

**GÜLSÜN KARAMUSTAFA**  
**"MODERNITY UNVEILED /**  
**INTERWEAVING HISTORIES"**  
**INTERPRETATION PACK**

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# INTRODUCTION TO SALT

SALT explores critical and timely issues in visual and material culture, and cultivates innovative programs for research and experimental thinking. Assuming an open attitude and establishing itself as a site of learning and debate, SALT aims to challenge, excite and provoke its visitors by encouraging them to offer critique and response. SALT hosts exhibitions, conferences and public programs; engages in interdisciplinary research projects; and maintains a library and archive of recent art, architecture, design, urbanism, and social and economic histories to make them available for research and public use.

An essential part of SALT's programming is developing ongoing, collaborative partnerships with schools, community and civic organizations through its Interpretation Program. SALT Interpretation is free, and seeks to engage young people through exhibition tours, moving image programs and artist-led collaborative projects. SALT also creates online curriculum guides (Interpretation Packs) for schools and youth organizations, which feature discussion topics, activities and educational resources to accompany each exhibition.

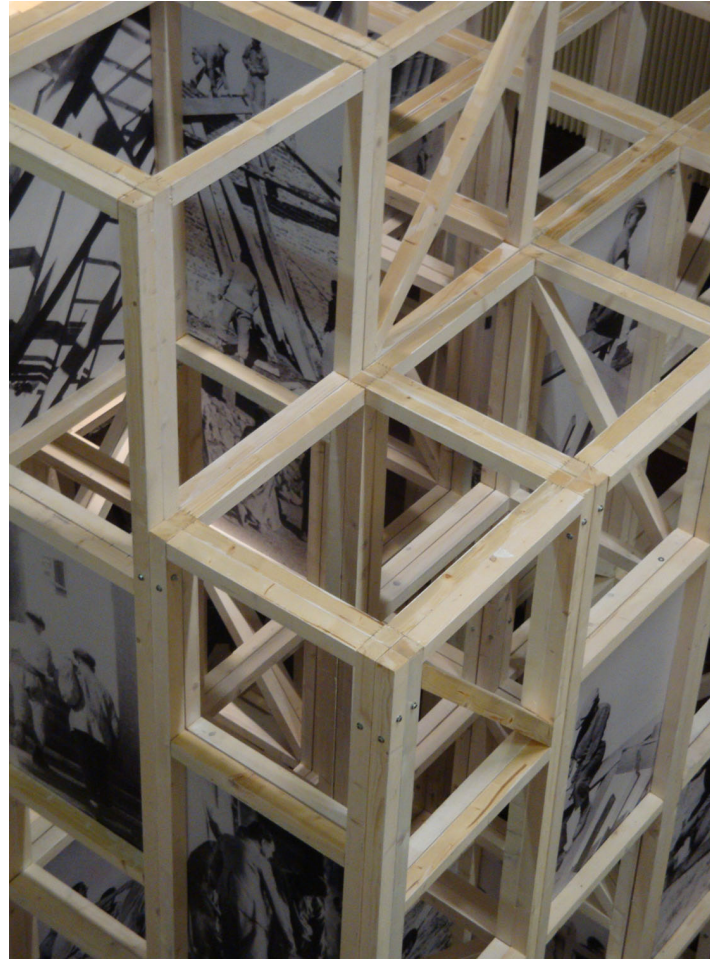


SALT's activities are distributed between two landmark buildings located in walking distance to each other, and also shared via [www.saltonline.org](http://www.saltonline.org). The first building, SALT Beyoğlu, whose program and circulation interiors are dedicated to exhibition and event spaces, opened April 9 on Istiklal Avenue. The second building, SALT Galata, is the former 19th century Imperial Ottoman Bank headquarters designed by Alexandre Vallauray. SALT Galata opens November 2011.

# GÜLSÜN KARAMUSTAFA "MODERNITY UNVEILED / INTERWEAVING HISTORIES"

The darkest period in the history of Europe had peculiar consequences on the formation of the institutions of the young Republic of Turkey. When the specter of fascism made it impossible for Jews and socialists to remain in Middle Europe, many architects, urbanists, teachers, musicians, doctors and artists sought refuge in Turkey. This group helped shape the transformative institutions of the country at a time when local professional knowledge was limited. One of these people was Austria's first woman architect, Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky. Gülsün Karamustafa's *Modernity Unveiled / Interweaving Histories*, first exhibited in Vienna in 2010, reflects upon a lesser-known facet of the remarkable story of Schütte-Lihotzky. Working together with mentor Adolf Loos, and later, at the City Council of Frankfurt, with legendary architect and city planner Ernst May, Schütte-Lihotzky designed public housing, educational facilities and community structures. When the political situation in the Weimar Republic began to deteriorate, Schütte-Lihotzky joined a team of seventeen architects—the "May Brigade"—and moved to the USSR to work on public buildings. In 1938, as Stalinism became a real threat, she moved with her husband to İstanbul at the invitation of Bruno Taut.

Karamustafa's installation pivots upon the grade school designs of Schütte-Lihotzky for the Village Institutes in Anatolia. The Village Institutes were part of governmental programs recognizing that economic and social progress started in rural areas. These programs were also a means of responding to the consequences of the Great Depression. The installation utilizes the scale of the original architectural plans and employs a detachable wooden structure to summon notions of construction and utilitarian modernism. Photographs underscoring the collective mobilization in Turkey during this period are arranged into the structure-like building units.



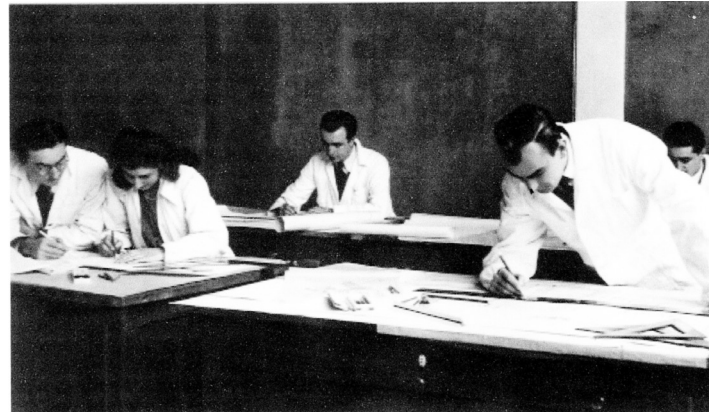
Gülsün Karamustafa, *Modernity Unveiled / Interweaving Histories*, Augarten Contemporary, Vienna, 2010

*Modernity Unveiled / Interweaving Histories* is the third project in the *Modern Essays* series, and is accompanied by a publication put together by the artist. For more information about *Modernity Unveiled / Interweaving Histories*, listen to an interview with Gülsün Karamustafa at [soundcloud.com/salt-online](https://soundcloud.com/salt-online).

# TO EDUCATORS

## HOW TO USE THESE MATERIALS

This SALT Interpretation Pack has been designed as a resource for you and your students as you explore the themes of the *Modernity Unveiled / Interweaving Histories* exhibition. It is our hope that—as a resource with the objective of stimulating dialogue—the following materials will not act as an authority on the concepts they introduce, but rather will encourage students towards further exploration and study, towards active discussion, and towards critical thinking about the exhibition and its themes.



Included in this Interpretation Pack are:

- *Opening Discussion: To İstanbul!*
- *The Village Institutes*
- *Research & Discuss: Co-education*
- *Closing Discussion: New Models in Education*
- *Additional Resources*

Each unit includes classroom activities, multi-media resources, terminology and opportunities for discussion; we encourage you to adapt, shape and build upon these materials to best meet the needs of your students and teaching curriculum. for discussion; we encourage you to adapt, shape and build upon these materials to best meet the needs of your students and teaching curriculum.

# OPENING DISCUSSION: TO İSTANBUL!

For the majority of World War II (1939-1945), Turkey was neutral, ultimately joining the Allies only a few months before the war's conclusion. As a result, the years leading up to and during World War II saw Turkey become a destination for the Jewish community, academics and other Europeans fleeing areas of conflict. İstanbul, in particular, earned a reputation as a haven for exiled Europeans. Among these exiles were Margarete Schütte-Lihotsky and her husband, Wilhelm, who left Russia in 1938 to teach at İstanbul's Academy of Fine Arts.

The relationship between exiles and İstanbul was one of mutual benefit. New arrivals found a safe place to live, work and study, while İstanbul's new universities—established as part of Atatürk's educational reforms of the 1930s—welcomed an influx of scholars and artists eager to work as professors. In addition to Schütte-Lihotsky and her husband, immigrants to İstanbul during this period included German architect Bruno Taut, theater producer Carl Ebert, and Hungarian pianist and composer Béla Bartók.

As an entry point for students to explore the themes of *Modernity Unveiled / Interweaving Histories*, we suggest leading a discussion around the movement of people to İstanbul around World War II, examining the impact this influx had on the development of the city then—and making comparisons to the relationship between immigration and İstanbul's intellectual capital today.



Wilhelm Schütte and Margarete Schütte-Lihotsky in their İstanbul apartment overlooking the Bosphorus, 1938

1. Either as a homework assignment, or in a school library or computer lab, ask your students to independently research and identify one foreign academic or artist who moved to İstanbul during the 1930s or '40s.
2. Students should find the following information about their figure:
  - a) What country did this person come from?
  - b) What was his or her profession before coming to İstanbul?
  - c) Upon arriving in İstanbul, what contributions (if any) did this person make to the city?
  - d) After the war, did this person stay in Turkey, return to his or her homeland, or go somewhere else?

## DISCUSSION

- *How do you think the movement of foreign academics to İstanbul during the 1930s and '40s influenced the city? What remains in the city today as a result of this period?*
- *What is “intellectual capital”? How does immigration—the movement of people into countries of which they are not natives—affect a country’s intellectual capital?*
- *What global influences do you see in the city today? How has diversity and the movement of populations influenced the arts, culture and daily life in your community?*

## TERMINOLOGY

*Atatürk’s Reforms* — a series of political, legal, cultural, social and economic reforms designed to modernize the new Republic of Turkey into a democratic and secular nation-state

*Diversity* — the quality of being composed of distinct or unlike elements or qualities

*Exile* — the state or a period of forced or voluntary absence from one’s country or home

*Immigration* — to come into a country of which one is not a native for permanent residence

*Intellectual capital* — the collective knowledge of the individuals in an organization or society

*Neutral* — not aligned with a political or ideological grouping

*World War II* — a global conflict lasting from 1939 to 1945, involving most of the world’s nations—including all of the great powers—eventually forming two opposing military alliances: the Allies and the Axis



Béla Bartók and his wife, 1936

# THE VILLAGE INSTITUTES

## INTRODUCTION

In 1928, the most critical issue in Turkey was education of the masses. Turkey's rural areas, in particular, had the country's highest rates of illiteracy, with few villages having schools or teachers. Part of Atatürk's educational and cultural reforms was aimed at addressing the problem of access to education through a series of actions throughout the country. These included the 1928 Alphabet Reform, which replaced the earlier Ottoman Turkish script with an extended version of the Latin alphabet; the 1932 foundation of the Turkish Language Association; and campaigns by the Ministry of Education that opened public education centers across Turkey. These initiatives succeeded in achieving a substantial increase in the country's literacy rate, from around 20% to over 90%.

The education campaign, too, brought the establishment of the Village Institutes. A system with a combined focus on teacher training, classical education and the development of students' practical skills, the Village Institutes were co-educational boarding schools concentrated in Turkey's rural areas. Within the Institutes' framework, teachers from villages were trained and sent home to form new schools, while students, in addition to engaging in a traditional academic curriculum, constructed school buildings and farmed their own food. The Institutes also emphasized the value of critical thinking and debate—at the time, an uncommon approach to education. Despite the brief existence of the Village Institutes (they were closed in 1954), this system significantly increased the number of primary schools in Turkey.

Using the Village Institutes as inspiration for new models in education, in **WHAT MAKES A GOOD SCHOOL? SESSION 1**, your students will brainstorm the combination of resources, qualities and people that make a great place for learning. In **SESSION 2**, like Margarete Schütte-Lihotsky, they will put their ideas to paper—in the form of architectural design blueprints.



## OBJECTIVES

- *To imagine spaces that provide equal opportunities for all students to learn*
- *To use design as a tool to creatively communicate an idea*
- *To consider alternative approaches to education*

## TERMINOLOGY

**Accessibility** — a term used to describe the degree to which a product, device, service, or environment is available to as many people as possible

**Critical thinking** — purposeful, reflective judgment concerning what to believe or what to do

**Literacy** — the quality of being able to read and write



# WHAT MAKES A GOOD SCHOOL?

## SESSION ONE

**MATERIALS:** Access to a library or computer lab

1. Begin this activity with a short discussion around the Village Institutes. Ask students to get into pairs and, in a school library or computer lab, research this educational system in Turkey.
2. Each pair should make a list of the Institutes' key characteristics. These may relate to the schools' physical design; the focus of its classes; its students, teachers and administrators; or its educational philosophy.
3. Once students have made their lists, ask them to contribute these ideas in a group discussion. What are students' impressions of the Village Institutes? Of the qualities they identified, which do they see present in Turkey's education system today?
4. Now, ask students to think of the characteristics they believe make great places for learning. Whether these are aspects of a school's physical design or facilities, its resources, or the people that foster success in students, ask students to be specific and encourage them to be creative. Write these ideas on the board and refer to the discussion questions below.

### DISCUSSION

- *In your opinion, what were the most successful qualities of the Village Institutes, in terms of creating spaces that encouraged children to learn?*
- *Why do you think the Village Institutes combined traditional academics with activities like farming, construction and physical education?*
- *What do you believe are the greatest challenges facing schools in Turkey today? If given the opportunity to design your own school, considering your class's ideas, where would you start?*



# WHAT MAKES A GOOD SCHOOL?

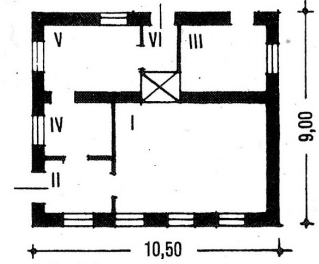
## SESSION TWO

**MATERIALS:** Drafting paper or white poster board, drawing pencils, pens, large flat tables, rulers, square (optional), tape, old magazines or newspapers, scissors, glue OR computers with Adobe Illustrator; scanner (optional)

The drawings to the right are Margarete Schütte-Lihotsky's plans for 30 and 50-student schools, designed during her time working at the Turkish Ministry of Education. Although there is no evidence these schools were ever built by the students of the Village Institutes, Gülsün Karamustafa's *Modernity Unveiled / Interweaving Histories* is based on the ¼ scale of Schütte-Lihotsky's 30-student school floor plan, in a project that brings these historical blueprints to life.

1. Now that students have considered the qualities of their "ideal" school, it is time to convert those ideas into a plan, like those for the Village Institutes to the right. Divide your class into groups of three. (Depending on how many large tables you have for this activity, you may choose to make larger groups. Also note that this activity can be completed in one long session, or spread out over several class periods.)

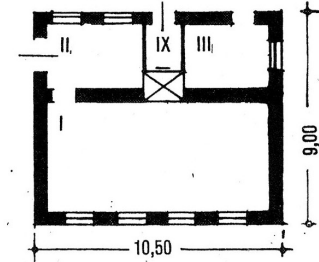
2. Each group will create a plan for a new school. Before they put anything on paper, however, groups should take at least 30 minutes to discuss which qualities, facilities, resources and people they would like their new school to have. As in the last session, encourage thinking to be creative. The main criteria for students' schools are that they (1) are innovative in their approach to education and (2) create equal opportunities for all students to learn.



Şekil. 1

BİRİNCİ İNŞAAT SAFHASI :  
30 TALEBELİK BİR SINIFLI MEKTEP, MUALLİM  
İKAMETGÂHİLE BİRLİKTE

VEYAHUT



Şekil. 2

BİRİNCİ İNŞAAT SAFHASI :  
50-60 TALEBELİK BİR SINIFLI MEKTEP, MUALLİM  
İKAMETGÂHI YOKTUR

Above: school for 30 students. Below: school for 50-60 students.

3. After these group discussions, show students the above images of architectural floor plans. If students are not familiar with floor plans, explain that they are simple line drawings showing the layout of buildings as seen from above. Distribute to each group drafting paper, pencils, pens, a ruler, a square (if available) and tape. Students will first draw a basic outline of their school, then sketch in walls, doors, windows and major architectural elements as per their designs.

4. With their floor plans in place, give students the opportunity to further develop their designs. At this point, groups can draw in more detailed features or cut out images from magazines and newspapers to paste onto their plans. Remind students also to name their schools. The end product will represent the spaces students feel are the best environments for learning.

5. Give groups an opportunity to present their plans to the class. If students would like to share their designs, using an online hosting site like Picasa or Flickr, create an album for the class. Scan each group's blueprint, then invite students to browse and comment on their collection.

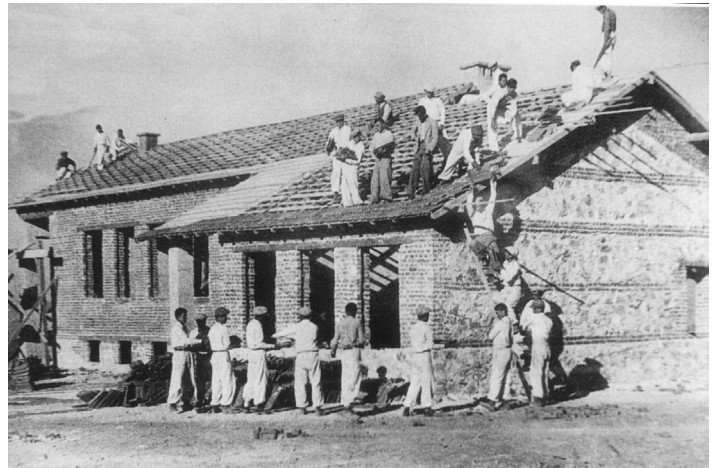
#### TERMINOLOGY

*Blueprint* — a detailed plan or program of action

*Floor plan* — a simple line drawing showing rooms as though seen from above

*Innovation* — a new idea, method, or device

*Perspective* — the technique or process of representing the spatial relation of objects as they might appear to the eye



#### DISCUSSION

- *Was it difficult to design a school that met the criteria of the activity? Have you heard of any schools or educational institutions similar to the one your group conceived?*
- *How do you believe design can be used as a tool to initiate change?*
- *Do you think your group's plan for a new school could realistically be implemented? Why or why not?*

# RESEARCH & DISCUSS: CO-EDUCATION

One of the Village Institutes' defining characteristics was that its schools were co-educational, meaning that boys and girls lived, worked and studied together. For many in Turkey at the time the Institutes were established, the integration of sexes was an uncommon phenomenon in education. In primary and high schools, as well as in universities, men and women either attended segregated institutions, or studied in separate buildings or classrooms. This tradition was not exclusive to Turkey—around the world, separating the sexes within the realm of education was the norm rather than the exception.

Today, while more and more single-sex academic institutions, particularly universities, have become co-educational, the debate around single-sex vs. co-education continues. Those in favor of single-sex education argue that with evidence of boys and girls having different learning styles, especially during early childhood, separating the sexes in fact enhances their ability to learn and develop. Arguments for co-education, on the other hand, include the benefits to both men and women of learning to work with and relate to the opposite sex; a fostering of greater mutual equality and respect between the sexes; and higher rates of success for students who learn in diverse classroom settings.

Ask your students to independently research the history of co-education in Turkey, then engage them in a discussion using the questions on the following page. Which learning style do they believe creates the best environment for all students to learn?



#### TERMINOLOGY

*Co-education* — the education of students of both sexes at the same institution

*Integration* — incorporation as equals into society or an organization of individuals of different groups

*Segregation* — the separation or isolation of a race, class, gender or ethnic group by enforced or voluntary residence in a restricted area, by barriers to social intercourse, by separate educational facilities, or by other discriminatory means

*Single-sex education* — the practice of conducting education where male and female students attend separate classes or in separate buildings or schools

#### DISCUSSION

- *Is your school single-sex or co-educational? How do you feel this teaching style benefits your school's students?*
- *Do you believe that boys and girls learn in different ways? How might these differences be an advantage (or disadvantage) in a co-educational classroom?*
- *Given the Village Institutes' emphasis on access to education, literacy and critical thinking, how do you think the integration of boys and girls fostered an environment best suited to meet the country's goals at this time?*



# CLOSING DISCUSSION: NEW MODELS IN EDUCATION

After visiting the *Modernity Unveiled / Interweaving Histories* exhibition at SALT Galata and engaging in some of the supplemental discussions and activities included in this Interpretation Pack, your students have examined the relationship between a city's immigration and intellectual capital; imagined the characteristics and resources that make the best places for learning; and, with Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky's designs for the Village Institutes in mind, brought their ideas for schools to life in the form of architectural blueprints.

As a conclusion to your students' experience of the exhibition, we suggest leading a discussion around alternative educational models. During their time, the Village Institutes provided an innovative and—in Turkey—unprecedented approach to education. The Institutes championed critical thinking, they established co-education and equal opportunities for students of both sexes, and they reimagined an academic curriculum founded on both traditional subjects and practical skills. Today, all over the world, similar overhauls of educational systems are emerging—these approaches, much like Turkey's Village Institutes', create new standards for teaching and learning.

Divide your students into groups of 5 and assign each one of the following alternative education systems to research. Share your findings in a class discussion.

- a) Montessori education
- b) Homeschooling
- c) Charter schools
- d) Mahatma Gandhi's "basic education"
- e) Unschooling



## DISCUSSION

- *Were you familiar with any of the alternative educational systems your class researched? Are you aware if any of these are operational in your own city?*
- *What do you believe are the advantages (or disadvantages) of the system your group researched?*
- *Do you think there are specific conditions within a country's education system that stimulate the development of alternative systems? How might these new approaches give rise to a change in the way students are educated?*

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## WEB RESOURCES

Goethe-Institut | [goethe.de/ins/tr/ank/prj/urs](http://goethe.de/ins/tr/ank/prj/urs)

Haydi Kızlar Okula! | [haydikizlarokula.meb.gov.tr](http://haydikizlarokula.meb.gov.tr)

SALT Online | [saltonline.org](http://saltonline.org)

Soundcloud | [soundcloud.com/salt-online](http://soundcloud.com/salt-online)

## BOOKS & ARTICLES

*Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (1916)

John Dewey

*Basic Education* (1962)

Gandhi

*The Montessori Method* (1988)

Maria Montessori

“A Gender Review in Education, Turkey 2003”

UNICEF

## EXHIBITIONS & PROJECTS

“The Frankfurt Kitchen”

*counter space: design + the modern kitchen*

MoMA, September 15, 2010 - May 2, 2011



