

of the figure of the beloved gives way historically to the ideologically ossified image of the companionate wife. This literary-historical argument, then, supports the sociopolitical insight that the legal redefinition of marriage had complex religious, social, and cultural causes. Awareness of such claims about the relationship between legal and literary discourse can help us read Iranian literature in relation to Iranian politics. Motlagh's observations are important for the study of cinema as well, something she herself acknowledges in her concluding remarks where she encourages others to continue where she has left off. Though focused on the literary, her observations about narrative and legal realism have deeply suggestive implications for Iranian film. This reviewer hopes that she finds willing and equally capable interlocutors.

NERGIS ERTÜRK, *Grammatology and Literary Modernity in Turkey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). Pp. 240. \$74 cloth.

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*Grammatology and Literary Modernity in Turkey* by Nergis Ertürk is an innovative study of Turkish literary modernity of the late Ottoman and early republican periods. A major goal of the book is to connect the history of modern Turkish literature to the transformations of Turkish language and writing since the mid-19th century, which occurred through cultural and linguistic changes such as the vernacularization of language, the emergence of phonocentrism (defined as the “privileging of spoken language over its written forms,” p. x), and its adoption as state policy in post-Ottoman Turkey. The originality of the work lies primarily in the author's employment of a poststructuralist theoretical framework following the works of Michel Foucault and particularly Jacques Derrida. The work begins and ends with references to Derrida, whose writings also inspired the book's title and one of its central themes: “Grammatology.” The book brings poststructural cultural and literary analysis to the study of Turkish literature, while situating the Turkish case in the broader context of literary and linguistic changes in other postcolonial settings, such as Indonesia and India. Written at the intersection of history, comparative literature, and cultural studies, the book will appeal to audiences across several disciplines, who will no doubt read the book from different perspectives. My comments here unavoidably reflect the perspective of a historian.

The book is organized into two parts, following an introduction that locates the work in its relevant theoretical and historical contexts. In Part I, the first chapter connects the emergence of the Ottoman Turkish novel to the 19th-century “communications revolution” (p. 34) (marked by the emergence of new print technologies and the spread of newspapers), which ushered in new debates over reforming the Ottoman writing system to close the gap between written and spoken language.

Chapter 2 seeks to demonstrate that phonocentrism and vernacularization took an explicitly nationalist character during the Young Turk and early republican periods. Ertürk argues that the processes of phonetization and vernacularization were not simply about transcribing “authentic national speech” (p. 15), but were in fact related to the generalization of one specific vernacular at the expense of other languages and dialects as part of an ideological project to nationalize a multilingual Anatolian population. This general point is quite well known in the field. What is new here is the author's poststructuralist interpretation of literary texts to reveal how literature reflected and contributed to the nationalization of (Ottoman) Turkish. This chapter also offers

a critical overview of the Turkish language reform debates, the adoption of a Latin-based phonetic Turkish alphabet in 1928, attempts at language purification, and the rise and fall of the Sun Language Theory. Ertürk's conclusion here that the language reforms produced an "amnesiac majority of modern Turkish speakers and writers" (p. 103) could perhaps be modulated with the recognition that a vast majority of Turkish citizens could not read or write any language before or after the language reforms.

Part II of the book analyzes selected works of three influential literary figures of the post-1922 period—Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Peyami Safa, and Nazım Hikmet [Ran]—and shows how the language of their literary and journalistic writings did not always conform to and defend, but rather sometimes criticized and resisted, the official language policies. Ertürk shows that while Tanpınar's conservative critique (expressing a sense of a profound cultural crisis) questioned the very possibility of cultural memory in a language reformed to erase that memory, Safa's writings (supporting monolingualism and vernacularization) reveal a skepticism over the attainment of complete assimilation into a nation unified by a common language.

Perhaps the most interesting section of the book is the final chapter, in which Ertürk takes up the case of Nazım Hikmet, not as a poet on the margins because of his communist affiliation, but rather as an influential literary figure whose works complemented the writings of his conservative modernist contemporaries Tanpınar and Safa. Like Tanpınar and Safa, Nazım Hikmet was involved in literary and journalistic debates over language in the 1920s and 1930s. Through an analysis of several of his influential works, such as *The Epic of Sheik Bedreddin and Other Poems* (New York: Persea Books, 1977) and *Human Landscapes from My Country* (New York: Persea Books, 2002), Ertürk demonstrates that despite his support for closing the gap between written and spoken language, Nazım Hikmet refused to take vernacularization as an oppressive or homogenizing process as he allowed the characters in his epic poems and novels to speak Ottoman Turkish, Arabic, Persian, Russian, and other languages. The one shortcoming Ertürk identifies in Nazım Hikmet's otherwise revealing writing that opens Turkish to other languages is his failure "to imagine the gendered subaltern as subject" (p. 180). Given the author's occasional remarks concerning the gendered dimensions of Turkish linguistic and literary modernity and given the scarcity of gender perspectives in Turkish literary and cultural history, it would have been interesting to include a woman (perhaps a feminist) writer such as Halide Edip Adıvar or Adalet Ağaoğlu (the latter admittedly would have extended the time span of the study). The book concludes with a brief overview of the recent changes in the Turkish legal framework concerning language rights and with a call in the language of Derrida for embracing multilingualism.

While a critical stance toward the Turkish nationalist project combined with a literary-cultural analysis informed by poststructuralism produces a refreshing analysis, a broader perspective and some recognition of the modernist and developmentalist drive of the republican project would have been helpful. For example, reading the *Millet Mektepleri* literacy drive in the aftermath of the 1928 alphabet change simply as a "disciplinary technology" in a Foucauldian sense (see, e.g., p. 94, footnote 62) overlooks the long processes of cultural change that made literacy both a condition and a means of modernity, as has been explored by scholars such as François Georgeon and Benjamin Fortna.

In her critique of the early republican-era language reforms as "spectralization" (p. 103) and as "emptying out the inner cultural domain" (p. 87), the author argues that it was possible for "a Western-oriented elite of bureaucrats, military officials, and teachers" to reconcile themselves "with the foreignness of the new writing by embracing the discourse of official nationalism" and "to produce an interiority within a fictively indigenous, always already Europeanized Turkishness" (p. 105). Thus, while making a case that the cultural reconciliation of the "elite" was in fact inauthentic or artificial ("fictively indigenous"), the author argues that in the provinces it was "the resilient local and interpersonal grammar of Islam, which the

politics of phonocentrism could not destroy, [that] became the means for the reconstruction of an alternative identitarianism” (p. 105). Similarly, while criticizing the “politics of phonocentrism” (p. 105) in post-Ottoman Turkey for creating “the externalized interiority of the disavowed ‘Ottoman,’ along with the Republic’s women, peasants, fundamentalists, criminals, communists, and ethnolinguistic others, the remainders of the Kemalist revolution” (p. 103), the author seems to consider Islam as the authentic cultural source for building an alternative identity, at the risk of replacing one totalizing ideology with another.

Ertürk’s passionate discussion of the violent effects of the Turkish language reforms would have benefited from considering recent historical and anthropological research on the effects of early republican reforms. This scholarship has shown that the effects of the Kemalist reforms in the provinces were not always as radical or complete as previously assumed. Although Ertürk does not locate her work within this evolving scholarship in modern Turkish history, *Grammatology* nevertheless contributes to that scholarship by demonstrating how the works of several writers, journalists, and poets diverged from the idealized language promoted by the state, even when these writers supported aspects of the state’s language policies. Overall this is a well researched and carefully written study that specialists as well as graduate students in Turkish literature, Turkish culture and history, comparative literature, literary criticism, and postcolonial studies will find useful in and outside of the classroom.

EYAL CHOWERS, *The Political Philosophy of Zionism: Trading Jewish Words for a Hebraic Land* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Pp. 274. \$99.00 cloth.

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In this carefully written book, Eyal Chowers makes the case that while Zionism is born of modernity it differs from other 19th-century nationalisms. His book lingers on late 19th- and early 20th-century thought, placing Zionist conceptions of time, building (by which Chowers means the pouring of concrete and the building of houses, along with the idea of a community that “willfully shapes both space and matter” [p. 121]), and language in the larger intellectual context of the period. It is an important achievement, as Chowers’s patient examination of Zionism’s intellectual origins allows us to better understand key aspects of contemporary Zionism. Yet his emphasis on what is particular to Zionism does not always help us understand the general challenges that any democratic and nationalist country such as Israel faces.

While many books on Jewish nationalism focus on European persecution of the Jews, Chowers argues that Zionism cannot be understood without taking into account its temporal imagination. Modernity changed the way people viewed time. Many people (taking their cues from Kant) came to argue that things would get progressively better as time passed. Each generation would advance morally, which also meant that each generation would have an obligation to try to make things better for the next. Although Jews for much of the 19th century were attracted to this idea of progress, after the Dreyfus affair it lost its resonance with many Jews. Chowers argues that what united many of the different kinds of subsequent Zionist thinkers—from Herzl to Ahad Ha’am to Jabotinsky—was a disenchantment with the ideology of progress. Modernity might bring technological progress, they concluded, but this need not entail moral and political progress as well.

Despite the skepticism of some Zionists about moral progress, those migrating to Palestine believed that they were building a new society and a new man, that “history was up for grabs, creating an interval in which innovative narratives could be consciously imagined, formed and