

Translating Affect as an Act of Transnational Feminist Solidarity: *Kindred* in Turkish

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In *This Bridge We Call Home*, explaining her metaphysics of interconnectivity, Chicana feminist Gloria E. Anzaldúa calls on her readers saying, “Although all your cultures reject the idea that you can know the other, you believe that besides love, pain might open this closed passage by reaching through the wound to connect. ... Using wounds as openings to become vulnerable and available (present) to others means staying in your body” (2002, 571-572). In my paper, I discuss a feminist translation project that I recently completed – the Turkish translation of Octavia Butler’s classic science-fiction novel, *Kindred* (1979), which was inspired by Anzaldúa’s political and affective vision of interconnectivity. *Kindred* tells the story of an African-American woman, Dana, who finds herself travel back and forth in time between 1976’s California and a plantation in antebellum Maryland, where she finds her ancestors among slaveholders and enslaved people. Through Dana’s story, *Kindred*’s readers time-travel between the pre-Civil-War and post-Civil-War US and are summoned to re-encounter their violent (and unfinished) history of slavery/racism and confront the collective pain that has built the contemporary US. This is how the novel shows us that we cannot “recover” from our violent past by denying and forgetting it. Rather, we need to recognize others’ pain, which is ours, and use our own wounds to connect with them so that we heal together because we can only heal together. This is precisely why I decided to translate *Kindred* into Turkish. On the one hand, by expanding the linguistic borders of the painful story through translation, I hoped to expand the geographic circle of the collective healing that it aims to activate. Transnational solidarities are only possible with the establishment and expansion of such epistemic and affective bonds across borders. On the other hand, I believed the story was emotionally powerful enough to inspire similar self-confrontations in Turkey (e.g. on the national denial of the Armenian Genocide). In other words, Butler’s mission in writing *Kindred* and my mission in translating it have coalesced despite the two different (yet similar) geohistorical realities the two books navigate. In my paper, starting with the question, how and why to translate pain, I discuss the ways in which these affective and political missions materialized in my translation of *Kindred* and why I consider such cross-border affectivities as a key practice of transnational feminist solidarities.