



sOWhat (CONTINUED)

of the women wear headscarves, we do not have any women representatives wearing headscarves in the Turkish Parliament. In this respect, I felt freer in the United States while I was going to school.

When I returned from my studies in the US, my plan was to work a few years in my area, then start a Ph.D. in a Turkish university. I tried to find a good job to use both my language skills and knowledge from my master's degree. Although Turkey is now more democratic, the qualified jobs are still official jobs by the government and they do not accept applicants wearing headscarves. I tried to apply to private universities' international offices and got two offers by sending my resume without my photo. During the interview, they told [me] that they also needed to wait for the new constitution to hire workers with headscarves. I decided to go back to school for my Ph.D. and now attend a private university. It is a multi-disciplinary and multi-linguistic (Turkish, English and Arabic) program on "Alliance of Civilizations." It offers courses that will enhance my perspectives on women and culture and it has great faculty including professors from Columbia University, Oxford, and Duke University.

Sometimes I feel like an unwanted child of an authoritative parent in Turkey. But I also know that it is my country and people in the street love and respect me although my state does not want to accept me as I am. Turkey is more democratic now than it was a decade ago and I believe that Turkey will be a true democratic country sooner or later.