

Subaltern Mothering and the Political Elsewhere

Militant Mothers of Kurdish Resistance towards a Stateless Freedom

Mediha Sorma

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Denny Hall, Room 211

University of Washington

The subaltern epistemology that emerges from Kurdish maternal practices and racialized grief offers a new theoretical framework to “envision forms of political action and alternative futures that are at once immanent in and yet seemingly outside of the dominant historical imaginations of existing social movements.

Through historicizing the construction of the “Kurdish difference” by the Turkish nation state, with a focus on the intersection of gender and race, Sorma reveals the contradictions/failures of the modern statecraft and multiple sites/forms of resistance emerging from them.

Mediha Sorma is a PhD Candidate studying Feminist Studies in the Department of Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies at University of Washington. She holds BA and MA degrees from Bogazici University in Istanbul, Turkey. Her primary fields of interest are feminist theory, critical race theory, Turkish studies, reproduction and motherhood, queer theory and transgender studies. Her dissertation examines the ways in which Kurdish women create insurgency through radical/militant practices of mothering that defy the boundaries of Global North feminist scholarship on reproduction and motherhood. Through an analysis of the racialized grief, performative politics of resistance, militarization of the Kurdish reproductive body, the child and the domestic space, Sorma centers Kurdish mothers around a genealogy of Kurdish feminist praxis against state racism.

