journal of Sociology* 103, no.4 (January 1998).

¹⁵⁷ Acharya, “Local and Transnational Civil Society,” 1.

The local norm entrepreneurs (or what this study interchangeably calls them as intermediaries, norm brokers, norm translators, or norm localizers) are Janus-faced actors in the sense that they are not only locally embedded but also nationally and transnationally connected. To put differently, they are insiders and embedded in their local context. As they interact with the local actors (individual or collective) and institutions, they retain concrete knowledge about the realities, needs and resources of that local setting. At the same time, in striving to cultivate social change, the local norm entrepreneurs choose to uphold international norms (i.e. human rights framework) in their diverse paths and processes of appropriation.

Moreover, drawing insights from the new social-movements research, we can assert that localizers are reflexive to the emergent political and/or discursive opportunity structures that would shape the resources as well as constraints in translating international norms into practice. As explained by Tarrow, political opportunity structure refers to “consistent – but not necessarily formal, permanent or national – dimensions of the political environment that either encourage or discourage people from using collective action”.¹⁵⁸ This double consciousness and the knowledge of the multiple realms (i.e. global, national, local) and reflexivity not only make them key agents in the process of norm localization, but also give them an intermediary role in connecting the global, national and local in the diffusion of norms.

As the conceptualization of norm localization presented above indicates, the local norm entrepreneurs appropriate and translate international norms into practice. In this line, norm localization is a two-stage process. Starting with the former, the appropriation process, in essence, is related to the local agents’ socialization into international norms.

Appropriation as a voluntary form of socialization and learning process is immensely shaped by the problem identifications, motivations, deliberate choices, channels, national/global connections or networks and pathways of local agents. In this line, for solving a local problem and in cultivating social change, the local agents would choose to appropriate or possess transnationally circulating norms, principles

¹⁵⁸ Sidney Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 23.

and concepts which are codified into the international legal instruments, particular ‘master frames’ (e.g. ‘women’s rights are human rights’, ‘VAW is a violation of human rights’, ‘the personal is political’), tactics and action repertoires that were developed in other parts of the world. However, by no means the local agents are passive recipients or imitators. They should be regarded as active agents of norm construction.¹⁵⁹ In other words, the local agents, endowed with interpretive capacity, intentionality and creativity, are enable to make use of and further develop what they have appropriated in a new context.

What is also integral to advancing international norms in different local contexts is translation. While appropriation is predominantly related to local agents’ socialization, translation-the second stage of localization- is part and parcel of the social practice of norms and aims at the socialization of local targets (or addressees) into the international norms. Depending on the realities, dynamics and/or power structures of a given local context, targets might include individuals, groups, leaders, communities, right holders, local public authorities, etc.

As argued by Levitt and Merry, localization is different from the literal or word-for-word translation of global norms and standards as they are presented in the international legal documents and instruments.¹⁶⁰ In Niamh Reilly’s words, translation is “a participative, dialogic process- grounded in the idea that the content of universal human rights must resonate with the concerns of and be defined by and with concrete situated right holders”.¹⁶¹ In explaining this translation work Zwingel uses the image of labor intensive quilt making, in which localizers creatively “stitch together” different pieces.¹⁶² These insights of the localization perspective, for instance, find sound in Yakın Ertürk’s (the then UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women) report on intersections between culture and VAW. Ertürk argues that

¹⁵⁹ Acharya, “Local and Transnational Civil Society,” 2.

¹⁶⁰ Peggy Levitt and Sally Engle Merry, “Making Women’s Human Rights in the Vernacular: Navigating the Culture/Rights Debate,” in *Gender and Culture at the Limits of Rights*, ed. Dorothy Hodgson (USA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 88, 91.

¹⁶¹ Niamh Reilly, *Women’s Human Rights*, 15.

¹⁶² Zwingel, *Translating International Women’s Rights*, 5.

In order to successfully uphold universally agreed values, in particular the principle that no custom, tradition or religious consideration can be invoked to justify violence against women, it is necessary to address, and understand, the process of legitimization in the assertion of these types of discourses. This requires systematic engagement in a “cultural negotiation” whereby the positive cultural elements are emphasized, while the oppressive elements in culture-based discourses are demystified.¹⁶³

One final novelty of the localizers is their ability to translate up and down that makes norm diffusion as a two-way dialogue. In other words, those occupying the middle translate human rights into local terms and context in order to make them relevant, usable and acceptable. At the same time, they channel the knowledge of local, problems, grievances, achievements or failures up by portraying them in terms of human rights.¹⁶⁴ Andreopoulos adds that “in turn, local responses can and do shape the global understanding of the content and applicability of the relevant norms and practices”.¹⁶⁵ As Merry makes it clear, “as knowledge brokers, translators channel the flow of information”¹⁶⁶ and “they foster a gradual emergence of a local rights consciousness among grassroots people and greater awareness of national and local issues among global activists”.¹⁶⁷ In brief, these Janus-faced actors transmit and convey the knowledge in two directions: from global to local, and from local to global.

Before moving further, it would be helpful to raise the following question: Who would be these norm localizers? All in all, agency is not restricted to state and state bureaucracy in the domestic socialization and implementation of international norms. A wide range of actors may act as localizers, including social movement

¹⁶³United Nations General Assembly Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Yakın Ertürk Intersections between Culture and Violence against Women*, A/HRC/4/34 (17 January 2007), 19, http://www.fasngo.org/assets/files/resources/4th_hrc_report_by_the_special_rapporteur_3_07.pdf

¹⁶⁴ Merry, “Transnational Human Rights and Local Activism,” 42; Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence*, 229.

¹⁶⁵ George J. Andreopoulos, “Challenges and Opportunities in Advancing Human Protection: Rethinking the Global-Local Nexus,” *Criminal Justice Ethics* 29, no.: 2 (August 2010):143.

¹⁶⁶ Merry, “Transnational Human Rights and Local Activism,” 40.

¹⁶⁷ Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence*, 134.

activists, feminists, human rights lawyers, rights-based NGOs and its members, academicians, social service providers, social workers, artists, intellectuals, politicians, community leaders, etc.¹⁶⁸ Levitt and Merry also draw attention to a second group of intermediaries who were first the beneficiaries/addressees, and then the enactors of localization process. They are, for example, local people attending training programs, workshops or activities on human rights, who return to their home and convey what they have learned to their friends, relatives or neighbors. They are, for example, formerly battered or oppressed women, who acquired new meanings through their interaction with women NGOs, staff in counseling centers or shelters, social movement activists, etc. and then joined the advocacy for women's human rights in their town or city.¹⁶⁹ Wies and Handane call norm localizers as 'frontline workers', who in their daily work directly interact with and assist victims and survivors.¹⁷⁰ Joel R. Pruce, speaks of practitioners and define these actors as "those people in the trenches, on the frontlines, in the field and on the ground".¹⁷¹ Rajaram and Zaraira, in their ethnographic study in Gujarat state India, also observe various types of translators including what they called conveyers, converters, adaptors, and generators. Lawyers are the typical examples of conveyers. They know what is written in the national and international law in terms of human rights. When clients seek help or advice about their problems, they convey the information about rights usually without attempting to create a fundamental change in their clients' world view. Converters attempt to encourage people to see their problems from a different, right based perspective. In order to create epistemic shifts or to add a new layer on people's consciousness, converters (i.e. women NGOs) organize for instance exhibitions, campaigns, theatres, public conferences, workshops, etc. Adaptors adopt the global discourses by paying due attention to the nuances of local culture, local context or the cultural symbols that will be deployed.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 229

¹⁶⁹ Peggy Levitt and Sally Merry, "Vernacularization on the Ground: Local Uses of Global Women's Rights in Peru, China, India and the United States," *Global Networks* 9, no.4 (2009):450.

¹⁷⁰ Jennifer R. Wies, Hillary J. Haldane, *Anthropology at the Front Lines of Gender-Based Violence* (Nashville Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press, 2011).

¹⁷¹ Pruce, "The Practice Turn in Human Rights Research," 5.

For instance, adaptors may change the human rights idiom and create new terms or means of expressing them, they may adapt a play they perform or a song they sing, they may pick only one specific aspect of human rights and leave the others in order to make it fit better with the local context or needs. Generators invent new terms and concepts, produce new approaches and attempt to make them acceptable in the local discourse.¹⁷²

Crucially, as asserted by Rajaram and Zararia, multiple actors in various ways can do the translation work. Alternatively the same person may perform different translation roles depending on the concept, nature of activity or to whom she/he translates.¹⁷³

3.1.3. Localization as the Translation of International Norms into Practice

Translation of international norms into social practice captures the crucial dimension of diffusion through localization. In Joel Pruce's words,

Social practice is the performance of norms in lived experience. Not in the sense that norms are diffused and learned, which while significant, only stands in for real practices, remaining abstract and ethereal. Whether or not states comply with norms remains important, but practice involves the activities by which compliance occurs, the local transformations compliance bring about, and the pressure to maintain compliance. For human rights, social practice is the grind of giving corporeal form to ideas and values, through the labor of actual people whose energies are directed at improving the lives of others.¹⁷⁴

Practice requires agency and as Wiener and Puetter put forward "norms are what actors make of them".¹⁷⁵ Moreover, as Adler and Poilot emphasize "practices are not merely descriptive arrows that connect structure to agency and back, but rather the dynamic material and ideational processes that enable structures to be

¹⁷² N. Rajaram and Vaishali Zararia, "Translating Women's Human Rights in a Globalizing World: the Spiral Process in Reducing Gender Injustice in Baroda, India," *Global Networks* 9, no. 4 (2009): 479-480.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 480.

¹⁷⁴ Pruce, "The Practice Turn in Human Rights Research," 4.

¹⁷⁵ Wiener and Puetter, "The Quality of Norm is What Actors Make of It," 4.

stable or to evolve, and agents to produce or transform structures”.¹⁷⁶ In this line, norm localization perspective claims that in distinct socio-cultural contexts locally embedded and transnationally connected norm entrepreneurs are key players in the social practice of human rights norms. These intermediaries appropriate, interpret and translate human rights ideas and norms in such a way that makes human rights resonant, acceptable, comprehensible, responsive to realities on the ground and usable by the targeted right holders and duty bearers.¹⁷⁷

Within various local contexts all over the world, norm localizers engage in meaning construction and mobilization processes in translating human rights ideas into social practice. Building on case studies, the burgeoning norm localization literature provides a bunch of context specific translation practices and tactics.¹⁷⁸ Let’s have a closer look at some of the major examples.

Drawing insights from Southeast Asian historiography Amitav Acharya provides four important norm localization tactics: framing, grafting, pruning, cultural selection.¹⁷⁹ According to Acharya, the proponents of a new norm actively construct the link between existing norms and emergent norms through framing.¹⁸⁰ In Acharya’s interpretation, “framing can make a global norm appear local”.¹⁸¹ Grafting is a form of norm transplantation in which “norm entrepreneurs institutionalize a new norm by associating it with a preexisting norm in the same issue area, which makes a similar prohibition or injunction”.¹⁸² In cultural selection tactic, the local agents borrow only “those ideas that are, or can be made, congruent

¹⁷⁶ Emanuel Adler and Vincent Pouliot, “International Practices,” *International Theory* 3, no.1 (2011):5.

¹⁷⁷ Peggy Levitt et al., “Doing Vernacularization: The Encounter between Global and Local Ideas about Women’s Rights in Peru,” in *Feminist Strategies in International Governance*, ed. Susanne Zwingel et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 127, 130.

¹⁷⁸ Tactics suggest the carefully planned awareness raising and/or persuasive moves, maneuvers, action repertoires (protests, sit-ins, petitions, campaigns, lobbying, naming and shaming), rhetoric, expedient, devices, methods, negotiation and dialogue skills, persuasive acts, etc. directed towards targets for achieving intended normative change.

¹⁷⁹ Acharya, “How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter,” 243-244.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 243.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 244.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 244.

with prior local beliefs and practices”.¹⁸³ Pruning denotes “adjustments to foreign ideas to find a better fit with existing local beliefs and practices”.¹⁸⁴

Rajaram and Zararia apply the vernacularization/localization framework in their ethnographic study on the translation of women's rights ideas in Baroda, India. Building on the analysis of three women's organizations, Rajaram and Zararia find that translation consists of several simultaneous processes, including recuperation, hybridization, simplification and compartmentalization. In recuperation “a concept from the past is adopted to strengthen a new campaign”.¹⁸⁵ Hybridization implies using the traits of a traditional institution which is familiar to people, but at the same time creatively adding new dimensions or imbuing it with a new meaning.¹⁸⁶ In simplification, translators use plain language or such tools as drama plays to make human rights norms less complicated and therefore easier to understand.¹⁸⁷ Compartmentalization refers to “the process by which ideas are narrowed down or sorted out”.¹⁸⁸ Since localizers tailor their words in terms of “what they think potential recipients might be able to hear”, in compartmentalization “translation consists of selective exposure and selective appropriation”.¹⁸⁹

The concept of frames and framing processes developed by the social movements scholars have also come to be seen as central in localization/vernacularization processes.¹⁹⁰ Extrapolating from the new social-movements literature we can assert that the local agents might translate international norms into practice by constructing collective action frames. Frames, with

¹⁸³ Ibid., 245.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 246.

¹⁸⁵ Rajaram and Zararia, “Translating Women’s Human Rights,” 476.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 476.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 477.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 477.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 477.

¹⁹⁰ Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence*; Acharya, “How ideas spread: Whose norms matter,” 243.

Goffman's commonly referred definition, denote "primary frameworks and schemata of interpretation".¹⁹¹ Frames do not themselves constitute ideas. They are ways of packaging, presenting and mobilizing ideas (i.e. human rights ideas) that generate intersubjective understanding and motive for action. As clarified by Snow and Benford, collective action frames have an interpretive function "by simplifying and condensing aspects of the world out there" and frames also involves "the ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists".¹⁹²

In generating collective action frames norm localizers would have various motivations, for instance to pinpoint and negotiate some conditions, situations, practices that they define as problematic and in need of change, to make attributions regarding who and what is to blame, to introduce a new norm as an alternative and appropriate solution to the problems of local people, to raise awareness, and to urge and mobilize local people for change, to ensure that local public authorities as duty bearers comply with their international commitments and implements norms properly, to remake international norms in terms of local needs.¹⁹³ To ease the comprehension, Snow and Benford condense these motivations under three core framing tasks of 'diagnostic framing', 'prognostic framing' and 'motivational framing'.¹⁹⁴

Another tactical point that can be borrowed from the social-movements literature is the conception of 'frame alignment'. Once prognostic and diagnostic

¹⁹¹ Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Boston: Northeastern University Press edition, 1986), 21.

¹⁹² David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance and Participant Mobilization," in *From Structure to Action: Comparing Movement Participation across Cultures*, ed. B. Klandermans et al. (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1988), 198.

¹⁹³ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment," *Annual Review Sociology* 26 (2000):615.

¹⁹⁴ Diagnostic framing refers to the problem identification and attribution (blame and responsibility). Prognostic framing involves the articulation of solutions to the identified problems or at least strategies and tactics for carrying out those proposed solutions. In other words, prognostic framing addresses "what is to be done" in the face of observed problems and grievances, how to cultivate social change. Motivational framing provides combinations of accounts and vocabularies of severity, urgency, appropriateness, duty, responsibility that give rationale for collective action. See Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements," 615-617.

frames are constructed, norm entrepreneurs enter into the process of adherent and constituent mobilization in cultivating resonance and so social change in a given context. According to Snow et al. this process requires frame alignment.¹⁹⁵ Snow et al. define frame alignment as “the linkage of individual and social movement organization (SMO) interpretive orientations, such that some set of individual interests, values and beliefs and SMO activities, goals, and ideology are congruent and complementary”.¹⁹⁶ They also decompose the alignment into four processes of ‘frame bridging’, ‘frame amplification’, ‘frame extension’, and ‘frame transformation’.¹⁹⁷ Importantly, the insights from the frame alignment processes as tactics would also contribute in our understanding of the social practice of international norms.

By frame bridging, Snow et al. refer to “the linkage of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem”.¹⁹⁸ Frame amplification refers to “the clarification and invigoration of an interpretive frame that bears on a particular issue, problem or set of events”.¹⁹⁹ Frame extension unfolds when “the programs and values that some SMOs promote may not be rooted in existing sentiment or adherent pools, or may appear to have little if any bearing on the life situations and interests of potential adherents”.²⁰⁰ In these alignment instances, as emphasized by Snow et al. agency “extends the boundaries of its primary framework so as to encompass interests or points of view that are incidental to its primary objectives but of considerable salience to potential adherents. In effect, the movement is attempting to enlarge its

¹⁹⁵ David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford Jr, Steven K. Worden, Robert D. Benford, “Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation,” *American Sociological Review* 51 (1986).

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 464.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 464, 476.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 467.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 469.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 472.

adherent pool by portraying its objectives or activities as attending to and being congruent with the values and interests of potential adherents”.²⁰¹

While frame bridging, frame amplification and frame extension mainly serve to align the interpretive frames of norm brokers and their targets, some norm brokers would choose to remain aloof from matchmaking. As explained by Snow et al. “the programs, causes, and values that some SMOs promote, however, may not resonate with, and on occasion may even appear antithetical to, conventional lifestyles or rituals and extant interpretive frames”.²⁰² When this is the case, norm brokers resort to frame transformation, which involves planting and nurturing new values, discarding old meanings or understandings, and reframing what is believed as erroneous.²⁰³

Norm localizers would also seek influence in many of the similar ways that TANs and transnational social movements do in other parts of the world. In this regard, Keck and Sikkink’s typology of tactics that networks use in their practices at international and national levels would be extended to the local level. Keck and Sikkink highlight four type of tactics that can be utilized for persuasion, socialization or pressure of targets. These tactics include the (1) information politics, (2) symbolic politics, (3) leverage politics, and (4) accountability politics.²⁰⁴

Last but not least, Celeste Montaya and Ackerly building on their observations on women’s human’s rights advocacy in various parts of the world provide an extensive list of the social practice examples that can also be observed in norm localization processes. Celeste Montaya notices that “grass-root organizations and NGOs conduct foundational research on human rights issues, engage in public awareness campaigns, provide valuable victim services, train relevant personnel in the legal and medical communities, and initiate a whole host of activities aimed at

²⁰¹ Ibid., 472

²⁰² Ibid., 473

²⁰³ Ibid., 473

²⁰⁴ Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*, 16-24.

combating violence against women on the ground”.²⁰⁵ Ackerly enriches the scope of activism. She highlights that in addition to advocacy to state, local women’s human rights activists support survivors of violence, try to raise consciousness about women’s human rights both at the individual and societal level, promote activism (i.e. campaigns, marches, boycotts), built networks and promote alliances among civil society actors working to end violence against women, integrate women’s human rights advocacy with other initiatives for social, economic and political change.²⁰⁶

All in all, there is no single proved pathway of localization or no a-priori way to determine what norm localizers aim to do or could be able to do or achieve on the ground. The norm localization perspective offers that it is contingent on the interaction of the agents and structure(s) as well as the targets in distinct socio-cultural contexts.

²⁰⁵ Celeste Montaya, *From Global to Grassroots: The European Union, Transnational Advocacy and Combating Violence against Women* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 10.

²⁰⁶ Brooke A. Ackerly, “Women’s Human Rights Activists as Cross-Cultural Theorists,” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 3, no. 3 (2001): 317.

CHAPTER 4

COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND STANDARDS

The international norms of ‘non-discrimination’ and ‘gender equality’ underpin the women’s human rights discourse as well as the rights-based approach in combating VAW. Before exploring the localization of women’s human rights norms in two sub-national settings (i.e. Trabzon and Antakya) in Turkey, this chapter focuses on the international level, where these norms and standards emerge, accepted by the states and then diffuse into the world.

The chapter starts with the milestones and process of global awareness raising on women’s issues and women’s rights between 1970s and early 2000s, in which the recognition of VAW as a human rights violation was embedded. The second part of the chapter elaborates on the meaning and substance of the international norms of gender equality and non-discrimination as they are defined in the international legal documents. The third part of the chapter reviews the international legal/human rights framework, which provides the basis for the human rights-based approach in combating VAW. This part provides the internationally recognized definition, root causes and forms of VAW, and addresses the due diligence principle and obligations of States for eliminating VAW.

4.1. The Process of Global Awareness Raising and Norm Setting

4.1.1. Human Rights and ‘Women’ Question: The Feminist Critiques

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, is the baseline and cornerstone of all contemporary human rights system and claims.²⁰⁷ At a time of great promise, the UDHR sets forth the rights and freedoms of all people, which are universal, inalienable, indivisible, and interdependent. The Article 1 of UDHR provides that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”.²⁰⁸ As the Article 2 of UDHR makes non-discrimination principle clear and binding that, “everyone is entitled to all rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”.²⁰⁹ Article 7 of the UDHR further guarantees equality of all people before the law, stating: “all are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law”.²¹⁰ Consecutively, the three core human rights instruments adopted by the UN, namely the UDHR (1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)²¹¹ and the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)²¹² adopted in 1966 set a plethora of political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights and freedoms. Expanding the traditional scope of international law that regulates inter-state relations, the human rights system recognizes the individuals and groups as right bearers, and the States as duty bearers. More clearly, the human rights system provides individuals and groups inalienable, indivisible and universal rights and freedoms, provides access to the international legal system, and

²⁰⁷ United Nations General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 217 A (III), (10 December 1948). <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3712c.html>

²⁰⁸ United Nations General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Article 1.

²⁰⁹ United Nations General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Article 2.

²¹⁰ United Nations General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Article 7.

²¹¹ The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 16 December 1966 and entered into force on 23 March 1976.

²¹² The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966 and entered into in 1976.

holds States accountable and responsible to respect, protect and fulfill all human rights and fundamental freedoms.²¹³

Notwithstanding the progressive push in the post-World War 2 human rights framework, in the next decades as argued by Coomaraswamy, “the problem of women's equality and empowerment was not always framed in terms of international human rights”.²¹⁴ The experiences, needs and claims of women have been widely sidelined in the application of human rights.²¹⁵ Women, constituting at least half of the world's population, have continued to experience gross violations of human rights both in public and private spheres of life (e.g. torture, political and social repression, humiliation, starvation, abuse, harassment, rape, exploitation, oppression, trafficking, gender based violence, even murder) simply because they are women.²¹⁶ As maintained by Bunch, “many violations of women's human rights are distinctly connected to being female-that is, women are discriminated against and abused on the basis of gender”.²¹⁷ Similarly, Rebecca J. Cook highlights that “international human rights law has not been applied effectively to redress the disadvantages and injustices experienced by women by reason only of their being women”.²¹⁸ In brief, arguably the human rights system failed to understand the systemic nature and the gender dimension of the women's subordination, failed to recognize the discrimination, oppression, violence, injustice against women as violation of human rights, and the existing state practices proved reluctant or

²¹³ Hilary Charlesworth, “What are Women's International Human Rights?,” 58.

²¹⁴ Radhika Coomaraswamy, “Reinventing International Law: Women's Rights as Human Rights in the International Community,” *Commonwealth Law Bulletin* 23, no.3-4 (1997):1251.

²¹⁵ Charlotte Bunch, “Transforming Human Rights from a Feminist Perspective,” in *Women's Rights, Human Rights: International Feminist Perspectives*, ed. Julie Peters and Andrea Wolper (New York, London: Routledge, 1995),12; Laura Reanda, “Human Rights and Women's Rights: The United Nations Approach,” *Human Rights Quarterly* 3, no.2 (May, 1981):11-15.

²¹⁶ Charlotte Bunch, “Women's Rights as Human Rights: Towards a Re-Vision of Human Rights,” *Human Rights Quarterly* 12, no.4 (Nov., 1990):486; Reanda, “Human Rights and Women's Rights,”13.

²¹⁷ Bunch, “Towards a Re-Vision of Human Rights,”486.

²¹⁸ Rebecca J. Cook, “Women's International Human Rights Law: The Way Forward,” in *Human Rights of Women National and International Perspectives*, ed. Rebecca J. Cook (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 3.

insufficient to eliminate discriminations against women both in public and private spheres of life.²¹⁹

The recognition of women's rights as human rights is the culmination of a long and arduous process. In the face of women's *de facto* exclusion from the 20th century human rights system and practice, the women's rights activists and feminist (legal) scholarship turned a critical eye on the development of human rights system, brought to the light the gaps, silences and boundaries of mainstream human rights system that result in women's exclusion, and framed the challenges of women as human rights violations. The main feminist criticisms leveled against the development of human rights system can be summarized under four core themes: the limitations of 'formal' equality understanding, androcentric disposition, replication of public-private distinction to the detriment of women and the hierarchical development of human rights.²²⁰ Reading these feminist critiques in tandem is essential for understanding why there emerged a need and demand to have 'women's human rights' including women's right to live free from gender based violence as well as the development of women's human rights regime including its legal instruments (e.g. CEDAW) and the norms of gender equality and non-discrimination.

Before moving further, it is noteworthy to elaborate on the conception of women's rights.²²¹ As pointed out Coomaraswamy, there are two overlapping aspects of integrating women's rights into the human rights agenda: "first, the attempt to make mainstream human rights responsive to women's concerns; and second, the conceptualization of certain gender-specific violations as human rights violations".²²² That is to say that, women's rights, at one level, are "an inalienable,

²¹⁹ Cook, "Women's International Human Rights Law,"3; Reanda, "Human Rights and Women's Rights,"14.

²²⁰ Edwards, *Violence against Women*, 43-87; Coomaraswamy, "Reinventing International Law,"1252.

²²¹ In the literature and international legal documents the terms 'human rights of women', 'women's human rights', 'women's rights', 'women's international human rights' are mostly used interchangeably. See Reanda, "Human Rights and Women's Rights,"11.

²²² Coomaraswamy, "Reinventing International Law,"1252.

integral and indivisible part of universal human rights”.²²³ As the famous rallying call of women’s movement ‘women’s rights are human rights’ denotes, women are entitled to enjoy all the political, social, cultural, economic rights and freedoms enshrined in three core human rights instruments adopted by the United Nations - the UDHR, the ICCPR, the ICSECR- on an equal footing with men.²²⁴ At another level, women’s rights expand the traditional scope of human rights and freedoms to elevate and eliminate the grave right violations directed against women on the grounds of sex and gender.²²⁵ These so called ‘women specific rights and freedoms’ include but not limited to ‘women’s right to live free from gender based violence’; ‘women’s sexual and reproductive rights to the highest attainable standard of sexual and reproductive health’, ‘to decide freely and responsibly the number’, ‘spacing and timing of their children, and on matters related to their sexuality’, and ‘to have the information and means to do so free from discrimination, violence or coercion’. All in all, reiterating Bunch’s compelling argument, women’s rights mean “not just looking at what have been called ‘women’s issues’- a ghetto, or separate sphere that remains on the margins of society- but rather moving women from the margins to the center by questioning the most fundamental concepts of our social order so that they take better account of women’s lives”.²²⁶

4.1.2. The UN Decade for Women and the Adoption of CEDAW

Decades of advocacy came to fruition and the advancement of women’s rights at the international level gained momentum in the early 1970s. With the

²²³ Charlesworth, “What are Women’s International Human Rights,” 59.

²²⁴ Charlesworth, “What are Women’s International Human Rights,” 59; The CEDAW Articles 6 to 17 and Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action broadly identify the rights pertaining to women’s gendered experiences as well as the interpretation of human rights and freedoms with a focus to guarantee non-discrimination and substantive equality between men and women.

²²⁵ Rebecca Cook, *Women’s Health and Human Rights: The Promotion and Protection of Women’s Health through International Human Rights Law* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 1994), 4; see also Global Fund for Women, “Women’s Human Rights: What are Women’s Human Rights?”, https://www.globalfundforwomen.org/womens-human-rights/#.WpcDoK5l_IU

²²⁶ Bunch, “Transforming Human Rights from a Feminist Perspective,” 11.

impetus and advocacy of increasingly visible second wave (feminist) women's movement²²⁷, in 1972 the UN General Assembly declared 1975 as the International Women's Year, and agreed to convene a world conference on women in 1975. Subsequently, the UN declared 1976-1985 as the UN Decade for Women.²²⁸ Four historic moments capture the merits of the UN Decade of Women: the first World Conference on Women in Mexico city (1975)²²⁹, the second World Conferences on Women in Copenhagen (1980)²³⁰, the third World Conference on Women in Nairobi (1985)²³¹ and the adoption of the "Convention on the Elimination of the All Forms of Discriminations against Women" (CEDAW) by the UN General Assembly in 1979.

Organized under the themes of peace, equality and development, the UN World Conferences on Women in Mexico, Copenhagen and Nairobi were instrumental in elevating the women and those longstanding concerns underlying the women's human rights to the center of the world agenda. The discussions and

²²⁷ For the extensive analysis of the emergence, standpoint and advocacy of the so called second wave women's movement for the international recognition of women's challenges and women's rights See, Elisabeth Jay Friedman, "Bringing Women to International Human Rights," *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice* 18, no.4 (2006):480; Elisabeth Jay Friedman, "Women's Human Rights: The Emergence of a Movement," in *Women's Rights, Human Rights: International Feminist Perspectives*, ed. Julie Peters and Andrea Wolper (New York, London: Routledge, 1995), 18-35; Arvonne. S. Fraser, "Becoming Human: The Origins and Development of Women's Human Rights," *Human Rights Quarterly* 21, no.4 (November 1999):853-906; Bunch, "Transforming Human Rights from a Feminist Perspective," 11-18.

²²⁸ Jutta M. Joachim, *Agenda Setting, the UN, and NGOs, Gender Violence and Reproductive Rights* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2007), 73-103; Zwingel, *Translating International Women's Rights*, 40-41.

²²⁹ For the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Mexico City UN World Conference on Women (1975) see, United Nations, *Report of the World Conference of the International Women's Year, Mexico City 19 June-2 July 1975*, E/CONF.66/34 (New York: United Nations Publication, 1976), http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CONF.66/34

²³⁰ For the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Copenhagen UN World Conference on Women (1980) see, United Nations, *Report of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Copenhagen 14 to 30 July 1980*, A/CONF.94/35 (New York: United Nations Publication, 1980), http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/CONF.94/35

²³¹ For the resolutions and decisions of the Nairobi World Conference on Women see, United Nations, *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi 15-26 July 1985*, A/CONF.116/28/Rev.1, (New York: United Nations Publication, 1986), http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/CONF.116/28/Rev.1

goals set in these world conferences have provided blueprints for improving the legal, social, economic and political conditions of women both in public and private spheres of life.²³² As pointed out Joachim, in contrast to formal equality understanding or equal treatment frame of the past decades, the emerging ‘women frame’ and ‘equality frame’ directly target the male-centeredness of human rights, the artificial distinctions drawn between public and private spheres, the primacy given to the political and civil rights as well as the social structures (i.e. patriarchy and gender) as sources of women’s subordination and exclusion.²³³

It cannot be doubted that the most important development of the formative phase of women’s right is the adoption of the CEDAW in 1979, which entered into force in 1981.²³⁴ Due to its legally binding and comprehensive character, the CEDAW is often described as the International Bill of Rights for Women or the Magna Carta for the Human Rights of Women.²³⁵

The overall purpose of the CEDAW, as the Women’s Bill of Rights, is to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women with a vision to ensure women’s *de jure* and *de facto* equality with men in both public and private spheres of life, and in the enjoyment of their rights and freedoms.²³⁶ To this end, the CEDAW sets the definition of discrimination against women (Article 1), brings the

²³² Yakın Ertürk, “The UN Agenda for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality,” *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs* 10, no.2, (Summer 2005): 96.

²³³ Jutta Joachim, “Women’s Rights as Human Rights,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*, (print publication date March 2010):5, <http://internationalstudies.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.001.0001/acrefore-9780190846626-e-430>

²³⁴ United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*, United Nations Treaty Series 1249 (18 December 1979), 13, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3970.html>

²³⁵ Upneet Kaur Mangat, “Women’s Rights are Human Rights,” in *Issues in Women’s Rights: A Practitioners Resource Book*, ed. K. M. Baharul Islam (New Delhi, Mumbai: Allied Publishers Private Limited, 2014), 18.

²³⁶ United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW Committee), *General Recommendation No. 25, on Article 4, Paragraph 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on temporary special measures*, (2004), Paragraph 4, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/453882a7e0.html>. ; United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW Committee), *General Recommendation No. 28 on the Core Obligations of States Parties under Article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, CEDAW/C/GC/28, (16 December 2010), Paragraphs 2, 3, 4, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4d467ea72.html>

corrective and transformative understanding of substantive equality. The Convention also identifies areas of discrimination and inequality, where the human rights of were either not well developed in the existing human rights instrument, or not protected or properly implemented at international and domestic levels. In this line, the CEDAW sets out binding obligations for the State parties to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women in general (e.g. Articles 2, 3, 4) and in the substantive areas of women's concern (e.g. Articles 6-17).²³⁷

For enforcing the human rights of women, the CEDAW also establishes the CEDAW Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (hereafter CEDAW Committee). The adoption of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW by the UN General Assembly in 1999 (entered into force on 22 December 2000) is another milestone in strengthening the enforcement mechanism of women's human rights regime.²³⁸ The Optional Protocol to CEDAW sets a communication procedure, which allows individuals or groups of individuals to submit communication (e.g. petition, appeals, complaint) to the CEDAW Committee (Article 2). The State parties to the Optional Protocol recognizes the competence of the CEDAW Committee to receive and consider complaints from individuals or groups within its jurisdiction (Article 1). Thus in addition to the regular reports of the States, the Optional Protocol enables the CEDAW Committee to conduct inquiries into the grave violations of women's human rights by the states and private individuals.

Reflecting on the novelties of the UN Decade on Women period, the scholarly literature pinpoints the advancement of women at the international level on a number of fronts. Firstly, the literature draws attention to the activism of women's movement and women's human rights NGOs as norm entrepreneurs.²³⁹

²³⁷ Carin Benninger-Budel, "Introduction," in *Due Diligence and its Application to Protect Women from Violence*, ed. Carin Benninger-Budel (Leiden, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publisher, 2008), 6.

²³⁸ United Nations General Assembly, *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, A/RES/54/4 (15 October 1999), <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N99/774/73/PDF/N9977473.pdf?OpenElement>

²³⁹ Benjamin Stachursky, *The Promise and Perils of Transnationalization*, 36; Nicola Lacey, "Feminist Legal Theory and the Rights of Women," in *Gender and Human Rights*, ed. Karen Knop (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 14; Anne Gallagher, "Ending the Marginalization: Strategies for Incorporating Women into the United Nations Human Rights System," *Human Rights Quarterly* 19, no.2 (1997); Martha Alter Chen, "Gendering World

Alongside the delegates from the UN member states, the accredited women NGOs, experts, academics attend the world conferences and parallel NGO forums. As Joachim highlights, the world conferences as symbolic events motivated the creation of international networks and new women organizations for advancing women's rights.²⁴⁰ According to Reilly, the UN Decade for Women not only presents "the beginnings of a new era in women's transnational organizing and solidarity"²⁴¹, but also "an early step in the emergence of a bottom up, civil society driven process to integrate women's concerns and gender perspectives throughout all UN agendas".²⁴² Secondly, the UN Decade on Women enables the establishment of the specialized UN agencies on women including the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).²⁴³ The establishment of these agencies and the UN World Conferences catalyzed the global awareness on women. These agencies also have worked hand in hand with the women's NGOs/networks and feminist academics, and provided financial support and funding for women's organizations to maintain permanent international offices, to conduct national/international campaigns.²⁴⁴ Thirdly, the establishment of CEDAW Committee as a monitoring mechanism strengthens the global implementation of CEDAW. More importantly, the CEDAW Committee formulates general recommendations, which provide the interpretations

Conferences: The International Women's Movement and the UN," *Third World Quarterly* 16, no.3 (1995).

²⁴⁰ Joachim, *Agenda Setting, the UN, and NGOs*, 100.

²⁴¹ Reilly, *Women's Human Rights*, 53.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 54

²⁴³ Ertürk, "The UN Agenda for Women's Rights," 101-103; Zehra F. Kabasakal Arat, "Women's Rights as Human Rights," *UN Chronicle The Magazine of the United Nations* 45, no. 2 & 3 (April 2008). In 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created a single UN body tasked with accelerating progress in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. The new UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) merged the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW).

²⁴⁴ Joachim, *Agenda Setting, the UN, and NGOs*, 100.

and guidelines on the meanings of CEDAW articles and the application of CEDAW to specific issues.²⁴⁵ For example, the CEDAW Committee's General Recommendations No. 12, No. 19 and No.35 were instrumental in the recognition of VAW as a form of discrimination and human rights violation and standard setting in eliminating VAW.

It is important to emphasize that CEDAW is a living and dynamic legal instrument that derives its substance from the international norms of non-discrimination and substantive equality. Particularly the interpretations and recommendations of CEDAW Committee make CEDAW a living and evolving instrument that could be able to respond effectively to the emerging needs or continued challenges of women, and as such could be utilized by women's human rights activists in various national/local contexts.²⁴⁶ As the ensuing sections of the chapter further explicate, despite the fact that the issue of VAW was not appropriately addressed by the CEDAW, its interpretations have provided a moral and legal foundation for the international recognition of VAW as a form of discrimination and human rights violation in the 1990s.

4.1.3. Milestones in the Recognition of VAW as a Human Rights Violation

Violence against women-one of the most extreme manifestations of discrimination and gender inequality in the world-has long been regarded by societies, states and international community as a private sphere issue, tolerated, dismissed or legitimized, and as such remained outside the remits of state responsibility and international human rights scrutiny.²⁴⁷

Compared to the recognition of women's rights in public realm areas (i.e. political and civic rights), the international recognition of VAW as a human right violation is a late comer and an arduous process. Complex negotiation processes during the world conferences on women as well as difficulty in adopting consensus

²⁴⁵ See CEDAW Articles 17 to 22; see also Reilly, *Women's Human Rights*, 61-63.

²⁴⁶ CEDAW Committee, *General Recommendation No. 25*, paragraph 3.

²⁴⁷ Bunch, "Towards a Re-Vision of Human Rights,"490.

legal documents, declarations, resolutions have been extensively discussed in the literature.²⁴⁸ Strikingly, even during the drafting process of CEDAW in the 1970s, the issue of VAW remained on the margins of international agenda because of the fact that most governments considered VAW as a private wrong, an individual matter or culturally sensitive issue.²⁴⁹ Looking more closely to CEDAW, with the exception of trafficking and exploitation of prostitution (Article 6), there is no specific provision requiring State responsibility to eliminate violence against women in due diligence.²⁵⁰ In the 1990s, however, the persistent struggle by the women's rights movement to persuade international community yielded results.

While the issue of VAW did not explicitly appear in CEDAW as a form of discrimination against women, the work of the CEDAW Committee has significantly contributed to, indeed, opened the way for, the recognition of VAW as a human rights issue. In 1992, tapping into the ongoing women advocacy the CEDAW Committee in its General Recommendation No 19 (GR No.19) authoritatively interpreted gender based violence against women as a form of discrimination within the meaning of Article 1 of the CEDAW.²⁵¹ The identification of the link between VAW and discrimination by the CEDAW Committee was stimulating as this initiative provided an entry point for the international recognition of VAW as a violation of human rights. The GR No.19 integrated the issue of VAW into the terms of existing human rights instruments including CEDAW, into the

²⁴⁸Reilly, *Women's Human Rights*; Edwards, *Violence against Women*; Joachim, *Agenda Setting, the UN, and NGOs*; Fraser, "Becoming Human,".

²⁴⁹ Yakın Ertürk and Bandana Purkayastha, "Linking Research, Policy and Action: A Look at the Work of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women," *Current Sociology* 60, no. 2 (2012): 143; Christine Chinkin, "A Critique of the Public/Private Dimension," *EJIL* 10, no.2 (1999): 392; Bunch, "Towards a Re-Vision of Human Rights," 495; Andrew Byrnes and Eleanor Bath, "Violence against Women, the Obligation of Due Diligence, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women-Recent Developments," *Human Rights Law Review* 8, no.3 (2008):518-520.

²⁵⁰ Coommarawamy, "Reinventing International Law," 1253.

²⁵¹ United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee), *CEDAW General Recommendation No. 19: Violence against women*, 11th session (1992), <http://www.refworld.org/docid/52d920c54.html>.

application of international norms of non-discrimination and substantive equality, and into the doctrine of state responsibility and due diligence principle.²⁵²

In 1993, the international community explicitly reaffirmed women's human rights by unanimously adopting the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action at the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights.²⁵³ Another significance of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action is the international recognition of gender-based violence as a violation of human rights. Crucially, this development is a dramatic example of the importance of women's advocacy in alliance with the UN bodies to have their rights recognized.²⁵⁴ Backed by the CEDAW Committee's groundbreaking GR No. 19 on violence against women, the norm entrepreneurs at Vienna succeeded to integrate the issue of VAW into the human rights paradigm.

Looking to the developments on the road to Vienna, when the agenda and core concerns of the Vienna Conference were first drawn up in the early 1990s, as underlined by Bunch, "women and gender were nowhere to be found on it, and violence against women was not contemplated as a human rights concern".²⁵⁵ Consequently, in 1991 the international movement of women, called the Global Campaign for Women's Human Rights, was established in an effort to bring gender based violations of women's human rights including VAW to the front and center of human rights agenda. This broad and inclusive coalition, linking women's movements in every regions, crossed the previous lines or divisions between the women from the global South and North.²⁵⁶ The Global Campaign launched multi-

²⁵²United Nations General Assembly, *In-depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women Report of the Secretary-General*, A/61/122/Add.1, (6 July 2006), 14-15, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/484e58702.html>

²⁵³ United Nations General Assembly, *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action*, A/CONF.157/23, (12 July 1993), <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b39ec.html>.

²⁵⁴ Joachim, *Agenda Setting, the UN, and NGOs*, 6.

²⁵⁵ Bunch, "How Women's Rights Became Recognized as Human Rights?," in *The Unfinished Revolution: Voices from the Global Fight for Women's Rights*, ed. Minky Worden (U.K.: The Policy Press, 2012), 30. See also, Reilly, *Women's Human Rights*, 73; United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, *Women's Rights are Human Rights* (New York and Geneva: United Nations Publications, 2014), 74, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/HR-PUB-14-2.pdf>

²⁵⁶ Reilly, *Women's Human Rights*, 69-79; See also, Charlotte Bunch and Niamh Reilly, *The Global Campaign and Vienna Tribunal for Women's Human Rights Demanding Accountability* (New York: Center for Women's Global Leadership and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, 1994).

level initiatives to shape the global agenda and norm setting processes during the Vienna Conference's preparatory phase, during the Conference and in its parallel NGO forums. Under the rallying cry of 'women's rights as human rights' the campaign organized petitions and initiated the annual 16 Days of Activism against gender based violence in November 1991.²⁵⁷ In a coalesced manner women carried out lobbying activities including lobbying the 'high level' national, regional and UN bodies as well as lobbying the states at the regional and national preparatory meetings. Through mobilization strategies and actions (e.g., satellite events, radio programs, local hearings, panels, rallies, film festivals, the use of media), the norm entrepreneurs raised global awareness on the gender based abuses against women and framed these abuses as human rights violations.²⁵⁸ The women's advocacy at Vienna Conference culminated in parallel NGO forums and in the Tribunal on Violations of Women's Human Rights, whereby right violations against women were publicly presented and the transformative vision of women's rights was effectively championed to persuade the States and international bodies.²⁵⁹

Soon after the Vienna Conference, the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW) in December 1993²⁶⁰, which is the first international legal instrument that specifically addresses the issue of VAW.²⁶¹ Though it is a non-binding legal instrument, the DEVAW provides normative framework by giving the definition of VAW, identifying its forms and structural root causes and calling states to meet the due diligence

²⁵⁷ The Campaign of 16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women links the November 25 International Day against Violence against Women (which was first declared by the Latin American and Caribbean feminist movement in 1981 to commemorate Mirabal sisters who were murdered by the regime of the Dominican Republic in 1960) and the anniversary of the UDHR in December 10.

²⁵⁸ See Joachim, *Agenda Setting, the UN, and NGOs*, 103-133.

²⁵⁹ Reilly, *Women's Human Rights*, 73-79.

²⁶⁰ United Nations General Assembly, *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW)*, A/RES/48/104, (20 December 1993), <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f25d2c.html>.

²⁶¹ United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, *Women's Rights are Human Rights*, 74.

standards of prevention, protection, prosecution and provision of compensation in responding to the problem.²⁶²

In 1994 the UN Commission on Human Rights established the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences (SRVAW).²⁶³ As noted by Ertürk and Purkayastha “the mandate of the SRVAW was developed within a longer history of international human rights practice and feminist activism”.²⁶⁴ The SRVAW mandate, through in-depth reviews, country visits, reports and recommendations, has not only raised the awareness of the causes and consequences of various forms of VAW but also further advanced and strengthened international standards to eliminate VAW.²⁶⁵

Another watershed was reached with the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China and the resulting Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for women’s equality, empowerment and justice.²⁶⁶ In 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was unanimously adopted by the UN member states.²⁶⁷ As a blueprint of implementation and practice, the governments, the international community and civil society, including NGOs and the private sector, were called upon to take strategic action in twelve critical areas of concern including violence against women.²⁶⁸ Since the Beijing World Conference on Women in 1995,

²⁶² Ertürk and Purkayastha, “Linking Research, Policy and Action,”144.

²⁶³ The SRVAW is an independent expert appointed by the UN General Assembly for a 3 year term (once renewable). The mandate holders since 1994 are Radhika Coomaraswamy (Sri Lanka), 1994-2003; Yakin Ertürk (Turkey), 2003-2009; Rashida Manjoo (South Africa), 2009-2015; Dubravka Simonovic (Croatia), holds the mandate since 2015.

²⁶⁴ Ertürk and Purkayastha, “Linking Research, Policy and Action,”144.

²⁶⁵ United Nations General Assembly, *In-depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women Report of the Secretary-General*, 16.

²⁶⁶ United Nations, *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women Beijing 4-15 September 1995*, A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1 (New York: United Nations Publication, 1996), http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1.

²⁶⁷ United Nations, *Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action*, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, (27 October 1995), <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3dde04324.html>.

²⁶⁸ Ibid. The twelve critical concern for the women’s empowerment covers (1)The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women; (2) Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to education and training; (3) Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to health care and related services; (4) Violence against women; (5) The effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women, including those living under foreign occupation; (6) Inequality in economic structures and

the UN General Assembly has convened sessions in every 5 years to review and appraise the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (e.g. the Beijing+5 in 2000, Beijing+10 in 2005, Beijing+15 in 2010, Beijing+20 in 2015).

The adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325) in 2000 is another landmark achievement in integrating the women's agency and rights into the UN's peace and security agenda as well as in addressing the VAW in situations of (post) war, conflict and humanitarian crisis.²⁶⁹ The UNSCR 1325 stresses two major concerns: the severe and disproportionate impact of war and conflict on women including VAW, and the crucial roles that women can and should play in conflict resolution processes and in achieving sustainable peace and stability. Incorporating a comprehensive gender equality perspective, the UNSCR 1325 builds on four basic pillars of implementation: participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery.²⁷⁰ Since the adoption of the UNSCR 1325 in 2000, the UN Security Council has adopted six subsequent resolutions to enforce effective implementation of the various dimensions of the women, security and peace agenda on the basis of gender equality and women's human rights.²⁷¹

policies, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources; (7) Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels; (8) Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women (9) Lack of respect for and inadequate promotion and protection of the human rights of women; (10) Stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and participation in all communication systems, especially in the media; (11) Gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment; (12) Persistent discrimination against and violation of the rights of the girl child.

²⁶⁹ United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1325 (2000)*, adopted by the Security Council at its 4213th meeting, S/RES/1325(2000) (31 October 2000), [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1325\(2000\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1325(2000)).; See also, Torunn L. Tryggstad, "Trick or Treat? The UN and Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security," *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 15, no.4 (October-December 2009):539-557.

²⁷⁰ United Nations General Assembly, *In-depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women Report of the Secretary-General*, 17.

²⁷¹ The Women, Peace and Security Resolutions of the United Nations Security Council Resolution include the UNSCR 1325 (2000), the UNSCR 1820 (2008), the UNSCR 1888 (2009), the UNSCR 1889 (2009); the UNSCR 1960 (2010); the UNSCR 2106 (2013); the UNSCR 2122 (2013).

Regional organizations, particularly the Organization of American States, the African Union and the Council of Europe, have also addressed the issue of VAW by largely endorsing and expanding the norms and standards set by the UN. For instance, the Organization of American States adopted the “Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women” (also called ‘Convention of Belém do Pará’) in 1994.²⁷² The African Union adopted the “Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa” in 2003, which specifically addressed the issue of VAW in Africa.²⁷³ More recently, the “Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence” (also called ‘Istanbul Convention’) adopted by the Council of Europe in 2011 and entered into force in 2014.²⁷⁴ More comprehensive in nature, the Council of Europe’s Istanbul Convention has significantly reinforced the global action to prevent and eliminate VAW.

4.2. Women’s Human Rights Norms: Defining Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination

The international norms of non-discrimination and gender equality underpin the women’s human rights, discourse, advocacy and practice. To put it differently, women’s human rights denote the “re-vision” of all human rights regime in order to properly include the women’s concerns, experiences, voices and interests on the basis of the international norms of equality and non-discrimination.²⁷⁵ The CEDAW, as the core legal instrument of women’s human rights, establishes the

²⁷² Organization of American States (OAS), *Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women* (“Convention of Belem do Para”), (9 June 1994), <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b38b1c.html>.

²⁷³ African Union (AU), *Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa*, (11 July 2003), <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3f4b139d4.html>.

²⁷⁴ Council of Europe, *Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence* (“Istanbul Convention”), (11 May 2011), <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4ddb74f72.html>.

²⁷⁵ Bunch, “Towards a Re-Vision of Human Rights,” 489-496.

meanings of discrimination and equality that also inform the global practice in combating against VAW.

The CEDAW provides a comprehensive definition of discrimination against women, which goes beyond the narrow understanding of the ‘distinction on the basis of sex’ as it was purported by the International Bill of Human Rights.²⁷⁶ As defined by the Article 1 of CEDAW, the discrimination against women denotes:

Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.²⁷⁷

The definition set out by the CEDAW makes it clear that discrimination against women encompasses any distinction, exclusion or restriction made against women in any field of life on the grounds of sex and gender. In this line, the CEDAW prohibits all forms of discrimination against women and obliges States -as duty holders- to eliminate both direct and indirect forms of discrimination committed by state actors or non-state actors (e.g. organizations, enterprises or private individuals) in the public as well as the private spheres.²⁷⁸

International norms of non-discrimination against women and equality would be regarded as the two sides of the same coin. They are interdependent and mutually reinforcing norms underpinning human rights based approach to eliminate all forms of discrimination and inequality against women including VAW. In order to eliminate all forms of discrimination committed by state and non-state actors in both public and private spheres of life, it is necessary to address underlying causes and consequences of women’s inequality, and empower women to be able to equally enjoy all their rights in practice.

Women’s human rights informed by a particular understanding of equality. That is ‘substantive equality’ or also often called ‘*de facto* equality’ or ‘equality of

²⁷⁶ CEDAW Committee, *General Recommendation No.25*, Paragraph 5.

²⁷⁷ CEDAW, Part I, Article 1.

²⁷⁸ CEDAW Committee, *General Recommendation No.25*, Paragraph 7; see also, CEDAW Committee, *General Recommendation 28*, Paragraph 16.

results'. Recognizing that the existing formal equality framework in human rights (i.e. equality before the law and equality of opportunity between men and women) did not effectively address the differences between men and women and women's historically rooted structural disadvantages, the CEDAW brought a corrective approach to equality. Otherwise stated, the CEDAW brings to the light that the equal treatment of men and women under unequal situations and structures serves to perpetuate rather than eliminate discrimination against women. Therefore, CEDAW provides more broader and substantive understanding of equality to address and correct disadvantages of women.²⁷⁹

Instead of conceiving equality merely in formal and gender blind terms, the Convention emphasizes the realization of women's rights in terms of the actual changes in the lives of women. Substantive equality aims to ensure that women have 'equality in opportunities', have 'equality in access to those opportunities', and have 'equality in getting results'. In other words, in the exercise and enjoyment of human rights, women and men must be treated equally, have equal access to opportunities, so that women can reach equal results/ outcomes to those of men.²⁸⁰

It is important to note that particularly in the aftermath of Beijing World Conference on Women, the term 'substantive equality' has begun to be interchangeably used or coupled with the term 'gender equality' in the literature and international legal documents.²⁸¹ Gender, as defined by the CEDAW Committee denotes "socially constructed identities, attributes and roles for women and men and society's social and cultural meaning for these biological differences resulting in hierarchical relationships between women and men and in the distribution of power

²⁷⁹ United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Fact Sheet No. 22 Discrimination against Women: The Convention and the Committee*, No.22, (February 1995), <http://www.refworld.org/docid/47947740d.htm>; CEDAW Committee, *General Recommendation No.25*, Paragraphs 8 to 14.

²⁸⁰ United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), *CEDAW and the Human Rights Based Approach to Programming, a UNIFEM Guide* (UNIFEM, May 2007), 7; United Nations, *Convention on the Elimination of All Form of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol: Handbook for Parliamentarians* (Switzerland: United Nations, 2003), 9.

²⁸¹ United Nations Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, *Gender Mainstreaming an Overview* (New York: United Nations, 2002), 1.

and rights favoring men and disadvantaging women”.²⁸² Moreover, gender systems are established in different socio-cultural contexts, institutionalized through culture and traditions, patriarchal structures, political and economic systems, religions, laws, and are learned through socialization processes in a particular society.²⁸³

The shift in the terminology or the increasing preference to use the term ‘gender equality’ signals and signifies a transformative vision, which addresses the deep rooted and socially constructed causes and consequences of inequalities that both women and men bitterly experience in different socio-cultural contexts. In this line, the gender equality understanding not only gives emphasis to women’s empowerment, but also embraces a multi-dimensional and intersectional view on inequalities and discrimination that men and women experience.

The concept of gender is also understood as not fixed but changeable. In other words, if gender is a socially constructed system, then it is also possible to deconstruct that discriminatory system and build a system that is based on the international norms of gender equality and non-discrimination.²⁸⁴ In this line, gender lens to equality set the goal to transform discriminatory power relations in all spheres of life, which requires changes in individual men and women, in societies, in laws and institutions, in habits and traditions, in the doctrine of state responsibility, in education systems, in attitudes and relationships, in socio-economic and political structures.²⁸⁵

4.3. The Elimination of VAW through Right-Based Approach: International Legal Framework

4.3.1. Definition of VAW in the International and Regional Legal Instruments

²⁸² CEDAW Committee, *General Recommendation No.28*, Paragraphs 5 and 16.

²⁸³ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), “Concepts and Definitions”, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>

²⁸⁴ Bunch, “Towards a Re-Vision of Human Rights,” 491.

²⁸⁵ Oxfam, *Ending Violence against Women an Oxfam Guide* (Oxfam International, November 2012), 5, 13, <https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/ending-violence-against-women-oxfam-guide-nov2012.pdf>

The international human rights instruments, particularly the CEDAW Committee's GR No. 19 and the DEVAW provide internationally recognized definitions of VAW. Emphasizing the gender dimension of VAW, the GR No. 19 defines gender based violence as “violence directed against a woman because she is a woman or which affects a woman disproportionately. It includes physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty”.²⁸⁶ In its Article 1, the DEVAW provides a more comprehensive definition: “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”.²⁸⁷

The international definition of VAW is accompanied by an understanding that women's right to live free from gender based violence is indivisible from the women's enjoyment of human rights and freedoms under general international law, human rights law and the CEDAW.²⁸⁸

4.3.1.1. The Root Causes of VAW

The terms “gender-based violence against women” and “violence against women” are often interchangeably used in the scholarly literature, in the international legal documents and by advocates, partly because this violence is

²⁸⁶ CEDAW Committee, *General Recommendations No 19*, Paragraph 6.

²⁸⁷ DEVAW, Article 1.

²⁸⁸ The CEDAW Committee's GR No. 19 and DEVAW Article 3 identify a series of rights that are interlinked with the women's right to live free from violence. The comprehensive range of human rights that are infringed, impaired or nullified by the gender based violence include, inter alia: “(a) the right to life;(b) the right to equality; (c) the right to liberty and security of person;(d) the right to equal protection under the law; e) the right to be free from all forms of discrimination; (f) the right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health;(g) the right to just and favorable conditions of work;(h) the right not to be subjected to torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; (i) the right to equal protection in times of international or internal armed conflict; (j) the right to equality and equal protection within the family; (k) freedom of expression, movement, participation, assembly and association”. See CEDAW Committee, *General Recommendation No. 19*; DEVAW, Article 3.

mainly perpetrated by individuals (i.e. husbands, ex-husbands, partners, ex-partners, male relatives, strangers), community, the state or non-state actors against women because they are women, and to highlight the gendered or structural causes and consequences of violence against women.²⁸⁹

Recognizing the systemic or structural nature of violence against women as gender-based violence, the DEVAW openly sets forth that

Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men.²⁹⁰

As also highlighted in the UN Secretary General's In-depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women, "no single cause adequately accounts for violence against women. Such violence arises from the convergence of specific factors within the broad context of power inequalities at the individual, group, national and global levels".²⁹¹

4.3.1.2. The Forms of VAW

It is commonly acknowledged that VAW is a global pandemic, which cannot be confined to a specific culture, region or country, or to religion, or to particular groups of women within a society.²⁹² Moreover, violence against women can take many forms and the specific social, economic, cultural, political, ideological,

²⁸⁹ United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee), *CEDAW General Recommendation No.35 on Gender-based Violence against Women, Updating General Recommendation No.19*, CEDAW/C/GC/35, (14 July 2017), http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/CEDAW_C_GC_35_8267_E.pdf ; See also, Edwards, *Violence against Women*, 25.

²⁹⁰ DEVAW, Preamble Paragraph 6.

²⁹¹ United Nations General Assembly, *In-depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women*, 28.

²⁹² United Nations, *Ending Violence against Women from Words to Action*, 27.

geographical contexts that women live immensely influence what form(s) of violence that women suffer and how they experience the VAW.²⁹³

The DEVAW, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the mandate of SRVAW identify multiple forms of VAW in terms of the site or setting, where violence occurs. Accordingly, violence against women encompasses, but not limited to the ‘physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family’²⁹⁴; ‘violence occurring within the general community’²⁹⁵; and ‘violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs’.²⁹⁶

The gender-based VAW also encompasses a broad range of harmful acts or practices, which cut across the physical, psychological, economic and sexual VAW in the family, in the community and the violence perpetrated or condoned by the State. The most prevalent harmful practices include, inter alia, the female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, (early) child marriage, dowry related violence, son preference, systemic neglect of girls, forced marriage, female genital

²⁹³ United Nations General Assembly, *In-depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women Report of the Secretary-General*, 36.

²⁹⁴ Family is defined by the broad range of women’s experiences of violence within familial/domestic relationships. See, DEVAW, Article 2; United Nations Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences, Yakın Ertürk : addendum : 15 years of the United Nations SR on violence against women, its causes and consequences (1994-2009): a critical review*, A/HRC/11/6/Add.5,(27 May 2009), 9, 16, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4a3f5fc62.html> ; Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Paragraph 113.

²⁹⁵ Violence occurring in the community can be committed in the neighborhoods, on public transport, in workplaces, educational institutions, sports clubs, and hospitals, in religious and other social institutions, where women daily interact with community. Violence occurring in the community includes but not limited to such acts as “rape/sexual assault; sexual harassment; violence within institutions; trafficking and forced prostitution; violence against women migrant workers; femicide, pornography”. See, DEVAW, Article 2; United Nations General Assembly, *In-depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women Report of the Secretary-General*, 40.

²⁹⁶ The State -either through its agents (i.e. those people empowered to exercise state authority including members of the legislative, executive and judicial branches, as well as law enforcement officials, social security officials, prison guards, officials in places of detention, immigration officials and military and security forces, etc.) or through laws and public policy- can perpetrate or condone violence against women. Violence perpetrated or condoned by the State includes but not limited to such acts as “gender-based violence during armed conflict; custodial violence; forced sterilization; violence against refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs); and violence against women from indigenous and minority groups”. See, DEVAW, Article 2; United Nations Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences, Yakın Ertürk, addendum: 15 years of the United Nations SR on violence against women, its causes and consequences (1994-2009): a critical review*, 10.

cutting/mutilation, honor crimes, maltreatment of widows, inciting widows to commit suicide, dedication of young girls to temples, restrictions on a second daughter's right to marry, dietary restrictions for pregnant women, forced feeding and nutritional taboos, witch hunt, marriage to a deceased husband's brother, acid throwing, bride price and compensation, virginity testing.²⁹⁷

Different forms and dimensions of violence have continued to be elaborated and addressed in the years that followed the adoption of DEVAW. Most recently, in 2017, the CEDAW Committee in its General Recommendation No.35 (GR No. 35) further elaborated the forms and dimensions of VAW by taking stock of its 25 years of knowledge accumulation and experience. The GR No.35 highlights that the VAW would be experienced in a range of public, private and technology-mediated settings, transcends the national boundaries, would be committed by States, intergovernmental organizations or non-state actors including private persons (e.g. intimate partners, family members, strangers) and armed groups (e.g. rebel forces, gangs, paramilitary groups, terrorists).²⁹⁸ Additionally, the GR No.35 identifies a continuum of multiple or intersectional factors that affect how women experience violence. These intersectional factors include, inter alia, "ethnicity/race, indigenous or minority status, color, socioeconomic status and/or caste, language, religion or belief, political opinion, national origin, marital and/or maternal status, age, urban/rural location, health status, disability, property ownership, being lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex, illiteracy, trafficking of women, armed conflict, seeking asylum, being a refugee, internal displacement, statelessness, migration, heading households, widowhood, living with HIV/AIDS, deprivation of liberty, being in prostitution, geographical remoteness and stigmatization of women fighting for their rights, including human rights defenders".²⁹⁹

All in all, it is also important to acknowledge that the forms and nature of VAW would evolve or new forms of VAW would emerge in line with such factors

²⁹⁷ United Nations General Assembly, *In-depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women Report of the Secretary-General*, 39.

²⁹⁸ CEDAW Committee, *General Recommendation No.35*, Paragraph 6.

²⁹⁹ CEDAW Committee, *General Recommendation No.35*, Paragraph 12.

as the demographic changes, economic restructuring, social and cultural shifts, wars, conflicts, natural disasters, advances in technology. Given the multiple, interrelated, intersectional and evolving nature of the forms and manifestations of VAW, it is hard to compile a complete list. Yet, the identification of the forms VAW at international level is an important step towards naming and addressing the multiple manifestations of VAW in different contexts.³⁰⁰

4.3.2. State Obligations and Due Diligence Principle

This section provides an overview of the obligations of States as duty bearers to address and eliminate VAW. Looking more closely, despite the fact that the CEDAW Articles 2 to 5 broadly set the States' positive obligations to prevent, protect and fulfill human rights in eliminating all forms of discrimination against women, there is no specific provision pertaining to the States' responsibility in eliminating VAW. In an attempt to fill this gap, the CEDAW Committee in its GR No. 19 and DEVAW thoroughly issued the States' obligations under the international human rights law. Mirroring the CEDAW Committee's GR No.19, the DEVAW Article 4 clearly states that

States should condemn violence against women and should not invoke any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination. States should pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating violence against women.³⁰¹

To this end, the DEVAW requires States, inter alia, take measures to ensure substantive equality and non-discrimination, to prevent VAW, to investigate and prosecute acts of violence, to punish perpetrators, to provide just and effective remedies for women who have been subjected to violence, to provide support services for women, to modify attitudes and behaviors giving rise to VAW, to develop capacity and training for awareness raising, to promote research, collect

³⁰⁰ United Nations General Assembly, *In-depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women Report of the Secretary-General*, 36.

³⁰¹ DEVAW, Article 4, Paragraph 1.

data, compile statistics concerning the position of women and VAW.³⁰² The DEVAW Article 4 (o) and 4 (p) also call States to recognize and cooperate with women's movement and NGOs at local, national and regional levels given their important roles in awareness-raising and in the elimination of the problem of VAW.

Importantly, the recognition of VAW as a human rights violation opens the way for the incorporation of due diligence standard as a tool for the elimination of VAW and a yardstick to assess States' compliance. The CEDAW Committee GR No. 19 expresses that "discrimination under the Convention is not restricted to action by or on behalf of Governments...States may also be responsible for private acts if they fail to act with due diligence to prevent violations of rights or to investigate and punish acts of violence, and for providing compensation".³⁰³ The DEVAW in its Article 4 (c) requires States to "exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women, whether those acts are perpetrated by the State or by private persons".³⁰⁴ To put it briefly, whether the acts of VAW are perpetrated by State or non-State actors, the due diligence standard establishes that States are not only responsible for the acts of VAW perpetrated by the State agents (including their omissions and failure to take positive measures), but also States are accountable for the acts of non-State actors if they fail to act with due diligence to prevent, investigate, punish VAW, protect the victims and provide effective remedies.³⁰⁵

At the regional level, particularly the Inter-American Convention and most recently the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention have strengthened the existing human rights framework. These regional initiatives provide the first binding legal

³⁰² DEVAW, Article 4; United Nations General Assembly, In-depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women Report of the Secretary-General, 73-78; United Nations Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Its Causes and Consequences, Yakin Ertürk : indicators on violence against women and State response*, A/HRC/7/6 (29 January 2008), <http://www.refworld.org/docid/47cd6c442.html>

³⁰³ CEDAW Committee, *General Recommendation No.19*, Paragraph 9.

³⁰⁴ DEVAW, Article 4 (c).

³⁰⁵ United Nations, *Ending Violence against Women from Words to Action*, 74, 89; Julie Goldscheid and Debra J. Liebowitz, "Due Diligence and Gender Violence: Parsing its Power and its Perils," *City University of New York (CUNY) Academic Works* (2015), https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1121&context=cl_pubs

instruments as regards to the eradication of VAW and incorporate due diligence standard as a benchmark for States to meet their legal obligations and policy commitments in addressing VAW.³⁰⁶

As Ertürk argues, the recognition of VAW as a human rights issue and extension of due diligence principle are transformative at least in three respects:

- 1) transformation of conventional understandings of human rights beyond violations perpetuated mainly by state actors in the public sphere; 2) transformation of the doctrine of state responsibility to include the actions of private individuals, thus, together with the former point, demystifying the public/private dichotomy; and 3) transformation of the criminal justice systems with the recognition of new species of crimes, such as domestic violence, marital rape, honor crime, etc.³⁰⁷

Importantly, the UN's CEDAW Committee as a monitoring mechanism reviews the regular reports submitted by the States parties in every four years. The Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention also established a monitoring and compliance mechanism (i.e. GREVIO) to assess the implementation of international norms and standards at the national level. On the basis of state reports and the 'shadow' reports provided by NGOs, these international and regional bodies identify gaps in implementation and gives recommendations to improve practice.

To conclude this chapter, broadly speaking, the period between the 1970s and the early 2000s constitute the formative phase of the international recognition of women's human rights in general and the issue of VAW in particular. The UN and the regional organizations (e.g. the Organization of American States, Council of Europe, African Union, ASEAN, etc.) have provided the platform for the advocacy of women's rights and freedoms on the basis of gender equality and non-

³⁰⁶ At the regional level, Article 7(b) of the Inter-American Convention of Belém do Para requires that States "apply due diligence to prevent, investigate and impose penalties for violence against women". The Council of Europe Istanbul Convention Article 5 – State obligations and due diligence 1 Parties shall refrain from engaging in any act of violence against women and ensure that State authorities, officials, agents, institutions and other actors acting on behalf of the State act in conformity with this obligation. 2 Parties shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, punish and provide reparation for acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention that are perpetrated by non-State actors.

³⁰⁷ Yakın Ertürk, "The Diligence Standard: What Does it Entail for Women's Rights," in *Due Diligence and Its Application to Protect Women from Violence*, ed. Benninger-Budel (Leiden, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2008), 31.

discrimination. Up until the early 2000s, the advocacy of women's movement and their alliance with the international/regional bodies enabled the creation of international norms and standards to guarantee the women's rights, including the women's rights to live free from violence.³⁰⁸

Today, it is possible to talk about the women's human rights regime, sometimes also called gender equality regime, which is identifiable by its international legal instruments (e.g. CEDAW, Istanbul Convention), norms (i.e. gender equality and non-discrimination), and compliance mechanisms (CEDAW Committee, GREVIO, Regular Reports).³⁰⁹ All in all, the CEDAW, the CEDAW Committee's General Recommendations, the DEVAW, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, UNSCR 1325 laid the foundation of the global action in tackling VAW. As a living organism, the international legal framework has been complemented and strengthened by an extensive array of instruments developed by the UN agencies (e.g. the CEDAW Committee, SRVAW, UN Women, UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, UN Secretary General, etc.) The growing body of case law has provided detailed guidance for states and non-states actors to address VAW in line with human rights approach. What is also crucial is that the regional organizations, particularly the Council of Europe, have largely embraced, updated and expanded international human rights framework in combating VAW.³¹⁰ As of 2018, 189 states had ratified the CEDAW and 30 states had ratified the Council Europe's Istanbul Convention, which means that States have declared and

³⁰⁸ See Zwingel, *Translating International Women's Rights*, 37; Reilly, *Women's Human Rights*, 44; United Nations, *The United Nations and The Advancement of Women, 1945-1995* (New York: United Nations Publication, 1996); Yakın Ertürk, "The UN Agenda for Women's Rights and Gender Equality," 93-97; Francisca de Haan, "A Brief Survey of Women's Rights from 1945 to 2009," *UN Chronicle: The Magazine of the United Nations* 47, no.1 (February 2010):56-59; Hilkka Pietilä and Jeanne Vickers, "Equality-Development- Peace. The UN System in the Vanguard of Advancement of Women, Development and Peace" in *The Future of the United Nations System: Potential for the Twenty-first Century*, ed. Chadwick F. Alger (Tokyo, New York, Paris: United Nations University Press, 1998), 248-281; Hilkka Pietila, *The Unfinished Story of Women and the United Nations*, UN-NGLS Development Dossier (New York and Geneva: United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service, 2007).

³⁰⁹ Nüket Kardam, "The Emerging Global Gender Equality Regime from Neoliberal and Constructivist Perspectives in International Relations," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 6, no.1 (March 2004); Yakın Ertürk, "The UN Agenda for Women's Rights," 91-92.

³¹⁰ United Nations, *Ending Violence against Women from Words to Action*, 15-20, 86-88.

committed to implement the international norms and standards for eliminating VAW.

In addressing VAW, the human rights based approach determines the states as duty holders and individuals as right holders, and seeks to eliminate the underlying causes of women's subordination and violence, to end all forms of discrimination, to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women, and ultimately to create a world in which all women enjoy their rights and freedoms.³¹¹ However, the continued prevalence of VAW all around the world as a pandemic gives few signs of optimism in terms of the effective implementation of international norms and standards. The UN Secretary General's in-depth Study on VAW reveals conundrums including the clash of culture and rights and persisting patriarchal structures and subordination of women in diverse socio-cultural contexts, the economic inequalities, doctrine of privacy and state inaction as well as inconsistent efforts in combating VAW.³¹² These suggests that for international norms and standards to have a real impact on the lives of women and societies, it is highly required to pay attention to the diffusion of these norms at (sub) national level.

³¹¹ United Nations, *Ending Violence against Women from Words to Action*, 27; Radhika Coomaraswamy, "Some Reflections on Violence against Women," *Canadian Women Studies* 15, no. 2-3 (1995):20.

³¹² United Nations General Assembly, *In-depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women Report of the Secretary-General*, 28-35.

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH: QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY RESEARCH

Given the theoretical premises of norm localization, the local context matters as it is the site of the interaction of social structures and the agents, in which the international norms are given meaning, re-negotiated, practiced and sometimes challenged or reproduced. Considering the theoretical premises and research questions, designing the present research in terms of qualitative case study method has unique advantages and the case study method fits well to the purposes of this study. As explained in Creswell's detailed definition:

Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of researcher and a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and it extends the literature or signals a call for action.³¹³

In pursuing qualitative case study, the researchers typically use relatively small number of cases providing the in-depth and contextual understanding of the

³¹³ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2007), 37.

phenomenon under interests, and focus on how things work (i.e. norm localization) in certain settings, at certain times and with certain agency.³¹⁴

In what follows, this chapter addresses the main methodological issues of case selection, data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations. In this, the research strategies (i.e. triangulation of data and purposeful sampling of cases and interview informants), limitations and/or trade-offs are presented as well.

5.1. Case Selection

To begin with the case selection, realizing that the intersubjective understanding of international norms would vary across time and space, across cultures, constructivists give emphasis to situate their research questions within socio-spatial contexts.³¹⁵ In the same vein, the norm localization research agenda encourages researchers to develop this perspective through the new insights gained from the case studies. Indeed, the analysis of norm localization dynamics can be pursued in any local space (i.e. sub-national level, be it a village, a neighborhood, a city, a metropolitan city or a region) all over the world. Therefore, case selection may sound simple or straightforward, but it is a challenging task given the fact that each and every local space in the world could be the case of this study. If there are hundreds or thousands of potential cases, then deciding on the small number of cases to conduct in-depth analysis emerges as an important methodological concern.

One possible strategy for both delimiting the potential cases and avoiding the selection biases is to follow purposeful sampling. In other words, instead of leaning on randomization and/or purely pragmatic concerns (e.g. time, money, logistic, access, affinity, etc.), the selection of illuminating, interesting and information rich cases to conduct in-depth analysis would be more viable strategy in terms of avoiding the problems posed by selection bias. In this line, in empirically exploring the processes and dynamics of norm localization, this study will focus on two socio-culturally and geographically distinct local contexts in Turkey, namely

³¹⁴ Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 73; Robert E. Stake, *Qualitative Research: Studying How Things Work*, 15.

³¹⁵ Klotz and Lynch, *Strategies for Research in Constructivist International Relations*, 9.

Trabzon and Antakya provinces. To put it differently, Trabzon and Antakya cases from Turkey will serve to explore and understand the dynamics and processes of norm localization in two distinct local contexts.

Before proceeding further on the justification of selecting Trabzon and Antakya cases, it is relevant to explain why Turkey was chosen as a background case or the national context in which we investigate norm localization. As explained by Seawright and Gerring “background cases often play a key role in case study analysis. They are not cases per se, but they are nonetheless integrated into the analysis in an informal manner”.³¹⁶ Moreover, the processes, turning points, opportunity structures in the macro (international and national) structural contexts of norm socialization/diffusion would provide some insights on the similarities in the micro-contexts of norm appropriation and translation.

5.1.1. Turkey as a Background Case

Turkey -a constitutionally secular country with its predominantly Muslim population and contentious gender regime- as a background case illustrates the traits of crucial/critical case study, and as an interesting and under-explored national site it would contribute to the norm localization research in many respects. First, Turkey has a dynamic and organized women’s movement, which particularly since the 1980s has brought the ‘women issue’ and VAW on the national agenda and has assumed agency for the advancement of women’s human rights. Second, since the 1990s the Republic of Turkey has been the part of international gender equality regime and committed itself for eliminating the gender-based inequalities and discriminations giving rise to VAW. This anchor has not only provided an external push for domestic reforms, but also provided tangible political and discursive opportunity structures for the women’s human rights defenders in Turkey. Third, despite the achievements in the legal and institutional framework, the pending challenges, which give rise to VAW in Turkey, have been the shortcomings in the implementation of international and national laws, persisting patriarchal structures

³¹⁶ Jason Seawright and John Gerring, “Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: a Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Option,” *Political Research Quarterly* 61, no.2 (2008):294.

and the lack of mental transformation at the political and societal level.³¹⁷ As the national level dynamics and processes of norm diffusion might have an enabling and constraining impact on the norm localization in Trabzon and Antakya local settings, it is useful to briefly elaborate on the milestones or turning points and the challenges in Turkish national context.

Turkey has a dynamic and active women's movement, which particularly since the 1980s has made the VAW publicly visible issue.³¹⁸ Largely endorsing the second-wave feminism in the world and upholding women's human rights discourse, the post-1980 women's movement in Turkey has addressed the patriarchy, various forms of oppression and subordination of women in private sphere, women's sexual and reproductive rights and the VAW. In the second half of the 1980s, the burgeoning feminist women's movement began to organize campaigns, street protests, and the awareness raising activities to expose the severity of VAW and urged the Turkish state authorities to develop legal and policy mechanisms to eliminate VAW in Turkey.³¹⁹ In the 1990s, women's movement

³¹⁷ See, Feride Acar and Gülbanu Altıok, "The 'Politics of Intimate' at the Intersection of Neo-Liberalism and Neo-conservatism," *Women's Studies International Forum* 41 (2013):14-23; Çiğdem Tozlu and Asuman Göksel, "WAVE Violence against Women Country Report Turkey," *The Turkish Social Sciences Association*, (January 2016), 16-19, https://notus-asr.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/WAVE_Report_Turkey_FINAL_EN_6March2016-3-3.pdf; Fatma Umut Beşpınar, "Women and Gender," in *Turkey and the Politics of National Identity Social, Economic and Cultural Transformation*, ed. Shane Brennan and Marc Herzog (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 129-132; Nüket Kardam, "Turkey's Response to the Global Gender Regime," *GEMC Journal* 4 (2011):14-18; Pınar İlkaracan and Liz Erçelik Amado, "Legal Reforms on Violence against Women in Turkey," in *Gender and Violence in Middle East*, ed. Moha Ennaji and Fatima Sadiqi (USA, Canada and New York: Routledge, 2011); United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, "Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Turkey," Forth-sixth session, CEDAW/C/TUR/CO/6, (16 August 2010), <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/co/CEDAW-C-TUR-CO-6.pdf>

³¹⁸ Şirin Tekeli, "Women in Turkey in 1980s," in *Women in Modern Turkish Society*, ed. Şirin Tekeli (London: Zed Books, 1995); Şirin Tekeli, "Emergence of the New Feminist Movement in Turkey," in *The New Women's Movement*, ed. Dahlerup (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1986), 179-199; Yeşim Arat, "Toward a Democratic Society: The Women's Movement in the 1980s," *Women's Studies International Forum* 17, no. 2-3 (March-June 1994); Nüket Sirman, "Feminism in Turkey: A Short History," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 3 (Fall 1989).

³¹⁹ See, Şirin Tekeli, "Women in Turkey in 1980s,"; Feride Acar et.al., "Report Analyzing Intersectionality in Gender Equality Policies for Turkey and the EU," *QUING Project* (Vienna: Institute for Human Sciences, 2008), 15; Çağla Diner and Şule Toktaş, "Waves of Feminism in Turkey: Kemalist, Islamist and Kurdish Women's Movement in an Era of Globalization," *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 12, no.1 (2010); Simel Esim and Dilek Cindoğlu, "Women's Organizations in 1990s Turkey: Predicaments and Prospects," *Middle Eastern Studies* 35, no.1 (1999).

gained momentum with the establishment of the first women's rights NGOs³²⁰, the research centers and graduate programs in universities. Additionally, since the 1990s the women's movement in Turkey has expanded to cover the Kurdish women's movement, Islamic feminists and LGBT movement.³²¹ Despite the increasing intra-movement heterogeneity in terms of the ideology (e.g. the Kemalists, socialist feminists, radical feminists, Kurdish women, Islamic feminists, etc.), geography and organizational priorities, as Esim and Cindoğlu emphasize “on the macro-level, they are the indicators of the collective capacity of women to determine the politics of gender in contemporary Turkey”.³²² The women's movement in Turkey has been the engine of legal and institutional reforms and achievement. Starting with the early 2000s, the women's human rights NGOs have flourished at the regional and local levels, which enhanced the grassroots mobilization in combating VAW in Turkey.

The institutionalization of state policy in combating VAW in Turkey started in the 1990s with the impetus of women's movement and state obligations under the CEDAW. In the early 2000s, Turkey's EU accession process intermingled well with the ongoing domestic advocacy and the CEDAW process that resulted in the achievement of comprehensive gender equality reforms. In pursuance of the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention, the support services, and protective and prosecution measures have been strengthened and extended at the national level.³²³

³²⁰ These first women's NGOs in Turkey include but not limited to the Purple Roof Women's Shelter in Istanbul, the Women's Library and the Information Centre Foundation in Istanbul, Foundation of Women for Women's Human Rights— New Ways in Istanbul, the Foundation for Women's Solidarity in Ankara, Association for Support and Training of Women Candidates (KA.DER).

³²¹ Ömer Çaha, *Women and Civil Society in Turkey: Women's Movement in a Muslim Society* (Farnham UK: Ashgate, 2013), 121-151.

³²² Esim and Cindoğlu, “Women's Organizations in 1990s Turkey,” 178.

³²³ Tozlu and Göksel, “WAVE Violence against Women Country Report Turkey,”; Feride Acar et al., “Issue Histories Turkey: Series of Timelines of Policy Debates,” *QUING Project* (Vienna: Institute for Human Sciences, 2007), www.quing.eu/files/results/ih_turkey.pdf; Burcu Özdemir, “The Role of the EU in Turkey's Legislative Reforms for Eliminating Violence against Women: A Bottom-up Approach,” *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 16, no.1 (2014); Hande Eslen Ziya, “The European Union's Influence on Women's Activist Groups Networking: A Comparison between Turkey and Greece,” *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 6, no.5 (2007): 88; Nüket Kardam, “Turkey's Response to the Global Gender Regime,” 15.

Looking to these milestone developments in detail, Turkey ratified the CEDAW in 1986 and also participated in the UN World Conferences, and declared its determination to implement the core international legal instruments (e.g. Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies, Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, GR. No.19, DEVAW). In 2002, Turkey ratified the Optional Protocol to CEDAW. Importantly, Turkey is the first country which signed the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention in 2011 (ratified in 2012). The ratifications of CEDAW, Optional Protocol and Istanbul Convention have also opened the way for the international monitoring of Turkey by the CEDAW Committee and the GREVIO.³²⁴

The first ever law on VAW in Turkey, the "Family Protection Law No. 4320" was accepted in 1998, which introduced new legal measures to be taken by the public agencies and courts for the protection of victims of domestic violence (i.e. protection orders) and prosecution of perpetrators.³²⁵ This is followed by the substantive reforms in the Turkish Civil Code (2001), Penal Code (2004) and in the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, which cumulatively have transformed the underlying gender blind and patriarchal philosophy in laws, and provided legal basis for combating VAW.³²⁶ In 2012, Turkey adopted its most comprehensive law so far in combating VAW, namely the "Law to Protect of Family and Prevent Violence against Women (Law No. 6284)".³²⁷ This new law established comprehensive legal and policy mechanisms in combating VAW in line with Turkey's obligations under CEDAW and Istanbul Convention. As defined in its Article 1, the Law No. 6284 aimed "to protect the women, the children, the family members and the victims of stalking, who have been subject to the violence or at the risk of violence, and to

³²⁴Tozlu and Göksel, "WAVE Violence against Women Country Report Turkey,"3.

³²⁵ See, Law No. 4320, *Law on the Protection of Family* (17.01.1998), Official Gazette, No. 23233. Prior to the enactment of Law No.4320, under the criminal code a victim of domestic violence had to fulfill a series of tiring procedures including first having an appropriate police and doctor report to prove violence, and then filling a court case against the perpetrator. The Law No. 4320 was amended in 2007 based on the needs that emerged during its implementation.

³²⁶ See, Law No. 4721, *Turkish Civil Code* (date of acceptance 22.11.2001), Official Gazette No.24607; Law No.5237, *Turkish Penal Code* (date of acceptance 26.09.2004), Official Gazette No.25611.

³²⁷ See, Law No. 6284, *Law to Protect Family and Prevent Violence against Women*, (date of acceptance 08.03.2012), Official Gazette No. 28239. <http://www.evicisiddet.adalet.gov.tr/en/dosya/up/icerik/1-6284-sayili-kanun.pdf>

regulate procedures and principles with regard to the measures of preventing the violence against those people”.³²⁸ The Law No. 6284 covered all women regardless of marital status, family members and victims of stalking; embraced the CEDAW Committee’s GR.19, the DEVAW and Istanbul Convention in defining VAW (Art 2 ç, d), and identified the forms of VAW comprehensively to include physical, sexual, psychological, economic forms and stalking. Importantly, the Law No. 6284 decreed to establish the Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers (ŞÖNİM) and brought preventive and protective measures to be implemented by the administrative authorities, judges, prosecutors, police and the ministries.³²⁹

In the ensuing period, Turkey has engaged in capacity building and data collection efforts, and strengthened the support services for the victims of VAW. The support services in Turkey are the ŞÖNİM³³⁰, First Step Stations, Women’s Shelters, ALO 183 Social Support Hotline. The ŞÖNİMs have entered into service as of December 2012 in 14 pilot provinces and currently 49 provinces out of 81 provinces in Turkey have ŞÖNİM.³³¹ As regards to the shelters, in total 143 shelters with 3444 capacity give service to survivors of VAW (women and children).³³² Moreover, the Provincial Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation Commissions for Combating Violence against Women decreed to be formed with the purpose of effective implementation of local action plans and the services provided in the provinces. These Commissions function under the chairmanship of the Governors and are composed of the representatives from the relevant organizations, institutions and civil society.³³³

³²⁸ Law No. 6284, Article 1

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ ŞÖNİMs provide consultancy, guidance and monitoring services for preventing violence and effective implementation of protective and preventive measures; and performed on 7 days, 24 hour basis.

³³¹ Republic of Turkey Ministry of Family and Social Policies The General Directorate on Status of Women (GDSW), “ŞÖNİM Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers”, [https://kadininstatusu.aile.gov.tr/data/58528516369dc524d057a5fe/The%20Violence%20Prevention%20and%20Monitoring%20Centers%20\(%C5%9E%C3%96N%C4%B0M\).pdf](https://kadininstatusu.aile.gov.tr/data/58528516369dc524d057a5fe/The%20Violence%20Prevention%20and%20Monitoring%20Centers%20(%C5%9E%C3%96N%C4%B0M).pdf)

³³² T.C. Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı, “Kadın Konukevi”, <https://alo183.aile.gov.tr/bilgi-bankasi/kadin-konukevi>

³³³ GDSW, “ŞÖNİM Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers,” 7.

Despite these progressive picture in terms of *de jure* achievements (i.e. new laws and the initial institutionalization of preventive, protective, and prosecution measures), the realities of women and the implementation of women's human rights norms in Turkey have been much more complex and indeed alarming. The VAW as a violation of human rights in Turkey is a national pandemic. At least four out of ten women in Turkey have been subjected to various forms of VAW³³⁴ and every day at least one women is being killed (i.e. femicide) by their husbands, partners, fathers, male relatives.³³⁵ The VAW in Turkey also comprises a wide range of under-documented violent and abusive acts towards women, particularly the harmful (traditional) practices of honor killings, early and forced child marriages, arranged marriages, exchange of brides between two families (i.e. *berdel*), polygamy, endogamy, son preference, etc.³³⁶ The gendered social relations and patriarchal

³³⁴The most current nationally representative survey the "Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey" conducted in 2014 is useful in comprehending the overall picture of VAW in Turkey. The findings of the 2014 survey reveals that at least 36% of ever-married women in Turkey have been subjected to physical violence and of the 12% of ever-married women have been exposed to sexual violence by their husbands or intimate partners, and the 38% of women experience both physical and sexual violence. At least 30% of ever-married women reported that they have experienced economic violence at any point in their lives. Compared to the other types of VAW, psychological violence by husbands or intimate partners is the most common one in Turkey. At least 44% of ever-married women in Turkey have experienced such psychological violence acts as insulting, cursing, humiliating, belittling, intimidating or threatening to hurt the women or someone she loves. Stalking is another form of VAW in Turkey and according to the findings, 27% of women in Turkey have experienced stalking at least once in their life time. See, Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, *Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey* (Ankara: Elma Teknik Basım Matbaacılık, 2015), 85-121, http://www.hips.hacettepe.edu.tr/eng/english_main_report.pdf

³³⁵ Collecting data on femicide in Turkey has been challenging, largely because the police and medical data collection systems are close to the public scrutiny and insensitive to the victim-perpetrator relationships or gender based motives of murderer. As a response to a parliamentary question in 2009, the Minister of Justice Sağdullah Ergin provided data on femicide in Turkey between 2002 and 2009. The numbers revealed that 66 women in 2002; 83 women in 2003; 128 women in 2004; 317 women in 2005; 663 women in 2006; 1011 women in 2007; 806 women in 2008; 953 women in 2009 were killed due to men violence. With a basic calculation, one can grasp a 1400% increase in femicide in five years. The Ministry of Justice have not shared any data on the issue until then. In the face of ambiguity in numbers, a group of volunteers created the 'Monument Counter', which is an on line (internet) monument to count and commemorate women who lost their lives due to men violence. The Monument Counter exhibits that 2164 women were killed between 2008 and (April) 2018. See, *Hürriyet Daily News*, "Murder a Fact of Women in Turkey", February 20, 2011, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=women-murder-victims-increase-snowballing-in-turkey-2011-02-20>; The Monument Counter (Anıt Sayaç), <http://www.anitsayac.com/>

³³⁶ United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, "Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Turkey," 4-5.

social structures still prevail in Turkey, which often compete with and challenge the legitimacy of human rights norms at the societal level.³³⁷ Moreover, patriarchy as one of the root causes of violence manifests itself differently in distinct regional and local contexts of Turkey.³³⁸

Given to these dynamics of reform, reversal and the resilience of the VAW at the societal level, it is interesting to explore how the women's internationally and constitutionally defined/granted rights have been pursued and could be localized in increasingly conservative national context and under insufficient norm implementation.

5.1.2. Selection of Trabzon and Antakya Cases

The purposive selection of Trabzon and Antakya cases is a result of an iterative series of decisions and judgments. The initial plan was the selection of information rich cases (i.e. local sites) from Turkey potentially offering interesting manifestations and insights of an ongoing norm localization process. Moreover, the potential cases were expected to meet at least three predetermined criteria: a high level of gender based VAW, the presence of an organized (or active) local civil society groups as agents and the concrete manifestations of state-based/led mechanisms and policies in combating VAW at the local level.

Following a preliminary inquiry in Turkey, it was concluded that at least a dozen of local contexts (e.g. Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, Antalya, Adana, Mersin, Antakya, Urfa, Nevşehir, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Van, Muş, Trabzon, Ordu, Rize, Edirne, Bursa, etc.) could be potential candidates for case selection and worthy of in-depth exploration. Yet, within the confines of this qualitative research it would be so arduous to make in-depth analysis of norm localization in each and every local context. Moreover, representativeness and generalization are not the major issues in

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ United Nations Human Rights Council, "UN Human Rights Council: Addendum to the Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Its Causes and Consequences, Yakin Ertürk, Mission to Turkey," A/HRC/4/34/Add.2 (5 January 2007), 6-11, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/45fea1812.html>.

this research. Localization perspective implies or assumes that norm localization processes and dynamics would vary given the complex interaction of agents and structures in distinct socio-cultural contexts. Therefore, the primary motivation is not generalization but to explore and illustrate how norm entrepreneurs in each local context write their own norm localization story.

Consequently, considering also the time and financial limitations of this research, it was decided to select two cases from Turkey based on three more selection criteria: (1) Variation in geographical locations and socio-cultural context (2) Approximate matching of the institutionalization of state-led policies and mechanisms in combating VAW in those particular local contexts (4) the presence of gatekeepers and potential key informants who are willing to devote their time to the researcher to observe their day to day activism and to make time consuming in-depth interviews.

As discussed in detail in Chapters 6 and 7, Trabzon and Antakya cases squarely meet the above mentioned case selection criteria. Table 1 presents a brief overview of the selected cases.

Table 1: Trabzon and Antakya Local Contexts at a Glance

	Location	Local Socio-cultural Context	Ongoing Process of Norm Localization	Agency	
				Civil Society Organizations	State-led Initiatives
T R A B Z O N	*North of Turkey *Coastal city of Black Sea region	*Conservative, nationalist, highly patriarchal society *Multi-ethnic and multi-cultural past *Closeness to 'foreign' ideas, world views (i.e. socialist ideas could not gain ground) * High level of VAW and gender-based discrimination in both private and public spheres	*Since the early 2000s	*Organized and active women's human rights NGOs, platform and individual feminist activists	*Women Shelter: (established in 2012) *Women Counseling Center (operated by metropolitan municipality) *ŞöNİM (established in 2012) *Family Court
A N T A K Y A	*South of Turkey *Border city to Syria	*Known as the city of peaceful co-existence *Multi-ethnic, multicultural society *Openness to human rights ideas and discourse *Persisting patriarchal structures *High level of VAW and gender-based discriminations in both private and public spheres	*Since the late 1980s	*Organized and active women's human rights NGOs, platform and individual feminist activists	*Women Shelter (established in 2014) *Women Counseling Center (NO) *ŞÖNİM (established in 2016) *Family Court

In addition, particular developments, turning points and critical junctures unfolding in and around these local spaces in the last three decades or so also make

Trabzon and Antakya unique and quite interesting contexts to explore the norm localization processes and dynamics. For instance, Trabzon is one of the localities in Turkey that felt most the impact of the dissolution of Soviet Union. Perhaps as an unintended consequence of a systemic level development, the collapse of Soviet system has resulted in irregular migration flow of vulnerable women from ex-Soviet countries who either sought to make informal luggage trade (*bavul ticareti*) or work as sex workers in Trabzon. In this process, not only the women from the ex-Soviet countries were exploited and stigmatized but also Trabzon women under patriarchal social structures were experienced intensified oppression and violence. Secondly, in the last decades Trabzon came to the national agenda with rising conservatism, nationalism, football fanaticism, misogyny, intolerance to civil society groups, and at the extreme hate crimes against non-Muslim minorities. Considering these adverse contextual dynamics, it would be interesting to explore how local norm entrepreneurs find ways to diffuse women's human rights norms in Trabzon. Another reason for why Trabzon emerges as a novel case is the United Nations' Women Friendly Cities program that was implemented in the city between 2006 and 2010. The Women Friendly Cities Program in Trabzon constitutes an opportunity structure for the diffusion of women's human rights in Trabzon. As we thoroughly explain in Chapter 6, this program not only imposed concrete duties on local public authorities for the proper implementation of women's rights but also placed women's NGOs and public service providers at the center of the process. In this line, the first year of program was devoted to the 'trainings of trainers', workshops and coordination of local stakeholders in Trabzon. Considering importance of global-local level linkages in norm diffusion dynamics, the exploration of the impact of this temporal dynamic in Trabzon would provide new insights into the norm localization research.

The Antakya case has also major potential to provide valuable insights on the dynamics of norm localization in a multi-ethnic border city under tense state-society relations as well as under the adverse effects of Syrian civil war across borders. Importantly, due to geographical proximity and constant interaction across borders, the Syrian war next door since 2011 and the resulting Syrian influx literally hit the daily life in Antakya. The emergent conditions also make gender based

discriminations and VAW overt. Interestingly, the advocacy for women's human rights in Antakya has gained momentum in this period. Therefore, Antakya case would provide important practical and theoretical implications.

Arguably, given the particularities of Trabzon and Antakya cases, the in-depth exploration of norm localization processes and dynamics in these two local contexts provide rich empirical data and valuable insights into how local agents and structure(s) interact and co-constitute each other in appropriating and translating women's human rights norms into local practice.

5.2. Data Collection

During the fieldwork in Trabzon and Antakya conducted between May 2016 and July 2017, this research collected rich qualitative data by primarily utilizing the in-depth and open-ended interviews and observation (natural and participant).

The data sources and types were triangulated in order to ensure the data credibility and to enhance inferential leverage.³³⁹ As underlined by Baxter and Jack, the strategy of utilizing multiple data collection techniques and data sources not only “ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood”³⁴⁰ but also “enhances data quality based on the principles of idea convergence and the confirmation of findings”.³⁴¹

5.2.1. Interviews

Interview can be defined as gathering information and data on a specific set of topics through purposeful conversations between an interviewer and an

³³⁹ Alan Bryman, “Triangulation,” in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods*, ed. Michael S. Lewis-Beck et al. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2004), 1143-1144.

³⁴⁰ Pamela Baxter and Susan Jack, “Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers,” *The Qualitative Report* 13, no.4 (2008):544.

³⁴¹ Ibid., 556.

interviewee.³⁴² Despite the fact that interviews can take many forms (i.e. structured, semi-structured, informal, ethnographic, etc.), the particular choice of this study is to utilize semi-structured and in-depth interviews as the primary data collection technique. As clarified by Kay E. Cook, in semi-structured interviews “the researcher retains some control over the direction and content to be discussed, yet participants are free to elaborate or take the interview in new but related directions”.³⁴³

Deciding with whom to conduct interviews is one of the major issues. In this regard, the purposeful sampling strategy was also used to identify key informants in Antakya and Trabzon provinces. Sampling was basically built on three judgments. First, it was decided to conduct interviews with two groups of local actors so as to achieve holistic understanding of localization process in two local contexts as well as to triangulate the interview data. These are (a) informants from the local public agencies as duty bearers in charge of providing services to the victims of VAW, particularly those social service workers who work in the ŞÖNİM in Antakya and Trabzon; (b) the informants from the local women NGOs and organizations as potential agents of norm localization. Secondly, despite the fact that the state-led and civil society activism in combating VAW has gained impetus in Turkey over the last decades, not all actors/endeavors pursue a women’s human right based framework in their approach to gender, VAW and in their associated local practices. Therefore, only those local informants who openly expressed their commitment to women’s human rights are taken into account in the sampling. Thirdly, in addition to their adherence to implement the women’s human rights approach in combating VAW, the informants were expected to meet such qualities as the extensive knowledge about the local context and as well as the performance of agency through the translation of women’s human rights framework into social practice.

³⁴² Michael Bloor and Fiona Wood, *Keywords in Qualitative Methods A Vocabulary of Research Concepts* (London: Sage Publications 2006), 104; Constance A. Barlow, “Interviews,” in *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research Volume 1*, ed. Albert J. Mills, Elden Wiebe, Gabrielle Durepos (London: Sage Publications 2010), 495; Janet M. Ruane, *Essentials of Research Method A Guide to Social Science Research* (USA, UK, Australia: Blackwell Publishing 2005), 147.

³⁴³ Kay E. Cook, “In-depth Interview,” in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods Volume 1*, ed. Lisa M. Given (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore: Sage Publications 2008), 422.

As a result, between May 2016 and December 2016, this study conducted 4 in-depth interviews with the social service workers who provide legal, social and psychological support services to victims of VAW under the Provincial Directorate Generals of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies in Antakya and Trabzon, and 31 in-depth interviews with those informants from the local women's rights NGOs, Bar Association's Women Commissions, and individual local activists who devoted adequate time and showed their willingness to participate in this study (For a list of informants see Appendix D).

The semi-structured interviews with the social service workers who work in the local public agencies and local women's human rights defenders and organizations were built on an interview guide involving a set of core topics driven by the theoretical framework and the research questions. At the same time, this study allowed the informants to flexibly engage in relevant topics, details, and the stories they deemed important. Allowing a certain degree of flexibility during the interviews made it possible to collect data about some thought provoking and interesting ideas, practices and issues that were not thought before data collection stage.

5.2.2. Participant Observation

While the interviews provide substantial data in answering research questions, it is still appealing and indeed necessary for a norm localization researcher to gain hands-on experience through observing the local socio-cultural milieu that gives rise to gender based VAW as well as the activities and daily routines of norm localizers in combating VAW in Trabzon and Antakya.

McKechnie defines participant observation as “a method of data collection in which the researcher takes part in everyday activities related to an area of social life in order to study an aspect of that life through the observation of events in their natural contexts”.³⁴⁴ Observation as a data collection technique can be utilized for a range of research objectives in different disciplines and fields of study. In utilizing

³⁴⁴Lynne E. F. McKechnie, “Participant Observation,” in *Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Methods Volume 2*, ed. Lisa M Given (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore: Sage Publications, 2008), 599.

observational techniques, the goal of this research was not to conduct an ethnographic study as it might be seen in anthropology and sociology. Rather, this data collection technique was utilized in different stages of fieldwork to complement and triangulate the data gathered through the in-depth interviews.

During the early phases of fieldwork, particularly before conducting the in-depth interviews with key informants, the observational techniques were utilized to collect background information relevant to this research including the socio-cultural organization of daily life, gendered challenges of local women as well as the turning points or critical junctures that would shape the norm localization processes in both cities. Spending one month in Trabzon in May 2016 and one month in Antakya in June 2016, I had the opportunity to gather information from numerous local people through informal, naturally occurring conversations, and became more familiar and accustomed to the socio-cultural structures that shape the women's and norm entrepreneurs' realities. The greater part of descriptive data collected through active seeing and informal conversations/interviews with the local women and knowledgeable intellectuals conducted in the parks, cafes, tea gardens, bookstores, neighborhoods as well as bazaars where rural women come to sell their products.

Observation, particularly participant observation, was predominantly utilized in the later phases of research following the in-depth interviews with key informants. With the permission of local women NGOs and organizations in Trabzon and Antakya, the researcher seized the opportunity to make first-hand observations in the offices and about the everyday work of norm localizers. Sometimes, it became possible to personally participate in their awareness raising and advocacy activities. Especially in these venues, it was illuminating to watch closely how localizers interact and translate women's rights into local context and practice. Moreover, it became possible to meet the local women who were previously the objects of norm localization, but then become active agents as a result of their interaction with the norm localizers in Antakya and Trabzon. This study also conducted interviews with these women about their realities and experiences in internalizing and utilizing women's human rights norms and the role of norm localizers in this process.

Before concluding to explain the data collection process, it is important to note that the observational and interview data were also combined, enhanced and triangulated with the other primary and secondary sources in the process of desk research. As emphasized by Byrne, today the parameters of conducting primary research with documents is changing. While traditionally libraries and archives were the sites of research, today in the age of internet a great deal of written and visual material are accessible online.³⁴⁵

Regarding the primary sources, this study collected data from the websites, blogs, face-book and twitter accounts of women's NGOs, platforms and activists where they inform people on their stance, announce their activities, mobilize for collective action, share their publications, brochures, pamphlets, photos, videos, press releases, etc. Particularly, the websites, twitter and face-book accounts of women NGOs and the local media were regularly followed. While the researcher was not physically there during all the activities that norm localizers organized, for instance, for the 8 March Women's Day, 25 November International Day for the Elimination of VAW, the you-tube videos, photos, face-book sharing of these events as well as conversations with the informants provide highly useful data which enhanced researcher's in-depth understanding of their efforts/practices to promote women's human rights norms.

Additionally, the web-sites of the Provincial Directorates of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies in Antakya and Trabzon as well as their press releases were regularly followed to better understand the state-led initiatives as well as state-civil society interaction in these particular localities.

Some secondary sources were also collected including the statistical data produced by the Turkish Statistic Institute and the Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies that inform the regional and local parameters of women and VAW in Turkey. In addition to this, such websites as Anitsayac and Bianet revealing the statistical portrait and magnitude of VAW in each and every province over time were analyzed. Last but not least, PhD dissertations as well as surveys, books and articles focusing on the gender relations, VAW, socio-cultural dynamics and the

³⁴⁵ David Byrne, "Reviewing the Literature: How does the Literature Review Differ from Doing Desk Research?" *Project Planner* (2017). Doi: 10.4135/9781526408518, available at <http://methods.sagepub.com/base/download/StageSection/488>

specific historical developments/turning points in Trabzon and Antakya were also reviewed and integrated into the empirical analysis of norm localization processes in those local contexts.

5.3. Data Analysis

Extensive field notes and qualitative data were collected through observation, interviews and from other primary and secondary sources. These voluminous raw data was transcribed first, and by using qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA organized into comprehensible parts with condensed themes (e.g. local context, forms of VAW, norm localizers, state-led mechanisms, appropriation process, targets, practice, tactics, strategies, etc.). The software program also enabled to organize and elevate the direct quotations from the most relevant parts of interviews and field notes, insights and understandings.

In the later steps of the analysis stage, writing up the separate cases was the main task. In other words, the initial focus was on individual cases, which provided that findings on norm localization dynamics are grounded in a specific local context and the practices of local agents. Once that is done, cross case analysis was conducted to identify possible patterns and themes that cut across these two cases. Data analysis presented in the empirical chapters.

5.4. Ethical Considerations

Certain ethical issues should be considered in data collection and data analysis in conducting norm localization research. The first ethical concern is confidentiality, which implies that private or off the record data will not be reported. With permission, most interviews were recorded and the informants' name and surname were used when referring or quoting the interview data in the empirical chapters. However, particularly those informants who work in the local public agencies in Trabzon and Antakya did not allow tape recording and requested not to use their full names in the text. The names and surnames of these informants were kept confidential by agreement and these interviews were used and cited, for

instance, as “Interview with Informant x, (affiliation), date, place” or alternatively were not cited in the empirical chapters. In addition to that, some informants from Trabzon initially gave permission to use their names and direct quotations from their interviews. However, these informants later on withdrawn all their permissions and informed the researcher not to use their names and the information that they provide in any part of the text. Only one informant shortly explained the reason of this reversal: “under the state of emergency conditions in Turkey, it is not safe for her and her NGO to make overt criticism vis-à-vis public authorities”.

Another ethical concern came to the fore during the collection and analysis of observational data and the interviews with the local women who had been subjected to various forms of VAW and who then gained awareness about their rights by attending the empowerment activities of women NGOs and become activist. Due to the ethical concerns, the violence stories of these informants were not included and their names were kept confidential. These interviews were labelled for instance as “Interview with Informant y (affiliation, gender, age) date, place”.

This study also committed to eliminate unequal power relations between the researcher and informant in the research process and to foster the empowerment of women during the interviews. In this line, the first issue was supplying the necessary information about the overall research project and having informed consent to ensure the voluntary participation of informants. Then, the interview questions were provided to the informants before the interview through e-mail, the informants were encouraged to ask questions whenever they need further clarifications, and informants were allowed to turn down questions whenever they feel uncomfortable. Moreover, at the data analysis stage, the researcher’s interpretations of the interview and observational data were shared with the informants.

CHAPTER 6

NORM LOCALIZATION IN TRABZON, TURKEY

6.1. Trabzon Local Context and the Micro-Structural Dynamics of Norm Localization

Before exploring the dynamics and processes of norm localization in the context of Trabzon, some background information on the local dynamics including the history, demography, turning points and the prevalent forms of VAW that shape the social life of the city and women's lives would be useful.

Trabzon, or with its ancient name 'Trapezus' is a city on the Black Sea coast of northeastern Turkey. Because of its location on the historical Silk Road and the strategic importance of its port, since the antiquity Trabzon has been a cultural center as well as a trade gateway to inner Anatolia, Iran, the Caucasus and Russia.

As of 2017 the population of Trabzon is 786.326.³⁴⁶ Although there is no reliable record on the ethnic origins of the residences of contemporary Trabzon, as highlighted by Ayşe Hür the city had a multicultural past with its Muslim Turks, Pontus Greeks, Armenians, and Laz people.³⁴⁷ Today the majority of Muslim Turks are followed by Laz people³⁴⁸ and also much smaller groups (i.e. symbolic in number) such as Pontus Greeks (also called Romeyka speakers) and Armenians

³⁴⁶ T.C. Trabzon Valiliği, "Nüfus ve Sosyal Durum", <http://www.trabzon.gov.tr/nufus-ve-sosyal-durum>.

³⁴⁷ Ayşe Hür, "Trabzon'un Etnik Tarihine Bir Bakış," *Trabzon'u Anlamak*, ed. Güven Bakırezer ve Yücel Demirel (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, Nisan 2017), 127-135.

³⁴⁸ Laz people are a Circassian ethnic group who converted to Islam during the Ottoman era. Laz people today predominantly live in the Black Sea Region of Turkey.

(also called Hemshins).³⁴⁹ Although the Laz population constitutes minority, the inhabitants of the city are generally so labeled in Turkey. Trabzon's 'Laz' jokes with their male characters 'Temel' and 'Dursun' and female character 'Fadime' are famous in Turkey and in the world.

The travel books and travelers (e.g., the great traveler Katip Çelebi) define Trabzon as a city where green and blue meet and emphasize the harmony between the human and environment/geography in the lives of Trabzon people. Today, it seems that the environmental degradation and unplanned urbanization deteriorated the green and blue silhouette and harmony of the city. These factors also deeply and adversely influence the agricultural sector and tourism, which are the backbones of local economy.

One major source that shapes the social life in Trabzon has been the city's famous national league soccer team Trabzonspor. The inhabitants of Trabzon, particularly Trabzon men have had strong emotional ties with the Trabzonspor, and generally consider the team as an inseparable part of their lives.³⁵⁰ As emphasized by Bozok, Trabzonspor is not only the source of joy, pride and honor of Trabzon city, but also one of the sources that feeds the construction of gender roles and masculinity of the Trabzon men.³⁵¹ Importantly, the collective fan swearing, songs, chants, cheers of Trabzon men in and around the stadium and during the matches (what it seems to be for fun when first seen or heard) illustrate and at many times feed the discriminatory gender roles, sexism, homophobia, misogyny and insult women body in Trabzon.³⁵²

In the near history of Trabzon, particularly from the late 1980s onwards, two crucial historical junctures have left imprint in the social relations, in the collective memory of the city as well as in women's lives. These local processes that frequently

³⁴⁹Since the Ottoman conquest of Trabzon (i.e. 15th century), the population of non-Muslim communities in Trabzon has gradually diminished over the centuries. This trend accelerated during the First World War for the Armenian community due to the 1915 events and deportation (*tehcir*), and for the Pontus Greeks during the population exchanges between Greece and Turkey in the 1920s. See Hür, "Trabzon'un Etnik Tarihine Bir Bakış," 140-168.

³⁵⁰ Interview with Bahar Usta Baki (sociologist), May 08, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁵¹Mehmet Bozok, "Constructing Local Masculinities: A Case Study from Trabzon Turkey" (PhD Dissertation, Middle East Technical University Department of Sociology, January 2013), 61-62.

³⁵² Interview with Bahar Usta Baki, May 08, 2016, Trabzon.

came to the fore during the fieldwork are: (1) the collapse and dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1989 and the unfolding informal luggage trade (*bavul ticareti*) and rising sex trade/industry in Trabzon up until the last decade; (2) rising conservatism\ nationalism and rightist uprisings in the city.

While Trabzon has traditionally been a migrant sending city (e.g., to Istanbul and western Europe), with the opening of border between Georgia and Turkey in 1989 Trabzon turns into a popular destination of temporary and often irregular migrants—particularly women- from the former Soviet bloc. Initially migrants from the former Soviet bloc try to earn their livelihood and make some profit through what the local people call ‘luggage trade (*bavul ticareti*)’.³⁵³ In the early 1990s, the so called ‘Russian Bazaar’ (*Rus Pazarı*) in Çömlekçi neighborhood of Trabzon becomes the major site of this informal economic activity.³⁵⁴ Alternatively, some migrant women try their chances in Trabzon in the domestic work sectors of cleaning and child, ill, disabled or elderly caring.³⁵⁵

In this period, some migrant women from the former Soviet bloc also voluntarily chose to work as sex workers or trafficked to do so. Interestingly, the flourishing sex trade/trafficking in a conservative city had been tolerated at least for a couple of months. These physically and sexually attractive sex workers became part of social and economic life in Trabzon.³⁵⁶ However, then these sex workers were stigmatized and popularly called as ‘Natasha’.³⁵⁷ As explained by Siegel and Yeşilgöz “hostility erupted in Trabzon from various sides: from state authorities,

³⁵³ Leyla Gülçür and Pınar İlkkaracan, “The Natasha Experience: Migrant Sex Workers from the Former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in Turkey,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 25, no.4 (2002):413; Bozok, “Constructing Local Masculinities,” 68; Ceren Baytokan, “Human Trafficking in Turkey: A Feminist Analysis,” *Fe Dergi: Feminist Eleştiri* 6, no.2 (2014):16.

³⁵⁴ Gülçür and İlkkaracan explain the cycle of luggage trade as follows: “Arriving in Turkey with an initial sum of approximately US\$1000 – 2000, these individuals buy goods (such as clothes, small household commodities) from local merchants and then return to their countries of origin to sell these products at a profit. Continuing the cycle, they then return to Turkey with small commodities, selling these and buying more goods to take back to their own countries”. See, Gülçür and İlkkaracan, “The Natasha Experience,”413.

³⁵⁵ Ceren Baytokan, “Human Trafficking in Turkey,”16.

³⁵⁶ Ceren Baytokan, “Human Trafficking in Turkey,”16; Interview with Bahar Usta Baki, May 08, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁵⁷ Ceren Baytokan, “Human Trafficking in Turkey,”16; Interview with Bahar Usta Baki, May 08, 2016, Trabzon.

from neighbor in the areas where Natashas live and sell their bodies and especially from Turkish wives”.³⁵⁸ There are numerous news and stories that appeared in the local and national media about how the arrival of ‘Natashas’ affected the social/familial structures in Trabzon and about the bankruptcies, suicides, divorces, venereal diseases of Trabzon men. In a nutshell, it seems that the so called Natasha experience of the city at least for a decade or more (i.e. from the early 1990s to up until the early 2000s) became the main issue that shaped the social life in Trabzon.³⁵⁹

In the following periods, the rising conservatism and nationalism come to the fore in Trabzon. By its inhabitants, Trabzon is quite often portrayed as a ‘conservative’ and ‘rightist/nationalist city’.³⁶⁰ At the extreme, these commonly spelled features of Trabzon have fed and been used as a pretext for such unfortunate nationalist/religious hate crime incidents. In the last decade, Trabzon has become national and international hot topic with the murder of Priest Andrea Santoro of the Italian Santa Maria Church in Trabzon (5 February 2006), the murder of Armenian journalist and human rights defender Hrant Dink (19 January 2007) and his murder trial. Moreover, rising conservatism and nationalism have reinforced intolerance to different ideas and ideological positions in Trabzon. For instance, the civil society groups and individuals (e.g., TAYAD, People’s Democratic Party and Kurds, LGBT individuals, women groups, environmentalists) have faced several lynch attempts, attacks and custody while trying to distribute leaflets, demonstrating or reading press statements, protesting conditions in the local context.³⁶¹

³⁵⁸ Dina Siegel and Yücel Yeşilgöz, “Natashas and Turkish men: New Trends in Women Trafficking and Prostitution,” in *Global Organized Crime: Trends and Developments*, ed. Dina Siegel, Henk van de Bunt and Damian Zaitch (Dordrecht: Springer-Science+Business, 2003), 78.

³⁵⁹ Bozok, “Constructing Local Masculinities,” 111-136.

³⁶⁰ The results of national elections in Trabzon can be regarded as one telling indicator of this tendency. For instance, in the general election held in 1 December 2015, conservative Justice and Development Party gained 66.8 % of votes and the far right Nationalist Action Party gained 13, 1% of votes in Trabzon.

³⁶¹ Hakan Ataman and Orhan Kemal Cengiz, *Hate Crimes in Turkey* (Ankara: Human Rights Agenda Association, 2009), 7-8, 10; Bozok, “Constructing Local Masculinities,” 51-53, 65-68; Tolga Korkut, “Police Watch, Beath and Attack in Trabzon,” *Trabzon-BIA News Center*, June 27, 2006, <http://bianet.org/english/human-rights/81277-police-watch-beath-and-attack-in-trabzon>; Bianet News Center, “TAYAD Faces New Lynch Attempt in Trabzon,” June 28, 2006, <https://bianet.org/english/human-rights/81324-tayad-faces-new-lynch-attempt-in-trabzon>

6.1.1. Local Dimensions and Prevalence of VAW in Trabzon

The “Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey” conducted in 2014 is important in revealing the statistical data pertaining to the prevalence of different forms of violence against women in Trabzon. The findings indicate that in the East Black Sea statistical region including Trabzon, at least %26.8 of ever-married women have been subjected to physical violence by their husbands or intimate partners. The percentage of women’s exposure to sexual violence is 9.9%. The research findings also show that physical and sexual violence together are prevalently widely experienced. At least 28.9% of women reported that in most of the cases, physical violence is accompanied by sexual violence.³⁶² Among the forms of VAW in this region including Trabzon, emotional violence/abuse (i.e. “insulting/cursing”, “humiliating/belittling”, “intimidating” and “threatening to hurt the woman or someone she loves”) is the most common category. At least 36.5% of ever-married women report lifetime emotional violence/abuse by husbands or intimate partners.³⁶³ The forms of economic violence/abuse (i.e. preventing woman from working or causing her to quit her job, not giving money for household expenses and depriving her of her income against their will) was reported to be 25.7%.³⁶⁴ Controlling behaviors over women’s lives have also been prevalent in the region including Trabzon. According to the findings these controlling acts that affect the lives of women in Trabzon include “always wanting to know where she is” (66.2%), “getting angry when the woman talks to other men” (44.4%), “interfering with the woman’s clothing, demanding her to dress as he wants” (33.2%), “demanding the woman to ask for his permission to go to a health institution” (23.5%), “ignoring the woman” (15.7%), “interfering with the woman’s use of social network sites” (12.8%), “preventing the woman from seeing her friends”

³⁶² Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, *Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey*, 86.

³⁶³ Ibid., 96.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., 101.

(11.8%), “preventing the woman from seeing her own family and relatives” (6.6%), “suspecting that the woman is unfaithful” (3.5%).³⁶⁵

While the 2014 survey data helps to illustrate the overall picture of the different forms of VAW in Trabzon, the narrations gathered from the in-depth interviews and the field observations in Trabzon reveal that the VAW would be much more prevalent and entrenched than what the official statistical data reveal. In order to better comprehend the context specific dimensions and types of VAW in Trabzon, the following section 6.1.1.1 addresses some prominent examples of gendered practices and harmful traditions that give rise to the VAW, and the section 6.1.1.2 addresses the so called ‘Natasha’ process in Trabzon and its impact on the lives of Trabzon women and migrant women.

6.1.1.1. Harmful Practices and Traditions Giving Rise to VAW

Below are some of the most prevalent gender stereotypes, gender based discriminations and harmful traditions in the rural and urban areas that constitute different forms of VAW in Trabzon.

a. Trabzon’s ‘Laz’ jokes with their male characters ‘Temel’, ‘Dursun’ and female character ‘Fadime’ are famous in Turkey and in the world. Indeed, these characters and their stories not only reflect the daily life of Trabzon but also the construction of masculinity and femininity that shape the gender stereotypes and the lives of women. As also observed by Bozok in his interviews with the local people, Trabzon men, just like in the Laz jokes, are narrated as ‘irrational’, ‘feverish’, ‘stubborn’, ‘aggressive’, ‘macho’, ‘funny’, ‘sociable’, ‘sexually demanding’, ‘patriarchal’ male character. In his fieldwork Bozok also finds homophobic, nationalist, militarist and conservative undertones in the self-descriptions of Trabzon men.³⁶⁶

The Trabzon women, just like Fadime character (the wife of Temel) in the jokes, have often been narrated with certain characteristics and gender roles including ‘hard working’, ‘rugged’ ‘brave’, ‘obedient’, ‘pure and honorable’,

³⁶⁵Ibid., 99.

³⁶⁶ Bozok, *Constructing Local Masculinities*, 60.

‘patient’, ‘uncomplaining’, ‘practical’, ‘agile’. Bahar Bostan further notes that “women have been imposed or thought to be an ‘ideal’ Black Sea women (*Karadeniz kadını*) who is obedient, hard-working and remain silent for the preservation of family structures or family honor”.³⁶⁷ These ‘ideal/typical’ descriptions of Trabzon men and women reveal deep-rooted discriminatory gender roles and stereotypes in Trabzon.

b. Son Preference: In the traditional rural families, when girls are born, usually they are not welcome. Even their mothers feel ashamed just because she couldn’t give birth to a son.³⁶⁸ Son preference as a form of discrimination also presents itself on the issues of distribution of family inheritance and resources. Bahar Bostan, a lawyer and human rights defender highlights that “still today, there are many women who cannot demand inheritance rights from their fathers and brothers. In many cases, families compel them to relinquish their rights. Women are either unaware of their rights or lack the legal support system needed to contest in the courts”.³⁶⁹

c. Illiteracy or Low Level of Education: According to the Turkish Statistical Institute 2013 data 29. 957 women in Trabzon are illiterate.³⁷⁰ The low level of education is also prevalent among rural women. Compared with men’s level of education, there is an imbalance between Trabzon men and women. This imbalance is attributed to girls’ shorter period of school enrollment. Families prioritize boys’ education. On the other hand, girls are generally assigned to take care of their younger siblings, to do house work (e.g. cooking, cleaning) and mainly help their mothers with housework.³⁷¹

d. The local women living in the rural areas of Trabzon mostly experience disparity in access to resources and opportunities as well as face gender based

³⁶⁷ Interview with Bahar Bostan (Lawyer), May 06, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁶⁸ Interview with Cavidan Yılmaz, May 5, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁶⁹ Interview with Bahar Bostan, May 06, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁷⁰ Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, *Seçilmiş Göstergelerle Trabzon 2013* (Ankara: Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu Matbaası, Eylül 2014), 87.

³⁷¹ Interview with Cavidan Yılmaz, May 5, 2016, Trabzon; Interview with Bahar Usta Baki, May 08, 2016, Trabzon.

discriminations, which give rise to VAW. For instance, harsh geographical conditions shape the daily lives of rural women. Due to the scarcity of usable farmlands, even in the small villages the houses are apart from each other and the transportation facilities are limited. These conditions not only affect the rural women's access to basic public services (e.g., health, education, security) but also force them to live in the confined spaces of extended family and relatives.

Agricultural production, the main anchor of rural economy, predominantly rely on unpaid or unregistered female workforce. Women mostly work as farmers in subsistence agriculture and sell their products (e.g., handicraft, butter, cheese, milk, vegetables) in the village or city bazaars/markets. Additionally, during the summertime they work as seasonal workers in the tea or hazelnut gardens in order to contribute the family income. However, most women do not have authority over the money (income) that they earned and have no social insurance.³⁷²

e. The local women who live in the suburbs of Trabzon have specific challenges and realities. The sociologist Bahar Usta Baki from the Karadeniz Technical University highlights that due to such factors as environmental degradation, lack of job opportunities for men, privatization of tea and hazelnut factories, and limited profit from the agricultural production, the traditional extended family structures have dissolved and young generations have had no option but to migrate from the country sides to the Trabzon city center in the last decades. Migration from the rural to urban areas, according to Baki, has adversely influenced the lives of local women.³⁷³ Baki substantiates her concerns with the following examples. For instance, the city life alienates these women from the production activities and imprisons them into the walls of their houses. In addition, the controlling behaviors of husbands and the next door neighbors over women's lives

³⁷² According to Turkish Statistical Institute 2012 data, in TR90 statistical region including Ordu, Giresun, Trabzon, Rize, Artvin and Gümüşhane, the women employment ratio is 41.4%. According to the report of Women's Labor and Employment Initiative (KEIG), the great majority of Trabzon women work in the agricultural sector (79%) and service sectors of ill, child and elderly caring, cookery, and house cleaning (18.5%). Additionally, home-based working, particularly Trabzon matting and kazaz jewelry (*Trabzon hasırı* and *kazaziye* respectively), is one of the most common income generating activities of local women. See Kadın Emeği ve İstihdam Girişimi (KEIG), *Türkiye'de Kadın Emeği ve İstihdamına Yönelik Politikalar: Kadın Emeği ve İstihdamına Dair Politika ve Faaliyetlerin 12 İlde Değerlendirmesi*, (İstanbul: KEIG Yayınları: Mayıs 2013), 148-149.

³⁷³ Interview with Bahar Usta Baki, May 08, 2016, Trabzon.

(dress, contact with other women and people, shopping, working) immensely increase in this new and unfamiliar environment. Baki also emphasizes the high level of anti-depressant usage among women who migrated from the country side to the city suburbs.³⁷⁴ Nurper Gürdal, a women's rights activist, also notes that the vast majority of these women are housewives with lower level of education and subordinated to their husbands. They have no decision-making authority over their lives and family issues. Alternatively, those suburb women who want to work cannot find qualified jobs, which push them to work in the low-paid informal service sectors of ill, child and elderly caring, house cleaning.³⁷⁵

f. Local women's unpaid labor in the household constitute another set of exploitation area and economic violence. From the childhood days women are expected to shoulder such responsibilities as house caring, child caring, elderly care and subsistence farming.

g. Although Trabzon women are often praised for their courage, creativity and hard work, they are disadvantaged when it comes to entrepreneurship and running their own business. Nurper emphasizes that as few women have savings, capital or experience (i.e. know-how), women have no/limited option but to depend upon male intermediaries for marketing their products who make large profit over the women's labor. This is the case for the women who wove Trabzon matting and kazaz jewelry (*Trabzon hasırı* and *kazaziye* respectively), women who want to open restaurant, women who produce the famous traditional Trabzon butter and cheese.³⁷⁶

h. Women and girls with disabilities are more vulnerable and prone to violence than women without disabilities and their male counterparts. Women NGOs report that women with disabilities in Trabzon have been experiencing multiple and aggravated violence at the intersections of 'disability' and gender-based discriminations. They are isolated, marginalized, and dependent on their caregivers. They have lower level of education, and limited financial resources and job opportunities. The mobility and cognitive impairments that they have make it

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Interview with Nurper Gürdal, May 15, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁷⁶ Interview with Nurper Gürdal, May 15, 2016, Trabzon.

more difficult for them to escape from the violent relationships, report violence to local authorities, access to police and justice system.³⁷⁷

i. Strict patriarchal structures and religious precepts have still intact in the traditional community life, which prepare the ground for seeing the women and girls as personal property and honor of male family members. Women are ‘owned’ and ‘protected’ by fathers or brothers before marriage and then by their husbands after marriage.³⁷⁸ Moreover, women’s sexuality and choices have been predominantly regulated by the patriarchal and Islamic codes. For instance, a girl’s saving herself to her husband or female virginity has been traditionally valued and praised. The married women are expected to serve their husbands’ sexual needs and obey their husbands’ demands. The refusal to have sexual intercourse is accepted as sin (*günah*), which exacerbate the marital rape cases.³⁷⁹

Another example of harmful practice is the violation of women’s rights to divorce. Bahar Bostan explains that

Divorce is still a stigma/taboo. Here people take a dim view of divorce and divorced women. Brides are said that ‘you enter your husband’s house with a wedding dress and can only go out with your shroud’ (*gelinlikle girdiğin evden kefenle çıkarsın*). The lack of financial resources, family support, courage and autonomy as well as social pressures compel women to continue marriage. Most women believe that it is their fate and suffer through the various forms of violence.³⁸⁰

Furthermore, particularly in the rural areas, the traditions of arranged and early marriages have still been alive and justified on the religious grounds. Young women sometimes do not have right to choose their partners. One striking example comes from the Şalpazarı district of Trabzon. Cavidan, one of the leading women’s human rights activists in Trabzon, tells that “arranged marriages are very common

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

³⁷⁸ Interview with Bahar Bostan, May 6, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁷⁹ Interview with Bahar Bostan, May 6, 2016, Trabzon; Interview with Bahar Usta Baki, May 08, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁸⁰ Interview with Bahar Bostan, May 6, 2016, Trabzon.

in Şalpazarı. During the engagement ceremony, the ID card of young girl is given to men's family to prove that she is, from then on, their property".³⁸¹

6.1.1.2. The 'Natasha' Experience and VAW in Trabzon

The opening of the Georgian-Turkish border following the dissolution of the Soviet Union immensely affected the lives of Trabzon women and those women from the former Soviet bloc who decided to migrate Turkey and chose to work as sex workers. This process particularly brought to the fore the gender and violence dimension of migration in Trabzon.

Trabzon women have mostly remained silent or found no way out in the face of rising sex trade and Trabzon men's relations with the 'Natashas'. Bozok explains that "during this process, in order avoid their husbands to leave them and to protect their families, the Trabzon women, who are traditionally oppressed to the role of being industrious, contented, rugged and child carer, experienced another oppression: they felt themselves as if were forced to become more sexually appealing and started to go to the beauty parlors".³⁸²

The migrant sex workers, who were stigmatized as 'Natasha' have also experienced multiple forms of violence and discriminations. Borrowing from the study of Gülçür and İlkkaracan, these women exposed to "a high risk of violence, state-sanctioned harassment and discrimination, and labor rights violations, with little or no recourse" due to their illegal status as well as the legal and social restrictions on prostitution in Turkey.³⁸³ Similarly, Bozok notes the prevalence of police oppression, pimps pressure and customers' harassment, sexual, psychological and physical violence.³⁸⁴ Emel Coşkun, building on her field research, finds that "the prostitution and migration regimes of Turkey render migrant women

³⁸¹ Interview with Cavidan Yılmaz, May 5, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁸² Bozok, "Constructing Local Masculinities," 60.

³⁸³ Gülçür and İlkkaracan, "The Natasha Experience," 413.

³⁸⁴ Bozok, "Constructing Local Masculinities," 60.

susceptible to gender violence, and weaken the identification and protection systems that may result in the ‘re-victimization’ of ‘victims’ of sex trafficking”.³⁸⁵

6.2. Tracing the Origins and Development of Women’s Human Rights Advocacy in Trabzon

The global ideas of women’s human rights begin to take root in Trabzon at a time when such dynamics as the so called ‘Natasha’ process, football fanaticism feeding the masculinity and misogyny, environmental degradation, poverty and male unemployment, the massive waves of migration from rural to urban areas, and increased conservatism/nationalism were making the women’s inured suffering more and more visible in Trabzon. Facing up to the severity of VAW in Trabzon, some local women who were mostly urban, educated and few in numbers in the early 2000s sow the seeds of a local women’s rights movement in Trabzon.

These few women activists initially struggle with VAW on their own, or take part in charity based women NGOs, or alternatively strive to establish women branches under the trade unions in their search for finding new and effective ways to redress injustice, inequalities and discriminations against women. In explaining their initial motives for action, the lawyer and a leading women’s rights activist Bahar Bostan states that “despite the fact that VAW has been part of the daily life in Trabzon, it has been highly tolerated, camouflaged and treated as a private matter between wife and husband or within family. The wider society, including local women, have been in the mentality of ‘arm may be broken but the damage remains under the skin’ (*kol kırılır yen içinde kalır*)”.³⁸⁶ Nilüfer Akgün, another leading local activist, explains their discontent or what has triggered their appeal to women’s rights with these words:

In the minds of Trabzon people VAW usually connotes ‘wife battering’ and has been spuriously justified and normalized under the terms of fate (*kader*), discipline strategy, traditions and Islam. There is more than that, until recently

³⁸⁵ Emel Coşkun, “Curbing Sex Trafficking in Turkey: The Policy–Practice Divide,” *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 24, no.3 (2015): 327.

³⁸⁶ Interview with Bahar Bostan, May 06, 2016, Trabzon.

the local public authorities have tended to define VAW as random, accidental, and tolerable (unless women are killed or severely injured) or a private sphere/family issue that is something outside the realm of state intervention. In sum, the local women in Trabzon including the ‘Natashas’ have been in a vicious cycle. Even we were in that trap. So, we had two options: We were either going to be ‘ideal’ women by remaining silent, or speak up and give a fight all together to defend our human rights. We have chosen the latter.³⁸⁷

The establishment of the Trabzon Bar Association Women’s Human Right Commission is regarded as an important milestone in the local context. This Commission- similar to the Hatay Bar Association Women Commission- was established following the general decision of the Union of Turkish Bar Associations in 1999. The Commission includes voluntary (mostly women) lawyers who embrace women’s human rights, and for the first time in Trabzon they provided free of charge counseling and legal support services to local women including victims of VAW. Importantly, in years to come the Commission has become a hub for cooperation and grassroots mobilization in combatting VAW. Moreover, through its awareness raising activities, press releases and public speeches, the Women Commission not only has made women’s problems publicly visible but also highlighted the gaps and shortcomings in the implementation of international and national rules and standards in combating VAW in Trabzon.

It seems that two critical developments in the local context reinforce the women’s human rights advocacy and grassroots mobilization in Trabzon. These developments are: (a) the ‘United Nations Joint Program to Protect and Promote the Human Rights of Women and Girls in Turkey’ or with its commonly used name ‘Women Friendly Cities Program’ in Trabzon between 2006 and 2010, and (b) the selection of Trabzon as a pilot city for the implementation of the Law No. 6284, which accelerated the establishment of local public agencies and institutions (e.g. shelter, ŞÖNİM, family court) in 2012 to provide support and protection services to the victims of VAW.

The Women Friendly Cities Program in Trabzon³⁸⁸ has created a multiplier effect in several respects. Firstly, the program placed women’s NGOs and local

³⁸⁷ Interview with Nilüfer Akgün, May 04, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁸⁸ The Women Friendly Cities Program of the United Nations in Turkey is one of the first examples of such local initiatives, in which the UN signed a protocol with the Turkish Ministry of Interior and

activists at the center of the process, for instance in identifying the real and persistent problems of local women, in implementing the program activities at the grassroots level and in monitoring the policies of local public authorities. In this line, particularly the first year of the program was dedicated to capacity building including the ‘trainings of trainers’, workshops and coordination of local stakeholders in Trabzon. In the ensuing process, women’s self-organizing has flourished in Trabzon. In addition to the Trabzon Bar Association Women’s Human Right Commission, the individual activists for the first time established right-based women NGOs including the Black Sea Women Association (BSWA) and Life Women Center Association (LWCA). In order to further mobilize local resources, women NGOs also established a women platform in Trabzon. Importantly, these local women NGOs were empowered to implement projects promoting women’s human rights in the rural and urban parts of Trabzon. Thirdly, the UN’s Women Friendly Cities program has provided an opportunity structure for women’s groups to intervene and influence local public policies in struggling with gender based discriminations and violence. Given the clear commitments of the local authorities to ensure democratic governance and civil society participation in developing gender equality mechanisms in Trabzon, previously excluded women’s NGOs turned into indispensable partners. In the face of the existing gap between women’s realities/needs and local authorities’ policies, the women’s NGOs have played an important intermediary role in the Trabzon context through their advocacy.

As regards to the development of state-led initiatives in combating VAW in Trabzon, it is important to emphasize that similar to Hatay as well as other provinces of Turkey, the concrete steps taken by the local public authorities correspond to Turkey’s signature of Istanbul Convention of the Council of Europe in 2011 and the subsequent adoption of Law No. 6284 in March 2012. What is also notable is that Trabzon is determined by the government as one of the pilot cities in Turkey in the

developed partnership with the Sabancı Foundation and the Association for Supporting and Training Women Candidates (KA.DER). The first phase of the Women Friendly Cities was launched between 2006 and 2010 in 6 pilot cities of Turkey including Trabzon. Building on the preparation of the Local Equality Action Plans and subsequent activities and mechanisms carried out with the women NGOs and local public authorities, the Women Friendly Cities program aims at mainstreaming gender equality and women’s rights in pilot cities of Turkey. Project was first launched in İzmir, Kars, Nevşehir, Şanlıurfa and Trabzon provinces in the first phase.

implementation of Law No. 6284. It means that compared to other provinces in Turkey (e.g. Hatay), the duty bearers in Trabzon have had a head start in combating VAW. In this line, the first and still only Women Shelter (called women guest house, *kadın konukevi*) in Trabzon was established in 2012 with 15 women and 5 children capacity. Trabzon ŞÖNİM was opened on 6 December 2012 under the Law No 6284. Then, the bulk of endeavor directed towards capacity building through the trainings of staff dealing with the victims of domestic violence such as social workers in ŞÖNİM and shelter, the law enforcement officers (police and gendarmerie), health care providers and the judiciary. Last but not least, in 2017, the Trabzon Provincial Coordination Committee on VAW (composed of the local public bodies having legal responsibility in implementing laws and mechanisms for eliminating VAW, and representatives from the civil society) prepared Trabzon's first local action plan on violence against women which will be implemented between 2017-2020.³⁸⁹

With five years to go since the establishment of local public agencies and mechanisms for eliminating VAW, the evaluation of the state-led initiatives in Trabzon arguably reveals a mixed picture. It points, on the one hand, achievements in some areas (e.g. institution and capacity building efforts to provide services to victims of domestic violence, the preparation of provincial action plan). On the other hand, interviews with the local women and women's rights NGOs reveal some flaws, negligence or shortcomings of the duty bearers in implementation. The critical concerns that usually come to the fore are as follows. The duty bearers could not be able to or reluctant to develop a holistic human rights based approach to transform the structural causes of discrimination and inequality giving rise to VAW. In other words, the local public authorities and agencies have not so far properly addressed and engaged in the awareness raising and prevention of VAW at the societal level. Recognizing this neglect, the local action plan included awareness raising activities to be organized in the upcoming years. Though the Provincial Directorate of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies does not share information on this, another major concern is related to the women's low level of applications for the services and

³⁸⁹ Interview with Informant 1 (social worker, staff who work in Trabzon ŞÖNİM) May 15, 2016, Trabzon; Interview with Informant 2 (social worker, staff who work in the Trabzon Provincial Directorate of Ministry of Family and Social Policies), May 16, 2016, Trabzon. The names of interviewees are kept confidential by the agreement.

mechanisms provided by the local agencies. Considering the fact that at least one third of local women experience violence, it means that most of the time violence is under-reported in Trabzon and has not been properly prevented, monitored, investigated and prosecuted. The women's human rights defenders explain this puzzling situation with the lack of awareness on the parts of women as well as the patriarchal control over the women. They also draw attention to the instances of mistreatment and ignorance towards the survivors of VAW in the police stations, shelter, healthcare centers, hospitals, or in the implementation of protection orders that dissuade women from using or claiming her rights.³⁹⁰

The initiatives of local authorities are progressing and it is too early to evaluate (or give judgment on) the agency of local public authorities in localizing women's human rights norms in struggling with VAW in Trabzon. On the other hand, tracing the local developments, it is plausible to argue that the women's rights movement in Trabzon has played a pioneering role for the localization of women's human rights norms in combating VAW. Starting with the early 2000s, the women's rights activists appropriated the international norms, have strived to translate these norms into practice and created wider norm resonance in preventing and eliminating VAW in Trabzon.

6.2.1. Norm Localizers in Trabzon

Before proceeding further, it would be useful to elaborate the profiles of women's organizations, who have shouldered the main agency and put women's human rights ideas in combatting VAW into practice in Trabzon.

6.2.1.1. Trabzon Bar Association Women's Rights Commission

Trabzon Bar Association Women's Rights Commission was established with the initiative of local women lawyers following the general decision of the Union of Turkish Bar Associations in 1999. As of 2017, the Women's Right Commission has 16 voluntary lawyers who provide free of charge counseling and legal support

³⁹⁰ Interview with Nilüfer Akgün, May 04, 2016, Trabzon.

services to women who have been subjected to violence. These voluntary lawyers have been working in close contact and coordination with women NGOs and local public authorities. They convey the information about women's rights and provide representation and accompaniment for clients. In addition to legal support services, the Women's Right Commission organize awareness raising panels, conferences, film sessions on women's human rights and VAW.³⁹¹

6.2.1.2. Black Sea Women's Solidarity Association

The Black Sea Women's Solidarity Association (BSWSA) is the first feminist and right-based women NGO in Trabzon, which was established in 2008. Before the formal registration of BSWSA as an NGO, the volunteers of this association had come together under the roof of the Confederation of Public Employees Trade Union (KESK) Trabzon Branch. Nilüfer Akgün explains their early mobilization processes as follows:

The women-led NGOs or groups in Trabzon were either affiliated with political parties, or faith based organizations or charities. We-as few women workers and public employees who defend human rights- decided to organize within the KESK Trabzon Branch. However, soon we realized that the mainstream approach in KESK has been predominantly built on the capitalist exploitation and class struggle. Women's human rights and VAW have been overlooked and paid insufficient attention by our male counterparts. Therefore, we decided to establish the BSWSA as right based grassroots organization for women.³⁹²

Lawyer Bahar Bostan, a leading volunteer, summarizes the identity of the BSWSA with these words: "We are the feminist, laborer (*emekçi*) and environmentalist women of Trabzon who believe in and defend the common cause of gender equality, women's human rights, solidarity of all women, non-discrimination and in this line we combat against VAW in Trabzon".³⁹³

The BSWSA follows feminist principles and emphasizes non-hierarchical ways of women organizing. In addition to that, the BSWSA activists highlight the

³⁹¹Interview with Bahar Bostan, May 05, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁹² Interview with Nilüfer Akgün, May 04, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁹³ Interview with Bahar Bostan, May 05, 2016, Trabzon.

importance of being ‘independent’. For the BSWA ‘independence’ implies not only putting distance to all political parties and ideological cleavages but also to reject seeking or receiving funding from any national or international donor.

In its struggle with VAW in Trabzon, the BSWA mainly conducts awareness raising and empowerment activities at the grassroots level. Monitoring of local public authorities also constitutes another key activity area of the BSWA. Its volunteers have been monitoring the implementation of services and mechanisms provided to protect and support women in terms of the Law 6284, CEDAW and Istanbul Convention. They also actively participate in the City Council, Equality Unit and Provincial Coordination Committee on VAW whereby they aim to intervene and influence local public authorities on behalf of local women.

6.2.1.3. Life Women’s Center Association

The Life Women’s Center Association of Trabzon (LWCA) was established in July 2009 with the initiative of two local women activists. The LWCA, as a right-based women NGO, mainly focuses on the empowerment of local women for preventing and struggling with VAW in Trabzon. Nurper, one of the founding members of this association explains the establishment process as follows:

For a long time, we have been observing the prevalence of violence and hardships of women in Trabzon. Cavidan and I have dreamed a safe and empowering space for local women where they can discover the joy of life, learn income generating skills, re-think who they are, what they want for their lives and gradually become aware of their rights. Therefore, inspiring from women’s right to life and in order to pave the way for a different life that they deserve, we named our association as ‘life women’s center’.³⁹⁴

The LWCA volunteers aims at reaching disadvantaged women in the city center, in the neighborhood, villages and hamlets with voluntary work. The office of LWCA is in the city center, very close to governorate, majority, and bazaar where local women come to sell their products or do shopping. The office was designed to give local women the impression that it is their ‘safe’ space where they can easily

³⁹⁴ Interview with Nurper Gürdal, May 15, 2016, Trabzon.

reach, ask for assistance, come together, get to know each other, share their experiences, develop solidarity, and find solutions to their daily problems in line with women's human rights.

The LWCA defines itself as an independent women's right organization to emphasize that it is not affiliated with any political party, religious community or ideology as well as their openness to all women in Trabzon. In order to maintain its independence and sustainability of its work, the LWCA develops projects and receives funding from national and international donors for enhancing gender equality and women's empowerment in Trabzon.

The LWCA offers trainings for local women including literacy, handicrafts, sewing, etc. so that they can gain better opportunities for employment and achieve income generating skills. Through these vocational trainings, it has been aimed to inform local women about entrepreneurship, earning their own money and enabling and enhancing women's economic and social empowerment. Furthermore, a novel contribution of the LWC is its initiative to establish the first women's cooperative in Trabzon. It is noteworthy that those women who participated in vocational trainings have demanded and indeed insisted on establishing a cooperative for themselves.

6.2.1.4. Trabzon Democratic Women Platform

Following the establishment of the first right-based women NGOs in Trabzon, the women's human rights defenders have gained momentum and put the initiative of establishing the Trabzon Democratic Women Platform in 2009 with the aim of increasing collaboration and solidarity in struggling with VAW and advancing women's human rights in social, political and economic realms in local context.

In order to develop prompt and joint strategies in the face of women's challenges and remain informed about the activities being carried out in the city and in Turkey, an e-group called trabzonkadinplatformu@googlegroups.com was established. This e-group has also been used to organize activities, meetings, and press conferences for the 8 March World Women Day and 25 November

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. This communication channel has enhanced the women's NGOs' and individual activists' solidarity and experience in working together.

6.3. Norm Appropriation Process: Local Agents' Socialization into the Global Ideas and Norms

As discussed in the theoretical chapter, the first phase of norm localization process involves norm appropriation. At that stage, the local activists appropriate international norms and ideas. In other words, norm transmitters or translators themselves get socialized into those norms.

In Trabzon case, the local women activists have appropriated women's human rights ideas through various channels. One frequently mentioned channel is the Women Friendly Cities Program of the United Nations in Trabzon. It is important to highlight that when the program was launched in 2006, the knowledge of right-based approach to end women's discrimination and gender-based inequality was not prevalent, if not unknown, at the local context. Indeed, except from few lawyers and feminist activists, even the noticeable women NGOs as well as the staff of the Provincial Directorate of the Ministries in charge of women issues had been pursuing the needs-based approach to women's advancement.³⁹⁵ Yet, they were 'the person' on the ground who know best about women's realities and grievances, and who ardently want to do something for changing the local dynamics that give rise to VAW and women's exploitation. As a result of this gap, the UN team, particularly Sinem Mısırlıoğlu (Trabzon coordinator of UNJP) played an intermediary role, contacted with potential civil society groups to identify and spur volunteers who are eager to embrace women's human rights, gender equality and right based approach. With the support of the other intermediary actors like KA-DER Ankara Branch and Sabancı Foundation, a series of workshops and trainings were organized in Trabzon, Ankara and Istanbul covering such topics as gender roles, gender equality, gender-based violence, international and national legal framework on women's rights, women's movement in the world and in Turkey, feminism, women and the city,

³⁹⁵ Interview with Cavidan Yılmaz, May 5, 2016, Trabzon.

project cycle management. All in all, the process of Women Friendly Cities and particularly those trainings and workshops of Sabancı Foundation and KA.DER produced a conducive environment for the appropriation of women's human rights in Trabzon. In the years to come, women activists were also empowered and guided in their endeavors to establish the right based women NGOs and women platform in Trabzon.

Nurper, a leading feminist activist and the founder of the right based women NGO LWCA, explains her experience as follows: "I become acquainted with CEDAW and such notions as gender, gender equality, gender based violence and right based struggle through the Women Friendly Cities project in Trabzon".³⁹⁶ Recalling her feelings when she first read CEDAW, Nurper adds that "I was very impressed. I read the text several times with fervor. I took so many notes and reflected on them. It was like a holy text. While reading CEDAW I thought that all the clues and remedies are here to redress our centuries old exploitation and problems in Trabzon".³⁹⁷

Cavidan, from the LWCA, also tells a very similar story. Cavidan is a retired civil servant, who mostly worked in the remote villages of Trabzon and gave vocational trainings to local women. Following her retirement, she started to write local women's stories in a newspaper and dedicated her life for searching solutions to the problems of local women. She, then, together with Nurper established the LWCA. Cavidan tells that "I was in my 40s when I first heard about women's human rights, CEDAW, gender based violence, etc. Knowledge and awareness that I have acquired through the trainings and workshops over many years have substantially changed my life. It pushed the boundaries of the possible for me. These new ideas have made me a completely different person, a human rights defender and activist".³⁹⁸

Another springhead that local women activists could be able to reach is the globally and nationally circulating feminist ideas and the feminist women's

³⁹⁶ Interview with Nurper Gürdal, May 15, 2016, Trabzon.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Interview with Cavidan Yılmaz, May 05, 2016, Trabzon.

movement in Turkey. Particularly those feminist lawyers and feminist artists in Trabzon, who had lived and/or studied in the metropole cities (e.g. Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir) and then returned to Trabzon, brought what they have learnt from the national feminist movement into the local context. These norm intermediaries or brokers, in turn, became an important source of knowledge as well as the agent for advancement of women's human rights in Trabzon. One example is Bahar Bostan, a young feminist lawyer who studied law in Ankara University and returned to Trabzon. Bahar explains that she acquired the knowledge of relevant national legislation and international law during her under-graduate law education. In the meantime, she also involved in feminist women's movement in Ankara, where she embraced feminist interpretation of patriarchy and gender roles. Sibel Suiçmez, an experienced lawyer and now the first female chair-person of Trabzon Bar Association, has been one of the first women's rights activist in Trabzon and becomes role model for her colleagues in advancing women's rights. Sema Turhan, a feminist artist who had lived in Istanbul for years and returned to Trabzon, also mentions the influence of Filmmor Women's Cooperative and Purple Roof Women's Shelter Foundation in explaining how she first met with feminism and women's human rights ideas.

Over time, the norm localizers in Trabzon have built stronger ties with women NGOs in other provinces of Turkey (e.g., Nevsehir, Ordu, Urfa, Ankara, Izmir, Istanbul, Antalya) and women's rights or feminist networks/platforms (i.e. Women Coalition-Turkey, Women's Labour and Employment Initiative Platform, We will Stop Femicide Platform). Localizers emphasize that being part of national networks is in itself a powerful learning and advocacy experience. Firstly, norm localizers have been invited and participated in conferences, meetings, trainings, seminars, projects on VAW and women's human rights. Though these two or three day programs with scheduled sessions and keynote speeches, local women activists increase their knowledge, ask specific questions to experts, get up-to-date information about global and national developments (i.e. Law No 6284, Istanbul Convention, GREVIO process, UN Resolutions and Reports on women's rights, etc.). Secondly, during the coffee breaks, lunches or dinners, local activists develop personal ties and connections with activists from other cities with similar objectives and interests. This informal channel is generally used for experience sharing and

learning from each other, which continues on the internet platforms (facebook, twitter, and blogs) and in other areas of struggle.

Appropriation process of the local agents, particularly direct relational links with national networks and the UN agencies, enable them to redefine and intervene VAW in Trabzon in line with women's human rights framework. This process immensely shapes the diagnostic and prognostic frames of local agency. Looking more closely, notwithstanding the prevailing norms and understanding of violence, women's human rights defenders in Trabzon openly subscribe to the UN definition of violence against women. In this line, they frame violence against women as a gendered phenomenon, a social problem and gross violation of human rights. The violence in its economic, physical, sexual and emotional forms has been rooted in and the direct result of gender based discriminations, inequalities and patriarchal structures. Moreover, appropriating the human rights based approach, women's human rights defenders identify women and marginalized groups as right holders, the local public authorities as duty bearers and locate themselves as intermediary stakeholders representing women's voices and claims.

6.4. Target Groups of Norm Localization in Trabzon

Who are the targets of norm localizers? To ask different, with whom do localizers interact as they try to promote women's human rights norms in Trabzon? In translating women's human rights into local practice, norm entrepreneurs have targeted various local circles (e.g. public and private; individual and collective) to enhance norm awareness and resonance. In this line, they have primarily endeavored to reach and influence two types of target groups in their struggle with VAW: (a) local women (b) local authorities as decision makers and local level officials and staff as public service providers and implementers.

6.4.1 Local Women as Targets of Norm Localization

Local women constitute the primary targets of the norm localizers. "In struggling with VAW in Trabzon, we work for women and with women" says Sema

Turhan from BSWA.³⁹⁹ In-depth interviews with women activists indicate that local women are not treated as a homogenous mass. Rather, realizing that local women experience gender based violence in varying and intersecting configurations and forms, activists sketch out the local women as ‘urban’, ‘rural’, ‘young’, ‘old’, ‘handicapped’, ‘disadvantaged’, ‘wealthy’, ‘poor’, ‘educated’, ‘less educated’, ‘illiterate’, ‘those women live in suburbs’, ‘conservative/religious’, ‘working women’, ‘house wives’, ‘immigrant women’, etc. This ‘strategic’ categorization help activists to better identify the social, political, economic and cultural conditions and problems of a particular woman that they interact with and to empower. In particular, some groups of women are more vulnerable to violence and therefore require special focus and further empowerment.

Regarding how and through what ways they reach and interact with local women, norm localizers gave plenty of examples. For instance, Bahar Bostan tells that “we are one of them. We go to bazaars, schools, parks, cafes, restaurants, mosques, Quran courses and remote villages. In our heart to heart daily conversations, women pour out their griefs, wishes, and demands”.⁴⁰⁰ Sema Turhan has focused on women with disabilities, women who sell their products in the bazaars/markets and women who wove Trabzon matting (*Trabzon hasırı*) and kazaz (*kazaziye*) jewelry. Sema is an amateur photographer and film director. She has been reaching these women and collecting their stories in what she calls ‘memory records’. In recording the daily lives and grievances of local women, Sema has also aimed to connect the local with the national and global through art and become the voice of these disadvantaged women.

The volunteers of LWCA implement projects funded by national and international donors (e.g. the UN, Sabancı Foundation, the European Union, the Swedish Embassy in Turkey). Target groups of these projects involve mainly disadvantaged women living in the rural and suburb areas of Trabzon, youth, housewives, and women who wove Trabzon matting and kazaz jewelry.

Alternatively, in order to reach the local women, the Trabzon Bar Association Women’s Rights Commission offer free of charge counseling and legal

³⁹⁹ Interview with Sema Turhan, May 09, 2016, Trabzon.

⁴⁰⁰ Interview with Bahar Bostan, May 06, 2016, Trabzon.

support services. Local women in Trabzon have increasingly contacted with the voluntary lawyers of Bar Association to take legal advice and pursue their rights on a variety of issues. Lawyers also provide representation and accompaniment to women in judicial processes and empower their clients.

6.4.2. Local Public Authorities as Targets of Norm Localization

The second main target group is the local public authorities which are used here as a broad term covering those who have been legally held responsible by the national/international law for the prevention of violence, protection of women, designing measures and providing services for women who have been subjected to violence. In the eyes of norm localizers in Trabzon, these local authorities and particularly the heads of those public institutions are important target groups because of the fact that they are in the position of implementing national and international rules and policies at the local level. In other words, the local public authorities and their initiatives represent what has been and will be done at the local level in the name of state for eliminating VAW.

Activists emphasize the impact of UN's Women Friendly Cities Program in shaping the relations between state and civil society in Trabzon. Reflecting on the period prior to the initiation of Women Friendly Cities program in Trabzon, Sema Turhan tells that

Taking the views and demands of civil society seriously were at best a dream in Trabzon. In other words, local public authorities, even locally elected mayors, were conventionally reluctant to civil society participation and intervention. Therefore, the voices of local people in general and Trabzon women in particular had never been substantially considered and effectively reflected in the planning and implementation of public policies and services.

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As explained by Bahar Bostan, women's NGOs have initially identified the key public bodies responsible for the coordination, implementation, follow-up and the evaluation of relevant strategies/policies in combatting VAW. In Trabzon

⁴⁰¹ Interview with Sema Turhan, May 09, 2016, Trabzon.

context, these local public authorities and bodies mainly include the provincial governor's office, district governor's offices, and provincial directorates of security, education, health, family and social policies, employment agency (*İŞ-KUR*), the metropolitan municipality of Trabzon and other municipalities. Then, activists have strived to involve in and participate the coordination and planning meetings, and the city councils where local public authorities are assumed to decide on the provincial action plans and strategies. As part of this advocacy, norm localizers monitor the implementation of initiatives of local public authorities to check the developments and sustainability.⁴⁰²

In addition to what we might call 'high ranking/level' local decision-making authorities, the women's NGOs have widened their target groups to cover 'lower and middle level' public service providers and staff who work in the Trabzon ŞÖNİM, counseling services, women's shelters, the provincial directorates of ministries and police officers. Nurper from LWCA explains that

One of our major concerns was the limitations or insufficiency of specialized/professional human resources in delivering prevention, protection and support services in struggling with VAW (i.e. medical, economic, psychological, social and legal support services for women and children in situations of violence). Other than few exceptions, the local service providers have insufficient knowledge and awareness about gender equality, gender based violence and the legal rights of women. We, therefore, decided to reach these local civil servants by signing protocols with authorities and increase their awareness and knowledge through trainings.⁴⁰³

The reasons to include these groups are twofold: (a) awareness raising, (b) monitoring and to ensure the proper implementation of women's human rights approach in prevention of violence, protection and support of women.

⁴⁰² Interview with Bahar Bostan, May 06, 2016, Trabzon.

⁴⁰³ Interview with Nurper Gürdal, May 15, 2016, Trabzon.

6.5. Translating Women's Human Rights Norms into Practice: Localization Tactics

Localizers in Trabzon are by no means passive receivers of global norms. Rather, they perform creative and active agency as they try to promote international norms and ideas in Trabzon. As they translate women's human rights and norms into local context and practice, norm localizers in Trabzon pay due attention to local dynamics and contextual factors. To increase the level of awareness, resonance and norm implementation, they deploy a wide range of tactics. These tactics include 'recuperation of women and womanhood', 'decoupling and grafting', 'empowerment of local women as right holders', 'canvassing', 'simplification', 'naming and shaming norm violating behaviors'. It is worth to have a closer look at to these translation tactics, which also constitute the performances of international norms of gender equality and non-discrimination in daily activism and practice of local agents.

6.5.1. Recuperation of Women and Womanhood

The recuperation of women and the image of womanhood is one particular empowerment tactic that localizers in the first place use it in their grassroots activism and daily works to prevent VAW. Indeed, in order to realize and claim her rights, it is essential for a woman to recover from exhaustion, realize inner strength, worth and re-discover her potentials as woman. Thus, recuperation tactic can be interpreted as a first and indispensable step of women's empowerment as right holders.

The NGO activists observe that the local women, particularly those who have been subjected to various forms of violence often get trapped into the victimhood psychology. These women exhibit pervasive sense of helplessness, pessimism, strong feeling of shame, self-blame, despair or hopelessness, give up. Additionally, during the so called 'Natasha' experience of Trabzon, most local women have lost their self-confidence vis-à-vis the beauty standards of blond and physically/sexually appealing sex workers from the former Soviet bloc. Norm

localizers strongly reject the image of local women as weak, inferior, vulnerable or victim. In line with the women's human rights ideas, they try to empower them as 'strong', 'capable', 'rights bearing', and 'autonomous' individuals.

Motivated to alleviate the women's hesitations and timidity, the LWCA volunteers for instance design their office and daily work to provide an empowering/encouraging environment for clients, which is based on women's autonomy, choice and equality. Nurper explains the atmosphere of the LWCA office with the following words:

We tell women that this is your space. We are here for you. We listen each other, we share our experiences but nobody will impose their will on you. There is no hierarchy and we jointly share all the responsibilities. The fact that these emotional and relational links are the first steps that enable our clients to think the possibility of a different life building on rights and equality.⁴⁰⁴

Recuperation has another dimension: making use of or adapting the culturally familiar images, symbols, narratives, achievements in order to highlight the virtues and power of Trabzon or Black Sea women. For instance, the Trabzon women who fought in the War of Independence in Turkey, Amazon or warrior women who are believed to live in the Black Sea Region of Turkey in the ancient times are important women images that serve to remind the capabilities and characteristics of local women. This suggest that norm localizers act creatively, and reinvent and reinterpret the forgotten glories of local women in order to enhance the emancipation of women in line with women's human rights norms.

In recuperating the womanhood, norm localizers also unveil the interconnectedness of women and nature as well as the domination of women and the domination of nature in the Black Sea Region. Therefore, struggles for women's rights are viewed as inseparable from the environmentalist struggles. Notice that they are doing what social movement scholars call frame alignment. To this end, localizers use the current examples of the local village women in the various parts of Black Sea Region (e.g. Trabzon Tonya, Trabzon Of, Artvin Cerattepe, Artvin Arhavi, Fırtına Yaylası, Rize Fındıklı, Rize Çamlıhemşin) who have resisted the construction of hydroelectric power plants (HES), and the so called 'Green Road'

⁴⁰⁴ Interview with Nurper Gürdal, May 15, 2016, Trabzon.

Project connecting highland areas in eight provinces of the region. One particular symbol of resistance is Rabia Özcan, also known as Havva Ana (Mother Eva), an old village woman with her local dress and swinging walking stick sat down in front of the bulldozers and gendarmerie forces to protect her land.⁴⁰⁵ Havva Ana is presented as the ‘true’ Black Sea Woman who is brave, resolute, stubborn, in touch with nature as well as who could be able to pursue her rights. This ‘she’ figure also helps to tell the state authorities, men, capitalist corporations who the women are.

Another example is women’s solidarity festival in Trabzon. Every year since 2016, the Trabzon Women Platform have been celebrating 8 March Women’s Day with a festival. Within the framework of this three-day solidarity festival, women organize panels, conferences, exhibitions, plays, poem and book interviews and workshops on women, with women and for women. The Platform members decorate the festival site with local ornaments, serve local foods, wear local dresses, and use local dialect in most of the activities. The activists’ use of the local dresses, local foods and local accent in diffusing women’s human rights norms are also quite telling examples. It indicates that norm localizers utilize the cultural resources in a very creative way to enhance the resonance of global norms within that particular local context. Such solidarity festivals in turn contribute norm internalization.

In 2016 and 2017, the festival committee used the slogan ‘Live as a Woman! (*Kadın gibi yaşa!*)’. In 2018, the committee added the slogan ‘Don’t harm/hurt even an ant’, which creatively links the eliminating violence against women with local peoples’ sensitivity to nature.

⁴⁰⁵ Rabia Özcan (Havva Ana) resisted the construction of Green Road to her highland Kavrın with these words: “What court? Do you think that your road will go to Kavrın when you bring the issue to the court, do you think so? What court? The court lies on itself (points to ground by referring to the martyrs). Our grandfathers lie under this ground. Are you gone crazy? What is a court? We are the court (At this point soldiers step back). What is the State? There is only people, people, people! What is the state? State is a state thanks to us! Our grandfathers joined the army from the Kavrın with barefoot and they became martyrs. No, no, highlands shall not be connected through this road! Every highland had its own road. I definitely did not want this! You, the governor huh? And we, we are the looters (*çapulcu*), huh? You only sit down on your chair. We have been molded by these lands. I shepherd here until I was eleven! Who is the governor, district governor? I, I, I, I am the people! What is your purpose, you infidels? There is already a road for people to walk? There is! So people, my grandchildren will walk these roads and became enchanted by its beauty!” See Cihan Haber Ajansı, “Yeşil Yola Havva Ana İsyani: Vali Çapulcu Diyor Halkım Ben,” Youtube, July 11, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXfMTTVze6I>

Last but not least, while recuperation is predominantly used as an empowerment and resonance building tactic, it also serves to reconstruct the perceptions about the feminism and feminist women activists in a culturally resonant way. One constant challenge of feminists in Trabzon has been the negative connotations of feminism and feminists in Trabzon as ‘man hater’, ‘a woman who reject marriage and affect other girls to do so’, ‘lesbians’, ‘marginal’, ‘anarchists’, ‘communists’, etc. In diffusing women’s human rights, most of the time localizers have to deal with misconceptions about feminists and try to define what feminism is. Ultimately, in 2015, some feminist activists decided to call themselves as Cazi and created Trabzon Cazıları as a women led local initiative in Trabzon. Nilüfer Akgün explains the meaning of CAZI and why they have called themselves as ‘CAZI’ with these words:

In Trabzon, people generally call feminists as marginal or witch (*cadı*). Indeed, throughout history all women who regret men domination have also been called as witches. Therefore we happily accept and use this label. Yet instead of feminist, we use ‘cazi’, which means in the local vernacular strong, resolute, charming, natural and inspiring women of Trabzon.⁴⁰⁶

Bahar Bostan also adds that “in choosing our name as Cazi we are inspired from the perfect harmony and relationship between the environment (nature) and women in Trabzon”.⁴⁰⁷

The strategic use of ‘cazi’ discourse is a highly telling example. It shows how local norm entrepreneurs strategically use local vernacular to promote their messages and ideas among local women. They use local vernacular to wrap up a particular idea in a familiar way so that they can amplify resonance. In other words, they use something that local people familiar with to promote an idea or norm that local people are unfamiliar or less familiar with. This particular tactic also illustrates the creativeness of local agents well.

The recuperation of women/womanhood as well as the image of feminism so as to better explain and diffuse feminism and women’s human rights ideas in

⁴⁰⁶ Interview with Nilüfer Akgün, May 04, 2016, Trabzon.

⁴⁰⁷ Interview with Bahar Bostan, May 06, 2016, Trabzon.

Trabzon exhibit similarities with Rajaram and Zararia's ethnographic study on the works of three women's organizations from Baroda, Gujarat state, India.⁴⁰⁸ As Rajaram and Zararia bring to the literature, norm localizers would innovatively find and use a concept, glory or symbols from the past to strengthen a new idea (e.g. the rights of LGBT individuals) in their local context.

6.5.2. Decoupling Harmful Practices and Religion and Grafting Rights

Norm localizers in Trabzon are fully mindful of the place of religion in the lives of local people in general and women in particular. Islamic values as part of local culture are inseparable part of life and play a central role in the formation of individual as well as collective identities. They are also cognizant of how traditional/patriarchal practices that perpetuate VAW in Trabzon have often been fused with conservative/religious values and norms. As explained by sociologist Bahar Usta Baki local people generally do not distinguish Islam and patriarchy in their minds and behavior as the two constantly overlap and interact in their daily lives. Therefore, in diffusing women's rights there emerge a constant risk that efforts to challenge patriarchy and gender inequality can be seen as attacks against religion and religious values.⁴⁰⁹

One way of creating a cognitive dissonance or discomfort in the minds of local people is to decouple Islam and harmful traditional/patriarchal practices that give rise to or perpetuate VAW. In pursuit of persuading local women, activists advance women and justice centered readings of Islamic texts, give commonly known examples from the life of Prophet Muhammed and his companions (*sahabe*) and hadiths of the Prophet. They assert that Islam is the religion of love and respect that forbids violence in any means. On the other hand, they denounce the patriarchal interpretations of Islam that discriminate and suppress the local women. In this line, for instance, they convey that 'killing of a woman when she wants to divorce is not Islam', 'Prophet Muhammed never ever beat his wives and daughters. Therefore

⁴⁰⁸ Rajaram and Zararia, "Translating Women's Human Rights," 476.

⁴⁰⁹ Interview with Bahar Usta Baki, May 08, 2016, Trabzon.

wife beating cannot be justified under Islam’, ‘there is no such thing in Islam that men spend their times in coffee houses and women work’, etc.⁴¹⁰

Norm localizers in Trabzon boldly convey the message that their endeavor is not against culture or Islamic values. Given the ingrained features of gender and gender based discriminations in society, the work of activists is to challenge the cultural legitimacy of patriarchy and harmful traditional practices. Through their decoupling efforts, they reinterpret, renegotiate, and strive to change the local culture from within.

Importantly, decoupling also serves a very important purpose. Decoupling tactic creates a viable entry point (gateway) for the women’s human rights norms (i.e. gender equality, non-discrimination) to gain ground and legitimacy. Subsequently, norm localizers in Trabzon engage in “grafting” tactic, which is introduced by Amitav Acharya for the first time in the literature. More clearly, they graft women’s human rights ideas onto the women friendly sides of Islamic ideas and practices. From another perspective, social movement literature would call this process a frame bridging endeavor. They engage in matchmaking by trying to bridge women and justice centered Islamic belief with women’s human rights as two ideologically congruent but unconnected system.

6.5.3. Empowering Local Women to Claim Their Rights

Once local women gain self-esteem, as a second step, the norm localizers strive to achieve the economic, social and political empowerment of local women. Empowerment is a process and practice of equipping women with human rights ideas as well as opportunities and resources so that they can gain power to control their own lives both in public and private spheres, defy discriminatory gender roles giving rise to VAW and claim their rights. As such, empowerment of women is indispensable for preventing VAW and as such paves the way for transforming the formal and informal institutions in Trabzon that reinforce VAW.

Empowerment of local women can take many forms. Canvassing for women candidates in local and national elections is one example. Norm localizers, using the

⁴¹⁰ Interview with Cavidan Yılmaz, May 6, 2016, Trabzon.

political opportunity structure of 2009 local elections, encourage and empower local women to take part in politics. To this end, for instance, the local women NGOs⁴¹¹ launched “40 Neighborhood 40 Women Mukthars” campaign between 2008 and 2009 in order to empower and develop solidarity with women candidates as well as to raise the awareness of local women to support these women candidates in the upcoming elections.⁴¹² Interestingly, norm localizers tend to adopt a non-partisan, non-ideological stance and convey the benefits of having a woman mukhtar who better understand the specific challenges of local women.⁴¹³ During the election period, the platform members knock the doors and organize meetings to canvass for the election of women candidates. As a result of women platform’s efforts, for the first time in Trabzon 12 women candidates enter the local elections. However, none of the women candidates were elected in this process. Since then, Trabzon Women Platform with the support of the KA.DER has continued to sustain its efforts to bring a women agenda and increase the participation of women in national and local elections.

The empowerment of local women can also be translated into practice through awareness raising and training activities. For instance, within the scope of ‘Travel to Women Friendly Villages’ project, the women NGOs could be able to reach those women who live in rural and mountainous settlement areas of Trabzon. This project was funded and supported by the Women Friendly Cities program of the UN. Throughout this project, the volunteers conducted surveys to grasp the realities of local women and gave seminars on VAW and sexual/reproductive health with the cooperation of doctors, nurses and social workers.⁴¹⁴ Cavidan Yılmaz, then,

⁴¹¹ This campaign was organized by Trabzon women platform which included the local NGOs of the Türk Kadınlar Birliği Trabzon Şubesi, Türk Anneler Derneği Trabzon Şubesi, Tüm Kadınlar Derneği, Karadeniz Kadın Dayanışma Derneği, Femin & Art Trabzon Kadın Sanatçılar Derneği, KA.DER Trabzon Temsilciliği.

⁴¹² The United Nations Joint Programme to Protect and Promote the Human Rights of Women and Girls (UNJP) Turkey, *Women Friendly Cities 2010* (Ankara: Damla Matbaacılık Ltd., January 2010), 129, 135, <http://www.kadindostukentler.com/content/docs/outputs/women-friendly-cities-2010.pdf>

⁴¹³ Interview with Cavidan Yılmaz, May 6, 2016, Trabzon; Interview with Sema Turhan, May 9, 2016, Trabzon.

⁴¹⁴ UNJP, *Women Friendly Cities 2010*, 128; Interview with Cavidan Yılmaz, May 05, 2016, Trabzon.

honored with the Sabancı Foundation's 'Change Makers of Turkey' award due to her invaluable efforts in reaching to the rural parts of Trabzon and diffusing women's human rights.

In another project, the LWCA volunteers focus on sexual abuse and violence against young women and adolescent girls. Using the motto of 'Conscious Youth is Happy Youth (*Bilinçli Genç, Mutlu Genç*)', the LWCA has targeted raising awareness on sexual abuse and harassment among high school students, teachers, families and communities at large. To this end, they organized trainings on reproductive health, sexual violence, gender roles and gender equality at three pilot high schools in Trabzon. In addition to awareness raising activities, youth desks were established under the guidance of school counselors, which provided sustainability of the achievements gained in the high schools.⁴¹⁵

Norm localizers in Trabzon also engage in the economic empowerment of local women. For instance, the LWCA activists have targeted the women who wove Trabzon matting and kazaz jewelry and initiated the establishment of first women cooperative in Trabzon. Cavidan tells their underlying motivation as follows:

Women in Trabzon are very hard working, productive and creative. However, in Trabzon it is common that women produce but men sell and take all the money. The wide spread social pressure as well as women's lack of awareness and experience in entrepreneurship have long prevented local women to get organize and establish a cooperative. Moreover, despite their capacity and willingness, the local women generally confront information gaps on entrepreneurship, patent rights, access to micro loans or credits, etc. They also confront barriers when seeking to access micro credits or loans from banks or KOSGEB (Small and Medium Industry Development Organization). We wanted to break the men dominance and women's subordination. We felt the necessity to provide a platform for them where women can come together, develop solidarity and involve in income generating activities for themselves.⁴¹⁶

For taking the first step to establish a women-led cooperative in Trabzon, in 2014 the LWCA launched a project entitled "Women in Trabzon are learning Cooperatives" and received funding from the Sabancı Foundation. The volunteers

⁴¹⁵ Interview with Cavidan Yılmaz, May 05, 2016, Trabzon.

⁴¹⁶ Interview with Cavidan Yılmaz, May 05, 2016, Trabzon

also set up links with the more experienced women cooperatives in other cities. With the partnership of Foundation for the Support of Women's Work (KEDV), Ardeşen Women's Cooperative and Water Lily Women's Cooperative (Bolu Düzce), 17 local women aged between 18 and 60 received trainings on cooperatives, strategies and involved in experience sharing meetings with other women cooperatives. The local women have also been empowered through the awareness raising trainings and activities on gender equality, women's human rights, violence against women, laws, leadership, communication, civil society activism.⁴¹⁷ Following this intensive process, Trabzon Women Entrepreneurship, Production and Marketing Cooperative (*Trabzon Kadın Girişim Üretim ve İşletme Kooperatifi*) was established in January 2015. One member of this cooperative explains their purpose with these words: "as a women cooperative we want to sustain our endeavor by being part of local economy, enhance women's social and life conditions and diffuse our rights among our sisters and disadvantaged groups".⁴¹⁸

6.5.4. Naming and Shaming Norm Violators

In order to ensure the proper implementation of women's human rights, the norm localizers in Trabzon rely on public exposure and condemnation tactic of 'naming and shaming'. Naming and shaming involve investigation/identification of shortcomings, norm violating behavior and misconduct in implementing women's human rights at the local level, and then bringing constructive criticisms and raising public awareness with the goal of creating pressure over duty bearers.

In making human rights a reality in Trabzon, local activists often try to maintain viable working relationships with local public authorities, thereby making them vulnerable or open to criticism and change. In this line, naming and shaming usually work through a dynamic of 'rhetorical entrapment'. More clearly, as emphasized by Sema Turhan, "by involving in the Women Friendly Cities program,

⁴¹⁷ For further details see, Sabancı Vakfı, "Women Life Center Association: Women in Trabzon are Learning Cooperatives," <http://www.sabancivakfi.org/page/women-in-trabzon-are-learning-womens-cooperatives>

⁴¹⁸ Interview with Elvin Çabuk, May 3, 2016, Trabzon.

the public authorities have committed themselves to transform Trabzon into a city of gender equality and non-discrimination, a city where women and girls can fully and sustainably realize human rights”.⁴¹⁹ Sema Turhan further tells that

While getting the views of local people and the integration of civil society representatives on women issues have not been a habit, throughout the Women Friendly Cities process (2006-2010) we could be able to push them to be more accountable and responsive. By participating, arguing and expressing the local women’s needs and public authorities’ shortcomings in each and every venue, we aim to make women’s voices heard at the public level and to exert pressure for better implementation.⁴²⁰

It is important to note that once the Women Friendly Cities Program had been completed in 2010, the influence of local women NGOs over the public authorities and their access to decision making mechanisms have substantially diminished.⁴²¹ Since that time, effectively using the local media, public statements and press releases, norm localizers raise their concerns and criticisms to denounce certain ‘unacceptable’, or norm violating inappropriate attitudes or policies of public authorities. For instance, every year in 8 March and from 25 November (the International Day for the Elimination of VAW) to 10 December (Human Rights Day), women’s human rights defenders in Trabzon organize activities, in which they raise awareness by naming the problems of women and publicly expose the shortcomings of duty holders in eliminating VAW.

Norm localizers also develop prompt and proactive responses in the face of right violations and discriminations against women. For instance, in April 2016 the deputy major of Trabzon Of Municipality interrupted the speech of a clergywoman (*vaize*) from the provincial office of Mufti (*müftülük*) in a meeting by saying that “who are you? Is it possible for a woman to preach to us? How can a woman preach to men? We do not need any advice given by a women”.⁴²² Trabzon Bar Association

⁴¹⁹ Interview with Sema Turhan, May 09, 2016, Trabzon; see also UNJP, *Women Friendly Cities 2010*.

⁴²⁰ Interview with Sema Turhan, May 09, 2016, Trabzon.

⁴²¹ Ibid.

⁴²² Medya Trabzon, “Sibel Suiçmez İstifa İstedi,” July 04, 2016, <http://www.medyatrabzon.com/sibel-suicmez-istifa-istedi-219506h.htm>

and women NGOs promptly condemned Of Municipality. Sibel Suiçmez, lawyer and chairwoman of Trabzon Bar Association, on behalf of Women Commission named and shamed this politician with these words:

The attitudes and discourse of Mr. Alireisoglu violate women's human rights. This type of ideas and attitudes are also against our customs, grace and civility rules. Mr. Alireisoglu's discourse contains gender based discriminations and as such it constitutes another face of violence against women. Trabzon is a women friendly city. However, such incidences that produce gender based discriminations and that result in the violation of women's human rights immensely affect the image of Trabzon. We do not accept his deceitful excuse because Mr. Alireisoglu still insists on his harmful ideas. This is unacceptable. He should immediately resign from his post in Of Municipality. If he does not, we claim it from the mayor of Of.⁴²³

Another serious concern of activists in Trabzon has been the fact that at the stage of implementation such insensitive, judgmental, rude or reluctant attitudes of local service providers perpetuate VAW in Trabzon. For instance Nilüfer Akgün tells:

Our clients report that law enforcement officers or service providers imply or offer them mediation. Most of the time, they fail to recognize women's trauma. Significant number of service provider fail to take VAW seriously and legitimize male control over women. We frequently intervene, expose and increase the awareness on the mistreatment and ignorance towards women in the police stations, in shelters, in healthcare centers, hospitals, or in the implementation of protection orders.⁴²⁴

Bahar Boston, to illustrate the insensitivity towards women's security and safety, gives the example of Women's Shelter in Trabzon.

We have long struggled for the establishment of a women's shelter in Trabzon. Finally, in 2012, a shelter, or what authorities call it a 'guest house' was opened to serve 15 women and their children. As the main function of this shelter is to provide security and support for women who experience violence and under threat of violence, it is utmost importance that shelter should be well protected and its address should be kept secret. However, everybody knows its address.

⁴²³Barotürk, "Trabzon Barosu Kadınları Aşağılayan Başkanvekilinin İstifasını İstedi," April 08, 2016, <http://www.baroturk.com/trabzon-barosu-kadinlari-asagilayan-baskan-vekilinin-istifasini-istedi-20015h.htm>.

⁴²⁴ Interview with Nilüfer Akgün, May 04, 2016, Trabzon.

Ask the address of this shelter to any taxi driver ...He brings you there. Even the webpage of Provincial Directorate of Family and Social Policies Ministry openly gives the address of Aysel Varlibaş Women's Shelter.⁴²⁵

Activists identify such instances of right violations or implementation flaws and then make public these issues with the aim of ensuring the proper implementation of women's human rights.

6.6. Summary: Localizing Women's Human Rights Norms in Trabzon

This chapter explored the processes and dynamics of norm localization in a highly conservative, nationalist and patriarchal locality in Turkey. While the gender based discriminations and VAW have long been part and parcel of daily life in Trabzon, such exacerbating factors as the so called 'Natasha' experience, rising misogyny, environmental degradation, increased conservatism/nationalism, unemployment and poverty created a threshold effect for some local actors to mobilize and seek effective ways to combat VAW. As the existing local structures and mechanisms (e.g. charities, religious approaches and practices, policies of the local public authorities, political groups and parties, community intervention to perpetrators of VAW) have proved ineffective to redress local women's deep rooted and structural challenges including VAW, these local actors (who were mostly urban and educated women activists and few in number) starting with the early 2000s intentionally chose to uphold and appropriate women's human rights ideas and norms. The findings revealed that the constituents of the local women movement including those informants who participated in this research have been the pioneering, key and active agents of norm localization in Trabzon.

As the norm localization perspective suggests, the localization of women's human rights norms in combating VAW in Trabzon is a two-stage process. The first stage of the localization process has begun with the appropriation and socialization of the local agents into the international norms, ideas, standards in combating VAW. In appropriating the international norms, these local actors have reached and connected with the various national and global norm diffusion channels, which

⁴²⁵ Interview with Bahar Bostan, May 06, 2016, Trabzon.

intensified the local norm agents' voluntary learning and internalization processes as well as enabled the women's human rights norms to travel to Trabzon. Particularly the establishment of Trabzon Bar Association Women Commission in the early 2000s and the implementation of Women Friendly Cities of the UN in Trabzon between 2006 and 2010 created an important dynamic or catalyst in constituting the interpretations and identities of local norm entrepreneurs. Over time, the norm localizers in Trabzon also connected and shared experience with the national level women networks, platforms (e.g. We will Stop Femicide Platform, Women's Coalition, KA.DER, KIHEP, Sabancı University Women and Gender Studies Institute, Women's Labour and Employment Initiative Platform, etc.), and the NGOs in other parts of Turkey, which also intensified and shaped their norm appropriation process.

Norm localizers in Trabzon are not passive norm takers. They reinterpreted the international norms in terms of the realities of Trabzon, challenges of local women, and their daily experiences in combating VAW. In this line, in diffusing the women's human rights norms into local context and practice, these local agents constantly took into account the local constraints. The interviews revealed that such local dynamics as the prevailing patriarchal structures and harmful traditional practices, women's subordination in both public and private spheres of life, women's lack of self-esteem and knowledge of their rights, increasing conservatism and nationalism, intolerance to the new ideas (i.e. feminism, women's rights) and civil society groups, and the shortcomings of the local public authorities in implementing women's rights in Trabzon have immensely shaped the norm localization process in Trabzon.

Given the misfit between the pre-existing local norms, realities in Trabzon that exacerbate VAW and the transformative vision of international norms, in the second stage of the localization process the local agents endeavored to translate international norms and standards into the local context and practice. To this end, first, the norm localizers identified the local women (i.e. right holders) and the local public authorities (i.e. duty holders and norm implementers) as their target groups, and strived to reach and intensively interact with these groups in promoting and diffusing women's human rights norms in combating VAW. Second, they tailored

norm translation tactics, which made international norms more resonant, understandable, relevant and usable by the targeted right holders, and facilitated the responsiveness of the local public authorities and agencies in combating VAW in Trabzon. For instance, to increase the norm resonance as well as the level of norm awareness and empowerment of the local women, the localizers developed the translation tactics of the ‘recuperation of women and womanhood’, ‘decoupling harmful traditional practices and religion, and then grafting women’s human rights norms’, ‘empowerment of local women as right holders’, ‘canvassing’, ‘simplification’, ‘the use of local cultural symbols’. In order to ensure the proper implementation of international norms by the public authorities, they engaged in ‘constructive dialogue building’, ‘rhetorical entrapment’, ‘naming and shaming norm violating behaviors’. Moreover, notwithstanding challenging and constraining local dynamics, the localizers in Trabzon have been highly creative in finding resources and they are also reflexive to emergent discursive and political opportunity structures. For instance, they established alliances with the local pro-human rights groups, intellectuals, artists and environmentalists to multiply their resources and advocacy. Some women NGOs as the LWCA and the Trabzon women platform received funding from the national and international donors, which also enhanced the organizational and financial capacity of the local agents. Moreover, norm localizers creatively find and utilized cultural resources including the strong local women figures, local vernacular, and local dress in diffusing women’s human rights norms. Last but not least, the Women Friendly Cities project, the establishment of ŞÖNİM and women shelter in Trabzon following Turkey’s adoption of the Law no.6284 on VAW, and Turkey’s ratification of Istanbul Convention also created a new opportunity structures for the local agents. These national level dynamics utilized by the localizers to demand the proper implementation of laws and standards at the local level.

The local norm entrepreneurs in Trabzon connected the multiple realms of norm diffusion through their appropriation process and they sow the seeds of the women’s human rights norms in Trabzon by creatively translating the international norms into practice and local context. The locally resonant translation tactics and activities targeting the local women and public authorities constituted the

performances of ‘abstract’ international norms in daily practice and enhance the norm diffusion process in the Trabzon context.



CHAPTER 7

NORM LOCALIZATION IN ANTAKYA, TURKEY

7.1. Antakya Local Context and the Micro-Structural Dynamics of Norm Localization

Antakya is the provincial capital of Hatay, located in the Mediterranean region and along the Syrian border of Turkey. Geographically, Antakya is a gateway bridging Anatolia and the Middle East.

Located on the fertile banks of Orontes River (*Asi Nehri*) and the historical Silk Roads, Antakya or with its ancient name Antioch holds an important place in the development of divine religions. It was the base for Apostles Paul's, Barnabas's and Peter's missionary journeys. The followers of Jesus were first called 'Christians' in Antakya. The cave church of Saint Peter is known as the first Christian church in the world. Antakya, due to its role in the formation of Christianity, became one of the sites of Christian pilgrimage.⁴²⁶ Antakya is one of the homelands of the Arab Alawi (Nusayri) community of the Middle East.⁴²⁷ The city harbors the sacred

⁴²⁶ Gürhan Bahadır, "Hristiyanlığın Antakya'da Şekillenmesi ve Habib-i Neccar," *Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 10, no.23 (2013).

⁴²⁷ The Nusayris, also called Arab Alawites in Turkey, generally trace their origins to the time of Ibn Nusayri, the pupil of eleventh Shi'a Imam al-Hasan al-Askari. The Nusayri belief system has secret and esoteric (*batini*) aspects. It is widely accepted that as a marginal sect of Shia Islam, Nusayri belief also integrate certain aspects of Christianity (e.g. trinity). The Arab Alawis also widely believe in reincarnation. The Arab Alawis mostly live in Syria and in Turkey (e.g. Hatay, Adana and Mersin). It is estimated that Turkey inhabits one million Arab Alawi citizens. The Arab Alawi community in Turkey and Turkish or Kurdish Alevis of Turkey share certain precepts of Shia Islam, but in terms of religious rituals they have differences. For instance, Arab Alawi people do not fast during Ramadan, women are excluded from learning and performing religion, they do not have public houses for worship (mosques or the Cem Houses of Turkish or Kurdish Alevis), prayers are conducted

places and sanctuaries of Arab Alawi (*Nusayri*) community including shrines, ziyara (*ziyaret*) and trees as manifestations of religious saints.⁴²⁸ Additionally, Antakya is the first settlement site of Jews in Anatolia. The first mosque of Anatolia, Habib Al-Najjar Mosque, is located in the Antakya old town. Turkey's last Armenian village in Anatolia, called Vakıflı, is located very close to Antakya. Today, Mosques, Synagogue, Churches (Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant), and Arab Alawi Pilgrimages have still stand side by side in Antakya.

Antakya is also demographically unique in many respects. For centuries the city inhabits multiple ethnic groups (Turks, Turkmens, Arabs, Armenians, Kurds, Circassians, Afghans, Gurbet or Kurbat people) having various religious affiliations (Sunni Muslims, Alawi or Nusayri Muslims, Catholic Christians, Orthodox Christians, Protestant Christians, Jewish people).⁴²⁹ The local people speak Turkish and Arabic. Despite the national borders, the people of Antakya are able to maintain their links with the Arab world and the Levant through family connections, affinities, and cross-border economic activities (up until the outbreak of Syrian War in 2011), as well as through labor migration to the Gulf countries.⁴³⁰

Antakya has also a reputation in Turkey and in the world as a place of love, peace and tolerance because of the harmonious co-existence of its ethno-religious communities. In the same vein, the local people describe Antakya or discursively construct Antakya with such phrases as 'meeting point of civilizations', 'cradle of civilizations', 'mosaic', 'cosmopolite', 'bell, azan, hazzan', 'we believe in same God under different religions', 'our differences are our wealth', 'We are one, on earth and under the sun!', 'Ultimately, we all are the subjects of the same God'.

in private houses and in small groups. For a detailed explanation of Nusayri belief system see, İnan Keser, *Nusayri Alevilik-Tarih, İnanç, Kimlik* (İstanbul: Karahan Yayınevi, 2016).

⁴²⁸ Gisela Prochazka-Eisl and Stephan Prochazka, *The Plain of Saints and Prophets The Nusayri-Alawi Communities of Cilicia (Southern Turkey) and its Sacred Places*, (Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010).

⁴²⁹ Fulya Doğruel, "An Authentic Experience of Multiculturalism at the Border City of Antakya," *Çağdaş Türkiye Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi (Journal of Modern Turkish History Studies)* 13, no.26 (2013-Bahar/Spring):274-275; Levent Duman, "Birinci Dünya Savaşından Günümüze Antakya-Hatay'daki Nüfus Hareketleri ve Göçler," in *Asi Güllüşüm Ah Güzel Antakya*, ed. Hakan Mertcan (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 81.

⁴³⁰ Sheila O'Rourke, "Gender, Selfhood, and Media: Hatay in the Context of Turkish Modernity" (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Irvine, Department of Anthropology, 2006), 73.

Contemporary Antakya is a lively city with its parks, festivals, historical and touristic places, bazaars, souk, spice market, and restaurants serving local cuisine. These public spaces are also presented as the enduring symbols of the city's glorious peaceful past and shape the daily lives and interactions of local people.

Beholding the diversity and harmony of the city at the borders of a nation state, for good reason one could ask, then, how could Antakya, in contrast to many other localities in Turkey be able to maintain its relative plurality, peaceful co-existence and multicultural social atmosphere?⁴³¹ In comprehending the authentic culture and local context of Antakya, Fulya Doğruel emphasizes the intersections between the local, national and global.⁴³² Tracing the roots of peaceful co-existence and multicultural social structure of Antakya in the *longue duree*, Doğruel puts forward the amalgamation of three factors: (1) some living elements of the Ottoman millet system⁴³³ in the public realm (i.e., inter-community tolerance, specialization in certain professions, development of mutual interests and inter-dependency), (2) resistance against disruptive external influences/dynamics and constant balancing

⁴³¹ Many localities in Turkey had lost their multicultural character due to such reasons as the large-scale deportation (*tehcir*) and suffering of the Anatolian Armenians in and around 1915, the population exchanges between Greece and Turkey with the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, the property tax of 1942 for minorities, the 6/7 September (1955) incidents and riots against Greek minorities, the Turkification/(Sunni) Islamisation policies of successive Turkish governments, migration waves, industrialization, etc.

⁴³² Fulya Doğruel, "An Authentic Experience of Multiculturalism," 285

⁴³³ Given the diversity of ethnic and religious communities under its Muslim rule, the Ottoman Empire introduced the millet system for its non-Muslim communities. Particularly the Orthodox Greek (Rums), Armenian and Jewish communities were recognized as the basic millets and various ethno-religious groups were placed under these categories. The millet system provided a tangible non-territorial autonomy to the non-Muslim communities in private, religious and judicial realms in return for their loyalty and regular taxation (*cizye*). One prominent feature of the millet system was the roles of religious leaders as intermediaries between empire and the communities in maintaining order. The millet system and its local practices in Antakya were quite similar to the rest of the Ottoman land. Muslims, Orthodox Christians, Armenians and Jews enjoyed their own group rights and freedom of religion. The Arab Alawite community (that were seen as deviant forms of Islam) were generally considered to be part of the Muslim millet. The Ottoman millet system was pruned during the 19th century Tanzimat period and then totally abolished with the establishment of the modern Turkey Republic. For further detail see, Karen Barkey and George Barkilis, "The Ottoman Millet System: Non-territorial Autonomy and its Contemporary Legacy," *Ethnopolitics* 15, no.1, (2016): 24-26.

efforts of local people (3) broad adherence to secularism and democratization processes of the modern Republic of Turkey period.⁴³⁴

In the near history of Antakya, two critical junctures-namely the ideological polarization and skirmishes between the leftist and rightist groups throughout the 1970s, and the outbreak of Syrian civil war next door in 2011- have conceivably influenced the local context and localization of human rights ideas.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, the ideological fragmentation of the world under the Cold War system as well as the effects of political deadlock and violent clashes between leftist and rightist groups in Turkey spread to Antakya as well. In parallel to the increase in education level, industrialization and the rise of leftist ideology and labor movement in Turkey, some local groups in Antakya raised their concerns for the exploitation of peasants and workers under the feudal social structures, capitalism and the oppressive state system. In this process, the socialist/leftist ideas gained ground in Antakya, which resulted in the formation of the local labor movement and the mobilization of youth under numerous leftist organizations and parties (e.g. *DEV-YOL*, *DEV-SOL*, *Kurtuluş*, *Halkın Kurtuluşu*).⁴³⁵ The political atmosphere of Turkey and its repercussions in Antakya also triggered the rise of ultra-nationalist and anti-communist rightist groups. Strikingly, the ideological polarization between the leftist and rightist groups brought ethno-religious differences to the surface. For instance, while the youth of Arab Alawi community appealed to leftist ideology, a substantial number of youth from Sunni Arabs and Sunni Turks chose to be part of anti-communist, rightist, nationalist ideology. In this period, Antakya women- young and old- also became politicized and took active part in ideological struggle. In a short period of time, artificial neighborhoods in terms of the ideological and ethno-religious positioning of the residents emerged in Antakya. Realizing the escalatory dynamics and the possibility of violent confrontations, the community elders, mothers and intellectuals of Antakya stepped

⁴³⁴ Fulya Doğruel, "An Authentic Experience of Multiculturalism," 275. For similar arguments see Levent Duman, "Birinci Dünya Savaşından Günümüze Antakya-Hatay'daki Nüfus Hareketleri ve Göçler," 88.

⁴³⁵ Interview with Meryem Kılıç, July 02, 2016, Antakya; Interview with Hatice Can, Antakya, July 6, 2016.

in and succeeded to consolidate the daily life in Antakya. As explained by Müslüm Kabadayı, the initiatives and interference of those who defend the common life culture and peace prevented an infighting in the 1970s.⁴³⁶ The lessons drawn from 1970s still linger in the memories. While the openness to new ideas and ideologies is an appreciated feature of local culture in Antakya, in the contemporary period the local people have regenerated the inner resistance mechanisms to avert extremism, conflict and adverse external influences.

Despite the fact that the military coup and subsequent anti-democratic regime in the 1980s substantially pruned the political space of both the leftist and rightist/nationalist groups in Antakya, an organized civil society with a non-violent protest culture have remained intact. In years to come, the local people have increasingly appealed to democracy and human rights as a new glue to keep their plurality and the peaceful co-existence. In the early 2000s, the EU accession process of Turkey and the successive democratic reforms also positively affected the social atmosphere of the city. Democratization process of Turkey has fed the advocacy for human rights as well.

The second critical juncture that has deeply affected the local context of Antakya, including the women's human rights advocacy, has been the ongoing civil war in Syria. Indeed, due to geographical proximity, local people's ties and interaction, any tension in Syria is bound to spread into Antakya. Since the outbreak of civil war in 2011, Turkey has adopted an open door policy toward Syrian civilians who fled from the war and the government has openly supported the opposition groups (e.g. Free Syrian Army) fighting against the Assad regime. The Syrians who are used to visit Antakya as tourists, traders, shoppers and relatives, at first were called as 'guests', and later in 2013 were granted the temporary protection status.⁴³⁷ It is plausible to argue that the influx of Syrian nationals into Turkey has far

⁴³⁶ Müslüm Kabadayı, "Kültürün Bereketli Toprağı: Hatay," in *Asi Güllüşüm Ah Güzel Antakya*, ed. Hakan Mertcan (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 36.

⁴³⁷ In terms of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (Law No 6458) adopted in 2013, Temporary Protection status under Turkish Law refers to "foreigners, who were forced to leave their countries and are unable to return to the countries they left and arrived at or crossed our borders in masses to seek urgent and temporary protection and whose international protection requests cannot be taken under individual assessment".

surpassed the initial projections.⁴³⁸ Apart from a small group of Syrians (approximately 20.000) live in the Temporary Protection Centers in Hatay, the rest of the Syrians began to live in and around the city seeking permanent residence and citizenship.

The Syrian war next door and the resulting Syrian influx initially hit the local infrastructure and economy, and then dramatically affect the demographic structure and social life in Antakya. Here are just some examples of the economic downturn and emergent social unrest in Antakya that have deeply affected the pace of VAW and the localization of women's human rights norms. For instance, the visa liberalization regime (August 2009) and increasing trade and integration following the free trade agreement (January 2007) between Turkey and Syria halted immediately after the outbreak of Syrian war. The local people who invested in tourism, service sector, luggage trade, transportation, and import/export business have experienced a great loss. Consequently, the local people who are used to work in those sectors lost their jobs. Meanwhile, the Syrians under the temporary protection status in Antakya began to work illegally in the service and agricultural sectors. Unfortunately, vulnerable Syrians who are on the breadline agreed to receive lower wages, which further cut the opportunities of locals in the job market. Additionally, the sudden influx of Syrian people sharply increased the rent and real estate prices in Antakya. In brief, Syrian people who live outside the camps put a heavy strain on the economy and public services of healthcare, transportation, municipal services and security.

Despite the fact that Antakya people have ethno-religious and family ties with Syrians, their new 'guests' were mostly defined as 'unknown strangers' (e.g. polygamous families, Syrian women wearing black burqa and niqab, the reality of Syrian brides or trafficking of Syrian women and girls, Syrians begging on the streets). Moreover, with radical (Sunni/Salafi/Jihadist) Islamist groups joining the Free Syrian Army opposition forces (e.g. al-Nusra, al-Qaeda) and freely crossing

⁴³⁸ As of December 2017, Hatay is the third province in Turkey which hosts 385.242 Syrian nationals under temporary protection (24.77% of Hatay population). See, Republic of Turkey Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management, "Temporary Protection-Syrians under Temporary Protection by Provinces", http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/temporary-protection_915_1024_4748_icerik

the Turkish border on a daily basis, and the ISIS taking control of some border villages, the anxiety of Antakya people, particularly Arab Alawi and non-Muslims, reached its peak.

Importantly, as with all wars, conflicts and humanitarian emergencies, women and girls are among the most vulnerable or fragile groups, bearing the heaviest burden and being systematically subjected to rights violations. Syrian Civil War since the 2011 has disproportionately affected the lives of both Syrian and Antakya women and girls from both sides of the borders.

It seems that while Antakya people try to develop empathy and mostly approach to Syrians fleeing from violence with hospitality, they still criticize the Turkish government's policies including interventions into the Syrian war, taking side with opposition forces, fueling sectarian conflict and the unplanned open door policy. In this atmosphere, the local people initiated meetings and protests for peace. However, instead of paying attention to complaints or finding satisfactory solutions, the state authorities have tended to suppress any oppositional voice in Antakya. As noted by Şule Can, in this period the state authorities' intolerant and suppressive attitudes against local people further strained the state-society relations and fueled the tensions in Antakya.⁴³⁹

7.1.1. VAW in Antakya: The Local Dimensions and Prevalent Forms

Compared to the status and social position of women in some other parts of Turkey (e.g., central and eastern Anatolia) and the wider Middle East, Antakya women have had visible presence in public spaces and actively participate in social, economic and political life. If one visits Antakya, one might see the local women staying outside and spending time in the tea gardens, parks, cafes, restaurants, bazaars until the late evening. One might see the local women workers in the factories, workshops, shops in the souk as well. Furthermore, particularly Arab Alawi and non-Muslim women do not cover their heads and body due to the relative freedom provided by their religious beliefs and customs. However, these relative

⁴³⁹ Şule Can, "The Syrian Civil War, Sectarianism and Political Change at the Turkish-Syrian Border," *Social Anthropology* 25, no.2 (2017):175.

freedoms of women in the public urban space would be the glossed part of the reality. In depth analysis of the codes of daily life in Antakya reveal a different story: widespread gender-based discriminations, inequality and multiple forms of VAW in both public and private spheres.

It is important to emphasize that so far there has been no substantial study on the prevalence and specific forms of VAW in Antakya. Even so, as in the case of Trabzon, the “Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey” conducted in 2014 would help us to grasp the overall picture in the Mediterranean statistical region including Antakya. The findings exhibit that at least %36.5 of ever-married women have been subjected to physical violence by their husbands or intimate partners. The percentage of ever-married women’s exposure to sexual violence is 11.8%. The research findings also show that with 38.2% the physical and sexual violence are prevalently experienced together.⁴⁴⁰

Among the forms of violence against women, the emotional violence/abuse (e.g., insulting/cursing, humiliating/belittling, intimidating and threatening to hurt the woman or someone she loves) is the most prevalent one. At least 42.2% of ever-married women reported lifetime emotional violence/abuse by their husbands or intimate partners.⁴⁴¹ As a particular form of psychological violence, controlling behaviors over women’s lives have also been prevalent in the local context. According to 2014 Survey findings these controlling acts that affect the lives of women in Hatay include “always wanting to know where she is” (59.3%), “getting angry when the woman talks to other men” (36.5%), “interfering with the woman’s clothing, demanding her to dress as he wants” (31.9%), “demanding the woman to ask for his permission to go to a health institution” (26%), “ignoring the woman” (17.5 %), “interfering with and blocking the woman’s use of social network sites” (16.1%), “preventing the woman from seeing her friends” (10.2%), “preventing the woman from seeing her own family and relatives” (8.1%), “suspecting that the woman is unfaithful” (3.3%).⁴⁴² The percentages of women who have been

⁴⁴⁰Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, *Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey*, 86.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.,96.

⁴⁴² Ibid.,99.

subjected to economic violence/abuse by their husbands or intimate partners (e.g., preventing woman from working or causing her to quit her job, not giving money for household expenses and depriving her of her income against their will) is 32.5%⁴⁴³

As mentioned above, at least four out of ten women in the Mediterranean statistical region including Antakya-Hatay province have been subjected gender based violence. The survey also draws attention to the fact that at least 49.3% of women have chosen to remain silent, have told about the violence to anyone or any state institution.⁴⁴⁴

In considering the specific forms of VAW in Hatay, it is noteworthy to add the unfolding femicide cases as the most extreme form of VAW. Although the exact number of femicide instances have not been recorded or released by the public authorities, it is reported by the Hatay Bar Association Women Commission that between 2010 and (June) 2018 at least 28 women have been murdered in Hatay by their husbands, ex-husbands, male family members and partners (boy-friends).⁴⁴⁵

Narrations gathered from the women's human rights activists and local women in Antakya during the field research and the data gathered from the secondary sources would help to circumstantiate the context specific dimensions and the magnitude of various forms of VAW in Antakya. To this end, through the examples that came to the forefront during the fieldwork, the section 7.1.1.1 addresses the gender based harmful practices and traditions that give rise to VAW in Antakya and section 7.1.1.2 further elaborates on the impact of Syrian war on the lives of Antakya women and those Syrian women under temporary protection status.

7.1.1.1. Harmful Practices and Traditions in Antakya

⁴⁴³ Ibid. 101.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.158.

⁴⁴⁵ Interview with Meral Asfuroğlu (Lawyer), July 05, 2016, Antakya.

In order to have a better sense of the root causes of VAW in Antakya, we should take into account the harmful local practices and defining features of socio-cultural context. Here are some examples:

a. Similar to Trabzon, son preference is still prevalent in Antakya and in the rural areas of Hatay. Sons, considered as the backbone of patriarchal family, are expected to maintain the continuity of lineage and protection of family property. The preservation of family name, family honor are assumed to be guaranteed by sons. They are also expected to care their parents in their old age. As a side effect of son preference, traditional patriarchal families infringe women's inheritance rights and confiscate the women's share. In Arab Alawi community of Antakya, sons have another duty and value. As the religion is only taught to son children of the family, they are seen as the carriers of religion and the performers of religious faith, rituals and customs.

b. Consanguineous marriages or marriage between cousins/blood relatives are quite common in Antakya and as a custom it adversely affects the women's and children's lives.⁴⁴⁶ İnandı et al., in their study on the consanguineous marriages in Hatay conduct a survey with 584 women between April-May 2014. They assess the causes and prevalence of consanguineous marriages, their effects on the children's health, and on life satisfaction and the happiness of the women. According to findings, the reasons given for favoring consanguineous marriages include the preservation of family property and inheritance; trust and anticipated interpersonal compatibility between bride and groom; traditions and customs in Antakya; parental authority; social protection of women; preventing 'foreigners' from entering into the family; maintenance of inter-family solidarity.⁴⁴⁷ The findings reveal that at least one third of marriages are consanguineous marriages between first cousins. The low education level, low economic status and low income of women are associated factors in the practice of this type of marriages in Hatay. Furthermore, the research

⁴⁴⁶ Interview with Hatice Can, July 06, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁴⁷ Tacettin İnandı et al., "Hatay'da Akraba Evliliği Sıklığı, Nedenleri, Çocuk Sağlığı, İlişkilerde Mutluluk ve Yaşam Doyumu (Causes and Prevalence of Consanguineous Marriage, Child Health, Happiness in Relationships and Life Satisfaction among the Women in Hatay)," *Turk J Public Health* 14, no.1 (2016): 43.

shows that consanguinity negatively affects the reproductive health of women. It leads to death of infants before, during or immediately after birth and increases the percentage of the congenital diseases and disabled children in Hatay.⁴⁴⁸

c. The practice of endogamy or marriage within a specific ethno-religious group (i.e. Sunni Turk/Arab/Kurd with Sunni Turk/Arab/Kurd; Alawi Arab with Alawi Arab; Christian Arab with Christian Arab; Jewish with Jewish; Armenian with Armenian, etc.), has still been an alive custom in Antakya. According to Doğruel, despite the fact that different ethno-religious communities can peacefully live in the same neighborhood, develop friendship and do commerce, Antakya people tend to maintain this isolationist custom because “the best guarantee for the conservation of an ideology of biological-genealogical continuity in a city such as Antakya is the respect for the rule of endogamy”.⁴⁴⁹ It is important to emphasize that compared to the past, the marriages among people of different religions (or sects) are no longer seen as a taboo. However, ‘giving away or taking bride from one another (*kız verme, kız alma*)’ has not been welcomed by the families and remains an important restriction on young women’s lives and choices.

d. Although young generations with higher education and better socio-economic status struggle with and reject it, the act of go between (*görücülik*) prevails as an arranged marriage custom in Antakya. Here is how the traditional arranged marriage process proceeds. Families who think that their son matured enough begin looking for a girl and to this end several female members of family are elected as matchmakers. These female family members search for a prospective bride in various spaces including the famous Turkish baths (*hamam*) of Antakya, wedding ceremonies of others, in their neighborhood. Matchmakers examine the ‘purity’, health and body of prospective bride secretly and carefully, make preliminary inquiry. When a suitable girl is found, matchmakers pay a sudden visit to her home and imply their intention. Then, they propose this girl to the family of prospective groom. The maintenance of the act of go between custom is harmful

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., 51-53.

⁴⁴⁹ Fulya Doğruel, “An Authentic Experience of Multiculturalism,”280.

because it obstructs the education of teenagers and encourage the practice of child marriages. It also revokes young people's right to select their own spouses.

e. Although the incidences of honor killings are rare in Antakya compared to the other parts of Turkey (i.e. Eastern and southeastern of Turkey), the importance attached to the 'honor and purity of women and girls' presents itself in the strong cultural focus on the virginity of girls and the chastity of widow women. The focus on 'female purity' is also extended to the perception of the 'pollution' of women during the physiological menstruation and postpartum periods and restriction of women to perform certain religious ritual worships including prayer, fast. The Arab Alawi Community in Antakya goes one step further. The Arab Alawi tradition in Antakya, as opposed to the Turkish Alawism and Sunni Islamic practices in Turkey, mostly excludes women from learning and practicing religious rituals on the grounds that women cannot keep a secret, women are dirty, unreliable and sinful.⁴⁵⁰ Considering the widespread discourse on the inter-religious tolerance in Antakya, it is important to highlight the women's discrimination inside the religious communities.

f. Local women's traditional gender roles and unpaid labor in the household constitute one of the major exploitation areas. "Working seven days in a week, between 08-24 o'clock, for free and mostly invisible and unappreciated. These are typical to rural women and women with low socio-economic status in Antakya" says women's rights activist Gülbahar Aşkar.⁴⁵¹ She further notes that "the imposed and internalized ideas about the women's 'feminine nature' and stereotypes (i.e. women are more emotional, compassionate, nurturing, patient, domestic, caring) create ground for gender based discriminations and exclude women from higher education, a professional career and personal development outside home".⁴⁵² Meryem Kılıç, a prominent women's rights activist in Antakya, draws attention to the fact that even women with higher socio-economic status or working women are taught to shoulder

⁴⁵⁰ Interview with Hatice Can, July 06, 2016; Antakya; see also, Mehmet Dönmez, "Hatay Yöresi Arap Aleviliğinde Kadın," *Sosyoloji Konferansları Dergisi (İstanbul Journal of Sociological Studies)* 43 (2011): 273-276.

⁴⁵¹ Interview with Gülbahar Aşkar, July 06, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

all the traditional responsibilities of house caring. In addition to that, looking after children, elders, sick and family members with mental and physical handicaps are associated with the natural duties of women at home.⁴⁵³

g. The oppression and heavy social pressure over the wives of migrant workers constitute another form of psychological VAW in Antakya. Nurhak Kar, women's human rights activist and lawyer, explains that "the relatives, neighbors and families snoop every action of these women and accuse them with disloyalty for instance when they buy a new dress, spend some time with friends or go to hair dresser. It is said with suspicion why you are doing this, your husband is not here".⁴⁵⁴

Since the early 1970s, hundreds of thousands Arabic speaking unemployed men of Hatay (especially Arabic speaking rural Christians, Alawi and Sunni Arabs) have migrated to Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries in order to find a job in the service sector. Each month, they sent remittance to their wives and families. Although migrant workers and their remittances have created a relative economic prosperity for these families, it has also increased VAW in various respects. Interviews with two local women activists, whose husbands had worked in Saudi Arabia would better portray the experiences of these women.

Words fail me. When he went to Saudi Arabia in the early 1980s, I was 23 years old with two children aged 3 and 4. I shouldered all the responsibility of our children and household. He was lazy and unemployed in Antakya, but in Saudi Arabia he turned to be irresponsible and rude. Indeed, he couldn't earn much in Saudi Arabia. The money he sent us was not enough or unsteady. I several times intended to divorce him, but I had a heavy social pressure over me. I was depressed and used antidepressant pills to remain standing for my children. I had no time for myself and no chance for my personal development.⁴⁵⁵

My husband was working in Saudi Arabia. I was alone with my three children and he could only be able to visit us for few weeks in a year. As I was housewife and no education. I was totally dependent on the money he sent us. Over the years, he changed a lot. He turned into a different man. He highly influenced by the way of life in Saudi Arabia, tried to bring their religious and Bedouin way of life into our family. He began to interfere and exert pressure

⁴⁵³ Interview with Meryem Kılıç, July 02, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁵⁴ Interview with Nurhak Kar (Lawyer), July 09, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁵⁵ Interview with Informant 3 (women, wife of a migrant worker, age 65) October 28, 2016, Antakya.

over me and my daughters. He wanted me to cover my head and body just like the women in Arabia. When I objected him, he threatened me with divorce and not sending money. He didn't want to allow our daughters to go to high school and university. I struggled a lot with him for the education of our daughters.⁴⁵⁶

While it is important to address the gender based challenges of local women in the private sphere, it is equally important to elaborate the extension of women's problems and violence into the public spheres of workplaces and labor market.

h. It is mostly women of low education, low socio-economic status and rural women who migrated to Antakya in the recent decades work for wages in domestic work sector. The daily, weekly or monthly paid domestic works of house cleaning, child, sick and elderly caring are the sole chances of these women to have an income. However, as there is no social security inspection, domestic work sector in Antakya has been essentially carried on informally and paid below the minimum living wage rate (i.e. 600-1000 TL monthly, approximately 75 TL daily). In other words, local women employed in these sectors earn less and work more than 8 hours without social security coverage, insurance, entitlement to retirement pension.⁴⁵⁷

i. Coinciding with the 2001 economic crisis in Turkey, young women and girls have increasingly entered into the workforce in small scale family businesses of the silk farming, silk and cotton weaving, soap making as well as in stores (clothing, glassware, houseware, furniture, spice, jewelry, drapery) of Antakya Souk and touristic places. This is especially the case for non-Muslim and Arab Alawi families who had traditionally been specialized in commerce, artisanship, tourism and handicrafts. While the entrance of young women into the workforce at first glance seems a positive development for the economic empowerment of women in Antakya, the reality was one of patriarchal and capitalist exploitation. As the main motivation of families is to reduce labor costs, these women generally work without social security and insurance. As their work is considered a contribution to family budget, these women are generally under paid or symbolically paid (i.e. receiving allowance) for their labor. Employment of young girls in the family businesses also

⁴⁵⁶ Interview with Informant 4 (women, wife of a migrant worker, age 55), October 25, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁵⁷ Interview with Hatice Can, July 06, 2016, Antakya.

influence their access to higher education and personal development opportunities.⁴⁵⁸

j. The sale of local products made through the labor of ‘housewives’ with rural background has been common in Antakya. Despite women’s efforts to convert domestic work into money, the sale of these products is seen as a contribution to family budget and a source to be spent mostly for children’s education and household needs. In this regard, women’s human rights activist Selda Özgür shares her observations as follows:

When you search Antakya on the internet (e.g. google), you immediately see *künefe* (famous local dessert of Antakya), tomato and red pepper paste, olive oil, daphne soap, silk, pomegranate syrup, cheese, village bread (*tandır ekmeği*), dried fruit rollup, spices, citrus fruits, local assorted appetizers (*meze*), lacework. All of these are produced by Antakya women, though their name and labor are not mentioned or appreciated anywhere. Women produce these home-made products and items, but men sell them and take all the money, and spend it freely. Most of these women do not have their own bank account, or credit card. When these women are asked about their occupation or profession, they say nothing. They think that they are just ‘housewives’.⁴⁵⁹

7.1.1.2. The Impact of Syrian War on the Lives of Syrian and Local Women

As regards to the Syrian women, it is evident that escaping from the armed conflict has not alleviated their challenges. Instead, Syrian women and children under the temporary protection status in Turkey found themselves in unstable situations, insecurity, and isolation, economic and social hardships. They have to confront not only poor access to health, sanitation, housing, livelihood and education, but also rising gender-based violence and discriminations which are the least discussed dimensions and consequences of the Syrian war in Turkey and in the world.

Although there is no official or reliable large scale survey data in respect to violence against Syrian women and girls who live in or outside the refugee camps

⁴⁵⁸ Interview with Hatice Can, July 06, 2016, Antakya; Interview with Ceren Arslanhan Yüce, July 08, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁵⁹ Interview with Selda Özgür, October 10, 2016, Antakya.

in Hatay, the media news, a number of qualitative studies/reports as well as interviews with the locals and women's rights activists confirm the dramatic rise in VAW and the resurgence of the harmful traditional practices in Hatay and in other border cities.⁴⁶⁰

Women's human rights defender Dilek Koşar explains her observations with the following words:

We know that wars firstly and primarily affect women and children. Wars strike women's lives with rape, harassment, displacement, lost, worse living conditions, refugee status and with various gendered discriminations. We sometimes see Syrian women and children while they are begging, sometimes we see them as second wives (*kuma*). Traffickers and some Syrian families are selling Syrian girls to men in Turkey. These innocent girls are becoming either child brides or forced sex workers.⁴⁶¹

Inci Aksu Kargin, building on her interviews with Syrian families who agreed to marry off their daughters to Turkish men in Hatay, finds that child marriages are unofficially conducted through religious marriage ceremony and Syrian girls mostly become second wives. Kargin identifies a number of reasons

⁴⁶⁰ United Nations Population Fund, "More Than Numbers Regional Overview: Responding to Gender-based Violence in the Syria Crisis 2016", http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/unfpa_gbv_take10-may17-single41.pdf; Burcu Kuğu and Erhan Okşak, "Evaluation Study Support to Life's Response to Syrian Refugee Crisis, 2012& 2013", *Hayata Destek Derneği (Support to Life Association)* (December 2013), 13-14, <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=4628>; İnci Aksu Kargin, "The Syrian Refugees in Turkey: Their Living Conditions and the Ways in which Their Presence has Affected Turkish Society," (PhD Dissertation, Indiana University Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, 2016); Randall Salm, "The Transformation of Ethnic Conflict and Identity in Syria," (PhD Dissertation, George Mason University, Department of Sociology, 2016); Fariba Nawa and Özge Sebzeci, "Syrian influx in Turkey prompts upsurge in polygamy", *Public Radio International (PRI)*, July 25, 2016, <https://www.pri.org/stories/2016-07-25/syrian-influx-turkey-prompts-upsurge-polygamy>; Fariba Nawa and Özge Sebzeci, "Activists Condemn Turkey's Polygamous Marriages Targeting Syrian Refugees," *The World Post*, July 25, 2016, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/polygamy-in-turkey_us_57964212e4b01180b52fae27; Brenda Stoter, "Syrian women refugees humiliated, exploited in Turkey," *Al Monitor*, March 12, 2014, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/03/syria-refugees-women-exploitation-harassment.html>; James Longman, "Child Brides: The Syrian Girls Pushed into Early Marriage," *BBC News*, October 11, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37617523>; Mazlumder Women Studies Group, "The Report on Syrian Women Refugees Living Out of the Camps," *Mazlumder*, May 2014, [http://istanbul.mazlumder.org/webimage/files/The%20Report%20on%20Syrian%20Women%20Refugees\(1\).pdf](http://istanbul.mazlumder.org/webimage/files/The%20Report%20on%20Syrian%20Women%20Refugees(1).pdf)

⁴⁶¹ Interview with Dilek Koşar, October 26, 2016, Antakya.

why Syrian families consent or seek to arrange polygamous and child marriages for their daughters:

...so that their daughters might not struggle with the social and economic problems and will have better futures. Syrian families also believed that their daughters should be under the protection of their husbands such that their honors will remain intact. In addition, in some circumstances, the Syrian girls see marriage as a means of being rescued from financial hardships or a sacrifice that they are willing to make so that they can provide their families with dowry money.⁴⁶²

Mazlumder's report on the problems of Syrian women who live outside the temporary protection centers draws attention to another dimension of the same bitter concern: unofficial marriages with the Syrian women and girls have become a trade sector or a case of human trafficking. Mazlumder Women Studies Group reports that there are matchmakers who arrange these marriages. The report also indicates that the matchmakers transmit especially the Syrian girls between 15 and 20 years old to the purchasers. Then, (unofficial/informal) imam marriages are done and these girls are delivered to the Turkish men. According to the report, these type of marriages are often seen in and around Hatay, Antep, Kilis, Urfa, and Batman.⁴⁶³

On the demand side, Turkish men tend to justify their 'illegal' marriages on the religious grounds. Despite the fact that polygamy and child marriage have been legally forbidden in Turkey, it is a widely held belief that the Qur'an permits a man to marry up to four wives especially in war times to protect and ensure the wellbeing of widows and girls. Furthermore, marrying with Syrian women and girls is appealing to men in Hatay because they do not demand white goods, furniture, and expensive wedding ceremony, and accept the authority and demands of their husbands under all conditions.⁴⁶⁴

Indeed, no matter what Syrian families and Turkish husbands say to justify polygamy and child marriage, as emphasized by lawyers Nurhak Kar and Meral Asfuroğlu, these marriages do not provide or guarantee a better future for Syrian women and girls on no account. Instead, these harmful traditional practices perpetuate the violence against women. Because their marriages are not recognized by law, these women who are mostly second wives have no inheritance rights, cannot get Turkish citizenship, and have no right

⁴⁶² Inci Aksu Kargın, "The Syrian Refugees in Turkey," 177.

⁴⁶³ Mazlumder, "The Report on Syrian Women Refugees," 34-35.

⁴⁶⁴ Interview with Hatice Can (Lawyer), July 06, 2016, Antakya.

of custody over their children. Subordinate to their husbands, Syrian (widow) women and girls are not in a position to make decisions and more vulnerable to domestic violence.⁴⁶⁵ Meral Asfuroglu from the Hatay Bar Association Women Commission also reports that though the domestic VAW against Syrian women is as high as or even may be higher than the level of the Antakya women, so far only 6 Syrian women applied to Bar Association to get legal assistance on such issues as inheritance, parental rights.⁴⁶⁶ Particularly domestic violence experiences of Syrian women have not been reported, which makes these women and girls alone and helpless.

The informal employment of Syrian women and the exploitation of their labor are other areas of economic violence and right violation that prevail in Hatay. It is important to note that most of the Syrian women could not be able work due to such reasons as language barriers, low level of education and work experience, not having a work permit under the temporary protection status, gender discrimination in the labor market, social adoption problems arising from cultural differences, social isolation in and outside the camps and their gendered roles and oppression as housewives at home.

Syrian women who found employment are usually hired in the agriculture and service sectors of house cleaning, child and elderly caring. However, unregistered employment of Syrian women with low wage is common.⁴⁶⁷ For instance, in Antakya local women usually earn 75-100 TL for house cleaning, but Syrian women work for 30-50 TL. As reported by local farmers, they prefer to hire Syrian nationals (women, children aged between 14-18 and young men) due to their cheaper labor. While local agricultural workers or those seasonal migrant workers coming from the eastern part of Anatolia demand at least 70 TL daily, Syrians accept half of this pay and do not complain about the working and living conditions they are provided with.

Last but not least, of the femicide cases in Hatay between 2010 and 2017, 4 women were Syrian under the temporary protection in Turkey. According to the news in the local media, these Syrian women were second wives with religious marriage and murdered their husbands or they work as sex workers and found dead.

If exploitation and violence against Syrian women and girls are one side of the coin, the other side of the coin is the heightened fear and violence against Antakya women

⁴⁶⁵ Interview with Nurhak Kar, 28 October 2016, Antakya; Interview with Meral Asfuroğlu, July 05, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁶⁶ Interview with Meral Asfuroğlu, July 05, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁶⁷ Interview with Hatice Can, July 06, 2016, Antakya.

following the Syrian war and influx. Selda Özgür summarizes the experiences and discontent of local women as follows:

The war in Syria and its impact in Antakya constitute the common challenge for Turkish, Kurdish, Armanian, Arab, Alawi, Sunni, Christian, Jewish women in Antakya. Border villages wake up with the sounds of bomb and gun battle. Our children see the warplanes in our sky. Unfortunately, we are under the constant threat of jihadist groups and ISIL terrorists who can freely walk on the streets in Hatay. Unlike before, Antakya women stuck in their houses and fear to go out and spend their times in the parks, restaurants, bars and cafes. Then, what Antakya women do not want? Antakya women do not want war and insecurity. Antakya women do not want ISIL and jihadist gangs, do not want polygamy and child marriages.⁴⁶⁸

Women's rights activists worry that their efforts to fight such harmful traditional practices like polygamy and early and forced marriages are in jeopardy. Another concern is the increasing male unemployment and decrease in the wages of domestic work sector that local women have been used to earn income. In brief, the Syrian war has perpetuated the challenges of both Antakya and Syrian women in various respects.

7.2. Tracing the Origins and Development of Women's Human Rights Advocacy in Antakya

The political atmosphere of the post-1980 military coup period in Turkey and by extension in Antakya, at least in the early 1980s, was not conducive for the development of democracy, human rights and civil society organizing in all meanings.⁴⁶⁹ While the military coup brought a sudden end to the social unrest and the skirmishes between the leftist and rightist extremists, it also resulted in the disclosure of the political parties, labor and trade unions, several civil society organizations. Simply, the regime intended to purge almost all leftist and rightist persuasions as well as any possibility of democratic organizing in Antakya. However, soon after the military rule between 1980 and 1983, the pro-democracy

⁴⁶⁸ Interview with Selda Özgür, October 26, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁶⁹ Interview with Hatice Can, July 06, 2016, Antakya.

civil society organizing resurrected in Antakya. The political parties, trade and labor unions were reopened one by one. Furthermore, the establishment of Human Rights Association (İHD)⁴⁷⁰ in Antakya in the late 1980s provided a platform for the reunification of pro-democracy and pro-human rights groups under a single roof. Importantly, those socialist and revolutionary women from the so called '78 generation' who survived from the 1980 coup also took part in this democratic consolidation process and the democratization struggle.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the advocacy for feminist ideas and women's human rights in Antakya began to grow through the modest but devoted initiatives of few educated, labor, socialist and middle class local women. It is noteworthy that these pioneering actors were predominantly active members of the local socialist/labor movement that already took ground in Antakya in the 1970s. Realizing that the mainstream socialist/Marxist groups and mixed civil society organizations (e.g. trade unions) have long failed to take account of the gender specific challenges and oppression of women in both public and private sphere, these women initially took the lead in the formation of the women branches of the 'leftist' political organizations and groups. These women branches, for instance, organized intensive awareness raising activities for working class women. They established reading groups, organized panels and workshops, whereby they mainly attempted to extend the socialist struggle to cover the problems of women and women's liberation in both public and private spheres.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the women activists not only continued to proclaim the problems of local women, but also tried to determine new and more effective strategies for their future organizing. As explained by Hatice Can and Meryem Kılıç, for a long time they culminated experience and knowledge, and they were seeking more transformative solutions for the problems of women. In the process, they realized that the class struggle on the basis of socialist ideas would be relevant but not sufficient in achieving the equality and the liberation of women in

⁴⁷⁰ Human Rights Association (İHD) was established in 1986 by the human rights defenders and relatives of prisoners who experienced torture and right violations during the period of military coup in Turkey. The İHD carries out an effective struggle against torture, murders by unknown person, villages' evacuation under state of emergency, extra judicial execution, bans on freedom of expression, etc. The İHD monitors the human rights violations in Turkey, prepare reports, raise public awareness and engage in advocacy for reform in Turkey.

a patriarchal society. Here, it is noteworthy to add that the translation of feminist literature into Turkish in the 1980s provides an important appropriation channel for the local women activists. Ardently embracing the feminist ideas and women's human rights in the 1990s, they put the gender based challenges and discrimination of women front and center.⁴⁷¹ Recalling the panels that they organized in the 1990s, Hatice Can notes that

In these panels and discussions, we for the first time publicly pronounced and introduced feminism and women's human rights. Our assessments on women's subordinate position in Antakya and criticisms against the patriarchal mentality and structures were creating a shock effect on our audiences. We were not only criticizing patriarchy in private sphere and harmful traditional practices but also gender blindness, discriminations and the shortcomings of the ideas proposed by the men who called themselves as socialist and revolutionary.⁴⁷²

Instead of being an offshoot of the mainstream class struggle in Antakya, women's rights defenders preferred the independent organizing of local women in pursuit of their rights.

The establishment of Antakya Amargi Women Cooperative⁴⁷³ in the early 2000s paved the way for the emergence of local women's movement in Antakya. Ceren notes that "Amargi as part of feminist women's movement in Turkey placed emphasis on Antakya. Amargi volunteers in Istanbul paid visits to Antakya. They encouraged the establishment of Antakya branch of Amargi. They organized seminars, panels and awareness raising activities. Most of us for the first time learnt the meaning of feminism, learnt the history of feminist struggle in the world and in

⁴⁷¹ Interview with Hatice Can, July 06, 2016; Interview with Meryem Kılıç July 02, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁷² Interview with Hatice Can, July 10, 2016.

⁴⁷³ Amargi Women Cooperative was established in Istanbul in 2001 by a number of leading feminists of Turkey including Pınar Selek and Aksu Bora. In a few years' time, Amargi opened its Izmir, Adana and Antakya branches. Amargi is a Sumerian word meaning 'freedom' and 'return to the mother'. Amargi aimed at deconstructing patriarchy and its manifestations in society. As an academy, it emphasized the importance of feminist knowledge production, and strived to widen the horizons of feminist theorizing and practice in Turkey. Amargi Feminist Journal, Amargi library, panels and discussions served to achieve this goal. Amargi adopted principles of inclusiveness, reflexivity and solidarity. It embraced intersectionality and diversity feminism. The organization tried to unite diverse women in Turkey in order to transcend the prevailing identity politics within women's movement. Amargi Women Cooperative including its Antakya branch was closed in 2011.

Turkey through the activities and journal of Amargi”.⁴⁷⁴ Therefore, the relational links with the Amargi Women Cooperative could be accepted as an important appropriation channel for local women activists.

Another milestone in the development of women’s human rights advocacy in Antakya is the establishment of Hatay Bar Association Women Commission in the early 2000s. The voluntary lawyers of the Women Commission with their legal expertise and knowledge played an intermediary role between global and local, and as such provided another norm appropriation channel for rising generations of rights activists. The Commission as the leading organization of the local women’s movement has also engaged in direct advocacy and awareness raising work.

Meral Asfuroğlu notes the imprint of the women’s human rights based reforms in the Civil Code, Penal Code and Constitution of Turkey in the early 2000s. She explains that “the momentum created by the feminist women’s movement in Turkey and the EU accession process not only resulted in legislative reforms but also provided an impetus for advocacy for the proper implementation of women’s Human rights at local context”.⁴⁷⁵

In 2005, the Antakya Women Platform was established with the participation of women from the Confederation of Public Employees Trade Union (*KESK*), Democratic People’s Party (*DEHAP*)⁴⁷⁶, Antakya Solidarity Houses (*Antakya Dayanışma Evleri*)⁴⁷⁷, Antakya Amargi Women Cooperative, and the lawyers from the Hatay Bar Association. The constituents of the women platform aimed to foreground the challenges of the local women both in the public and private spheres and urged local public authorities for the proper implementation of women’s human rights and national laws. In their first 8 March press release in 2005, on behalf of the Platform members Belgin Ayrancı solidified their stance and claims as follows:

⁴⁷⁴ Interview with Ceren Aslanhan Yüce, July 07, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁷⁵ Interview with Meral Asfuroğlu, July 07, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁷⁶ Democratic People’s Party (*DEHAP*) was established in 1997 and abolished itself in November 2005. Ideologically *DEHAP* stood on the leftist spectrum of politics and tried to promote the democratic rights of Kurdish people in Turkey. *DEHAP* was also known for its policies to achieve gender equality, women’s participation in political and decision making mechanisms.

⁴⁷⁷ Antakya Solidarity Houses, which was closed in December 2016, was a local socialist group aiming to develop solidarity with workers and poor people.

In the terms of the principles of Antakya Women Platform, we are against class-based, economic, ethnic, sexist, social, and cultural discriminations against women. We reject all forms of gender-based discriminations against women in laws, in the policies of the Justice and Development Party government, in the public institutions and in every facet of life. We demand the proper implementation of the universal declaration of the human rights, the CEDAW and the Vienna and Beijing declarations of women's rights and we will pursue our work accordingly.⁴⁷⁸

Notice in this first public statement the references to international legal documents as well as women's human rights norms and standards.

Feminism and women's human rights, once marginal or unknown to most people in Antakya, began to gain ground in the 1990s and early 2000s. However, two critical junctures- the Syrian war and the Gezi Park process in Turkey- immensely influenced the magnitude of the localization of women's human rights ideas in combating VAW in Antakya. In other words, the Syrian war at regional level and the Gezi Park process at national level provided a new political opportunity structure for mobilizing to advance women's human rights.

Amid the spillover effects of Syrian civil war, Antakya turned into one of the cities where thousands of people took to the streets and parks for months to express support to Gezi movement. The Gezi Park protests initially started on 28 May 2013 as a contest to the new urban development plan for Istanbul's Taksim Gezi Park through the petitions and peaceful sit-ins by environmentalists in defense of trees and green area. However, the excessive use of force and violent interventions by police, and government's anti-democratic, intolerant policies sparked a nation-wide outrage and protest movement in Turkey. Antakya people also joined this wave and rallied to express their own discontent with the rising anti-

⁴⁷⁸ The 8 March 2005 Women's Day Press Release of Antakya Women Platform was borrowed from the site of Haber7com. Haber7com, "Antakya'da Kadın Platformu Kuruldu", June 3, 2005, <http://www.haber7.com/guncel/haber/95437-antakyada-kadin-platformu-kuruldu>

secularism/sectarianism, conservatism, the war next door and Turkey's interventions, destabilizing effects of Syrian influx and human rights violations.⁴⁷⁹

During the Gezi Park protests in Antakya, women were at the forefront to defend their rights and to protect their children from the tear gases and bullets. They raised voice against the 'imperialist' war in Syria and against the anti-democratic policies of Justice and Development Party government. The local women from the all sects of the society mobilized and bravely rallied to bring peace, democracy and human rights to the war-torn region.

This dynamism in the local context also opened a new opportunity structure for women's human rights defenders to draw attention to the challenges and oppression of women in the private sphere and the prevalence of VAW in Antakya. Selda Özgür, one of the prominent local activists, explains the developments as follows:

Before the eruption of Syrian war and Gezi Park process, we –few women's human rights activists and socialists- have been meeting in our houses or organize meetings to discuss the challenges of local women, rising conservatism under the JDP government, right violations and the VAW. We were organizing activities and press releases to celebrate 8 March Women's Day, 1 May Worker's Day, etc. However, Syrian War and Gezi process provided a new dynamic and impetus for women's self-organizing in Antakya. During the protests we set up a tent and stand of our own at the Sevgi Park (or how we then called it *Direnış/Resistance Park*) where Antakya women freely pronounced themselves and their problems. We produced our own slogans under the name of 'women's words'. Then, by using this energy and potential we established our women NGOs and Antakya Women Solidarity Platform to combat VAW.⁴⁸⁰

In this process, the local women redefined the boundaries of local politics and civil society advocacy for human rights. The spotlight turned, as never before, on government's interventions to women's lives and freedoms, the rise in VAW and its root causes including misogyny, gender inequality, and patriarchy at the societal

⁴⁷⁹ Yael Navaro-Yashin, "Shadows of the 1980 Coup and the Syrian War: Resisting in Antakya," Hot Spots, *Cultural Anthropology* website, October 31, 2013, <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/409-shadows-of-the-1980-coup-and-the-syrian-war-resisting-in-antakya>; Milliyet, "Antakya'nın kalbine üçüncü ateş düştü", November 09, 2013, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/antakya-nin-kalbine-ucuncu-ates/gundem/detay/1761834/default.htm>

⁴⁸⁰ Interview with Selda Özgür, October 26, 2016, Antakya.

level. This momentum also triggered the re-institutionalization of women's human rights advocacy through the self-organization of local women at grassroots level and the establishment of women's rights NGOs for combating VAW in Antakya. This particular case illustrates well that norm localizers might take the opportunities created by the developments at national political life (e.g. Gezi movement) and entangle women's issues to those social and political events that might offer new venues or opportunities for mobilization and thus localization.

As regards to the development of state-led initiatives in struggling with VAW in Antakya, it is important to emphasize that the bulk of bureaucratic endeavor and the institutionalization of local mechanisms corresponded to Turkey's signature of Istanbul Convention of the Council of Europe in May 2011 and the subsequent adoption of Law no 6284 in March 2012. However, up until 2016 the local public authorities, who have legal responsibility to establish and implement services and mechanisms for preventing and ending VAW, could not be able to develop effective and substantial strategies responding the challenges of Syrian and local women in Antakya. Compared to the other metropolitan cities in Turkey (i.e. Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Antalya, Trabzon), they remained laggard and insufficient in capacity. To put it clearly, for instance, Hatay Violence Prevention and Monitoring Center (ŞÖNİM) was established in Antakya on February 08, 2016 and there is only one Women Shelter (called women guest house), which serve 31 women and children under thirteen. As of 2018, the Metropolitan Municipality of Hatay and other municipalities, despite their rhetorical commitments and legal obligations, have not yet established a counseling center or shelter for women who have been subjected to VAW.⁴⁸¹ In June 2016, the Provincial Coordination Committee on Violence against Women was established. This provincial coordination committee chaired by vice governor of Hatay decided to meet twice a year and aimed to coordinate the policies and activities of the local public bodies having responsibility in

⁴⁸¹ Interview with Informant 5, (Senior Social Worker, staff who work in the Provincial Directorate of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies of Antakya), October 28, 2016, Antakya; Interview with Informant 6 (Social Worker, staff who work in the Provincial Directorate of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies), December 1, 2016, Antakya.

implementing laws and mechanisms on preventing VAW.⁴⁸² However, as of June 2018 the Committee could not be able to prepare a provincial action plan in combating VAW in Hatay, which means that the local public authorities as duty holders still reluctant to develop women centered and effective strategies and prefer to implement their obligations in an ad hoc manner. Similar to Trabzon, the local mechanisms to prevent VAW have not been institutionalized. Importantly, the protection services provided to Turkish nationals have not been properly extended to Syrian women and girls under the temporary protection. This negligence on the part of state also further exacerbates the VAW in Antakya.⁴⁸³

The initiatives of local authorities are progressing and it is too early to evaluate (or give judgment on) the agency of local public authorities in localizing women's human rights based approach in struggling with VAW. On the other hand, tracing the developments, it is plausible to argue that the women's rights movement in Antakya has played a pioneering role for the localization of women's human rights norms in combating VAW. In less than three decades the local feminists and women's rights activists successfully set linkages between the socialism and women's rights; democracy, peace and women's human rights; capitalism and patriarchy; patriarchy and VAW, thereby they create wider resonance and alliances in the local context. Before analyzing norm localization practices in Antakya, let's look at the profiles of these women's NGOs in detail.

7.2.1. Norm Localizers in Antakya

This study will base its norm localization analysis on the agency of the local women's movement in general and the activists within the women's human rights NGOs in particular. The in-depth analysis focuses on the Hatay Bar Association

⁴⁸² Interview with Cemile Güvercin Sayın (Social Worker), October 27, 2016, Antakya; Interview with Meral Asfuroğlu, July 05, 2016, Antakya. The second provincial coordination committee chaired by Vice Governor Aydın TETİKOĞLU met in December 2016. This time, 3 participants from the civil society were included to the coordination committee: one representative from the Mustafa Kemal University and Hatay Bar Association and Hatay Metropolitan Municipality.

⁴⁸³ Interview with Meral Asfuroğlu, July 05, 2016, Antakya; Interview with Cemile Güvercin Sayın (Social Worker), October 27, 2016, Antakya.

Women Commission, the Yeşilpınar Women Social Support and Solidarity Association, Antakya Campus Witches, the Antakya Purple Solidarity Women Association.

7.2.1.1. Hatay Bar Association Women Commission

The Hatay Bar Association Women Commission was established in 2004 following the general decision of Turkish Bar Association. It has been a leading organization of the local women's movement, which dedicated to take action and bring about change for the actualization of women's human rights, gender equality, and prevention of VAW in Antakya/Hatay.

In terms of advocacy, the Commission members draw attention to the right infringements, shortcomings in policies and practices of the law enforcement agencies, public authorities of Antakya and try to generate public pressure over them. They aim to actualize the proper, equal and non-discriminatory implementation of national/international laws on women's rights.

Another concern of the Women Commission is the limitations in women's access to justice due to complexity of judicial/legal mechanisms or due to lack of knowledge and awareness of local women on their rights. In conveying women's rights and in facilitating the utilization of the national/international law and relevant violence prevention and protection mechanisms, the volunteer lawyers of the Women Commission offer a free of charge legal aid and counseling service. The Women Commission also has a telephone line for those women who have limitations in mobility. The voluntary lawyers provide free of charge representation and accompaniment to women in the judicial processes. Furthermore, the lawyers participate in programs in the local radio and TV channels, and panels whereby they inform the audiences on the problems of women, the women's rights and mechanisms in combatting VAW.

7.2.1.2. Yeşilpınar Women Social Support and Solidarity Association

The Yeşilpınar Women Social Support and Solidarity Association (YWSSSA) was officially established in 2011 by the women of Yeşilpınar district of Antakya. As a women's rights NGO, the YWSSSA seems to pursue a gender and development approach in combating VAW in Antakya. The YWSSSA volunteers identify and try to eliminate the discriminatory gender roles and power hierarchies between women and men in their local context. Moreover, the heightened unemployment and gendered challenges of local women following the Syrian influx prompted Meryem Kılıç and her friends to find new ways for the economic and social empowerment of the disadvantaged rural women. To this end, they initiated projects and activities by particularly focusing the economic potentials, needs and challenges of women mostly living in the rural areas and remote parts of the city. In this way, the YWSSSA aims to instigate a process through which disadvantaged rural women become aware of their gender roles, and gain social and economic strength to challenge gender inequalities, discriminations and patriarchy giving rise to VAW.

Another novelty of Yeşilpınar women is their peace activism. Particularly their rally and protests to stop Syrian War resounded in Antakya and in Turkey. Since 2012, Yeşilpınar women have mobilized local people and rallied for the future of their children in both sides of the border with the motto “No to Shedding Brother Blood! A Scream for Peace (*Kardeş Kanına Hayır! Barış İçin Bir Çığlık*)”.⁴⁸⁴

7.2.1.3. Antakya Campus Witches

As part of the national network of the Campus Witches⁴⁸⁵, the Antakya Campus Witches was established by the female and LGBT-I students of Mustafa

⁴⁸⁴ Interview with Meryem Kılıç, July 02, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁸⁵ The Campus Witches is a group of feminist and anti-capitalist female university students, who have been organized over 20 universities in Turkey since 2013. In their blog and Facebook page, the Campus Witches introduce themselves with these words: “We are the self-organization of young women”. The Campus Witches is an independent community of young female university students, who organized to grapple with the problems of young women because they are women.

Kemal University in 2013 with the aim of fighting against widespread gender-based discriminations, inequalities, and VAW including harassment, rape, abuse, sexism, the normalization of control over the women's lives in the student dorms, classes, university campuses, and on the streets.

These young university students wear purple hats in their activities and deliberately call themselves as witches. One of the activists, Gülsüm, explains the reasons behind this:

Since the ancient times, women who have resisted and rejected male domination or patriarchy, and who relied on feminine power and nature have been treated as witches by the authorities. Unfortunately, these women were ostracized, tortured and burned alive. Today's patriarchal mentality and its manifestations (i.e. in dating/marriages, in the society, in the families, in the university, in the state policies, etc.) also relegate women to subordinate position and deny women's basic human rights when women claim them. We maintain the legacy of the witches and just like our great-great-great grandmothers we rise against oppression of women and the rules of patriarchal system. Therefore we call ourselves witches of Antakya.⁴⁸⁶

Starting with the campus of Mustafa Kemal University, these feminist and anti-capitalist young university students have been working to build solidarity and sisterhood between women. The Antakya Campus Witches organize various awareness raising activities in the campus and urge young women to stand up against patriarchy, traditional and imposed gender roles, sexist stereotypes that give rise to VAW. The witches also offer free of charge self-defense courses to young women so they can rediscover their inner feminine power and protect themselves against harassment, stalking, and dating violence, etc.

Within few years' time, the Antakya Campus Witches has become visible in the local through their feminist demonstrations, sit-ins, speeches, press releases, protests. Mobilizing the increasing numbers of young women, they organize alternative activities for 8 March Women's Day, 25 November International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, Valentine's Day and Mother's day, etc.

⁴⁸⁶ Interview with Gülsüm Tonaydın, October 25, 2016, Antakya.

7.2.1.4. Antakya Purple Solidarity Women Association

The Antakya Purple Solidarity Women Association (PSWA) was established in February 2014. The PSWA volunteers define themselves as feminist and independent neighborhood women (*mahalle kadınları*) who have been organized and committed to fight against all forms of gender-based violence and discriminations in Antakya.

Nurhan, one of the founders of PSWA, explains this women's human rights NGO with these words:

We accumulated power and experience for years to overthrow patriarchal and capitalist system that enmeshed in every inch of life. During the Gezi Park protests in Antakya, we decided to establish a women's rights NGO and to struggle violence against women at grassroots level. PSWA is a struggle for freedom that leaks into the women's spaces of houses, factories, kitchens, workshops, cities and villages.⁴⁸⁷

PSWA is completely run by volunteer neighborhood women who organize non-hierarchically. The PSWA volunteers stress their independence and strongly reject to receive funding from national or international donors as an imperative of their independence. In line with their stance, they do not take part in funded projects of other civil society organizations or state institutions. Therefore, the PSWA relies on contributions of its volunteers and occasional income generating activities. For instance, these neighborhood women collected money among themselves to hire a shanty house in Armutlu district of Antakya and collectively renovated its walls, kitchen and garden. In order to finance their activities or other expenses some of its volunteers work as day laborer in restaurants, cafes, some others sell their handicrafts in bazaars. "We are committed to remain self-sufficient and maintain our independence" says Kader.⁴⁸⁸

The PSWA particularly concerns about the ways wars, traditional gender roles, capitalism, class, ethnicity, religion, culture, political ideology, patriarchy divide local and regional women who need to develop solidarity in order to combat

⁴⁸⁷ Interview with Nurhan Nur, October 26, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁸⁸ Interview with Kader Koşar, October 25, 2016, Antakya.

against VAW and use their rights. Therefore, volunteers reach neighborhood women through their awareness raising and empowerment activities. Knowing both Arabic and Turkish is an important asset of volunteers in reaching all local women including Syrian women under temporary protection status in Antakya.

PSWA adopts a critical stance towards patriarchy, rising conservatism and particularly Justice and Development Party government's religious discourse and interferences to women's lives and choices. As a women NGO, the PSWA also sets linkages between subordination/oppression of local women capitalist consumerism and environmental degradation. Aylin explains their environmentalist vision with these words: "city life and modernization have kept women apart from the nature or as we call it mother earth. In our activities we enable women to rediscover the natural feminine power and energy. We commit ourselves to include environmental concerns (pollution of farm land, air, Asi River, sea; hydroelectric power plants, urban renewal, etc) and develop solidarity since women and nature are interdependent and inseparable".⁴⁸⁹

7.3. Target Groups of Norm Localization

Regarding the target groups, norm localizers try to reach and influence various groups in order achieve normative change in Antakya. We might collect them under two major groups who are given priority: (a) the local women, (b) local public authorities.

7.3.1. Local Women as Targets of Norm Localization

Women's human rights defenders in Antakya identify the local women as the first and foremost targets in bringing about normative change in Antakya. In approaching the local women, norm localizers have developed sensitivity towards differences including ethno-religious, age, education, class and ideological positions and preferences of local women on the grounds that they simultaneously want to ensure diversity and inclusion as much as possible in a multi-cultural city. In other

⁴⁸⁹ Interview with Aylin Yüksel, October 26, 2016, Antakya.

words, while promoting a human rights based approach in struggling with VAW, localizers on the one hand act with the awareness that each woman group in Antakya mosaic has *sui generis* gender realities and experience violence accordingly, and on the other hand they respect and encourage ‘unity in diversity’. Knowing both Arabic and Turkish is an important asset of localizers in reaching and interacting with all these women groups.

In explaining how they reach and interact with local women, norm localizers give plenty of examples. For instance, most PSWA volunteers define themselves as neighborhood women and they instinctively inclined to focus on marginalized and disadvantaged women who live in the villages and neighborhoods of Antakya including illiterate women, women with low level of education and socio-economic status, handicapped women, women farmers, low paid worker women of the factories, workshops and family businesses, university students, housewives, non-Muslim women, and Syrian women and girls under temporary protection. Nurhan from the PSWA explains why they initially started from the marginalized, isolated and disadvantaged rural and neighborhood women:

Of course a woman with higher socio-economic status would be subjected violence and discriminations. Yet, she is in a better position to stand on her own feet, in a better position to learn and pursue her rights. On the other hand, rural and neighborhood women are the most fragile and oppressed ones. Because they have been imprisoned into the kitchens and houses, they are treated as invisible housewives. Indeed, it is also not that easy to reach them and convey the ideas of women’s rights. We do that. We encourage them to discover their potentials, dreams, feminine power and rights for a new life.⁴⁹⁰

In the eyes of Antakya Campus Witches, Mustafa Kemal University campus is a fertile ground both in terms of reaching young women and in combating violence against women. “Our main problem is being a woman in a university, which is patriarchal, sexist, oppressive, and discriminatory towards women” says Eylem from the Campus Witches.⁴⁹¹ In order to reach young female and LGBT students, the volunteers of Campus witches organize such activities as panels, conferences,

⁴⁹⁰ Interview with Nurhan Nur, October 26, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁹¹ Interview with Eylem Yağcıbulut, October 25, 2016, Antakya.

picnics, concerts. They utilize printed materials (i.e. posters, post-it notes, banners, newspaper, flyers, and leaflets) and use social media in order to draw attention to gender based violence and discriminations. They also organize self- defense (wendo) trainings.⁴⁹²

The Bar Association Women Commission has developed alternative access channels in conveying women's human rights to the local women. Firstly, the volunteer lawyers of the women Commission offer a free of charge legal aid and counseling service to the local women who have been subjected to different forms of violence and for all cases of the violation of women's human rights. The Women Commission also has a telephone line for those women who have limitations in mobility. Secondly, the secondary victimization of survivors of violence when they try to utilize the judicial mechanisms is another concern of the Women Commission. In order to encourage and empower their clients, the Women Commission provides free of charge representation and accompaniment to them in the judicial processes. Thirdly, the lawyers participate in programs in the local radio and TV channels, and panels whereby they could access and inform wider audiences on the problems of women, the women's rights and mechanisms in combatting VAW. Last but not least, the lawyers organize awareness raising trainings and workshops on gender, gender equality and VAW in the schools, in the prisons and in the neighborhoods and villages of Antakya.

The local activists also try to reach to the Syrian women living in the refugee camps and suburbs of Antakya, and develop solidarity with them. Starting with the 2016, the women platform in Antakya has been organizing awareness raising and empowerment activities (conferences, seminars, festivals and campaigns) for the Syrian Women.

Last but not least, starting with the 2005, each year the local norm-brokers have used the 8 March Women Day, 25 December International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1 May Workers day as an opportunity to reach local women and convey their right based messages and criticisms to the wider audiences.

⁴⁹² Interview with Gülsüm Tonaydın, October 25, 2016, Antakya.

7.3.2. Local Public Authorities as Targets of Norm Localization

So far, it has been seen that the members of local women's rights movement, arguably the main agents of norm localization in Antakya, have primarily targeted to reach and transform the women through their rights-based approach in struggling with VAW. In addition to this grassroots level endeavors, norm localizers target local public authorities who legally bear the main responsibility to prevent violence and establish effective mechanisms to protect women and prosecute perpetrators.

In order to ensure the proper implementation of legal rights of women, for instance, Hatay Bar Association Women Commission pay keen attention to participate in the meetings of Provincial Coordination Committee on Violence against Women. As this coordination committee is chaired by vice governor of Hatay and involve the representatives from relevant local public bodies, this public institution has strategic importance.⁴⁹³ Meral Asfuroğlu notes that the representatives from local public bodies have limitations in airing the problems of women and taking initiatives. These representatives generally wait for the official directives of higher state authorities (e.g. government, the president of the republic, ministry of family and social affairs, (vice) governor of Hatay) before taking any initiative. On the other hand, Asfuroğlu as the representative of Bar Association finds herself and her institution more vocal and courageous to reveal the real problems of women and to offer proposals or strategies in line with women's human rights.⁴⁹⁴

Another target is the ŞÖNİM of Hatay, which was established in 2016. Trying to build dialogue and cooperation channels, the representatives from the local women's movement pay visits, for instance, to the director or social workers of ŞÖNİM. In these visits, as reported by activists, they firstly introduce themselves, their organizations and their right based endeavors in struggling with VAW, then

⁴⁹³ It is important to note that women's rights NGOs were neither invited to these meetings nor informed about the developments, decisions or future action plans. Interestingly, only the Hatay Bar Association Women Commission and academics from the Mustafa Kemal University were officially invited to the meetings.

⁴⁹⁴ Interview with Meral Asfuroğlu, July 05, 2016, Antakya.

explain the specific challenges or hesitations that prevent local women from applying ŞÖNİM or utilizing their rights, and then call for cooperation in finding solutions, making awareness raising trainings/activities and effective implementation of local mechanisms. “Developing personal relations is indispensable for unlocking the closed doors” says Meryem Kılıç from YWSSA.⁴⁹⁵

Hatay Bar Association and Yeşilpınar women also took the lead in giving trainings to mukhtars, police officers, gendarmerie, teachers and prison officers on gender based violence and women’s rights. To this end, they prepared courses, toolkits and applied to authorities to get permission. As reported by trainers, receiving official permissions took so long (i.e. six months or more) and some institutions refused their applications. Still, their persistent attempts to reach these groups and raise their awareness on gender equality, non-discrimination, root causes and consequences of VAW, and laws seem to keep going.

The municipalities and majors are also regarded as important targets for localizing women’s human rights in Antakya. The Municipalities of Hatay province, particularly those governed by the majors from the Republican Peoples Party (i.e. Hatay Metropolitan Municipality, Iskenderun, Arsuz, Samandağ, Defne, Antakya, Yeşilpınar Municipalities) are seen as the sites of advocacy as well as the potential allies to promote gender equality and non-discrimination in the local context.

7.4. Translating Women’s Human Rights Norms into Practice: Localization Tactics

Taking into account the local dynamics, target groups, their material and ideational resources and contextual factors, norm localizers in Antakya perform creative and active agency. As they translate the women’s human rights norms into practice, they utilize a bunch of tactics such as ‘unlearning and relearning’, ‘diagnostic questioning’, ‘recuperation’, ‘simplification’, ‘compartmentalization’, ‘self-defense’, ‘sisterhood solidarity’, ‘naming and shaming’, and ‘alliance building’.

⁴⁹⁵ Interview with Meryem Kılıç, July 02, 2016, Antakya.

7.4.1. Triggering the Unlearning and Relearning Processes of Local Women

Women's human rights activists in Antakya believe that in order to create a space for the new knowledge and practice of women's human rights in struggling with VAW, before anything else there is a need for local women to 'unlearn' those discriminatory and oppressive norms that they have internalized since their childhood. In explaining the meaning of 'unlearning', activists emphasize that it is a transformative process that gradually unsettles, and then replaces certain 'harmful' cultural/gendered codes of 'normal', 'appropriate', 'moral', 'plausible' with the new ideas of feminism and women's human rights. Unlearning as a tactic firstly aims at creating cognitive dissonance and as such is constitutive element of awareness raising and the overarching strategy of preventing VAW.

It is important to emphasize that unlearning is a multi-step process, and indeed it instigates a life-long re-learning process through the appropriation and internalization of women's rights norms and ideas. Norm localizers acting as facilitators and converters guide and empower the local women firstly to question, and then to challenge existing harmful cultural codes in line with feminist and women's human rights ideas. In this process targets turn out to be the right bearing and claiming individuals and potentially would turn out to be the new agents of global ideas and norms in Antakya.

Looking more closely, the unlearning process usually starts with friendly and warm conversations with the local women on their daily lives including such topics as women's social lives, women to women relations, women's roles in marriage, women's feelings and challenges in childbearing, child rearing, economic difficulties, etc. Norm localizers tell that when they pay visits to neighborhoods and villages, most of the time local women do not hesitate to invite them to their houses, to their gold days (*altın günü*), to their brunches or to attend their daily activities. As cultural insiders, localizers have access to the private sphere of the local women, which is otherwise closed to strangers. These seemingly simple, usual or mundane women to women conversations are of course have a purpose. They serve to understand everyday lives and challenges of targets.

In this dialogue building process, then, localizers go on by asking to their targets various ‘why’ questions: Why women are portrayed as indecisive, weak, emotional, less capable and less clever than men? ; Why girls wear pink and boys wear blue?; Why women have to be thin, chic, charming?; Why bride and mother-in-law cannot get along with?; Why women are not generally nominated as candidates in the elections?; Why women cannot or should not breastfeed their babies in the public spaces?; Why women should not laugh loudly?; Why men should not cry and always have to be brave and strong? ; Why women are not permitted by their husbands and families to work outside? ; Why is housework always the responsibility of women? Why women are less educated than men? ; Why is there a negative attitude towards a divorced women? Why women should not spend time outside at night?; Why Arab Alawite women are excluded from religion and religious ceremonies? ; Why are women ashamed of talking about menstruation period publicly? Why do families make circumcision feast for their boys? ; Why women should obey all the demands of husbands (including sexual relations)? ; Why maidenhood belt (*bekaret kuşağı*) is tied around the bride’s waist by her brother? ; Why women have been subjected to discrimination and violence? ; Why do women only associate the VAW with wife beating or killing?, etc.

As can be seen all these diagnostic ‘why’ questions directed to the local women during the purposeful dialogues are related to gender based discriminations and inequalities that prevail and underlie the VAW in Antakya. Gülsüm Tonaydın explains that initially it is not easy to answer these questions because of the fact that most women (young or old) have not thought about them before or they find these questions bothering. Therefore, targets sometimes vaguely reply or almost automatically give such answers as ‘I don’t know’, ‘that is life. It is inevitable’, ‘that is just the way it goes’, ‘it is so but I am happy/ I have no problem with that’, ‘well at least my husband doesn’t beat me’.⁴⁹⁶

The answers and reactions of local women in the face of unusual and thought provoking questions are difficult to ignore as they bring gendered, sexist and discriminatory myths, biases, fears and prejudices to the fore which have been

⁴⁹⁶ Interview with Gülsüm Tonaydın, October 25, 2016, Antakya.

mostly shaped by already existing cultural norms. “The transformation of discriminatory societal norms requires being aware of them. It requires critical reflection that enable a woman to rethink and change her normal” says Selda from the PSWA.⁴⁹⁷ It seems crystal clear that the local women’s socialization into women’s human rights mean a lot of questioning and unlearning ranging from dress codes to beauty standards, from family relations to child raising, from the definition of violence to women’s survival strategies, from religious and moral precepts to daily habits, from gender roles to homophobia, from external barriers to internal barriers of women.

In the second step, norm-brokers focus on the consciousness raising and recuperation of targets, and to this end they organize various women-centered activities. These activities include breakfast or coffee meetings, nature walks, picnics, house and neighborhood visits and meetings, self-defense (wen-do) trainings, vocational trainings, barter activities, women choirs in neighborhoods, seminars on reproductive health, summer camps for children and women, etc. These venues provide space, time and opportunities for local women outside their houses and kitchens. They come together, participate in new and joyful activities. They feel more relaxed and self-confident as they learn or attain new abilities, habits and income generating skills.

It is noteworthy to emphasize that in these early stages, norm-localizers act as facilitators but they proceed carefully in order to ensure the comprehension of their targets and not to cause a knowledge over-dose, alienation and dissonance. Nurhan from the PSWA explains their initial challenges as follows:

The terms gender, gender (in)equality, (non)discrimination, women’s human rights, patriarchy, feminism are too abstract and usually do not make any sense or meaning for the local women when they for the first time hear these words and concepts. Especially feminism has negative connotations as men beating, men hating or a women totally reject family and societal values, a women who live alone, or lesbians.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁷ Interview with Selda Özgür, October 26, 2016, Antakya.

⁴⁹⁸ Interview with Nurhan Nur, October 26, 2016, Antakya.

Meryem Kılıç draws attention to another challenging question that usually comes to the minds of women in their unlearning processes: “Is religion compatible with the women’s human rights ideas and norms?”. Kılıç explains that “religion is important for Antakya women, it is part of women’s identity and local culture. Therefore, they want to be sure about the purview of new ideas before testing their validity in daily life”.⁴⁹⁹ She maintains that

Though we criticize patriarchal interpretation of religion, we do not judge religion or faith per se. Adopting a truly secular approach, we convey our message that they may (or may not) believe in God and-or any religion (be it Christianity, Islam or Judaism). It is a personal decision, a matter of faith. It is something between individual woman and God. Feminism and women’s human rights, we reclaim, refer to equality, dignity and value of each and every woman. They are about our natural rights, not about our faiths. It is the struggle of women to have an equal voice and opportunity in men’s world. We simply offer them to separate the wheat from the chaff.⁵⁰⁰

Compared to the decoupling and grafting practice developed by norm localizers in Trabzon, we see a slightly different tactic in Antakya. As Trabzon is a conservative city, it is indispensable or inescapable for localizers to establish a bridge between women’s human rights ideas and Islam. In Antakya, however, due to centuries old multiculturalism and inter-religious tolerance culture, local women are accustomed to the secular practice in their daily lives. Localizers do not engage in frame bridging. Rather, they first raise awareness on the patriarchal interpretations of religions (be it Alawi or Sunni Islam, Christianity or Judaism) and persuade local women to separate earthly and heavenly matters. In doing so, norm localizers in Antakya promote both peoples’ right to religion as part of their inner world and women’s human rights norms of gender equality, non-discrimination, women’s reproductive rights, women’s right to live free from violence, etc. This could also be interpreted as the compartmentalization of rights and faiths.

Furthermore, in the early stages of unlearning process the localizers deliberately refrain from introducing or reading word by word the texts of, for instance, the CEDAW, Istanbul Convention, or national laws, which are seen as

⁴⁹⁹ Interview with Meryem Kılıç, July 02, 2016, Antakya.

⁵⁰⁰ Interview with Meryem Kılıç, July 02, 2016, Antakya.

complex, confusing, alien, complicated, and inexplicable for the local women. They also do not expect local women to immediately change their lives. After all, in these initial steps of unlearning process the local women in myriad ways could be able to rediscover who they are and imagine what they further want for themselves and for their children. They gradually begin to get uncomfortable with the existing patriarchal codes of normal and appropriate that have been tailored to regulate their lives. This time it is their turn to ask 'why' questions. Hence, the empowerment activities on the one hand recuperate women's self-confidence, and on the other hand trigger a process of self-reflection and problem identification which open a space for new knowledge of women's rights.

In the third step, localizers act as converters to guide the empowerment and 'relearning' process of the local women. In their right-based consciousness/awareness raising activities such as drama workshops, role plays, watching feminist movies, reading and discussion sessions, the converters plant the seeds of feminist ideas, and international norms of gender equality and non-discrimination into the minds and daily practices of local women.

Crucially, relearning and simplification go hand in hand in the third step of the empowerment of women as right holders. Converters often resort to 'simplification' as a translation tactic. More clearly, in their interactive activities localizers translate for instance the meaning of gender, gender equality, and discrimination, they elaborate on patriarchy and how gender roles are socially constructed by men and imposed on women. They construct the linkage between VAW and patriarchy, gender based inequalities and discriminations. While doing these, converters pay attention to be as simple and clear as possible, use local plain language instead of formal legal language and utilize the shared experiences, familiar examples from the daily life. It seems that simplification is necessary to create cognitive resonance and the intersubjective understanding of the root causes of VAW and women's human rights ideas in combating VAW.

"If their substance are unknown, saying to women that they have rights make little value and use" says Aylin.⁵⁰¹ Hence, what follows is the introduction of the

⁵⁰¹ Interview with Aylin Yüksel, October 26, 2016, Antakya.

texts of universal rights and freedoms of women with their practical and immediate relevance in the daily life. In this stage, the women NGOs and the voluntary lawyers of Hatay Bar Association cooperate. They organize panels and seminars on women's human rights and national laws. These conveyers and converters promote the universal rights and freedoms of women as a new code of 'appropriate' and 'just' that could potentially redress their gendered grievances and transform centuries old gender based discriminations and inequalities in Antakya.

The following expressions of local women who have participated in various rights based activities, and who then became NGO volunteers offer a glimpse at how unlearning/relearning process as a tactic for preventing VAW translated into practice and have made a difference.

I really, indeed for the first time, thought that perhaps I would be the part of the problem. I was expecting my daughter to help me in the housework, but not from my son. I was interfering my daughter's clothes. I was not allowing her to spend time with her friends. But my son was free to do whatever he wants. Now, I know that it is not fair.⁵⁰²

He was beating me because the soup was too salty, because my baby got cold, because I visited my family or next door neighbor without his permission (sighing). My husband was beating me and I was beating my innocent children. Worse than that I was always thinking that it was all my fault.⁵⁰³

Before getting married, I was working. However, my husband did not allow me to work. Then I had two children and stucked at home. I was totally dependent on my husband and his family. Then, I started to attend the activities of Purple Solidarity. These were my only opportunity to do something outside home and to chill out. Soon I realized that I was not happy throughout the years. My comfort in dependency was a trap. I wanted to do something not for pleasing my husband or my children but for myself. I decided to work again and persuaded my husband.⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰² Interview with Informant 7 (women, housewife, 30 years old), October 25, 2016, Antakya.

⁵⁰³ Interview with Informant 8 (women, housewife, 65 years old), October 25, 2016, Antakya.

⁵⁰⁴ Interview with Informant 9 (women, designer in a mosaic workshop, 40 years old), October 25, 2016, Antakya.

One day my daughter resentfully asked me why her ID card is pink, the walls of her room is pink and why I always buy pink or red dresses despite the fact that she hates these colors. She was right. My 8 years old daughter taught me a lesson.⁵⁰⁵

I was thinking that I need a man for safety, protection, happiness. But, why? Depending on men for safety, for money, for a happy life curtailed my freedom, self-confidence and made me more vulnerable to the violence. I learnt to protect myself, I learnt to earn my money, I learnt to love myself. I started a new life in my 50s.⁵⁰⁶

My husband was working in Saudi Arabia and I was alone with my children. Here, if your husband is not here, everybody keep a watchful eye on you. They pressurize you to always stay at home. When you buy new clothes or go somewhere for fun they criticize you or charge with disloyalty. Now I realize that for all that years I was like a prisoner. Now, I don't mind them.⁵⁰⁷

7.4.2. Sisterhood Solidarity

Women's rights defenders think that the subordination of women and normalization-legitimization of violence are the constructs of patriarchal culture that prevails in Antakya. As oppose to this, they strive to create an alternative women culture under the name of 'sisterhood solidarity (*Kızkardeşlik Dayanışması*)'. Localizers develop this tactic in order to reinforce the economic, social, political empowerment of individual women through a new collective identity, and to mobilize diverse women groups around the common purpose of eliminating VAW.

If the devaluation and violence against women are assumed to be the constructs of patriarchal culture, as social constructionist perspective on gender also assume, then it is important to understand the reconstruction of local women culture through the sisterhood bonds and how women's human rights are translated into practice through this tactic.

⁵⁰⁵ Interview with Informant 10 (women, housewife, 35 years old), October 25, 2016, Antakya.

⁵⁰⁶ Interview with Informant 11 (women, waitress in a künefe restaurant, 53 years old), October 24, 2016, Antakya.

⁵⁰⁷ Interview with Informant 12 (women, wife of a migrant worker, housewife, 60 years old), October 24, 2016, Antakya.

Sisterhood solidarity, on the one hand, partially evokes women's relations with each other in the traditional patriarchal family, in which women have already had some survival strategies by supporting each other against men oppression and power hierarchies. For instance, a girl child or young girl can be in solidarity with her mother against the oppression of her father or brothers. With her mother's support, she can go to high school, university, spend time with her friends (albeit usually secretly), or escape to marry with someone she doesn't want. A bride can develop solidarity with her mother-in-law or someone from the family, and take the support of that family member in escaping from her husband's bad treatments or habits. A woman can share her grievances and oppression with other woman (i.e. her next door neighbor, her sister, her mother). This sharing would somehow relieve her mind as well as create a kind of mutual support and solidarity mechanism among the women with similar experiences. In a nutshell, traditional sisterhood ties provide a kind of shield to ease the challenges of individual woman under patriarchal system. Therefore, it is strategic to use the terms 'sister', 'sisterhood' in developing solidarity among local women as this terms resonate well with the cognitive priors/preconceptions and everyday survival strategies and lives of women in Antakya.

On the other hand, norm localizers are well aware that traditional notion of sisterhood in patriarchal and extended family structure does not intend to transform the existing power structures and gender roles or stereo-types. It also involves such repressive dynamics as the persistent interference of family members or neighbors into the women's and girls' lives, choices and freedoms. Therefore, the traditional notion of sisterhood is strategically modified or reconstructed, and framed to accommodate the rights and freedoms of women and girls. This presents a frame transformation process. In brief, building on a symbolic cultural resource, the 'sisterhood solidarity' promotes gender equality, non-discrimination, a life for women that is free from all forms of men violence and mobilize women to achieve this goal.

Another important dimension of sisterhood solidarity is that in establishing sisterhood bonds, human right activists do not imply the inherent biological similarities or uniformity of women in Antakya or in Turkey or in the world.

Activists emphasize the reality that women have varied socio-economic realities and for centuries women in this region have been divided along the covert lines of religion, ethnicity, class, age, marital status, ideology, nation-state borders that are all constructed by men. Some activists also draw attention to the fact that mistrust, comparison, gossip and prejudices have been prevalently shaping woman to woman relations in Antakya (i.e. mother-in-law- bride; sister-in-law-bride; among neighbors, among teenagers, Syrian women-Turkish women; young women-old women, educated-illiterate women).⁵⁰⁸ In contrast to the prevalent divisive and discriminatory dynamics that shape everyday life, they say “a woman is not wolf to other woman. A woman can only be the sister to other woman”. Notice that activists make a reference to famous Latin proverb “*Homo homini lupus*” meaning that a man is a wolf to other men. The use of the word sisterhood implies that women are bonded in solidarity despite their differences. Extension of sisterhood solidarity as a tactic serves to make diverse women mobilize and unite for the common cause of transforming/transcending all forms of men-made boundaries, inequalities, discriminations and wars.

Sisterhood bonds in practice first and foremost serve to strengthen and sustain the recuperation and unlearning processes of local women. Aylin explains that

We want to release our sisters from the prison of kitchens and walls of houses. We want to release our sisters from the legacy of the imposed gender roles that lead all forms of violence and discrimination. We foster neighborhood women’s empowerment, self-realization, consciousness, power and potentials, of their creative capacity to solve their own problems. We pursue a women’s way of learning from each other and helping each other in line with women’s human rights.⁵⁰⁹

In many respects, sisterhood intends to insert women’s rights consciousness and solidarity in women’s lives. For instance, the PSWA house and its beautiful garden provide a space for local women where they can freely gather, share experiences, discuss their problems, develop solidarity and spend their time by

⁵⁰⁸ Interview with Dilek Koşar, October 26, 2016, Antakya; Interview with Aylin Yüksel, October 26, 2016, Antakya.

⁵⁰⁹ Interview with Aylin Yüksel, October 26, 2016, Antakya.

collectively reading books, watching movies, listening music, drinking coffee, singing, and learning income generating handicrafts in sisterhood. Moreover, the PSWA volunteers frequently visit villages, neighborhoods, factories, workshops and organize what they call ‘Problems are here, Solutions are in our Solidarity (*Sorunlar Burada Çözüm Dayanışmada*)’ awareness raising and empowerment activities for women. Additionally, the PSWA and Campus Witches of Antakya organize picnics, breakfasts, coffee times, concerts, drama workshops, reading and movie watching sessions, vocational trainings, barter activities and summer camps for women and children. All these venues provide a space for social empowerment of women.

Sisterhood solidarity also opens new ways for the economic empowerment of women in order to ensure women’s equal access to resources and opportunities. Nurcan Zubaroğlu tells that

Once a woman realize that her labor has been exploited by her family and it is a form of violence, she begins to seek ways to change this. However, as she is lack of resources, education and economic independence, she generally feels trapped. Moreover, the more she raises against traditional gender roles, the more she faces the opposition (even ridicule) of family members, and her motherhood and womanhood are put under the scope.⁵¹⁰

Similar to norm localizers in Trabzon, the localizers in Antakya step in to develop solidarity with the disadvantaged women. For instance, the YWSSSA has been implementing right based development projects by receiving funding from the national and international donors (e.g. the Sabancı Foundation, European Union, and German Embassy) and developing cooperation with municipalities. In one of their projects between July 2012 and July 2013, the YWSSSA volunteers reached local women (mostly housewives and rural women with low level of education and economic independence) and gave them trainings in such subjects as leadership and organization, financial literacy, agricultural production, wild harvesting, climate change and agriculture, organic farming, supports and entrepreneurship.⁵¹¹ The

⁵¹⁰ Interview with Nurcan Zubaroğlu, July 2, 2016, Yeşilpınar, Antakya.

⁵¹¹ This project was funded by the Sabancı Foundation. The YWSSSA developed partnership with the Foundation for the Support of Women’s Work (KEDV) and Besni Social Support and Solidarity Cooperative for Active Women (Adıyaman).

immediate results of the project were impressive: a production and training workshop called *Defnesu* was established by the local women and these women processed some 15 tons of organic fruits, crops and plants. They took the patent of brand called *Defnesu*, and women's products were packaged and sold under this brand.⁵¹²

The PSWA also follows a similar path for the economic empowerment of neighborhood women. They organize free of charge vocational trainings, whereby volunteer instructors teach women the techniques of mosaic art and handicraft. As explained by the qualified instructor Elif Kocaoğlu Kültekin, they have long tried to establish a women cooperative. However, due to bureaucratic barriers (i.e. legal procedures for establishing and running a cooperative, insufficient support and micro-credits to women entrepreneurs), they backed down from this idea. In 2017, those women who have successfully completed vocational trainings took the initiative to establish a workshop and hired a shop in the city-center. Just like those Trabzon women, they began to sell their products without any need and help from (men) intermediaries.⁵¹³

Norm localizers, particularly those who have been active members of labor unions and labor movement in Antakya, have been striving to transform the internalized gender roles of working women. As reported by Meryem Kılıç, women members of unions who have consciousness about labor rights would not have the same level of consciousness when the issue comes to gender, gender equality, and the root causes of VAW. She noted:

We identified that working women have been under the heavy burden of traditional gender roles of child and elderly caring, house cleaning, which were preventing women from taking higher positions or a career in the work and in politics. In addition to that working women –despite their higher level of education- have been subjected to various forms of violence. For instance, some of them have had no authority over their income and they were thinking that it is normal to give all their salary to their husbands and then to receive allowance from them. Worse than that some of them have been subjected to

⁵¹² Interview with Nurcan Zubaroğlu, July 2, 2016, Yeşilpınar, Antakya.

⁵¹³ Interview with Elif Kocaoğlu Kültekin, December 20, 2016, Antakya.

physical violence and trying to hide it. However, women need to have self-determination to use the value of their labor and have awareness of gender equality and rights⁵¹⁴

Succeeding to establish the women commissions in trade and labor unions (e.g. Education and Science Workers' Union, Health Workers' Union), women's human rights defenders try to unionize larger number of working women as right holders. These women commissions, as part of local women's movement in Antakya, publish informative booklets, brochures, and since the 1990s have been giving trainings to their women members on the rights of women, on gender equality in workplaces and private realms of life, and VAW.

The sisterhood solidarity has been also extended to empower LGBT individuals in Antakya. The women's movement integrated the *Kaws Kuzah* (means rainbow in Arabic) LGBTI community into their grassroots activism and advocacy as part of their holistic and transformative approach in eliminating all forms of discriminations.

Sisterhood solidarity also serves to mobilize the local women to take initiative for their lives and to defend their rights. For instance, given the contextual factors, the war next door became a crucial concern of the Antakya women and activists in Antakya. Meryem Kılıç tells that the sectarian war in Syria and its repercussions in Antakya have turned into the primary issue of the daily life and conversations. As Antakya women have relatives in Syria (some of them were wounded, harassed, or murdered), they were anxious about their conditions and lives. "Then we noticed that we, as women, should take initiative, and in the first place we need to work for peace in solidarity. In the absence of peace, our endeavours to diffuse women's rights would be meaningless", says Kılıç.⁵¹⁵

Noticing the effects of war on women's lives, the women's human rights movement in Antakya openly declares its anti-war position. 'Sisterhood solidarity for peace' is used as an antidote of the negative repercussions of the ethno-religious conflicts and wars in the middle-east region. Antakya Women Solidarity Platform

⁵¹⁴ Interview with Meryem Kılıç, July 02, 2016, Antakya.

⁵¹⁵ Interview with Meryem Kılıç, July 02, 2016, Antakya.

and Yeşilpınar women in particular organized sit-ins and protests against wars in the region. The local activists have played an intermediary role in connecting Antakya women with the Syrian women, Ezidi Women, Kurdish women- all women from the conflict zones in the Middle-East.

Another example is the local activists' efforts to integrate the voices of Syrian women into the 8 March Women's Day and 25 December Day activities in Antakya. In 2016, the local activists reached the Syrian Women who live in the refugee camps and isolated suburbs of Antakya. Under the slogan of "Even if the war sets us apart from our lands, women can still meet and develop solidarity", they jointly organized bi-lingual awareness raising and solidarity festival including panels on Syrian women's rights under temporary protection, theatre plays with VAW theme and concerts. In 2017, from 25 November to 10 December, the Antakya Women Solidarity Platform and the Syrian women jointly organized the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence Campaign in Antakya.

Another dimension of the sisterhood solidarity is the mobilization of local women for ensuring legal protection and justice in cases of VAW. To this end, for instance, the lawyers from Hatay Bar Association Women Commission and NGO representatives have been joining the court cases to defend the rights of the local women who have been subjected to various forms of violence. They jointly have been participating and following the femicide cases to prevent penalty reductions to the perpetrators and to develop solidarity with the families of the murdered women in Antakya. In addition to their involvement in the legal processes next to their sisters, local activists attempt to shape public opinion by drawing attention to severity of VAW in Antakya.

All in all, sisterhood solidarity is not only an empowerment tactic but also a form of collective action and mobilization tactic pursued by the women's movement and organizations in translating women's human rights into practice.

7.4.3. Self-Defense of Women

Women's human rights defenders in Antakya, particularly the Campus Witches and Purple Solidarity, ardently support the view that in Antakya as well as

in Turkey self-defense of women is righteous and legitimate. Self-defense is seen as a path to empower women (i.e. physically, mentally/psychologically and socially) so as to prevent violence and protect women from various types of right infringements in the absence of effective state or community intervention. Kader from the PSWA clarifies why they promote the self-defense of women with these words:

Every day at least one women is killed in Turkey by their (ex) husbands, (ex) partners, male family members and too often law enforcement officers (police, gendarmerie, prosecutors, social workers, etc.) fail to protect these women despite the fact that they are legally required to protect women under risk. At least one third of women have been subjected to life time physical violence. Worse than that law enforcement officers or courts usually expect women to prove their exposure to men violence. While it is very common for perpetrators to get impunity or remission due to their repentance or good behavior like wearing a tie, the survivors of violence such as Nevin (Yıldırım), Yasemin (Kaymaklı), Çilem (Doğan), who killed perpetrators before being killed, were sentenced to heavy imprisonment for life. We almost lost our hope from the state that glorifies the preservation of family and masculinity instead of protecting woman and ensuring her rights.⁵¹⁶

Kader then asks, “How can a woman defend or protect herself before being killed, wounded, raped or harassed? Sometimes self-defense may be the only way for a woman to survive or to show men and wider society that gender based discriminations, inequality and violence will not be tolerated”.⁵¹⁷

Drawing attention to the Özgecan Aslan case (20-years old university student from Tarsus, Mersin who was brutally murdered in a minibus on her way to home from the university in February 2015) Eylem from the Campus Witches adds that

This could happen to me, to you, to our friends, any of us. The streets are not safe and insufficiently lighted at night. We don’t have shuttle from the university campus to our dormitories, or from the city. The administrative and security personal of the university and dormitories dedicated themselves to control our lives and protect our honor rather than ensuring our safety and rights. Society and university administration push me to sacrifice my freedoms

⁵¹⁶ Interview with Kader Koşar, October 25, 2016, Antakya.

⁵¹⁷ Interview with Kader Koşar, October 25, 2016, Antakya.

in order to prevent violence. Yet I want both my safety and my freedoms, my autonomy. Therefore, I learnt self-defense.⁵¹⁸

In explaining their interpretation of self-defense, Gülsüm from the Campus Witches complains that “due to the distortion and exaggeration of the self-defense practices of the Campus Witches in Ankara University (Ankara) and Akdeniz University (Antalya) that appeared on media, self-defense has been associated with men beating or retaliating violence with violence. Therefore, for some people self-defense sounds somewhat extreme or contrary to right based approach in combating violence against women”.⁵¹⁹

Notwithstanding the widely circulating misinformation in the media, Gülsüm explains that “self-defense does not necessarily mean that women will bear arms or will beat the perpetrators. Our problem is not men in general. Rather we fight with the patriarchal mentality and its concrete manifestations in everyday life that legitimize/normalize various forms of men violence against women”.⁵²⁰

In essence, self-defense is framed as an indispensable part of women’s rights, particularly women’s right to life and right to protect themselves from men violence in cases where laws and state do not protect them. In this line, the first step of self-defense builds on the empowerment of women through the trainings and awareness raising activities. The self-defense classes are offered only to women and its place as well as its substance are usually all kept secret from men. In these trainings, young women learn to use their voice and body language, various techniques to escape from violence and protect themselves from violence (including rape, harassment, and mobbing, stalking, physical or psychological injuries), they discover their inner strength, gain courage and self-confidence. These trainings and awareness raising activities also strengthen sisterhood bonds and social networks – a collective space- which enhance the feeling in the individual woman that ‘she is not alone’ in resisting patriarchal culture and incidents of violence.

⁵¹⁸ Interview with Eylem Yağcıbulut, October 25, 2016, Antakya.

⁵¹⁹ Interview with Gülsüm Tonaydın, October 25, 2016, Antakya.

⁵²⁰ Interview with Gülsüm Tonaydın, October 25, 2016, Antakya.

7.4.4. Alliance Building with pro-Human Rights Groups

Given their scant material and human resources in cultivating and sustaining social change and in affecting the policies of public authorities for the proper implementation, the norm localizers feel the necessity to build alliances at local and national levels.

In terms of alliance building quests at local level, the women's human rights activists try to bring close together the pro-human rights groups and individuals (man, woman and LGBT individuals) from all walks of life in Antakya. Targeting the potential egalitarian bystanders including journalists, artists, trade unionists, lawyers, doctors, teachers, politicians, relatives of victims and other human rights NGOs, the LGBT community, socialist-leftist groups, environmentalists in Antakya, norm brokers aim to expand advocacy and the formation of local solidarity networks in struggling with VAW.

The women's human rights brokers carefully tailor the formation of local alliances, whereby they take the initiative and remain at the core of organizing. They give direction to individuals and local groups by determining the common principles and goals in struggling with VAW. Adherence to peace, democracy and (women's) human rights are key in the formation of alliances between women's human rights defenders and potential allies. These common positions keep groups united and extend the frame of women's human rights to cover all oppressed, disadvantaged or discriminated groups.

The establishment of the Antakya Women Solidarity Platform in 2015 can be regarded as the direct consequence of the alliance building endeavor. As of 2018, the Women Solidarity Platform of Antakya covers the women's human rights NGOs, Hatay Bar Association Women Commission, as well as the women from the Human Rights Association Antakya Branch, the Health and Social Service Workers Union Antakya Branch, Anatolian Cultural and Research Association (*AKA-DER*) Antakya Branch, Halkevci Women, and the Kaws Kuzah LGBT community and individual activists. Particularly for the preparation processes of the 8 March Women's Day, 25 December International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1 May International Workers' Day, the Platform members work

together to mobilize local resources and organize joint activities. Moreover, pro-human rights groups pour their financial and human sources to provide support to women and their children who have been subjected to violence.

The Platform members also developed internal communication mechanism, which enable them to promptly unite to in the face of oppressive state policies, legislation attempts of bills that infringes women's rights and right infringements at local level.

The Municipalities, particularly those governed by the mayors from the Republican Peoples Party (i.e. Hatay Metropolitan Municipality, Arsuz, Samandağ, Defne, Antakya, Yeşilpınar Municipalities) also seen as the potential allies to promote gender equality and non-discrimination in the local context. Once persuaded, these municipalities with their wider resources could be able to establish women shelters, counseling centers for women and to develop women friendly policies in budgeting and decision making mechanisms. For instance, the YWSSSA in their project 'Flower- Fostering Local Opportunities for Women's Effective Participation' aimed to strengthen the sustainable and participatory democracy mechanisms and to increase the women's participation in the decision making processes in Antakya.⁵²¹ To this end, the YWSSSA members identified the problems in Antakya and organized local media campaigns and seminars, prepared training kits for participatory decision making. Importantly, the YWSSSA activists targeted Hatay Metropolitan Municipality, Samandağ Municipality, Arsuz Municipality and İskenderun Municipality for advocacy and lobbying. Consequently, their visits and dialogues with the municipalities brought results and they signed protocols establishing shared rules to integrate women into the decision making processes and the violence prevention mechanisms. Municipalities are encouraged and lobbied to open counseling centers and shelters for the women who experienced violence.

In expanding and strengthening the local alliances, the PSWA volunteers also formulated a locally resonant approach and initiated 'bundle is the pretext, conversation is marvelous (*bohça bahane, sohbet şahane*)' visits to pro-human

⁵²¹ 'Flower- Fostering Local Opportunities for Women's Effective Participation' project was implemented in Hatay and Rome between 2014 and 2016 in partnership with the Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini (Italy). This project is co-financed by the European Union and Turkey within the scope of Civil Society Dialogue 3 (TR2010/0135.01-01/056).

rights egalitarian stakeholders. “When paying someone a visit, bringing a gift is a custom here. We therefore prepared a bundle (*bohça*) and filled it with symbolic gifts” says Nurhan from the PSWA.⁵²² Each *bohça* is filled with such meaningful gifts and a note attached on it. For instance, a soap with a note ‘a soap made by feminists, it perfectly washes oppressive masculinity’; a menstrual pad with a note ‘we are not ill or dirty, we are in our natural menstruation period’; a mirror with a note ‘look and smile. You are very beautiful’, a letter and the newsletter of PSWA and Campus Witches. In these visits, local activists build personal relationships and learn each other better, which are of course crucial for sustaining cooperation in combating gender based discriminations and VAW in Antakya.

Alliance building is not solely confined to local alliances. Women’s human rights defenders in Antakya also involved in national networks in their advocacy for women’s rights and combatting VAW. These networks are Women Coalition and We will Stop Femicide Platform. Moreover, since 2015 PSWA members participate in the General Assembly of Women’s Shelters and Solidarity/Counseling Centers, whereby they build rapport and share their experiences with other women’s human rights NGOs. Last but not least, the YWSSSA became a member of the European Women’s Lobby.

7.4.5. Naming and Shaming Norm Violators

Naming and shaming is one of the most conventional tactics that human rights defenders all around the world resort as an advocacy tactic. Placing women as right holders and identifying the state and local public authorities as duty bearers, the localizers in Antakya (just like in Trabzon) identify problems, raise their voices through naming and shaming and engage in advocacy for change.

The tactic of ‘naming and shaming’ rests on the preliminary work and daily experiences, observations and interventions of the norm localizers. As they constantly interact with the local women and wider society, the localizers are in a better position to gather reliable public information about the gaps, challenges, needs and right infringements. They could effectively identify the discriminations

⁵²² Interview with Nurhan Nur, Antakya, 27 October 2016.

and inequalities that the local women experience because they are women. The women's human rights defenders in Antakya also monitor and identify the public authorities' shortcomings, norm violating behaviors and misconducts in implementing women's human rights. As contended by Aylin from the Purple Solidarity "the national and local public authorities should not and cannot hide behind the excuse that they did not know about women's rights, right infringements and gender based violence that dominate the daily lives of local women".⁵²³

In naming, norm intermediaries frame the women's realities including various forms of violence as human rights violations. Since the 1990s, the women's human rights defenders in Antakya have been using the 8 March Women Day, 25 December International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1 May Workers day as an opportunity to publicly shame the local public authorities for their shortcomings and misconducts in preventing VAW and in implementing national and international laws and mechanisms in Antakya. Meral Asfuroğlu summarizes their longstanding discontents as follows:

There is no state-led initiative or mechanism to prevent violence and to raise right-based awareness on that issue. Despite Turkey's obligations under the CEDAW or the women's rights under Turkish constitution, penal code and civil code, the local women continue to be discriminated and oppressed under patriarchal system. Additionally, despite the clear indications of the Law no 6284 and Istanbul Convention, mediation efforts, blaming and making light of violence despite the statement of women, maltreatment in the police offices (*karakol*), bureaucratization of the process, insufficient capacity of women shelter could well be added to the list of challenges. Connected with these challenges, local women mostly hesitate to apply state institutions when they face various forms of violence both in public and private sphere of their lives.⁵²⁴

What is noteworthy from the point of this study is that activists try to maintain their persuasive dialogue building efforts up to its limits. However, in the face of persistent right violations and implementation gaps, the norm localizers switch to the public exposure and deterrence tactic of 'naming and shaming', which works as a megaphone to build up pressure over the authorities from below. Thus, naming and shaming is by definition public. Publicly naming and shaming

⁵²³ Interview with Aylin Yüksel, October 26, 2016, Antakya.

⁵²⁴ Interview with Meral Asfuroğlu, July 05, 2016, Antakya.

‘wrongdoers’, the localizers seek to increase the costs of right violations or implementation flaws and compel authorities to take action in protecting women and prosecuting perpetrators. Interviewees emphasize the importance of pre-established alliances for collective action and the social media for grass-root mobilization.

Alternatively, the naming and shaming tactic can be directed against the perpetrators of VAW in cases of impunity. For instance, the Campus Witches encourage women to stand up, develop solidarity and mobilize them to take matters in their own hands. It brings to the fore such non-violent ‘naming and shaming’ actions against perpetrators of violence including dissuasion and early warning of men to change his attitudes, then labelling and public exposure. In terms of their naming and shaming experiences, activists note that self-defense or more clearly unexpected and joint reactions of women stupefy and horrify the perpetrators. In exposing perpetrators of violence, activists sometimes hang a banner, put up posters on the walls of university or deliver letters throughout the university campus, or alternatively use social media platforms.

7.5. Summary: Localizing Women’s Human Rights Norms in Antakya

This chapter explored the processes and dynamics of norm localization in Antakya. While Antakya is generally associated with its multiculturalism and civil society activism for democracy and human rights, the gender based discriminations and VAW in private sphere have been part of daily life. In the late 1980s, some local women who had been mostly the members of socialist/leftist political parties and organizations began to raise their criticisms to the existing patriarchal structures, and strived to redress women’s oppression and challenges including the VAW. These local actors have intentionally chose to uphold and appropriate the feminist ideas and women’s human rights norms in combating VAW. The findings revealed that the constituents of the local women movement including the women’s human rights NGOs, the Hatay Bar Association’s Women Commission, the members of Antakya Women Platform and Antakya Women Solidarity Platform as well as individual feminist activists have been the pioneering, key and active agents of norm localization in combating VAW in Antakya.

The localization of women's human rights norms in combating VAW in Antakya has proceeded in stages. The first stage of the norm localization process has begun in the 1980s with the appropriation of feminist ideas. It is noteworthy that the translation of globally circulating feminist and socialist literature into Turkish provided an important appropriation channel for the local women, which enabled the women's human rights norms to travel and diffuse into Antakya. The local activists discussed these feminist books, articles, films, documentaries, magazines in their reading groups and interpreted these texts, which immensely shaped their learning and socialization processes. The local women activists also connected with the women's movement in Turkey through the feminist Amargi Women Cooperative. The establishment of Hatay Bar Association's Women Commission in the early 2000s also enhanced the norm appropriation process. The lawyers of the Women Commission with their legal expertise and knowledge provided another norm appropriation channel in Antakya. The more recent norm appropriation channel is the social media and internet, which intensified the connections between the global, national and the local in the diffusion of women's human rights norms, standards and the practices.

The in-depth exploration of the norm localization process in Antakya revealed that the Syrian civil war since the 2011 has immensely influenced the pace and magnitude of the localization of women's human rights norms. In other words, as a border city, the civil war in Syria and its repercussions in Antakya (i.e. demographic change, economic collapse, Syrian refugees, and child brides, etc.) increased the level of VAW and made the women's suffering and subordination more and more visible. The lack of effective state-led policies and mechanisms has triggered the grassroots mobilization of local women in combating VAW. Moreover, amid the spillover effects of Syrian war, in 2013 the Antakya people joined the Gezi Park protests in Turkey to express their discontent with the destabilizing effects of the Syrian influx and the human rights violations. This dynamism in the local context also opened a new opportunity structure for the women's human rights defenders for diffusing and advancing women's human rights norms.

Similar to the norm localizers in Trabzon, the localizers in Antakya have not been passive norm takers. Taking into account the local dynamics, their resources and constraints, the norm localizers have performed creative and active agency in diffusing the women's human rights norms. In terms of the realities of local women and their experiences in combating VAW, they have reconstructed the women's human rights norm at the local level. Looking more closely, in the second stage of localization process, the norm entrepreneurs have strived to translate the gender equality and non-discrimination into the practice. To this end, they first and primarily targeted to reach and empower the disadvantaged local women and the Syrian women. In addition to their grassroots activism, they engaged in advocacy and targeted the local public authorities in order to ensure the proper and effective implementation of the prevention, protection and prosecution mechanisms in combating VAW. Secondly, the localizers have developed a bunch of translation tactics in order to render the abstract international norms more resonant, understandable and usable by the local women and to ensure the effective norm implementation by the local public authorities and service providers. The translation tactics, which are tailored to enhance the awareness, comprehension and empowerment of local women include the 'unlearning and relearning', 'diagnostic questioning', 'recuperation', 'simplification', 'decoupling rights and religion', 'self-defense' and 'sisterhood solidarity'. The localizers also develop advocacy tactics targeting the duty holders in combating VAW in Antakya. In this regard, the localizers have been conventionally resorted to the 'naming and shaming of implementation flaws, right violations and violators'. Moreover, in multiplying their resources and advocacy, they established alliances with the pro-human rights groups at the local and national levels.

All in all, the international norms and standards as well as the feminist ideas have begun to diffuse into Antakya in the 1980s. The local norm entrepreneurs have connected the global, national and local through their norm appropriation and translation processes. These local norm intermediaries creatively translated the international norms into local context and practice by tailoring locally resonant tactics. Consequently, the process of norm localization in Antakya enhanced the

norm diffusion at the grass-roots level and facilitated the norm implementation by the duty holders.



CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the processes and dynamics of the localization of women's human rights norms in two local settings (i.e. Trabzon and Antakya provinces) in the Turkish national context. In analyzing the norm localization dynamics and processes it is questioned that how international norms are interpreted and translated into practice in distinct local contexts? To ask differently, how international norms are localized and what are the processes and dynamics of norm localization?

This final chapter provides the summary of the key findings of the current study, discusses the theoretical and practical implications of the findings and finally provides a brief discussion on how to extent this study in future research.

8.1. Findings and Arguments

To summarize the main research findings, this study claims that for successful norm diffusion, international norms must resonate at the local/grassroots level. As a result, the local norm entrepreneurs play a major role in norm diffusion processes because these actors are the key players who connect the global and national with the local and so enhance norm resonance and practice in a particular local setting. Norm entrepreneurs at the local level play a key role in norm localization simply because they are not only internationally and nationally connected, but also locally embedded. Otherwise stated, they are Janus-faced actors in the sense that they have two faces; one looking to local socio-cultural world, another to national and international worlds. This suggests that norm localizers

might simultaneously and effectively operate at multiple levels with multiple actors. From this perspective, the key dimension of norm localization in Trabzon and Antakya contexts is the active, creative and performative agency of local norm entrepreneurs, who translate international norms into a particular local context and practice. Then, who are these key actors or agents of norm localization in Trabzon and Antakya?

The pioneering and active agent of norm localization in Trabzon and Antakya has been the local women's movement, composed of the women's human rights NGOs, Bar Association's Women Commissions, women platforms, individual activists, and feminists. The local public authorities as duty bearers in combating VAW might be regarded as 'late-comers' and 'passive' agents of norm localization or 'passive' norm implementers. To put it more clearly, in both localities the tangible initiatives taken by the local public authorities correspond to the adoption of the Law No.6284 in Turkey in 2012. In a top-down way, Trabzon and Antakya were determined by the government as the sites of the implementation of this new law, which necessitated and triggered the institution and capacity building efforts (e.g. training of staff in relevant local public bodies to provide services to the victims of VAW, and the establishment of women shelter and ŞÖNİM, establishment of family courts, etc.). The empirical findings reveal that the institutionalization of state-led policies and mechanisms at the local level add a new dynamic and have accelerated the norm localization process and women's human rights advocacy in Trabzon and in Antakya. However, given some implementation flaws and certain shortcomings or the reluctance of local public bodies to develop holistic approach for preventing VAW and eliminating the structural causes of VAW, arguably it is too early to talk about their 'active' agency in diffusing international norms in Trabzon and Antakya cases.

The in-depth analyses of Trabzon and Antakya cases further reveal that the local norm entrepreneurs have a dual agency role in norm diffusion processes. They first appropriate international norms (i.e. voluntarily embrace and learn), and then interpret and translate them into practice in a particular local context. Thus, they are both the objects and subjects of norm diffusion.

Norm appropriation constitutes the first stage of norm localization. Findings show that at this stage the local activists engage in connection building, learning, comprehension, interpretation and meaning construction, and they mostly interact with national and global actors. Thus, norm appropriation processes in Trabzon and Antakya involve the socialization of local activists themselves into international norms. At this stage, they become the *objects* of norm diffusion.

As regards to the appropriation process or norm localizers' socialization into international norms, the interviews with norm localizers in Trabzon and Antakya reveal that despite their limited access to the international/regional platforms and bodies (i.e. the UN, Council of Europe, EU, European Court of Justice, UN CEDAW Committee, SPVAW, summits and world conferences on women, etc.) as well as TANS, the norm localizers in Trabzon and Antakya have actively sought out the norm appropriation opportunities. The local norm brokers have appropriated women's human rights ideas and norms through various channels at the local, national and global levels.

One prominent channel of norm appropriation at the local level has been the lawyers, feminist artists/intellectuals, who had lived and/or studied in the metropole cities in Turkey (e.g. Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir), then returned homeland (i.e. Trabzon and Antakya), and conveyed their knowledge and experience to the fellows. In other words, those lawyers and feminists in Trabzon and Antakya have played an important intermediary role in connecting the national and local, and became an important relational channel for norm diffusion.

In addition to intra-movement knowledge and experience sharing at the local level, the second prominent appropriation channel has been the globally and nationally circulating feminist books, articles, films as well as the texts of international and national legal instruments (e.g. CEDAW, Istanbul Convention, DEVAW, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Turkish Constitution, Turkish Civil and Penal Code, Law No.6284, etc.). The growing use of the social media, communication technologies and internet have also facilitated and made easier to access and appropriate the ideas, collective action repertoires and developments at national and global levels. Norm localizers, individually and collectively (e.g. in reading groups, panels, seminars) read these texts, comprehend

and interpret the meanings, and discuss the relevance in terms of their experiences in combating VAW at the local level.

The third prominent appropriation channel has been the national networks, platforms and the wider women's movement in Turkey. Interviews reveal that over time, the norm localizers in Trabzon and Antakya have built stronger ties and connections with the women NGOs in other provinces of Turkey and such national networks/platforms as the Women Coalition-Turkey, Women's Labour and Employment Initiative Platform, We will Stop Femicide Platform, the General Assembly of Women's Shelters and Solidarity/Counseling Centers, etc. As being part of these networks and platforms, they were also invited to and participated in conferences, meetings, trainings, seminars, projects on VAW and women's human rights that were mostly funded by the UN, EU and other national/international donors. In these awareness raising activities, the local women activists have increased their knowledge, asked specific questions to experts, get up-to-date information about global and national developments (i.e. Law No 6284, Istanbul Convention, GREVIO process of Istanbul Convention, UN Resolutions and Reports on women's rights, etc.). Secondly, during the coffee breaks, lunches or dinners, local activists develop personal ties and connections with activists from other localities with similar objectives and interests. This informal channel is generally used for experience sharing, learning from each other and for future cooperation.

Last but not least, as in the instance of UN's Women Friendly Cities program in Trabzon, a new channel directly linking the global and local might emerge, and immensely influence and facilitate the local actors' socialization into international norms and ideas. For a specific and pre-determined period of time between 2006 and 2010, the UN project team in cooperation with the national level norm promoters of KA.DER and Sabancı Foundation had played an intermediary role in diffusing women's human rights norms and standards in Trabzon. Interviews reveal that such activities as the trainings of trainers, seminars, meetings have substantially shaped the prognostic and diagnostic framings of local agency and also empowered the local agency through material (e.g. access to funding) and non-material means.

The second stage of norm localization process is norm translation. Norm translation is about the socialization of local target groups into international norms.

At this stage, as promoters of international norms, local norm entrepreneurs become the *subjects* of norm diffusion.

To begin with the target groups as the objects of norm localization, the findings show that norm localizers in both localities have primarily strived to reach and transform two types of local target groups: the local women, and the local public authorities and agencies. The selection of these two groups is strategic in the sense that local women are identified as right bearers and the local public bodies as duty bearers.

As emphasized above, norm localizers in Trabzon and Antakya are by no means passive norm receivers. They perform creative and active agency by taking into account the cognitive/cultural priors, local dynamics, target groups, their material and ideational resources. Otherwise stated, localizers are aware of the local structural constraints as well as resources including existing state-based mechanisms, social justice ideologies, potential bystanders and potential resisters, ethnic and religious identities, native languages, symbols, songs, customs, traditions, gender roles, codes of daily life. Moreover, localizers are reflexive to the emergent legal, political and/or discursive opportunity structures that might influence their resources in translating international norms into practice. For instance, in Trabzon the legislation of new laws in Turkey (e.g. gender equality reforms in the Penal Code, Civil Code, Constitution in the early 2000s and the adoption of Law No. 6284 on VAW in 2012), Turkey's international commitments for elimination VAW, and the Women Friendly Cities Program have provided legal and discursive opportunities to norm localizers. The environmental degradation and so called Natasha process were also processed by norm localizers to advance their cause. In Antakya, the local activists utilized the democratization process in Turkey (particularly the democratization process in the aftermath of the 1980 military regime and the EU accession process in the early 2000s) and the adoption of new laws on women and VAW as discursive and political opportunity structures. Moreover, Syrian Civil War across the borders and the Gezi Park protests in Antakya added a new dynamic and have created a benchmark effect for the grassroots mobilization of women.

Findings further show that norm localization is not an automatic or smooth process, but a highly complex dialogue and congruence/resonance building process, involving tensions and contestations. Therefore, in translating women's human rights into local context and practice, localizers have developed particular translation tactics, which present the performance or practice of international norms in lived experience.

As regards to the translation tactics in Trabzon, the norm localizers have promoted the recuperation of women and womanhood to enhance their self-esteem, promoted the political, social and economic empowerment of local women as right holders. To build resonance and to ease comprehension at local level, they used simplification, and also utilized the local cultural symbols and dialect. Importantly, as religion is an inseparable part of daily life in Trabzon, in conveying their messages the localizers tried to decouple religion and harmful traditional practices against women, and then grafted gender equality and feminism. They also have developed advocacy tactics to ensure the proper implementation of international norms and standards at local level. Their advocacy tactics include the rhetorical entrapment of duty holders and publicly naming and shaming norm violating behaviors.

In the Antakya case, norm localizers have developed particular awareness raising, empowerment and mobilization tactics targeting local women. For instance, they triggered the unlearning and relearning processes of local women through dialogue building, questioning, recovery of women's self-esteem, simplification and awareness raising on their rights and empowerment. They promoted sisterhood solidarity and self-defense of women. To make women's human rights norms of non-discrimination and gender equality more resonant and comprehensible, they simplified the core concepts, use the local dialect, and give examples from daily life. Importantly, adopting a truly secular approach, they treat religion as a matter of faith and as such they decoupled women's human rights and religion. Norm localizers in Antakya have also engaged in advocacy tactics. For instance, they built alliances at local and national levels to enhance and multiply their resources. They also engaged in naming and shaming of norm violating behaviors of local men and duty bearers

so as to ensure proper implementation of norms and local mechanisms in combating VAW.

Finally, this study reveals some similarities in terms of the profiles of norm localizers, in their norm appropriation channels, in their resources and allies, in their target groups and norm translation tactics. These similarities should not be surprising for several reasons. First, since these localizers follow human rights based approach in combating VAW (e.g. gender equality, non-discrimination, the necessity of women's empowerment, effective norm implementation by the duty holders, and the elimination of root causes of VAW etc.), they are likely to develop and share similar diagnostic and prognostic framings, target similar groups and utilize similar strategies and tactics. In other words, they share more or less the same ideational and normative framework and so approach the women issue from a similar perspective. Also, since they have creative and active agency, localizers can and do learn from global and national actors and from other localizers in Turkey in other localities. Social media and internet in particular facilitate the local norm entrepreneurs' learning and inspiration. In other words, local activists and norm promoters do have ability for interactive learning and emulation.

There are substantial differences across these two cases of norm localization as well. It is simply because those local norm entrepreneurs are embedded in different social, cultural and political environments in their respective localities. In other words, the local social and political environment, in which local activists operate, condition their social and cultural resources, target groups and strategies and tactics. For instance, in Antakya, woman activists got easily mobilized during the post-1980 military coup period and Gezi protests in Turkey and promoted their own women agenda. However, that was not the case in Trabzon. Such differences are due to the different socio-cultural features of those two localities. In Antakya, we see a stronger culture of protest and opposition but not to the same degree in Trabzon. Another quite striking difference is related to the nexus between religion and gender equality. In Trabzon, norm localizers attempted to reinterpret or reframe Islam to deliver the message that Islam (indeed) defends women rights. In Antakya case, however, norm localizers tried to separate the earthly issues of gender equality from the private faith issues. In other words, we see compartmentalization in

Antakya case but frame bridging in Trabzon case with respect to the nexus between religion and gender equality. This difference is due to relatively stronger multiculturalism, inter-religious tolerance and secularism in Antakya. All these suggest that broader social and political structures at local level do shape actions and strategies of norm localizers. In other words, as local agents try to transform local normative understandings with global norms, their particular tactics and actions are influenced by the local structural factors. Otherwise stated, local agents does not really operate in a vacuum. If norm localizers vary in their interpretations, ‘meaning work’ and translation tactics, this is because localizers must work within the particular structures of their own localities. That is that, their social positions and ideological backgrounds differ, the forms of VAW that the local women experience differ, their potential allies and resisters differ, their resources, opportunities and challenges differ, etc.

In brief, the in-depth analyses of Trabzon and Antakya cases indicate that *the local does matter* in terms of norm diffusion. The literature on norms and norm diffusion in IR discipline tend to underestimate the significance of local actors, dynamics and processes in terms of norm diffusion. These two cases, however, clearly indicate that the efforts of local norm entrepreneurs play a vital role in the diffusion of international norms and ideas, even as equally important as global and national actors’ efforts.

8.2. Theoretical Implications

Regarding the theoretical implications, this study has several ramifications for the research on norms and norm diffusion dynamics and processes in IR discipline.

First of all, the analysis of the localization of women’s human rights norms in two sub-national or local settings in Turkey implies that norm resonance is indeed quite vital for successful norm diffusion and implementation. This begs the question of “what factors might facilitate, promote or impede norm resonance?” Answering this vital question requires paying greater attention to the local dynamics, processes and actors. Thus, this suggests that norm diffusion literature in IR discipline should

have greater room for local structures, dynamics, processes and agency. Such an extension requires adopting a triadic (threefold) perspective to norm diffusion rather than a dyadic (twofold) approach. Unfortunately, most of the existing studies on norms and norm diffusion have remained dyadic in the sense that they focus on the interactions between the global/international and the national. However, dyadic perspectives are limited because they ignore or neglect actors, dynamics and processes at local level. This study shows that localization is an inseparable part of norm diffusion. If norm emergence is the starting point, the norm localization on the ground is the end point of norm diffusion. Therefore, for a better understanding of norm diffusion, we have to take into account the local level as well. Adopting such a triadic approach (i.e. giving due attention to the global, national and local) would help us to provide better answers for the fundamental and challenging questions about norm diffusion such as when and under what conditions a particular international norm is more likely to get internalized and embraced widely?

What would be the main features of a triadic approach to norm diffusion? This particular study suggests that a triadic approach should acknowledge that there is a constant and mutual interaction among the global/international, national and local. Also, it must be acknowledged that the relations among those three realms are not necessarily hierarchical and layered in a vertical or top-down manner, but mostly horizontal. For instance, local norm entrepreneurs might bypass the national actors and institutions and directly engage in horizontal relations with the global or vice versa. For instance, global, national and local norm entrepreneurs might develop a non-hierarchical horizontal relations through which they pool and share advocacy resources. Moreover, the triadic approach implies that norm diffusion is a two-way process. The experiences, challenges, 'best' practices or failures at the local level provide feedback and valuable input for further development of international norms in the light of the realities on the ground.

The second major theoretical implication of the current study is that the localization perspective developed in this study brings to the fore an interesting interplay between agency and two different (and usually competing) ideational/non-material structures. The first structure is the globally circulating international norms (e.g. gender equality, non-discrimination, human dignity, etc.), which are

appropriated by local norm entrepreneurs and at the same time reconstituted through the interpretations and social practices of the local agents. The second structure is the pre-existing local socio-cultural norms that shape the daily lives of people. Importantly, the second structure varies across space. The local norm entrepreneurs, in their norm translation processes strive to transform a particular local structure from within. This mutual constitution or interplay between the globally connected/locally embedded local agents and two ideational structures imply that for a better understanding of the processes and dynamics of norm diffusion, we need to move away from the static understanding of ideational/non-material structures. In other words, we should not treat norms as something fixed or static, but as something flexible, malleable, open to interpretation, contested, and constantly in the making and re-making through the everyday practices of norm localizers.

One final theoretical implication is related to the issue of resonance and congruence building efforts of local agency. Despite the underlying premise of norm localization perspective that an international norm (as ‘interactive and dynamic process’) allows for interpretation to accommodate distinct claims and realities on the ground, the norm localization perspective does not imply a change in its core. In norm localization, the international norms retain their essence (i.e. the underlying purpose, fundamental ideas and principles codified into the international instruments, etc.). Otherwise, we cannot talk about ‘norm’ diffusion. Thus, it is important to separate the strategic use, distortion or modification of norms by some state and non-state actors in terms of their interests and resonance building efforts of norm localizers. The detailed analyses of norm localization processes in Antakya and Trabzon cases show that the flexible nature of international norms eases the job of local norm entrepreneurs because it facilitates local activists’ efforts to translate them into local practice and context. While putting into practice, localizers transmute international norms into a more digestible and appealing form, but retains its core. Otherwise stated, the elastic nature of international norms allows norm localizers to match the global and the local more easily. All these implies that if norms were indeed hammered in stone, it would be much more difficult, if not impossible, to localize them.

8.3. Practical Implications

This research also brings to the fore a number of practical implications. The empirical findings of this study provide a solid evidence that states are no longer the ‘sole’ duty bearers and primary actors of the domestic socialization/internalization of human rights norms. As the Trabzon and Antakya cases indicate, despite the international commitments of state actors in Turkey to eliminate VAW since the 1980s, the institutionalization and effective implementation of state-led mechanisms at local level (e.g. the establishment of shelters, legal and social support services and protection mechanisms for the victims of VAW, effective prosecution mechanisms, local action plans, etc.) might take decades. Moreover, the initiatives of duty bearers would remain limited on their core obligations of preventing violence from occurring, awareness raising, women’s empowerment and pursuing a transformative change agenda targeting the eradication of root causes of VAW. To remedy this gap, today ever-expanding number of non-state actors (e.g. individuals, NGOs, social movements, etc.) as being both right-holders and stakeholders engage in norm diffusion, implementation and practice at the national and local levels.

Furthermore, the detailed analysis of the localization of women’s human rights norms in two unique local settings in the Turkish national context indicate that international and global actors as well as donors promoting particular norms should take the local dynamics, processes and agency much more seriously. As the empirical analyses of this study confirm, norm localization is not an automatic and smooth process. Rather, it is a highly relational and political process, involving resistance, tensions and contestations. Hence norm diffusion requires active and creative agency. The Trabzon and Antakya cases clearly indicate that especially *non-state actors* at local level (e.g. individual and collective local actors) play crucial role in translating global norms into a particular local setting. This suggests that supporting and empowering the local agency would also increase the likelihood of successful norm diffusion. In brief, global norm promoters should not only engage with state actors (e.g. government, ministries) but also with local actors and movements. Allocating material and non-material resources (e.g. funding and financial support, sharing experience, organizational skills, know-how, etc.) and

designing locally relevant programs would certainly empower local agency and so facilitate norm diffusion. For instance, Women Friendly Cities Program implemented by the UN in Trabzon did play a catalyzer role and boost women's human rights advocacy in the city. Such programs targeting the subnational actors have major potential in terms of generating real change at grassroots level. This policy suggestion is also valid for the national governments and bureaucracy. Cooperating and coordinating with local activists and NGOs would substantially contribute norm implementation and socialization.

One final practical implication is that in international relations, the so called 'high politics' including the wars, conflicts, climate change, environmental degradation, economic crises, and the systemic changes such as the end of the Cold War are not generally considered as local issues. However, as underlined by Reilly, "their immediate impacts and meanings are inevitably experienced, negotiated and contested in everyday lives of women, men, children in contexts of unequal gender power relations in intimate relationships, families and communities".⁵²⁵ Looking closely, Trabzon is one of the localities that felt most the adverse effects of the dissolution Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. The wars in the Middle East including the Syrian Civil War hit the social, economic and demographic structure of Antakya and have mostly affected the lives of local and Syrian women and girls. This insight suggests that the more global/international/national actors concern with validating the experiences of local, the more they can generate effective responses to contemporary problems and crisis.

8.4. Future Research

Finally, what would be the directions of future research on norm localization? This particular norm localization research is limited in scope. It focuses on the diffusion of women's human rights norms (i.e. gender equality and non-discrimination) in combating VAW. And, it makes in-depth analysis of the norm localization dynamics and processes in Trabzon and Antakya local contexts in Turkey. One possible extension of this study would be to extend the analyses across

⁵²⁵ Niamh Reilly, *Women's Human Rights*, 2

space. The norm localization in Trabzon and Antakya examples provide useful insights for theory development, but do not necessarily (or intend to) represent a general pattern in Turkey. That is that, particular local contexts of Trabzon and Antakya provide examples of how international norms are appropriated and translated into a local context and practice. It would be quite useful to analyze and/or compare norm localization processes and dynamics across different local settings in Turkey. Alternatively, norm localization dynamics and processes might be analyzed in different national contexts. For instance, as we mentioned in Chapter 4, Merry, Levitt and their collaborators have already engaged in such an endeavor in Beijing (China), Baroda (India), Lima (Peru) and New York (USA). This would certainly allow us to gain new insights into norm localization processes and dynamics. Such an extension would also be quite rewarding in terms of having a better understanding of the triggers, potential difficulties of and opportunities for norm localization (i.e. what works, what does not and why?).

Another possible extension would be to extend the analyses across issue areas. Analyzing how norm localization processes and dynamics operate in other issue areas such as environment, children's rights, LGBTI rights, in conflict resolution/transformation processes or other human rights issues would also contribute our comprehension of norm diffusion processes. Such an extension would enable us to understand the differences and similarities among norm localization processes and dynamics across issues areas. This would ultimately contribute our knowledge of norm diffusion processes.

Norm localization research might also be extended in terms of the profiles of local agents. Given the state-centric focus of the mainstream norm diffusion literature, the norm localization perspective has inclined to highlight the active and creative agency role of the non-state actors at the local level including their experiences, endeavors, challenges and tactics. However, this emphasis on non-state actors should not create an implicit dichotomy between 'good' local activists/social movements/ platforms/NGOs and 'bad' state actors or local governments who are 'always' reluctant or insufficient to implement international norms. In other words, theoretically a wide range of state and non-state actors (state agencies, local public authorities, municipalities, political parties, professionals, academics, intellectuals,

artists, ordinary individuals, cosmopolitan elites, NGOs, donors, religious or community leaders, national/local agencies of international organizations, etc.) might assume agency and strive to localize international norms. It is highly recommended to the future researchers to consider the possibility of wide-ranging state and non-state actors in tracing the processes of norm localization in distinct local/national contexts. The analysis of norm localization in such local sites where the state and non-state actors genuinely cooperate, for instance, certainly contribute to our understanding of norm diffusion dynamics and processes.



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APPENDICES

A. THE APPROVAL FROM METU APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

DUMLUPINAR BULVARI 06800
ÇANKAYA ANKARA/TURKEY
T: +90 312 210 22 91
F: +90 312 210 79 59
ueam@metu.edu.tr
www.ueam.metu.edu.tr



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

Sayı: 28620816 /168

13 NİSAN 2016

Gönderilen: Doç.Dr. Özgehan ŞENYUVA

Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

Gönderen: Prof. Dr. Canan SÜMER

İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başkanı

İlgi: Etik Onayı

Sayın Doç.Dr. Özgehan ŞENYUVA' nın danışmanlığını yaptığı doktora öğrencisi Burcu ÖZDEMİR'in "Kadınlara Yönelik Şiddetle Mücadelede Kadının İnsan Hakları Normlarının Yerelleşmesi: Türkiye'de Kadın Sivil Toplum Örgütlerinin Yerel Pratikleri" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay 2016-SOS-065 protokol numarası ile 25.04.2016-25.12.2016 tarihleri arasında geçerli olmak üzere verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.


Prof. Dr. Canan SÜMER

İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başkanı


Prof. Dr. Meliha ALTUNIŞIK

İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu

Üyesi


Prof. Dr. Ayhan SOL

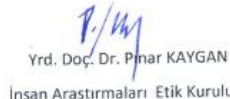
İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu

Üyesi


Prof. Dr. Mehmet UTKU

İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu

Üyesi


Yrd. Doç. Dr. Pınar KAYGAN

İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu

Üyesi

BU BÖLÜM, İLGİLİ BÖLÜMLERİ TEMSİL EDEN İNSAN ARAŞTIRMALARI
ETİK ALT KURULU TARAFINDAN DOLDURULACAKTIR.

Protokol No: 206-SS-065

İAEK DEĞERLENDİRME SONUCU

Sayın Hakem,

Aşağıda yer alan üç seçenekten birini işaretleyerek değerlendirmenizi tamamlayınız. Lütfen "Revizyon Gereklidir" ve "Ret" değerlendirmeleri için gerekli açıklamaları yapınız.

Değerlendirme Tarihi: 13-04-2016

Ad Soyad: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi İsmail Kılıç

☒ Herhangi bir değişikliğe gerek yoktur. Veri toplama/uygulama başlatılabilir.

☐ Revizyon gereklidir

☐ Gönüllü Katılım Formu yoktur.

☐ Gönüllü Katılım Formu eksiktir.

Gerekçenizi ayrıntılı olarak açıklayınız: Gönüllü Katılım Formu eksiktir.

☐ Katılım Sonrası Bilgilendirme Formu yoktur.

☐ Katılım Sonrası Bilgilendirme Formu eksiktir.

Gerekçenizi ayrıntılı olarak açıklayınız: Katılım Sonrası Bilgilendirme Formu eksiktir.

☐ Rahatsızlık kaynağı olabilecek sorular/maddeler ya da prosedürler içerilmektedir.

Gerekçenizi ayrıntılı olarak açıklayınız: Rahatsızlık kaynağı olabilecek sorular/maddeler içerilmektedir.

☐ Diğer.

Gerekçenizi ayrıntılı olarak açıklayınız: Diğer gerekçe belirtilmemiştir.

☐ Ret

Ret gerekçenizi ayrıntılı olarak açıklayınız: Ret gerekçe belirtilmemiştir.

B. INFORMED CONSENT FORM (in Turkish)

Bu çalışma ODTÜ Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü doktora öğrencisi Burcu Özdemir tarafından Doç. Dr. Özgehan Şenyuva danışmalığında doktora tez çalışması olarak yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Bu çalışma, uluslararası normların sosyo-kültürel olarak farklı yerel bağlamlarda nasıl yayıldığını ve kök saldıgını daha iyi anlamak için normların yerelleşme dinamiklerini ve süreçlerini incelemektedir. Kadının insan hakları normlarının yayılmasına odaklanılarak, bu çalışmada kadına yönelik şiddetle mücadele bağlamında normların yerelleşmesi araştırılmaktadır. Bu amaca yönelik olarak onay vermeniz durumunda sizinle yaklaşık 90 dakika sürecek bir mülakat yapılacaktır ve yine sizin onay vermeniz durumunda görüşme bir ses kayıt cihazı ile kaydedilecektir. Cevaplarınız sadece araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilecektir; elde edilecek bilgiler doktora tezinde ve tezden çıkacak bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır.

Çalışmaya katılım tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Görüşme kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular içermemektedir. Ancak görüşme esnasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz görüşmeyi istediğiniz zaman bırakabilirsiniz. Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Bu çalışmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz ODTÜ Uluslararası İlişkiler bölümü doktora öğrencisi Burcu Özdemir (oburcu@gmail.com) ya da aynı bölüm öğretim üyesi Doç. Dr. Özgehan Şenyuva (senyuva@metu.edu.tr, 0312 210 3086) ile iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum. Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman yarıda kesip çıkabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum. (Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

İsim Soyad

Tarih

İmza

----/----/----

C. INFORMED CONSENT FORM (in English)

This doctoral thesis study is conducted by doctoral student Burcu Özdemir under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Özgehan Şenyuva at International Relations Department of Middle East Technical University. This informed consent form is prepared to present you the information about the study.

This study explores the norm localization dynamics and processes in order to better understand how international norms diffuse and take root in diverse local socio-cultural contexts. Focusing on the diffusion of women's human rights norms, this study investigates the norm localization in the context of combating violence against women. In line with this purpose, an interview will be done, and it is expected to last approximately 90 minutes. In case you give permission, this interview will be audio recorded. Your answers will be evaluated by only the researcher. The obtained data will be used for this dissertation and scientific publications.

Participation to this study is voluntary. This interview do not include disturbing questions. However, you can stop interview whenever you feel uncomfortable for any reason. Thank you for participating in this study. For further information, you can contact with Burcu Özdemir (oburcu@gmail.com), doctoral student at the Department of International Relations in Middle east Technical University or Assoc. Prof. Dr. Özgehan Şenyuva (senyuva@metu.edu.tr, 0312 210 3086) from the same department.

I agree to participate in this study and I know I can withdraw whenever I want. I accept that the information I provide will be used for scientific purposes.
(Please sign this form, and return it to the researcher).

Name Surname

Date

Signature

----/----/----

D. LIST OF INFORMANTS

	PLACE	INTERVIEWEE	INSTITUTION AFFILIATION	INTERVIEW DATE(s)
1	TRABZON	Bahar Bostan	Lawyer, Trabzon Bar Association Women Commission, Blacksea Women Association and Trabzon Cazıları	06.05.2016
2	TRABZON	Bahar Usta Baki	Black Sea Technical University, Department of Sociology	08.05.2016
3	TRABZON	Cavidan Yılmaz	Life Women Center Association	05.05.2016
4	TRABZON	Nurper Gürdal	Life Women Center Association	15.05.2016
5	TRABZON	Nilüfer Akgün	Black Sea Women Association	04.05.2016
6	TRABZON	Sema Turhan	Black Sea Women Association, Trabzon Cazıları	09.05.2016
7	TRABZON	Elvin Çabuk	Life Women Center Association and Trabzon Women Entrepreneurship, Production and Marketing Cooperative, Kazaz instructor	03.05.2016
8	TRABZON	Informant 1 The name of interviewee is kept confidential by the agreement.	Social worker, staff who works in the Center for Preventing and Monitoring Violence (ŞÖNİM) of Trabzon	15. 05. 2016
9	TRABZON	Informant 2 The name of interviewee is kept confidential by the agreement.	Social worker, staff who works in the Trabzon Provincial Directorate of Ministry of Family and Social Policies	16.05.2016
10	ANTAKYA	Meral Asfuroğlu	Lawyer, Hatay Bar Association Women Commission	05.07.2016 28.10.2016 20.03.2017
11	ANTAKYA	Hatice Can	Lawyer	06.07.2016- 10.07.2016
12	ANTAKYA	Meryem Kılıç	Yeşilpınar Women Social Support and Solidarity Association	29.06.2016 02.07.2016
13	ANTAKYA	Nurcan Zubaroğlu	Yeşilpınar Women Social Support and Solidarity Association	02.07.2016
14	ANTAKYA	Gülbahar Aşkar	Antakya Purple Solidarity Women Association	06.07.2016
15	ANTAKYA	Ceren Arslanhan Yüce	Antakya Purple Solidarity Women Association	07.07.2016
16	ANTAKYA	Aylin Yüksel	Antakya Purple Solidarity Women Association	05.06.2016 26.10.2016 13.11.2016

17	ANTAKYA	Nurhan Nur	Antakya Purple Solidarity Women Association	05.06.2016 26.10.2016
18	ANTAKYA	Dilek Koşar	Antakya Purple Solidarity Women Association	26.10.2016
19	ANTAKYA	Selda Özgür	Purple Solidarity Women Association	11.06.2016 26.10.2016
20	ANTAKYA	Kader Koşar	Antakya Campus Witches and Antakya Purple Solidarity Women Association	25.10.16
21	ANTAKYA	Eylem Yağcıbulut	Antakya Campus Witches	25.10.2016
22	ANTAKYA	Gülsüm Tonaydın	Antakya Campus Witches	25.10.2016
23	ANTAKYA	Cemile Güvercin Sayın	Social Worker, Hatay Social Worker's Association	27.10.2016 28.10.2016
24	ANTAKYA	Elif Kocaoğlu Kültegin	Mosaic and Handicraft Instructor, Antakya Purple Solidarity Women Association	20.12.2016
25	ANTAKYA	Nurhak Kar	Lawyer	08.07.2016 28.10.2016
26	ANTAKYA	Informant 3 The name of interviewee is kept confidential by the agreement	Women, wife of a migrant worker, age 65	03.07.2016 28.10. 2016
27	ANTAKYA	Informant 4 The name of interviewee is kept confidential by the agreement	Women, wife of a migrant worker, age 55	03.07.2016 25.10.2016
28	ANTAKYA	Informant 5 The name of interviewee is kept confidential by the agreement	Senior Social Worker, staff who works in the Provincial Directorate of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies of Antakya	28.10.2016
29	ANTAKYA	Informant 6 The name of interviewee is kept confidential by the agreement	Social Worker, staff who works in the Provincial Directorate of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, Antakya	01.12.2016
30	ANTAKYA	Informant 7 The name of interviewee is kept confidential by the agreement	Women, housewife, age 30, PSWA volunteer	25.10.2016
31	ANTAKYA	Informant 8 The name of interviewee is kept confidential by the agreement	Women, housewife, age 65, PSWA volunteer	25.10.2016
32	ANTAKYA	Informant 9 The name of interviewee is kept	Women, designer in a mosaic workshop, age 40, PSWA volunteer	25.10.2016

		confidential by the agreement		
33	ANTAKYA	Informant 10 The name of interviewee is kept confidential by the agreement	Women, housewife, age 35, YWSSA volunteer	25.10.2016
34	ANTAKYA	Informant 11 The name of interviewee is kept confidential by the agreement	Women, waitress in a künefe restaurant, age 53, PSWA volunteer	24.10.2016
35	ANTAKYA	Informant 12 The name of interviewee is kept confidential by the agreement	Women, wife of a migrant worker, housewife, age 60, PSWA volunteer	24.10.2016



E. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Özdemir Sarıgil, Burcu
Nationality: Turkish (TC)
Date and Place of Birth: 08 October 1980, Şanlıurfa
Marital Status: Married
Phone: +90 505 6625163
email: oburcu@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MS	METU European Studies	2006
BS	Marmara University Political Science and International Relations	2003
High School	Antakya High School, Hatay	1998

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2004- 2014	METU Center for European Studies	Research Assistant

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Fluent German

PUBLICATIONS

1. Özdemir, Burcu. "The EU's Western Balkans Enlargement Strategy since the Thessaloniki Summit." *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies* 11 (2006):173-193.
2. Özdemir, Burcu. "The Role of the EU in Turkey's Legislative Reforms for Eliminating Violence against Women: A Bottom-Up Approach." *Journal of Balkan & Near Eastern Studies* 16, no.1 (March 2014): 199-136.
3. Özdemir, Burcu, and Zeki Sarıgil. "Turkey's Europeanization Process and the Kurdish Issue." in *The Europeanization of Turkey: Polity and Politics*, eds. Ali Tekin and Aylin Güney, 180-94. New York: Routledge, 2015.

F. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Uluslararası normlar, düzenleyici ve kurucu davranış standartlarını oluşturmak yoluyla hem uluslararası siyaseti hem de toplumların ve bireylerin günlük hayatlarını şekillendirirler. Özellikle insan hakları normları olan eşitlik, ayrımcılık yapmama, insanlık onuru gibi normlar her türlü ayrımcılığı ve eşitsizliği, yoksulluğu, baskıyı ve şiddeti bireylerin yaşamından çıkarmak için evrensel ve ahlaki bir gündemin taşıyıcısıdır. Ancak, dünya çapındaki insan hakları raporları göstermektedir ki gerçekler ve uluslararası metinlerdeki normlar ve idealler birbiriyle her zaman örtüşmemektedir. Bu nedenle, ‘iyi’ ideallerin ve uluslararası normların kendiliğinden ve içkin olarak ikna edebilme niteliğine sahip olduklarını ve bu niteliğin normların içselleştirilmesini garanti edebileceğini varsaymak yanıltıcı olacaktır. Gerçek anlamda bir etkiye sahip olabilmeleri için, uluslararası normların sahiplenilmesi ve yayılımı gereklidir. Yani uluslararası normlar bir çok kanal aracılığıyla bölgelere, ülkelere ve en nihayetinde bireylerin günlük hayatlarında anlam bulması ve pratiğe dökülebilmesi için yerele ulaşmalıdır. Dahası, uluslararası normlar otomatik olarak yayılamazlar. Norm yayılımı ve pratiği için bu normları benimsemiş aktif ve yaratıcı aktörlere, yani savunuculara, aktarıcılara, uygulayıcılara gereksinim vardır.

Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininde normlar ve norm yayılımı konuları, inşacı perspektifin (konstrüktivizm) 1990’lardan itibaren daha da önem kazanmasıyla birlikte çalışılmaya başlanmıştır. Ana akım inşacı norm ve norm yayılımı literatürü, özellikle normların oluşturulduğu uluslararası düzeye ve normların uygulanması için esas kabul ettikleri devletler düzeyine odaklanmışlardır. Bu literatür, geliştirdikleri norm yayılımı modelleri aracılığıyla normların ulusal alanda sosyalizasyonunu sağlayan aşamaları ve mekanizmaları ortaya koymuş, ve ayrıca devletlerin uygulamadaki farklılaşmasını açıklamaya çalışmıştır.

Bu çalışmanın başlangıç noktası, ana akım norm ve norm yayılımı literatüründeki önemli ve bir o kadar da şaşırtıcı eksikliklerdir. Ana akım literatür, uluslararası ve devlet düzeyinde norm oluşum ve yayılım süreçlerini ve aktörlerini derinliğiyle ele almış olsa da, yerel düzeyi ve yerel aktörlerin norm yayılımındaki

rolünü göz ardı etmiştir. Literatürdeki bu eksiklik ilgi çekicidir çünkü normların oluşumu başlangıç noktamızsa, normun yayılımının ulaşacağı son durak yerel düzeydir. Başka bir ifadeyle, normların oluşumu ve devletlerin bu normları kabul edip uygulamayı taahhüt etmeleri norm yayılım sürecinin başlangıcıdır. Devletlerin norma uyumları ve uygulamaları belirli standartlara, kuralla bağlanmış olsa da, ve uluslararası gözleme/denetime tabi tutulsa da, önceden öngörülmesi zor ve belki de daha zorlu bir yayılım süreci yerel düzeyde oluşacaktır. Uluslararası düzeyde kabul edilmiş ve yayılımda olan bir normun yerele ulaşması ve yerelde filizlenme süreci bize neden bazı normların daha kabul görüp, bazı normların başarısız olduğu konusunda ve hangi faktörlerin norm yayılımını olumlu ya da olumsuz etkilediği konularında öngörü saylayacaktır. Başka bir ifadeyle, normun uygulamadaki başarısını ya da başarısızlığını anlayabilmek için, normların yerel düzeyde yeniden inşası sürecini de göz önünde bulundurmamız gerekmektedir. Bu da yereldeki dinamikleri, süreçleri ve aktörleri incelememizi gerektirir.

Bu çalışmanın amacı, uluslararası normların sosyo-kültürel olarak farklı yerel bağlamlarda nasıl yayıldığını ve kök saldıgını daha iyi anlamak için normların yerelleşme dinamiklerini ve süreçlerini incelemektir. Daha açıkça ifade etmek gerekirse, uluslararası normların yerelleşme dinamiklerinin ve süreçlerinin incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır.

Norm yerelleşmesi norm yayılımının vazgeçilmez parçalarından biridir çünkü başarılı bir norm yayılımı sürecinden bahsedilmemiz için normların sahiplenilmesi ve gündelik pratiğe dökülmesi gereklidir. Yerel düzeyde var olan normların geçerliliğini sürdürebileceğini ve hatta uluslararası normlarda çatışabileceğini göz önünde bulundurduğumuzda uluslararası normların yerelleşmesinin önemi daha da belirginleşir. İnsan hakları normları gibi evrensellik iddiasında olan ideallerin, bireylerin ve toplumların hayatında gerçek anlamda etkisinin ve geçerliliğinin olabilmesi ve mevcut sosyo-kültürel normları dönüştürebilmesi için yerel düzeyde sahiplenilmesi ve pratiğe dökülmesi gereklidir. Yani normlar yerelleşmelidir.

Bu çalışma norm yerelleşmesini, normların yerel aktörlerce sahiplenilmesi ve yerel bağlama ve pratiğe çevirilmesi süreci olarak tanımlamaktadır. Yereldeki norm savunucuları yerelleşme süreci için kilit konumdadır. Yerelin bir parçası olan

ama aynı zamanda küresel ve ulusal düzeyle de bağlantı kuran yerel aktörler norm yayılımında aracı ve uygulayıcı rolü üstlenirler. Yerelleşme süreci, yerel norm savunucuları tarafından başlatılan bir süreçtir. Yerelleşme, uluslararası normların yerelin gerçeklikleri ile bağdaşır, daha anlaşılır, kabul edilir ve kullanılabilir olmasını sağlamayı, ve nihayetinde uluslararası normlar çerçevesinde sosyal ve bilinçsel bir değişim sağlamayı hedefler.

Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplindeki ana akım norm ve norm yayılımı literatürünün yerel bağlamı ve yerel aktörleri yeterince ele almaması önemli bir kısıtlılıktır. Norm yerelleşmesinin yukarıda yapılan tanımının da dikkat çektiği üzere yerelleşme, norm yayılımının sağlanması ve sürdürülebilmesi için önemlidir. Normların oluşumu ve devlet aktörlerince kabulü yerelde otomatik olarak norm içselleşmesi ve pratiğini beraberinde getirmez. Aşık olan ancak genellikle literatürde es geçilen önemli nokta, norm yayılımının bağlamının ve normu yayan aktörlerin kimliklerinin, kaynaklarının, kısıtlılıklarının ve koşullarının ne olduğunun önem arzetmesidir. Norm yerelleşmesi perspektifi, belirli bir yerel bağlamda normun nasıl yayıldığını derinliğiyle ve bütüncül olarak anlamamıza olanak sağlar. Yerel bağlama ve yerel aktörlerin rolüne yaptığı vurgu ile de uluslararası ilişkiler disiplindeki norm yayılımı literatürünün gelişimine katkı sağlar. Bir başka önemli husus, norm yerelleşmesi perspektifinin normları -ister uluslararası normlar, ister yereldeki mevcut sosyo-kültürel normlar olsun- esneyebilen, yoruma açık ve deneyimler ışığında geliştirilebilen süreçler ya da referans noktaları olarak ele alması, yerel bağlama ve yerel aktörlerin rolüne vurgu yapması, ve norm yayılımını sosyal bir pratik olarak görmesidir. Bu çerçevede, norm yerelleşmesi perspektifi normların devam eden inşa süreçlerini ve dinamik diyalog ve uyum inşası süreçlerini anlamamızda yardımcı olur.

Araştırma Soruları

Çalışmanın cevaplamaya çalıştığı temel araştırma sorusu, uluslararası normların farklı yerel bağlamlara nasıl ulaştığı, yayıldığı ve kök saldığı sorusudur. Başka bir ifadeyle, uluslararası normların yerelleşme dinamiklerini ve süreçlerini anlamayı amaçlayan bu çalışma, normların farklı yerel bağlamlardaki aktörlerce

nasıl sahiplenilip pratiğe döküldüğünü araştırmaktadır. Bu ana soru çerçevesinde cevaplanılmaya çalışılan alt sorular ise yerelleşmeyi sağlayan aktörlerin kimler olduğu, bu aktörlerin hangi kanallar aracılığıyla uluslararası normlara ulaştığı ve sahiplendiği, yereldeki hangi yapısal koşullar altında normu yaydıkları, uluslararası normları pratiğe çevirirken ne tür strateji ve taktikler izledikleridir.

Kadınlara Yönelik Şiddetle Mücadelede İnsan Hakları Normlarının Yerelleşmesi

Norm yerelleşmesi dinamikleri ve süreçleri, ‘toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği’ ve ‘ayrımcılık yapmama’ normlarının kadınlara yönelik şiddetle mücadele bağlamında yerelleşmesine odaklanılarak incelenecektir. İnsan hakları savunuculuğunun en önemli mevzularından ve eylem alanlarından olan kadınlara yönelik şiddetle mücadele, aynı zamanda sosyo-kültürel olarak da tartışmalı ve hassas bir konudur. Bu nedenle, norm yerelleşmesi dinamiklerini ve süreçlerini anlamamız için değerli bir inceleme alanıdır.

Medeni ve siyasi haklarla karşılaştırıldığında, kadınlara yönelik şiddetin insan hakkı ihlali olarak uluslararası alanda tanınması geç kalmıştır. Kadın hareketinin başarılı savunuculuğu ve 1970’li yıllardan itibaren Birleşmiş Milletler’in inisiyatifleri sonucu, toplumsal cinsiyet temelli eşitsizlik ve ayrımcılık türü, ve insan hakları ihlali olarak tanınmıştır. Kadınlara yönelik şiddetle insan hakları çerçevesinde mücadelenin başat ögesi toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği ve ayrımcılık yapmama normlarının devletler, toplumlar ve bireyler tarafından içselleştirilmesi ve uygulanmasıdır. Dolayısıyla bu iki norm, kadınların şiddete maruz kalmadan yaşam özgürlüğünün fiili ve hukuki temelini oluşturmaktadır. 1990’lardan itibaren şiddetle mücadelede uluslararası standartların oluşumunda önemli gelişmeler vuku bulmuştur. Uluslararası ve bölgesel platformlarda oluşturulan yasal ve ilkesel enstrümanlar devletlerin şiddetle mücadele konusundaki görev ve yükümlülüklerini belirlemiş, ve devletlerin uygulamaları ya da verdikleri taahhütlere ne derece uydukları uluslararası komitelerce gözlemlenmiş ve raporlanmıştır. Özetle, günümüzde kadınların insan hakları ya da toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği rejiminin varlığından, ve bu rejimin norm, standart ve riayet

mekanizmalarından söz edebiliriz. Bir başka önemli husus da norm ve standartlarının sadece devletler tarafından değil bir çok sivil toplum örgütü, toplumsal hareket ve toplulukça benimsenmiş olması ve kadınlara yönelik şiddetle kendi yerel ve ulusal bağlamlarında mücadele ederken kullanılmasıdır. Ancak, bütün bu olumlu gelişmelere rağmen toplumsal cinsiyet ve ayrımcılık temelli şiddet hala küresel boyutta bir salgındır. Küresel ölçekte yapılan çalışmalar kadınların en az üçte birinin şiddete maruz kaldığını göstermektedir. Bu nedenle şiddetle mücadele devam eden, zorlu ve çok yönlü bir mücadeledir. Kadınlara yönelik şiddetin önlenmesi ve sonlandırılması için devletlerin, toplumların ve bireylerin uluslararası norm ve standartları gerçek anlamda içselleştirmesi ve uygulaması gerekmektedir. Bu çerçeveden bakıldığında, yerelleşme perspektifi normların ve standartların nasıl yayıldığını ve norm savunucularının aktörlük rolleri sayesinde yeni yerlerde kök saldıgını kavramımızı sağlayabilir. Norm yerelleşmesi perspektifi, insan hakları normlarının ve hak temelli mücadele yaklaşımının otomatik olarak yayılmadığını, bu normların farklı sosyo-kültürel bağlamlarda şiddetle mücadele eden yerel aktörlerce sahiplenildiğini, yerel gerçeklikler ışığında yorumlandığını, ve farklılaşan yöntemlerle pratiğe döküldüğünü önermektedir. Bu itibarla, sosyo-kültürel olarak farklı yerel uzamlarda norm yerelleşmesinin derinlemesine incelenmesi, norm yayılımını anlama konusundaki analizleri besleyecek niteliktedir.

Araştırma Yöntemi

Bu çalışma, nitel durum çalışması yöntemini kullanmaktadır. Nitel durum çalışmasını yürütürken, araştırmacılar genellikle az sayıda örnekleme odaklanırlar ve bu da araştırma konusunu bütüncül, derinlemesine ve bağlamsal inceleme olanağı sağlar. Başka bir ifadeyle, araştırmacı seçilen örneklemeler aracılığıyla, belirli uzamlarda, belirli aktörler ile, belirli zamanlarda süreçlerin nasıl işlediğini (örneğin norm yerelleşmesi) inceler ve anlamlandırabilir. Norm yerelleşmesi süreçlerini ve dinamiklerini ampirik olarak incelerken bu çalışma Türkiye ulusal bağlamından, sosyal ve kültürel olarak farklı iki yerel alan olan Trabzon ve Antakya örneklemelerine odaklanmaktadır. Yani, Trabzon ve Antakya yerel bağlamları kadının insan hakları normlarının yerelleşmesi dinamiklerini anlamamızda bize ışık

tutacaktır. Türkiye ulusal bağlamının seçilme nedeni üç başlıkta açıklanabilir: (a) Türkiye kadın hareketinin güçlü ve köklü olduğu bir ülkedir. Geçmiş 19. Yüzyıla dayanan bu hareket, 1980 sonrasında kadınların özel alandaki sorunlarını, yaygın ataerkilliği ve özellikle kadınlara yönelik şiddeti ülke gündemine taşımıştır. Kadın hareketi, aynı zamanda medeni hukuk, ceza hukuku ve anayasada toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini ve ayrımcılık yapmamayı ve şiddetin önüne geçmeyi temel alan kanunların çıkarılmasında başat rol oynamıştır. İlk zamanlarında Ankara, İstanbul ve İzmir gibi büyük kentlerde örgütlenen kadın hareketi, günümüzde Türkiye'nin hemen her ilinde STK'lar ve platformlar aracılığıyla savunuculuk yapmakta ve kadınlara yönelik şiddetle mücadelenin tabanda yayılmasına öncülük etmektedir. (b) Türkiye Cumhuriyeti devleti, kadın hakları rejiminin bir parçasıdır. İmzacısı olduğu uluslararası sözleşmeler (örneğin CEDAW, İstanbul Sözleşmesi gibi) yoluyla kadınlara yönelik şiddeti ülke çapında önleyeceğine ve bu çerçevede yasal, siyasi ve toplumsal adımları atacağına dair taahhütte bulunmuştur. Özellikle son yirmi yılda şiddetle mücadelenin yasal ve kurumsal altyapısını başarıyla gerçekleştirmiş olan Türkiye, 'şiddete sıfır tolerans' resmi söylemini benimsemiştir. (c) Kadın hareketinin ulusal ve yerel bağlamda savunuculuğuna ve yasal-kurumsal altyapının uluslararası standartları yakalamasına rağmen, Türkiye'de şiddet toplumsal bir salgın halindedir. Şiddete zemin hazırlayan toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliği, ayrımcılık ve zarar verici geleneksel pratikler toplumda hala kabul görmekte ve meşrulaştırılabilmektedir. Türkiye'de kadınların en az üçte biri şiddete maruz kaldığı gibi, her gün en az bir kadın toplumsal cinsiyet temelli şiddet sebebiyle hayatını kaybetmektedir. Bu nedenle, Türkiye ulusal bağlamı norm yayılımı araştırması için ilginç bir arka plan oluşturmaktadır. Özellikle belirtmek gerekir ki, Türkiye'den bir çok yerel bu çalışmanın örnekleme olabilirdi. Trabzon ve Antakya'nın örneklem olarak seçilmesinin sebebi çalışmanın beşinci bölümünde detaylandırılmıştır. Yapılan amaçlı örneklemin en göze çarpan özelliği zengin ampirik veri sağlanabilmesi ve bu iki yerelin kendine has yerel dinamiklerinin olmasıdır. Örneğin, Türkiye'nin Karadeniz bölgesinde bulunan ve milliyetçi-muhafazakar, ataerkil bir şehir profili çizen Trabzon, Sovyetler Birliği'nin yıkılmasından sonraki sistemik değişimden en çok etkilenen yerellerden biridir. Özellikle, 'Nataşa' süreci olarak adlandırılan ve gerek yerel kadınların gerekse eski

Sovyet bloğundan gelerek yasa dışı seks işçiliği yapan kadınların yoğun şiddete maruz kaldığı travmatik bir süreç yaşanmıştır. Trabzon, aynı zamanda başını yine kadınların çektiği çevreci hareketin etkin olduğu bir yereldir. Antakya ise, Türkiye’de çok kültürlülüğü, toleransı ve sivil toplum yapılanmasının etkinliği ile tanınan bir yereldir. Suriye sınırında olan Antakya, 2011 yılında başlayan Suriye iç savaşından en çok etkilenen yerlerden biridir. Suriye iç savaşı şehrin demografisini, sosyal ve ekonomik yapısını sarsmakla kalmamış, yerel ve Suriyeli kadınların maruz kaldıkları toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliği ve ayrımcılık temelli şiddeti gözle görülür oranda artırmıştır.

Trabzon ve Antakya’da Mayıs 2016 ve Temmuz 2017 tarihleri arasında gerçekleştirilen alan çalışmasında, derinlemesine mülakatlar ve katılımcı gözlem teknikleri ile veri toplanmıştır. Çalışma kapsamında gerçekleştirilen 35 derinlemesine mülakat, Trabzon ve Antakya’da norm yerelleşmesinde rol alan STK temsilcileri, aktivistler ve ŞÖNİM’lerde kadınlara yasal, sosyal ve psikolojik destek vermekle yükümlü personelle yapılmıştır. Katılımcı gözlem tekniği yerellerin sosyo-kültürel yapılarını anlamlandırmada, yerel aktörlerin normu yayma pratiklerini gözlemlemekte kullanılmıştır. İlaveten birincil ve ikincil kaynaklardan da veri toplanmıştır. Toplanan bu veriler üçgenleme tekniği ile karşılaştırılmıştır. Veri analiz sürecinde MAXQDA veri analizi yazılımı kullanarak, yazıya dökülen alan notları belirli kodlar kullanılarak değerlendirilmeye alınmış ve çalışmanın altıncı ve yedinci bölümlerinde yerelleşme dinamiklerini ve süreçlerinin yazımında kullanılmıştır.

Sonuç ve Bulgular

Uluslararası normların yerelleşmesini anlamayı amaçlayan bu çalışma, giriş ve sonuç bölümleri dahil sekiz bölümden oluşmaktadır. Giriş bölümünü takip eden ikinci bölümde Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplindeki inşacılık perspektifinden beslenen norm ve norm yayılımı literatürü incelenmiş ve ana akım literatürdeki eksikler, kısıtlılıklar tartışılmıştır. Çalışmanın üçüncü bölümünde analitik ve kavramsal çerçeveyi oluşturan norm yerelleşmesi perspektifi detaylı olarak sunulmuştur. Çalışmanın dördüncü bölümünde kadınların insan hakları normlarının uluslararası düzeyde ortaya çıkışı, kavramsallaşması ve kadına yönelik şiddetle

mücade konusunda uluslararası boyutta üretilen hak temelli mücadelenin kavramsal ve hukuki çerçevesi incelenmiştir. Çalışmanın beşinci bölümü araştırma yöntemine değinmekte ve örneklem seçimi, veri toplama teknikleri, veri analizinin nasıl yapıldığını anlatmaktadır. Takip eden altıncı ve yedinci bölümde Trabzon ve Antakya örneklemelerinde çalışmanın amaçları, teorik yaklaşımı ve araştırma soruları çerçevesinde norm yerelleşmesi dinamikleri ve süreçleri derinlikli bir şekilde incelenmiştir.

Antakya ve Trabzon illerinde toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği ve ayrımcılık yapmama normlarının yerelleşmesi süreçleri göstermektedir ki, yerel bağlamın kendine has yapısal özellikleri ve yerel aktörler norm yayılımının süreç ve dinamiklerinin belirleyicisidir. Araştırmanın ana bulguları çerçevesinde, bu çalışma başarılı norm yayılımı için uluslararası normların yerel düzlemde yankı bulması gerektiğini ileri sürmektedir. Bu bağlamda, yerel norm girişimcileri norm yayılımı süreçlerinde çok önemli bir rol oynamaktadır, çünkü bu aktörler küreselle ulusali yerele bağlamakta ve yerelde norm rezonansını ve pratiğini sağlamaktadırlar.

Trabzon ve Antakya yerel bağlamlarında norm yerelleşmesinin ana boyutunu aktif, yaratıcı ve edimsel yerel norm girişimcilerinin aktörlük rolü oluşturmaktadır. Bu aktörler ‘soyut’ normları yorumlayıp, yerel bağlama ve pratiğe aktarmaktadır. Trabzon ve Antakya örneklemelerinde norm yerelleştiricilerinin kim olduğuna bakacak olursak, öncü ve aktif amillerin yerel kadın hareketinin ana bileşenleri olan sivil toplum örgütleri, baroların kadın hakları komisyonları, kadın platformları, aktivistler ve feministler olduğunu görmekteyiz. Kadınlara yönelik şiddetle mücadelede yasal olarak yükümlülük sahibi olan yerel kamu kurum ve kuruluşları ise pasif norm yerelleştiricileri ya da pasif norm uygulayıcıları olarak sınıflandırılabilir. Daha açık bir ifadeyle, Trabzon ve Antakya’da yerel kamu otoritelerince atılan kayda değer somut adımlar, 2012 yılında 6284 nolu kanunun yürürlüğe girmesinden sonra ortaya çıkmıştır. Türkiye’deki diğer iller gibi, Trabzon ve Hatay illeri hükümet tarafından yeni kanunun uygulama yeri olarak belirlenmiş ve bu da kurum ve kapasite geliştirme çabalarını gerekli kılmıştır. Çalışmanın bulguları, yerelde devlet kaynaklı kurumsallaşmanın norm yerelleşmesine yeni bir dinamik eklediği ve hatta hızlandığını göstermektedir. İlaveten, devlet kaynaklı kurumsallaşma Trabzon ve Antakya’da kadınlara yönelik şiddetle insan hakları

yaklaşımıyla mücadeleyi ve hak savunuculuğunu da güçlendirmiştir. Fakat, şiddetle mücadeleyle yükümlü-sorumlu kamu kurum ve kuruluşlarının alt yapı oluşturmada, uygulamada ve şiddeti doğuran cinsiyet eşitsizliği temelli sebepleri yok etmede bazı eksiklikleri ya da isteksizlikleri nedeniyle, çalışma bu aktörlerin yerelleşmedeki aktif rolünden bahsetmek için henüz çok erken olduğunu tespit etmiştir.

Çalışmanın bir diğer bulgusu ise, Trabzon ve Antakya örneklemelerindeki norm yerelleştiricilerinin norm yayılımı süreçlerinde ikili bir aktörlük rolü üstlenmesidir. Yerelleştiriciler ilk olarak uluslararası normları gönüllü öğrenme yoluyla sahiplenmiş, akabinde yorulmuş ve yerel bağlamlarında pratiğe dökmüşlerdir. Bu nedenle, yerelleştiriciler norm yayılımının hem öznesi hem de nesnesidir.

Normun sahiplenilmesi norm yerelleşmesi sürecinin ilk aşamasını oluşturmaktadır. Bulgular göstermektedir ki bu aşamada yerel aktivistler öğrenme, kavrama, yorumlama, anlam yaratma ve bağlantı kurma ile uğraşmakta ve bu çerçevede ulusal ve küresel aktörlerle etkileşime girmektedirler. Dolayısıyla, Antakya ve Trabzon'da vuku bulan sahiplenme süreçleri yerel aktörlerin sosyalizasyon süreçlerini içerir. Bu aşamada yerel aktörler norm yayılımının nesnesi konumundadır. Trabzon ve Antakya'daki yerelleştiricilerin norm sahiplenme süreçlerinde dikkat çeken başka bir husus ise, bu aktörlerin uluslararası ve bölgesel platformlara ve ulusaşırı savunuculuk ağlarına erişimlerinin sınırlı olmasına rağmen, yerel, ulusal ve diğer küresel norm yayılım kanallarına ulaşmaktaki başarılarıdır.

Norm yerelleşmesinin ikinci aşaması normların yerel bağlama ve pratiğe aktarılmasıdır. Norm aktarımı yerelde belirlenen hedef kitlelerin sosyalizasyonu ile alakalı bir süreçtir ve bu aşamada yerelleştiriciler norm yayılımının öznesi konumundadır. Antakya ve Trabzon örneklerinde görülmüştür ki yerelleşmenin başat hedef kitlesini kadınlar (hak sahipleri) ve kamu kurum ve kuruluşları (yasal yükümlülük ve sorumluluk sahipleri) oluşturmaktadır. Öncelikle bu iki grubun seçimi stratejiktir. Yerelleştiriciler şiddetle mücadele ederken zaman içinde ve aşamalı olarak daha geniş toplumsal kitlelere ulaşmayı ve erkek şiddetine zemin hazırlayan toplumsal yapıyı dönüştürmeyi hedeflemektedirler.

Antakya ve Trabzon'daki norm yerelleştiricileri edilgen norm alıcıları değildir. Mevcut kültürel normları, yerel dinamikleri, hedef kitlelerini ve kaynaklarını göz önünde bulundurarak aktif ve yaratıcı bir aktörlük rolü üstlenirler. Bir başka ifadeyle, yerelleştiriciler kısıtlılıklarının ve ellerindeki kaynakların (örneğin yerelde hakim olan kültür, sosyal adalet ideolojileri, potansiyel destekçiler, olası direniş odakları, etnik ve dini kimlikler ve aidiyetler, kültürel semboller, örf, töre ve gelenekler, kanıksanmış toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri, günlük hayatın kodları, mevcut devlet mekanizmaları) farkındadır. İlaveten, norm yerelleşmesini etkileyecek yeni beliren yasal, siyasi, toplumsal ya da söylemsel fırsat yapılarını da yakından takip edebilir ve kullanabilirler. Örneğin, Trabzon'daki yerelleştiriciler Türkiye'de yürürlüğe giren toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği ve kadınlara yönelik şiddetle ilgili kanunları, Türkiye'nin bu bağlamdaki uluslararası taahhütlerini (örneğin, İstanbul Sözleşmesi) ve şehirlerinde 2006-2010 yılları arasında uygulanan Birleşmiş Milletler'in 'Kadın Dostu Kentler' programını fırsat yapıları olarak görmüşler ve etkin şekilde kullanmışlardır. Trabzon'da Sovyetlerin dağılmasından sonra vuku bulan 'Nataşa' sürecinin olumsuz etkileri, ve hızla bozulan doğal yaşam ve uyanan çevre bilinci de yerelleştiriciler tarafından kadın haklarını savunmak için değerlendirilmiştir. Antakya örnekleminde ise yerel aktivistler, Türkiye'nin 1980 darbesi sonrasındaki demokratikleşme sürecini ve kadın haklarını geliştiren kanunları söylemsel ve siyasi fırsat yapıları olarak görmüşler ve kullanmışlardır. İlaveten, Suriye iç savaşı ve Gezi Parkı süreci de yerelde kadın hakları örgütlenmesine ivme kazandırmıştır.

Çalışmanın bulguları göstermektedir ki norm yerelleşmesi otomatik ya da problemsiz bir süreçten ziyade, gerilim ve uyuşmazlığı da içeren oldukça kompleks bir diyalog ve mütabakat inşa etme sürecidir. Bu nedenle, uluslararası normları yerelde yayarken yerelleştiriciler taktikler geliştirmişlerdir. Bu taktikler, aynı zamanda uluslararası normların yerelde pratiğini ve tecrübe edilmesini de temsil etmektedir.

Trabzon'daki norm yerelleştiricilerinin kullandığı taktiklere baktığımızda, kadınları sosyal, politik, ekonomik alanlarda güçlendirmeyi ve kadınlarda hak bilincini uyandırmayı ön planda tuttuklarını görmekteyiz. Yerel kültürle uyumu yakalamak ve normların anlaşılmasını kolaylaştırmak için yerel sembolleri ve dili

de katarak ‘basitleştirme’ taktiğini kullanmışlardır. Bir başka önemli taktik din ve kadın haklarını uyumlulaştırma çabaları sonucu ortaya çıkmıştır. Din, Trabzon halkı ve kadınların yaşamında çok önemli bir öge olduğundan, mesajlarını yayarken yerelleştiriciler öncelikle dini ve kadınlara zarar veren gelenekleri birbirinden ayırmışlar, ve akabinde İslam dinindeki kadın haklarına uluslararası normları aşlamışlardır. Trabzon’daki norm yerelleştiricileri aynı zamanda normların kamu otoritelerince etkin bir şekilde uygulanmasını sağlayabilmek için savunuculuk taktikleri olan ‘adlandırma ve utandırma’ ve ‘sözel sıkıştırma’ taktiklerini kullanmışlardır.

Antakya’daki yerelleştiricilerin kullandıkları yerelleştirme taktiklerine baktığımızda, bu aktörlerin kadınlara ulaşmayı ve dönüştürmeyi hedefleyen farkındalık arttırma, güçlendirme ve harekete geçirme taktiklerini kullandıklarını görmekteyiz. Örneğin, kadınların yeniden öğrenme süreçlerini tetikleyen diyalog inşası, kadınların öz güveninin tamiri, basitleştirme ve hak bilinci uyandırma taktiklerini geliştirmişlerdir. İlaveten kadınları güçlendirmek için kız kardeşlik dayanışmasını ve öz savunma taktiklerini geliştirmişlerdir. Toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği ve ayrımcılık yapmama normlarını daha anlaşılır ve yankılanır kılmak için, ana kavramları basitleştirmişler, yerel dili kullanmışlar ve günlük hayattan örnekler üretmişlerdir. Önemli bir diğer husus ise, yerelleştiricilerin seküler bir tutum içinde dini kişisel bir inanç konusu olarak ele almaları ve insan hakları ile dini konuları birbirinden ayırmalarıdır. Antakya’daki norm yerelleştiricileri savunuculuk taktikleri de geliştirmiştir. Örneğin, kaynaklarını çoğaltmak için yerel ve ulusal ittifaklar inşa etmişlerdir. İlaveten bir savunuculuk taktiği olan adlandırma ve utandırmayı yerel otoritelerin etkinliğini arttırmak ve şiddet uygulayan erkekleri caydırmak ve dönüştürmek için kullanmışlardır.

Trabzon ve Antakya örneklemelerindeki norm yerelleşmesi süreçlerine karşılaştırmalı olarak baktığımızda bazı benzerlikleri ve aynı zamanda farklılaşmayı da görmekteyiz. Benzerliklere bakacak olursak, örneğin yerelleştiricilerin norma erişim kanallarında, kullandıkları kaynaklarda, kurdukları ittifaklarda, hedef kitlelerinde ve taktiklerinde birebir olmasa da benzeşmeler gözlemlemek mümkündür. Bu benzeşmeler bir takım sebeplerden dolayı şaşırtıcı değildir. Öncelikle, yerel aktörler kadınlara yönelik şiddetle mücadele ederken insan hakları

normlarını ve yaklaşımını benimsedikleri için benzer tanılayıcı ve çözüm bulucu çerçevelmeyi kullanmaları, benzer kitlelere ulaşmaları ve benzer taktikleri kullanmaları olasıdır. İlâveten, yerelleştiriciler, küresel ve ulusal alandaki aktörlerden ve farklı yerellerdeki sivil toplum örgütlerinden öğrenebilir, deneyim paylaşabilir ve birbirlerini etkileyebilirler. Günümüzde etkin bir şekilde kullanılan sosyal medya ve internet de yerelleştiricilerin birbirleriyle etkileşimini hızlandırmıştır. Bir başka ifadeyle, toplumsal cinsiyet temelli şiddetle mücadele ederken aynı fikirsel altyapıyı benimseyen farklı yerellerdeki norm girişimcileri, etkileşimli öğrenme ve öykünüm içinde olabileceklerinden bir takım benzerlikler göstermeleri kaçınılmazdır. Aynı zamanda, Trabzon ve Antakya'daki norm yerelleşmesi süreçleri azımsanmayacak farklılıklara da sahiptir. Bu farklılaşmanın başat sebebi ise yerelleştiricilerin farklı sosyal, kültürel ve siyasi çevreler içinde olmalarıdır. Diğer bir deyişle, aktörlerin normları yaymaya çalıştıkları yerel çevre, onların kaynaklarını, odak gruplarını ve taktiklerini şekillendirir. Örneğin, Antakya'daki kadın aktivistler, Türkiye'de 1980 darbesinin hemen akabinde, Suriye iç savaşı sürecinde ve Gezi Parkı protestoları sürecinde kolaylıkla mobilize olabilmişler ve kadın haklarını öne çıkaran gündemlerini geniş halk kitlelerine tanıtabilmişlerdir. Ancak, sivil toplumun göreceli olarak sosyal baskı altında olduğu, sokağa çıkma ve protesto kültürünün çok gelişmediği Trabzon'da bu durumdan bahsedememekteyiz. Bu gibi farklılıklar yerel bağlamların sosyo-kültürel ve politik farklılıklarından ötürü olabileceği gibi, yerelleştiricilerin kendi tercihleriyle de alakalı olabilir. Antakya'da güçlü bir sivil toplum ve protesto kültürü varken, Trabzon'da aynı derecede bir kültürden bahsetmek güçtür. Başka bir farklılaşma, yerelleştiricilerin din ve kadın hakları bağlantısına yaklaşımlarında ortaya çıkmaktadır. Trabzon'daki norm yerelleştiricileri kadın hakları normlarını yayarken dini yorumlayarak, aslında 'gerçek' İslamın kadın haklarını savunduğu mesajını vermektedirler. Yani, Trabzon gibi dinin insanların hayatında başat rol oynadığı bir yerelde din ile kadın haklarını bağdaştırmaktadırlar. Antakya'da ise yerelleştiriciler toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğinin dünyevi bir mevzu olduğunu savunmakta ve inanç meselesi olan din ile kadın haklarını birbirinden ayırmak suretiyle normu yaymaktadırlar. Başka bir ifadeyle, Antakya örneklemindeki yerelleşmede 'bölmeleme/kompartmanlaştırma' varken, Trabzon örnekleminde din

ve toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği arasında ‘köprü kurma’ çabası vardır. Antakya’da gözlemlenen bu farklılık çok kültürlülük ve seküler yaşam tarzının nispeten daha güçlü olmasına bağlanılabilir. Bu bulgular ortaya koymaktadır ki yereldeki sosyal, kültürel ve siyasi yapısal dinamikler norm yerelleştiricilerinin yöntemlerini, eylemlerini ve taktiklerini şekillendirmektedir. Yerel aktörlerin toplumsal konumları, ideolojik zeminleri, yereldeki kadınların maruz kaldıkları şiddet formları, yerelleştiricilerin ittifakları ve karşıtları, kaynakları, fırsatları ve zorlukları farklılaşabilir. Bütün bunlar da uluslararası normların farklı yerelerde yayılımı için belirleyicidir.

Teoriye Yönelik Çıkarımlar ve Öneriler

Bu çalışma, Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplinindeki norm ve norm yayılımı literatürüne katkı sağlayacak bir dizi çıkarım ve öneri sunmaktadır. İlk olarak, Türkiye ulusal bağlamından seçilen Trabzon ve Antakya örneklemi işaret etmektedir ki normların başarılı bir şekilde yayılabilmesi ve uygulanması için yerelde yankı bulması hayati önemdedir. Bu bulgu hangi faktörlerin yerelde norm yankılanımını arttırdığı ya da ket vurduğu sorusunu da sormayı gerektirir. Bu can alıcı soruyu cevaplayabilmek için yerel dinamiklere, süreçlere ve yerel aktörlere odaklanmak gerekmektedir. Fakat böyle bir araştırma alanı norm yayılımına ikili bir yaklaşımdansa, üçlü bir yaklaşımı gerektirmektedir. Norm yayılımı literatürünü oluşturan çalışmaların büyük çoğunluğu uluslararası düzey ile devlet düzeylerinin etkileşimine odaklanmakta ve böylelikle norm yayılımına ikili bir yaklaşım sergilemektedir. Fakat, ikili yaklaşımlar kısıtlı kalmaktadır çünkü yerel düzeydeki aktörleri, dinamikleri ve süreçleri gözardı etmektedirler. Bu çalışma göstermiştir ki yerelleşme norm yayılımının olmazsa olmaz ve ayrılmaz bir parçasıdır. Bu nedenle, norm yayılımını daha iyi anlayabilmek için yerel düzeyi de dikkate almak gerekliliği vardır. Norm yayılımında küreseli, ulusalı ve yereli entegre eden üçlü bir yaklaşım, temel sorular arasında olan ne zaman ve hangi koşullar altında normların daha yaygın bir şekilde içselleştirildiğini cevaplamızda yardımcı olacaktır.

Norm yayılımına üçlü yaklaşımın ana özelliklerine bakacak olursak, bu çalışma önermektedir ki küresel, ulusal ve yerel arasında daimi ve karşılıklı

etkileşim vardır. Ayrıca, kabul edilmelidir ki bu üç alan arasındaki ilişki hiyerarşik ve yukarıdan aşağı dikey yapılanmada olma gerekliliğinde değildir. Küresel, ulusal ve yerel yatay ilişkilene içinde olabilir. Örneğin, yerel aktörler ulusal aktörleri es geçip doğrudan küresel aktörlerle ve küresel alanla yatay ilişkilenebilir ya da bu durumun tam tersi de mümkündür. Bir başka örnek, küresel, ulusal ve yerel norm girişimcileri hiyerarşik olmayan yatay ilişkiler geliştirebilir ve bu çerçevede savunuculuk kaynaklarını ve deneyimlerini paylaşabilirler. Dahası, norm yayılımına getirilen üçlü yaklaşım norm yayılımının çift yönlü bir süreç olduğunu da işaret etmektedir. Yerel düzeydeki deneyimler, zorluklar, işe yarayan pratikler ya da başarısızlıklar uluslararası normların gelişimi için geri bildirim sağlar.

Bu çalışmanın norm yayılımı literatürünün teorik gelişimine yönelik ikinci önerisi ise aktörler ve yapılar arasındaki ilişki ile ilgilidir. İnşacı terörden beslenen yerelleşme perspektifinin ortaya koyduğu, yerel aktörlerin iki farklı yapıyla aynı anda etkileşimidir. Birinci yapı uluslararası normlardır. Bu normlar yerel aktörlerce benimsenir ve aynı zamanda yorumlama ve pratiğe dökme yollarıyla yerelde yeniden inşa edilirler. İkinci yapı ise yerelin kendine özgü sosyo-kültürel normlarıdır ve bu yapılar yerelden yerele değişim gösterir. Yerelleştiriciler yerel yapıları kendi içinden değiştirmeye ve dönüştürmeye çabalarlar. Yerel aktörlerle bu iki yapı arasındaki etkileşim ve karşılıklı inşa süreci göstermektedir ki norm yayılımını daha iyi anlayabilmek için yapıların değişmezliğini varsayan yaklaşımlardan uzaklaşmalıyız. Başka bir ifadeyle, yerel ya da uluslararası normları sabit ve değişmez olarak almak yerine, esnek, yoruma açık, şekillendirilebilir olarak görebiliriz. Normlar yerelleştiricilerin günlük pratiklerinde sürekli bir yeniden yapılanma içindedirler.

Bu çalışmanın teoriye yönelik son önerisi, yerel aktörlerin uyum inşa etme çabalarıyla alakalıdır. Norm yerelleşmesi perspektifi uluslararası normların yorumlanabileceğini ön görse de, bu, yorumlamanın uluslararası normun özünü değiştirecek şekilde olması anlamına gelmez. Böyle bir durumda normdan ve normun yayılımından bahsetmek de mümkün olmaz. Bu nedenle normların bazı devlet ve devlet dışı aktörlerce çıkarları doğrultusunda stratejik olarak kullanılmasıyla ya da tadili ile norm yerelleştiricilerin uyum inşa etme çabalarını birbirinden ayırmamız gerekmektedir. Antakya ve Trabzon örneklemi

göstermektedir ki normların esnekliği yerelleştiricilerin normu pratiğe ve yerel bağlama çevirirken işini kolaylaştırmaktadır. Yerelleştiriciler normu pratiğe dökerken normun özünü değiştirmeden daha anlaşılır, sindirilebilir ve çekici bir forma sokabilirler. Bu da göstermektedir ki normlar taşınmaz kazanmış değişmez kaideler olsalardı norm yayılımı ve yerelleşme çok daha güç bir çaba olurdu.

Uygulamaya Yönelik Çıkarımlar ve Öneriler

Bu çalışma aynı zamanda uygulamaya yönelik öneriler sunmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, artık devletlerin insan hakları normlarının yerelde yayılmasında ve uygulamasında tek başına yükümlülük sahibi ve birincil aktörler olmadığını göstermiştir. Bir başka bulgu da, Türkiye örneğinde olduğu gibi, devlet aktörlerinin 1990'lerden bu yana süre gelen uluslararası taahhütlerine ve yükümlülüklerine rağmen, yerel düzeyde devlet öncülüğündeki mekanizmaların kurumsallaşması ve etkili bir şekilde uygulanması (örneğin sığınma evlerinin açılması, hukuki ve sosyal destek hizmetleri ve kadına yönelik şiddet mağdurları için koruma mekanizmaları, etkili soruşturma ve kovuşturma mekanizmaları, yerel eylem planları vb.) on yıllar alabilmektedir. Trabzon ve Antakya örneklerinde görüldüğü gibi, devlet eliyle mücadelenin somut adımları ancak 2012 yılından sonra atılmıştır. Bu adımlar, yereldeki kadın hareketi tarafından çok daha önce başlatılan mücadele sürecine eklemlenmiş ve norm yayılımını güçlendirmiştir.

Bunun yanı sıra, yereldeki devlet bazlı aktörlerin girişimleri, temel sorumlulukları olan şiddeti önleme, farkındalık yaratma, kadınların güçlendirilmesi ve toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği ve ayrımcılık yapmama temelli sosyal dönüşüm yaratma konularında sınırlı kalabilmektedir. Bu sorunun çözümü için, günümüzde her geçen gün sayısı artan devlet dışı aktörler (örneğin bireyler, STK'lar, sosyal hareketler, vb.) hem hak sahibi hem de paydaşlar olarak normların yayılması ve uygulanması için çaba göstermektedirler.

Ayrıca, Türk ulusal bağlamında incelenen iki özgün yerel ortamda kadınların insan haklarının yerelleşmesinin detaylı analizi göstermiştir ki uluslararası ve küresel aktörlerin yerel dinamikleri, süreçleri ve aktörleri çok daha ciddiye alması gerekir. Bu çalışma, norm yerelleşmesinin otomatik ve pürüzsüz bir

süreç olmadığını teyit etmiştir. Daha ziyade içinde direnç, gerilim ve mücadele bulunduran oldukça ilişkisel ve politik bir süreçtir. Dolayısıyla norm yayılması etkin ve yaratıcı aktörlerin varlığını gerektirir. Trabzon ve Antakya örnekleri, özellikle yereldeki devlet dışı aktörlerin (ör: bireyler ve kollektif yerel aktörler) küresel normların yerelin gerçekliklerine cevap verecek şekilde uyumlulaştırılmasında çok önemli bir rol oyandığını açıkça göstermektedir. Bu durum, yerel aktörleri desteklemenin ve güçlendirmenin de norm yayılma olasılığını arttıracaklarını göstermektedir. Kısacası, yalnızca devlet aktörleri (ör: hükümet, bakanlıklar) ile değil, aynı zamanda yereldeki aktörler ve hareketlerle de ilişki kurulmalıdır. Maddi ve maddi olmayan kaynakların tahsisi (ör: fonlama ve finansal destek, deneyim paylaşımı, kurumsal beceriler, bilgi birikimi, vb.) ve yerelle ilgili programların tasarlanması yerel aktörleri güçlendirecek ve böylelikle norm yayılımını kolaylaştıracaktır. Örneğin, Birleşmiş Milletler tarafından Trabzon’da uygulanan Kadın Dostu Kentler programı, katalizör rolü üstlendi ve kentte kadınların insan hakları savunuculuğunu destekledi. Yereli ve yerel aktörleri hedefleyen bu tür programlar, sürdürülebilir oldukları sürece tabanda gerçek değişim yaratma açısından büyük bir potansiyele sahiptir. Bu politika önerisi hükümetler, bakanlıklar ve yerel otoriteler için de geçerlidir. Yerel aktivistler ve STK’lar ile işbirliği yapmak ve koordineli bir şekilde çalışmak normun uygulamasına büyük ölçüde katkıda bulunacaktır.

Bu çalışmanın uygulamaya yönelik son bir önerisi ise, savaş, çatışma, iklim değişikliği, çevrenin bozulması, ekonomik kriz ve Soğuk Savaş gibi sistemik değişikliklerin, uluslararası ilişkilerde ya da başka bir deyişle “yüksek siyasette” yerel sorunlar olarak görülmemesidir. Yakından incelendiğinde, Trabzon, Sovyetler Birliği’nin dağılmasının ve Soğuk Savaş’ın sona ermesinin olumsuz etkilerini en çok hisseden yerlerden birisidir. İklim değişikliği doğayla doğrudan bağ kuran kadınların yaşantısını derinden etkilemektedir. Petrol fiyatlarındaki yükseliş, ailelerin dar bütçesini derinden etkilemekte ve erkek işsizliği şiddeti arttırabilmektedir. Suriye İç Savaşı da dahil olmak üzere Orta Doğu’daki savaşlar, Antakya’nın sosyal, ekonomik ve demografik yapısını sarsmaktadır ve çoğunlukla yerel ve Suriyeli kadın ve kız çocuklarının hayatlarını etkilemektedir. Bu görüş, küresel/uluslararası/ulusal aktörlerin yerel deneyimlerle daha çok ilgilendikçe,

güncel sorunlara ve krizlere yönelik daha etkili yanıtlar üretebildiklerini göstermektedir.

İleri Çalışmalar

Son olarak, norm yerelleşmesi ile ilgili gelecekte yapılacak araştırmalar ne yönde olurdu? Bu çalışmada, kadınlara yönelik şiddetle mücadelede kadın hakları normlarının (ör: toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği ve ayrımcılık yapmama) yayılımına ve yerelleşmesine odaklanılmıştır. Ayrıca, Türkiye içinde farklı sosyo-kültürel özelliklere sahip iki kent örnekleme (Trabzon ve Antakya) üzerinden norm yerelleşmesi dinamikleri ve süreçleri derinlemesine incelenmiştir. Dolayısıyla, yapılan norm yerelleşmesi çalışması kapsamı itibarıyla ile sınırlıdır. Bu çalışmanın olası bir uzantısı, örneklem seçimini ve alan çalışmasını farklı illere ve bölgelere genişletmek olacaktır. Trabzon ve Antakya örneklemelerinde norm yerelleşmesi incelemesi, teori gelişimi için yeni bilgiler sağlamaktadır. Yani, Trabzon ve Antakya'nın kendine has yerel yapısı ve norm savunucuları, uluslararası normların nasıl sahiplenildiğine ve yerel bağlama nasıl dönüştürüldüğüne dair örnekler sunmaktadır. Türkiye'de daha farklı yerlere normların nasıl ulaştığını ve oradaki norm yerelleşmesi süreçlerini ve dinamiklerini analiz etmek ve/veya karşılaştırmak da oldukça faydalı olacaktır. Ayrıca, norm yerelleşmesi dinamikleri ve süreçleri, farklı ulusal bağlamlarda analiz edilebilir. Örneğin bu çalışmanın üçüncü bölümünde çalışmalarına yer verilen Merry, Levitt ve araştırma ekibi; Pekin (Çin), Baroda (Hindistan), Lima (Peru) ve New York (Amerika Birleşik Devletleri)'da böyle bir çaba içine girmişlerdir. Bu tür çalışmalar elbette norm yerelleşme dinamikleri ve süreçlerine ilişkin yeni anlayışlar veya görüşler kazanmamıza olanak verecektir. Çalışmaların bu şekilde genişletilmesi, tetikleyicilerin daha iyi anlaşılması, norm yerelleşmesinde karşılaşılabilecek potansiyel zorluklar ve fırsatları (yani başarılı bir norm yayılımı için nelerin işe yaradığı, nelerin işe yaramadığı ve nedenleri) daha iyi anlamak açısından oldukça yararlı olacaktır.

Bu çalışma farklı yerel ve ulusal bağlamlara genişletilebileceği gibi, farklı konulara da genişletilebilir. Norm yerelleşme süreçlerinin ve dinamiklerinin örneğin çevre, çocuk hakları, LGBTİ hakları, çatışma çözme/dönüştürme süreçleri veya

insan haklarının başka alanları gibi farklı konularda nasıl işlediğini analiz etmek, norm yayılma süreçlerinin kavranmasına da katkıda bulunacaktır.

Yerelleşme araştırması ayrıca yereldeki aktörler boyutuyla da geliştirilebilir. Ana akım norm yayılımı literatürünün ve uluslararası ilişkiler disiplininin devlet odaklılığını eleştiren yerelleşme perspektifi, deneyimleri, çabaları, zorlukları ve taktikleri de dahil olmak üzere yerel düzeydeki devlet dışı aktörlerin aktif ve yaratıcı aktörlük rolünü ön plana çıkarmıştır. Ancak, devlet dışı aktörlere yapılan bu vurgu ileriki çalışmalarda “iyi” yerel aktivistler/sosyal hareketler/platformlar/STK'lar ve “kötü” devlet aktörleri veya uluslararası normları uygulama konusunda “her zaman” isteksiz veya yetersiz olan yerel yönetimler şeklinde bir ikililik varsayımı yaratmamalıdır. Başka bir deyişle, teorik olarak çok çeşitli devlet ve devlet dışı aktörler (devlet kurumları, yerel kamu otoriteleri, belediyeler, siyasi partiler, profesyoneller, akademisyenler, entelektüeller, sanatçılar, sıradan kişiler, kozmopolit seçkinler, STK'lar, sendikalar, dini liderler, cemaat önderleri, uluslararası kuruluşların ulusal/yerel birimleri vb.) aktörlük rolü oynayabilir ve uluslararası normları yerelleştirmek için çabalayabilirler. Gelecekte benzer çalışmalar yürütecek araştırmacılara, farklı yerel ve ulusal bağlamlarda norm yerelleşmesi süreçlerini incelerken, hem devlet hem de devlet-dışı çok çeşitli aktörlerin aktif norm savunucusu olabileceğini göz önüne almaları tavsiye edilmektedir. Örneğin, devlet ve devlet dışı aktörlerin gerçek anlamda işbirliği yaptığı alanlarda norm yerelleşmesini incelemek, norm yayılma süreçlerinin yeni boyutlarını ortaya çıkaracaktır. Bir başka ilginç örnek, dini liderlerin norm yerelleştiricisi olarak aktif rol oynadığı yerel bağlamlar olabilir.

Norm yerelleşmesi literatürü yeni filizlenen ve derinlikli incelemesi yapılacak yeni örneklemeler aracılığıyla teorik ve kavramsal anlamda geliştirilmeye açık bir araştırma alanıdır.

G. TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

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