

The denial of Armenian massacre has created a milieu of secrecy and silence among the inheritors of victims and perpetrators alike, establishing the ‘unspeakable as heritage’. Despite the organized forgetting, this secrecy is being unravelled and disentangled in affective embodied encounters in potentially errant and ambiguous ways. To address this productive-affective dimension, Yeğenoğlu will examine a survivor story and the new milieu created by the affective encounter between an Armenian grandmother, who survived her abduction during the forced deportation of Armenians and has lived her life as a Muslim with a Turkish name, keeping her Armenian-Christian heritage secret for many years, revealing this secret to her granddaughter only at a very old age. Fethiye Çetin, the granddaughter, now a prominent human rights lawyer in Turkey, wrote a memoir describing the encounter with her grandmother. Interpreting this memoir, Yeğenoğlu suggests that affect, such as the one shared by Fethiye Çetin and her grandmother, ought not to be modeled according to a stimulus-response schema or the dichotomy of activity and passivity, but rather should be seen as located in the in-between or in the space of relation. Affective encounters move from the past energizing the present, are creative elements, and enable new and unforeseen milieus and mediations. Given that the deeds of the past refuse to remain buried in a climate of secrecy, the medium of innumerable instances of affective encounters allows for the emergence of new incidents, different re-enactments of the past, and perhaps new identities.

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Respondent: Alice von Bieberstein
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ICI Lecture Series **ERRANS environ/s**

There is hardly a discipline, field, or discourse within the natural and social sciences nor the humanities that hasn’t long been touched and transformed by the notions of milieu, environment, or Umwelt. The recent revival and proliferation of ecological discourses can be understood, at least in part, as a response to the increasingly complete immersion in technologically in-formed environments.

The transdisciplinary impact of these new concepts has not yet been captured, nor is it clear that it can be captured, but while the life sciences play a prominent role in them (having adopted, in the 19th century, concepts from physics and transgressed into the social sciences, for example, as racist discourses and social Darwinism), they don’t operate as the leading science in this transformation. Instead, this process appears to be a multidirectional, non-hierarchizable, and errant movement, itself constituting a complex ecology of knowledge. **ERRANS environ/s** contemplates aspects of this frequently divergent, potentially errant, and certainly ongoing transformation of not only the sciences or cultures of knowledge, but also cultural and artistic production at large. It will investigate the ways in which an attention to environments can have the effect of dissolving boundaries or making them permeable, questioning clear-cut distinctions, undermining naive ontologies, decentering the subject, folding nature and culture, and producing complex political ecologies attuned to far-reaching entanglements.

Meyda Yeğenoğlu

Affective Encounters and the Disruption of Silence