

## Halide Edib Between Modernity and Nationalism

Secil Poyraz

Florida State University

Missoula, MT

[sss06h@my.fsu.edu](mailto:sss06h@my.fsu.edu)

### Abstract:

Halide Edib (Adivar) (1884-1964) occupies a distinguished place in Turkish history and literature. In a literary career that spanned roughly fifty years, she wrote twenty-one novels in Turkish and English along with four collections of short stories, two plays, scores of essays, and two-volume autobiography. These works stretch from her childhood to the most turbulent period in Ottoman/Turkish history—a period informed by grand modernization/westernization projects in conjunction with the development of nationalist and anti-colonial sentiments, and the demarcations of the boundaries of nation-states. It is without a doubt that the nationalist ideologies that characterized the Turkish modernization process impacted Edib's engagement with such basic categories of identity as nation, gender, and religion. To admit the fact of this influence, however, is not to say that she was simply a passive recipient of these ideologies. Rather, as this paper argues, she challenged them to a significant extent in her work. The aim of this paper is to examine how Edib actively engaged nation, nationalism, gender, and religion as sites for the negotiation of Turkish national identity. This paper will also show that with her wide sphere of influence in intellectual and literary circles, Edib played a major role in shaping the ways that these concepts came to be understood in Turkey.

**Short Bio:** Secil Poyraz (Ph.D. Candidate, Florida State University). Ms. Poyraz is a doctoral candidate in Humanities program at Florida State University. Her research interests include gender issues, nationalism and literature in the Middle East.