

rites of the second spring: situational analysis of  
postmenopausal hormone replacement therapy in Turkey

by

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation argues the medicalization of menopause in Turkey became possible due to the coexistence of changes that accompany the globalization of neoliberalism, such as the diffusion of the idea of the patient-as-consumer; and remnants of core ideals of modernity, such as the embrace of beliefs in Western science, technology and medicine that comprised “modern” identity. In this context, the increased influence of global pharmaceutical corporations and the neoliberal privatization of the health sector after the 1980s turned the modern subject formation of the “conscious citizen/woman” discourse into one of the “conscious consumer/woman.” The concept of *bilinç*, which can be translated as consciousness or awareness, constitutes one of the main discursive continuities between modernization project and the post 1980s neoliberal era.

The key to the dynamics of acceptance and refusal of HRT and the medicalization of menopause is the coexistence of multiple social worlds, each with their own concerns, interests, ideas and reactions to aging, gender, and being healthy. These social worlds in question are especially observed in the arena of the clinic, with the intersections, overlaps and mutual adjustments that menopausal women, doctors and pharmaceutical representatives engage in when faced with each others’ discourses. Using Adele Clarke’s situational analysis as the theoretical framework as an answer for the multiplicity question and keeping the focus on the “situation,” I aim to provide localized accounts of experiences drawn from nine months of ethnographical research done in gynecology clinics in Istanbul between 2006-2007, and archival research on the media representations of menopause and HRT in Turkey between 1999-2006.