

State Policies and the Women's Body: The Turkish Case¹

Ulaş Sunata

Abstract

This article examines the question of how women are embodied in state feminisms. The focus is on women whose placement in political discourses and policies is problematic in some cases for some reasons, such as who make governmental actions to strengthen women's position in society; to what end; women's role and participation in the policy making process; legislative, executive and juridical representation of women; and their relation with feminist movement. How women are located in the society defines not only that women's position but also the position of men in relation to women. That is the reason why this paper considers state policies on women not always to improve women status but to locate women in, or attach them to the related political visions.

The notion of bio-politics is central to Foucault's work in the context of body and population. He uses the term bio-politics, derived from his own notion of bio-power, as the implementation of state power over both the physical and political bodies of a population. Thus, state policies on physical bodies of women are highly significant for an analytical understanding of both social structures and transformations.

I shall present the Turkish case to illustrate a kind of state feminism. The emergence of Turkish state feminism at the turn of the 20th century is a master key to analyze state policies on the women's body regarding to the Turkish transformation. However, we recognize a line of rupture from the primary policies at the turn of the new century. Besides supranational policies, the recent state

¹ Special thanks to my dear student Bahar Ayça Okçuoğlu for her editorial support in the preliminary version of this study.

feminism has a new paradigm for women of Turkey. This paper attempts to question not only the paradigm shift from the Westernist to the post-Islamist reason but also the negative impact of their existence on women as individuals and feminist solidarity.

Keywords: state feminism, embodiment, Turkey

There is a claim that feminist movement began with the suffrage movement that rapidly spread out in West continental Europe after the 1789 French Revolution, then in England, America, New Zealand and Australia. As a matter of fact, this right demand is the first confrontation moment between state authority and feminist movement. The first-wave feminism continuing from the 19th century to the early 20th century firstly struggled with *de jure* inequalities and won first legal rights for women. The second-wave feminism that appeared in the 1960s and 1970s has mainly a resistance, or even an opposition, to make cooperation with the state in the context of social policies, since many feminists argue state apparatuses and the related bureaucracy are not only men dominated but also male biased and patriarchal (Ferguson, 1985; Martin, 2013). However, second-wave feminists still challenged to nation-states, particularly in equality demands. In order to realize their demands, it is generally known that most of states construct their own institutions to improve women status and make legal transformations. The emphasis of third-wave feminism, initially appeared in the 1990s, shifted to women's diversity and differences from the essentialist definition for women. In fact, the framing of *Menschenrechte für Frauen* (human rights for women) started to gain more validity rather than *Frauenrechte* (women's rights) by underlining inequalities and other discriminations based on women's different identities such as class, ethnicity, age, disability, religious and sexual orientation. The international and transnational organizations becoming more effective in the 1990s and 2000s by the impact of globalization waited for governmental changes from state-oriented women movements to convenience them through their own agendas. This leads to the entrance to the age of reforms in the name of women in the global scale. On behalf of national feminist movement, international organizations coping with subordinate statuses address non-governmental organizations for women and bureaucrats dealing with women's issues. Being in tune with the times, third-wave feminism in the national level generally develops *de jure* concerns and struggles in the defined indicators and parameters.

It is obvious that feminism sustains a bargain relationship with state authorities in terms of demanding rights. However, the problem of state has not any place in the feminist theories until the

1980s. As a matter of fact, MacKinnon (1983:635) determines “[f]eminism has no theory of the state”. At the end of the 1980s, women and state started to be discussed together in the context of changing political hegemonies and patriarchal forms (Hernes, 1987; Showstack Sassoon, 1987; Siim, 1988; MacKinnon, 1989). Even, the studies during the 1980s and 1990s displayed the existence of the term “state feminism” as a social fact in many countries. Since the word “state” interrupts feminists and the word “feminism” interrupts patriarchal state institutions, “state feminism” has stayed out of usage. For a long time, most who read a binary contradiction of two words in the term have tried new formulas, and added new concepts like “gender mainstreaming,” “women’s policy agencies,” and “gender equality agencies” into the terminology in the social welfare societies at the end of the 1990s. But the suggested terms remain weak in the conceptualization of the phenomenon (See Outshoorn and Kantola, 2007:2-6). For this reason, feminist theorizing has progressed since the 1990s through encountering with the realities that lie under the concept of “state feminism” (Gordon, 1990; Kandiyoti, 1991; McBride Stetson and Mazur, 1995; Skjeie and Siim, 2000; Rankin and Vickers, 2001; Lovenduski, 2005; Kantola, 2006; Outshoorn and Kantola, 2007)².

The term “state feminism” is defined in many ways. The most optimistic definition is the adherence of women movements’ demands in the state (Lovenduski, 2005:2). This definition based on a thesis that there is a direct interaction between women movement and state institutions through the non-governmental organizations’ mediation. For example, McBride Stetson and Mazur (1995:274) developed a typology for analysis of comparative state feminisms and it assesses two criteria: policy influence and policy access. Nonetheless, this definition can only be used with an operating stable representative democracy for welfare social state model analysis. This definition does not enclose different experiences with unstable state structure, as well as does not take the possibility of making docile feminist movement by governmental activities into consideration. In this article, “state feminism” is used as “activities of government structures that are formally charged with furthering women’s status and rights” (McBride Stetson and Mazur, 1995:1-2). In other words, it is the attempts of state authorities with their own parameters to develop women’s socio-political situation with public policies.

It is argued that state feminism is well short of the feminism in general, because of its reliance on bureaucracy. In addition, much of the debate concerning the effectiveness of state

² Also, the terms of “sub-state feminism” (Celis and Meier, 2007) and “supra-state feminism” (Woodward and Hubert, 2006) were added into the literature.

feminism is about whether it is understood as working within or changing existing paradigms. By means of state feminism, the main purpose of the movement is restricted to convert any bureaucracy into an instrument of social change. However, feminism in general advocates and supports rights of women as well as deconstructs gender inequality and patriarchy as social facts. As a matter of fact, feminist movement engages all patriarchal and hegemonic forms in life. But our critic on state feminism is not only narrowness of its targets in the name of feminism but also its potential handicaps in the movement. The main danger could be breakdown of solidarity among national feminist organizations due to competition with each other in the scope of benefiting from funds. Most importantly, feminism defends that the emancipation of women must be the acts of women themselves. In other words, the feminist claim is for self-emancipation. The point here is not that men should not be involved in any way, but it is that women should lead the movement and the related organizations. Unfortunately, state feminism does not require women as the leading actors. The main agents in state feminism are bureaucrats, politician and senior civil servants who deal with strengthening women's status and rights. Their gender is not questioned from the perspective of state feminism, since this approach intrinsically regards for whom, not by whom.

Jayawardena (1986) analyzes Third World feminism with a cross-national research from the late 19th century to the early 20th century. The included countries are Turkey, Egypt, Iran, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, China, Vietnam, Korea and Japan. She claims that feminism is not a strange ideology to Third World countries contrary to traditionalists and Eurocentrics who state "feminism is a phenomena just for West." On the contrary, she suggests that feminism develops with the women's struggles for equal rights and against the subordination of women in houses and society that is unique to Asia and Middle-East. The visibility of same tendency mostly in Muslim countries is a result of the study. Kandiyoti (1987:335) suggests Eurocentric feminist theories to instead of major on the victimization of women through the unmediated dictates of Islam, there is a need to think again on the collective concrete forms of controlling the women body and sexuality that is not just special to Muslim societies. Out of Western experience, feminist theories should try to understand women's different experiences' varieties and different feminisms in this context. Jayawardena (1986) maintains that the emergence of feminist movement is related within the frameworks of anti-imperialist and nationalist struggles, a general drift to secularism, modernization with social reforms, and the rise of "enlightened" middle-class. Eventually, understanding women's circumstances is possible with the basis of the changes of regulations with religion in the paths of post-independency states, different nationalisms, state ideologies and opponent social movements. Berktaç (2003:96) points out the specificity of feminism(s) and the

complexity on women emancipation that transferred from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey, due to Islamic reflections of the Sharia period not just on religion but also on culture and due to nationalist concerns both on saving the state and on combining Islam and Westernism. How women are represented in political discourses, the steps for legal emancipation, women's involvement ways to economic life and articulations of their gender interests to social movements are closely related to the nation-state building process and the related transformations (Kandiyoti, 1991:3-4). In fact, the state feminism of Turkey that appears immanently with the process of nation-state building and the related East-West argumentation is the main topic of this work. By taking the transition process of state structure and government models into account, Turkish state feminism history should be read syntagmatically and paradigmatically. Thereby, not just relations with women movements, but also the new paradoxes in patriarchal systems that enter with state mechanisms to female citizens' lives should be examined.

While Western European counterparts also establish a direct or an indirect relation with the state almost in every phase, the feminist history of Turkey has different features in this context. Tekeli (1993:30-3) divides this history into three stages: (i) *first-wave feminism* that reaches to top with the Second Constitutional Era (1908-1918) and continues up to the Republic's first years, (ii) "*state feminism*" (the Republic's first years – the 1920s and 1930s) and (iii) *second-wave feminism*³ after 1980. Correspondingly the history of women in Turkey is separated by Çaha (2004) into five stages: (i) *women's participation to social life* (from the 17th century to 1876 - the announcement of the First Constitutionalist period), (ii) *women's becoming a social actor in the public sphere* (from 1876 to 1923 -the announcement of the Republic), (iii) *women's isolation from their femininities* (from 1923 to the 1980s), (iv) *identity seek of women* (since 1980 - Turkish coup d'état), (v) *the rise of local feminisms* (starting from the 1980s and well became clear in the 1990s). Although there is a denotation that state feminism phase corresponds to the Republic's first years, like most academicians, Tekeli also believes that this phase's clear marks could be followed during the last periods of the Ottoman Empire. Kandiyoti (1991) betrays that state feminism started with the announcement of the Second Constitutionalist Period (1908) and Sirman (1989) asserts that the first-wave called is also state feminism. It is important to re-evaluate state feminism doubtlessly to be named in the first years of the Republic and interposing to women movement history in Turkey.

The emergence of Turkish state feminism at the turn of the 20th century is a master key to

³ This wave was criticized by leftist ideologies in Turkey, because the orthodox leftists considered feminist movements as "bourgeois deviation" in the 1960s (Abadan-Unat and Tokgöz, 1994).

analyze state policies on the women's body regarding to the Turkish transformation. However, we recognize a line of rupture from the primary policies at the turn of the new century. Besides supranational policies, the recent state feminism has a new paradigm for women of Turkey. This paper attempts to question not only the paradigm shift from the Westernist to the post-Islamist reason but also the negative impact of their existence on women as individuals and feminist solidarity. This study reveals similarities and differences between state feminisms of Turkey at the turn of the 20th century and at the turn of the 21st century. If we want to understand better how state feminism works in practice we need to pay closer attention to analyzing what they do and why they do it.

Turkish State Feminism at turn of the 20th century

Integration Policies for Women

Although the 1839 Tanzimat reforms did not directly mention women as an issue, this period procreated the result of intimacy of religious, class and sex based parallel communities to one another, especially in big cities of the Empire. In this context, the debates on women's visibility in public space and participation to social life started. Actually, it could be said that the happened thing is the passing from the sex-segregated social spheres - *haremlık* (the living area reserved for women) versus *selamlık* (the living area reserved for the men) - to the private versus public sphere separation. The problem that usually named as "women's participation to public space" could actually be read as the shared social areas with men, such as public transport vehicles, cinema, education institutions or working places, that separated with "curtain" previously. This circumstance could be read as male participation to public space from *female gaze*. But different forms of patriarchy propose different strategies to improve women's security and provide resistance mechanisms towards male domination by defining women in their own paradigms (Kandiyoti, 1988). Since the precedence of *male gaze* in classical, religious, modern and Western patriarchal forms, women participated to public sphere and it perceived as coping with this circumstance left over to men. Thus women seem guests as if they were invited to male social spaces.

In 1856 with the effects of committed education reforms, women's education appears as a topic. After, while the Committee of Union and Progress that came to administration with the Second Constitutional continued to debate the woman problem as defining it as a reason of imperial's backwardness; it said that they target initially women's education to provide women's

participation to public sphere. Ottoman Empire's new political governmental purposes probably indicate the beginning of the state feminism. Maybe the best historical example of state's women problem is the news that given with the heading of "For Emancipation of Moslem Girls Admires European System" in November of 19th 1911 in New York Times. In this news, Ahmed Rıza Bey who is a significant name of Young Turks Movement and Second Constitutional's new council of ministers' chair:

"... We have women enough, but we have no life companions, no sisters, no wives, no mothers in the proper sense of the word. [...] The chief object I have in view is the elevation of the sense of motherhood and of its sacred responsibilities in the minds and hearts of our daughters. I was greatly struck during my long exile by the splendid beneficial results that accrue European countries from good women brought up with the ideal of gentle, sweet, self-sacrificing, yet strong and rational motherhood. Give us such motherhood and our country will be saved, prosperous, and happy. Nothing else will do it."

Rationalist, positivist, progressive, Western-oriented, and reformist Turkish men (Young Turks) in the duration of establishment of the new Republic, while pointing out emancipation of women as the key of civilization and a premise for improvement of nation, primarily aimed at woman body's education in their own social imaginations. This aim is the formula of integration of women to new society order. They *Orientalized* not only their past, but also women by referring to their European fellows, particularly in the context of their roles in family. Opposing to the argument of fragmented Western family by traditionalist, religious, and conservative Turkish men, they argued that women would be responsible from Turkish men's well-being and future's enlightened generations. In order to raise responsible citizens, women should recover from the past's traditions and superstitions and should be educated and enlightened, according to them. The new Republic's male dominated state removed polygamy with Civil Code and divorce with man's one word, as well as presented equality between men and women in all social places as national policy. Women did have right to vote in local elections in 1930, and in general elections in 1934. In spite of these political rights, "Kemalist reforms do not aim to be liberalized woman or contribute the improvement of woman consciousness and woman identity, they aimed to prank Turkish women with the education and skills that make them better peer and mother," to Arat (1998:52). By the Law on Unification of Education as much as the unity principle in education and supporting of coeducation, women's education and active participation to working life were especially promoted in the state discourse

of the Republic era. The Republic of Turkey presents a role model figure for women, as “enlightened mother of nation” (Tekeli, 1988; Kandiyoti, 1987). At the end, there is a common sense “Atatürk/the Republic/the State gave their rights to women”. As if women would not strike actively for their rights in Turkey, as if there were no series of rights that gained after a strike, as if all rights for women were given by the state. The impression makes Turkey’s women as if they were “debtors for the state”. Due to the feelings of “indebtedness” to the state, the women have more actively presented their protection for the Republican principles, especially nationalism and laicism.

As one of the key figures of post-colonial theories, Spivak (1999) maintains two social types that have a voice on “brown woman’s body”: the brown man who claims that he is protecting local traditions and the white man who puts forward that he is bringing universal human rights and saving brown women from brown men. While this debate on brown woman’s body continued between these men, black woman’s utterance on her own body is not listened; even she has not the right to comment on her own body. The above-mentioned Westernist and reformist elite men’s in the Turkish state feminism experiences perform the role of the white man who came as colonizer in the Indian case. In the Turkish case, the men could use the “woman problem” for their more effective strategic aims. They listen women while women talk in their way of thinking and they create women speakers to themselves. Thereby, the role model women is not just modern, enlightened, educated, working mother and peer, they had adjectives like patriotic and altruistic at the same time. All in all, the role model of women that presented by state feminism as integration policies to Republic regime in the nation-state model that could be summarized, performed the socio-political function of inducement to public of secular reforms and national purposes, which women’s symbolic and economical value is indispensable for the Republic.

Woman Body’s Symbolic Value

In accordance with state-women relations, Şeni (1984), by considering that the process contains a linear continuity from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic, mentions social control on women with their body and sexuality. In this context, by underlining symbolic value and its meaning, she argue that women’s clothing and their standing ways in the city locations that composed through the medium of *firman* (imperial edict) in the late periods of the Ottoman Empire is in the same analytical level with the Republic’s “endowment” of political rights to women. Although Kandiyoti (1987:336) agrees with Şeni on symbolic value’s importance in this context, she

still argues that Şeni's argument is inadequate to explain reforms' political and economic necessities.

Turkish state feminism firstly created "ideal man" model by the common label "hat revolution," taking place in 1925, which Lewis defined as "big symbolic revolution". Merely like religious icons; Atatürk's portraits, busts and sculptures promoted this model. Ideal man figure, as governmental representation too, was introduced as fair, prescient, open minded, right-giver father. Also, in this framework the new modernist nation-state was announced presented public consent metaphorically. It is not coincidence to prefer "Atatürk" as his surname which refers to the "father of Turks" by the Surname Law in 1934, since he symbolically gave very well the state character portrait. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk is publicly presented by separating from Ottoman Empire's sultans. He is remembered with being a symbol father who protects and shows favor to his "children" (young citizens), particularly to his "daughters", in spite of his authoritarian character. It can be said that this ideal father model has carried him beyond charismatic leadership in Weberian sense⁴. In addition to this, the ideal woman model especially represented by Turkish woman teacher was presented as seems like a privilege to women by Atatürk. These "privileged women" are mentioned under the name of "daughters of the Republic". A solid femininity image combined with modernity was created and Turkish woman became a symbol of both enlightenment-progressiveness and darkness-backwardness (Bora, 2004).

Atatürk did not have a biological child but he undertook many kids' protectorate and adopted many of them. The importance that he gave for education has been portrayed in public opinion by his father figuration, particularly through his spiritual daughters, such as Ülkü Adatepe, Ayşe Afet İnan, and Sabiha Gökçen. Being the "head teacher" of the country, photographs taken when he visited girls' vocational schools and photos of the gestures of starting to waltz that are for inciting everyone at balls are some visual elements, jogging to memories, that completes this portrait. The creation of ideal woman is a process that maintains with Atatürk's wife's portraying. Such that Latife Hanım drawing a key figure to Turkish woman⁵.

Especially the "ideal woman" figure used to overcome socio-political, economic and

⁴ Weber (1968:215) defines charismatic authority as "resting on devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him."

⁵ Latife Hanım was portrayed in the studies and narratives as self-sustained, independent, notably informed about world languages, very beautiful, skilled, alive, dynamic, and having curious to art, literature and music, and ability to use weapon splendidly. In her period, she was represented as a public portrait of educated, patriotic, enlightened, intelligent, and free-standing women (Çalışlar, 2006).

symbolic backwardness and signed that a new age started (Kandiyoti, 1991). This figure has symbolically respectable amount of role in the context of Turkish Republic's both internal affairs and foreign affairs. In this same time, as opposed to Hitler Germany's and Mussolini Italy's "*Kinder-Küche-Kirche*" (Child-Kitchen-Church) slogan, Atatürk Turkey "presented itself as a country electing women to its parliament and thereby symbolically claimed its rightful place among other Western democratic nations" (Kandiyoti, 1987:321). Even it could not rhapsodize itself in internal politics by being the first country that gave right of suffrage to women in Europe, but it is not the first one.

Family, which is considered as "the building block of society", is given importance to be increased in the new established state of Turkey, to provide unity and to obstruct differentiations. Nicole Van Os propounds the existence of "familial feminism" ("*aileseel feminism*") in Turkey. As if women would make sense within the family; in fact woman is just defined as mother or as spouse or as daughter.

The reforms in the Second Constitutionalist period could be pointed as the beginning of biopolitics on women in Turkey. The changes in education system, the coeducation that girls and boys had courses in same classes, the introduction of teaching as the best job for women are the first steps of women's participation to education system and changing given meanings to their values. From this period, the understanding that they need to be educated about medical knowledge and the given importance to this, which is for more healthful mothers and children is a concrete example of why women's value began to be change. Hence the "household economy" (*ev ekonomisi*) course for girls and the "work knowledge" (*iş bilgisi*) course for boys, which were given in the 1980s and 1990s in secondary schools, are important in terms of given roles to girls and boys. The learning outcomes of the "household economy" lessons were designed as being able to stitching, vignette, cooking, and evaluating wastes. This gendered course was used as a tool to make women good housewives.

The constituted similarity between homeland and woman body is the most encountered scenes of memoirs and novels that are about Istanbul's occupation (Kaynar, 2007:248). The production of this knowledge is not coincidence. Delaney (1991), who conducted a village study in the 1980s of Turkey, mentions that the woman's body becomes a family icon through reproduction as well as the related ties and all kinship relations, and transforms home, village, homeland and world for men. Home's master, village's headman, state and God are male. "Mother land" and "benevolent state" model are still two important symbolic references used in political arena. Through the social and cultural capital created by patriarchal phenomena, Turkish state feminism

may be the most “successful” example of utilizing this symbolic value. Actually, it is to demolish the traditional discourse and patterns for the new nation-state patriarchy and fulfill new sexist patterns by bringing Western patriarchy in place of Islamic patriarchy (Berktaş, 2001).

Turkish State Feminism at the Turn of the 21st Century

Supranational Regulations, Extra-Supranational Regulations and Changing Paradigm

The first decade of the new millennium was crucial years for stepping forward in terms of empowering women legal status by means of supranational regulations. In the extent of accordance process to the European Union, Turkey signed *Accession Partnership Document* in 1999 and priority change areas were determined. The plans were arranged according to these change areas based on short, medium and long terms, and the procedures aimed at removing discrimination against woman and involving gender equality (Özerdem, 2010). The United Nations’ contract - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was confirmed and signed by Turkish government in 1986. Until 2002 the Turkish government did not however give importance to sign the related protocol of the Convention that confirmed previously. In 2002, items in civil code that involve discrimination against woman were revisited in accordance with the gender equality. The concept “head of family” was removed from the codes; and also equal right and responsibilities for spouses were specified. For instance; the right to speak given to women about domestic and children issues, the incapacity of deciding one-side where to live as a couple specified to husbands, the ability for women to press a divorce charge in the case of cheating by husbands, and equally distribution decision of goods that obtained during marriage union in the case of divorce. In 2004 by means of revision in the 10th Article of the Constitution, the sentence “women and men have equal rights” was written. The item “State is responsible to provide realizing of this equality” was attached (Dedeoğlu, 2009). With the changes in Labor Law, equal treatment and equal valued work, equal wage principle were identified between sexes.

Another point that could not practice successfully in the accordance process to the EU is childcare issue. The Union made a decision that the Turkish state should provide care service for 90 percentages of children over the age of three until 2010 (Dedeoğlu, 2009). But childcare in Turkey including pre-school education possibilities still remains very weak. Although many workplace do not realize the regulation, in Labor Law, “workplaces of 100-150 female workers have to constitute child care rooms, workplaces of above 150 female employees have to open kindergarten”

(Dedeoğlu, 2009). The great gap in childcare should be re-considered in order to criticize reproduction policy on enforcement to motherhood explained below in the name of the new paradigm shift.

Apart from the legal changes by the effect of supranational organizations in recent years overlapping the time of the AKP (Justice and Development Party) government, it is clear that the Turkish state brings woman-focused issues, in particular body-related theme, up to the political agenda more frequently compared to past. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan usually puts these three subjects into words: (i) pre-life approach against pre-choice, (ii) stance against cesarean delivery, (iii) slogan of “three children.” All these issues related with reproduction are explanatory tools to debate Turkish state feminism’s continuation, to analyze its new qualification, and to show an emerging new paradigm for state feminism of Turkey today. Notably the debated issues in the recent period are considered as not only controversial but also provoking because of the governmental approach to have the right to decide over women’s body. Erdoğan has announced that his government gives the contraception game away (Today’s Zaman, 2011; Hürriyet Daily News, 2013; TRT Haber, 2013). He harshly criticized birth control campaigns conducted in Turkey, making CHP (Republican People’s Party) - founded by Atatürk - “scapegoat” for it and aging population. This can be read as a critic of the second state feminism to the first one, but it is actually a focus point of the new Turkish state feminism – “reproductive governmentality” (Altıok, 2013), *pro-natal policy*.

In a comparison with the previous state feminism, there is a different reason under the decision to limit abortion’s reasons and to shorten legal term for the related process, by not debating women’s right to decide freely on their own bodies. It will probably push women seeking unhealthy solutions. The cesarean section of the related law draft has similar features with abortion issue. Both abortion and cesarean operations will not be realized by not obtaining the husbands’ permissions. This means non-recognition out of wedlock relationships and disapproves of them, and intervention to woman rights. But Erdoğan’s decisions and advices are obvious over women by correlating them to family. The “three children” issue turning up in his discourses of the new century’s first years is a new motto that how the state politicizes, manages, canalizes and educates the notions of woman and family. In fact, the previous state feminism provided a mother role for women, but not dictated. In the past, the reproduction topic is even only evaluated in the framework of family planning procedures. Erdoğan who believes that power and country will strengthen by increasing population openly expresses his purpose of “a new generation”

underlining “religious generation”. The emergent paradigm to create its new citizens is comparable with the previous one of state feminism. Still, it is obvious that the paradigm is shifted from Westernist to post-Islamist political vision at the turn of the 21st century.

The most distinctive indicator of this shift is the altered state policy on *turban*. The phenomenon of turban has always been disputed in Turkey since its establishment, the discussions even stretching back to the last period of the Ottoman Empire. Westernist ruling elite and Islamist elite, as the opposite poles of the debate, discuss whether women should be allowed to cover their hair in public spaces. The turban debate has occupied an important place and remained in the political agenda of Turkey, which is the unique constitutionally laical example among the countries, where the clear majority of the population consists of Muslims⁶. In the changing paradigm at the turn of the 21st century, the Erdoğan government did take however remarkable steps to overturn the turban ban.

Turban question cannot be considered without understanding laicism experience in Turkey. Laicism in Turkey, as one of Atatürk’s six main principles, is partly different from secularism. Secularism provides freedom from government imposition related to religion upon the people, within a state that is neutral on matters of belief, and gives no state privileges or subsidies to any religion. The word *laiklik* in Turkish comes from the French word *laïcité*, which is also the core concept of the French constitution⁷. The term was originally the French equivalent of the term “laity”, which encompasses everyone who does not belong to the Catholic clergy. After the French Revolution this meaning changed into the practice of keeping religion separate from the executive, judicial, and legislative branches of government. The same principle is valid in the constitution of the Republic of Turkey. In practice, however, the state has controlled and funded Sunni Islam as the religion of the majority through the Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*)⁸. This of course is in stark contrast with the law accepted in the 1900’s France, which separates church and state according to three principles: the religious neutrality of the state, the personal and social freedom of religious exercise, and the right to establish public powers related to the church. The

⁶ The country has hence witnessed more negotiations in comparison to the rest of Europe, where confusion over turban emerged in the last decades only after encountering female Muslim diasporic identities.

⁷ Article 1 states: “*La France est une République indivisible, laïque, démocratique et sociale.*”

⁸ Since the multi-party system in 1946, Turkey witnessed Islamization that was suppressed for many years. After the military coup in 1980, the “Turkish-Islamic synthesis” began to be stressed by the Atatürkist military. This ideology, claiming to cooperate with the laicism principle, has three pillars: the family, the mosque, and the barracks.

law shows that “the Republic neither recognizes, nor salaries, nor subsidizes any religion”⁹. In addition, it continued the ban on wearing conspicuous religious symbols in public space, especially in educational contexts. Although the laicism principle in the Republic of Turkey is confined to the definition of the separation of religion from state affairs and the freedom of religions as individual faiths, including Sunni Islam, all independent religious communities that are deemed political are nonetheless illegal. Moreover, laicism in Turkey corresponds to a kind of secular behavior in public spaces. Therefore, religious dress codes, including veiling, are forbidden inside all official and military institutions. The public servants cannot cover their heads with turban. The students do not have the right to have their Islamic dress codes coming to the universities. As such, the current turban debate appears entangled with the nature of the state laicism in Turkey and differs from the French experience.

The turban debate also deals with the so-called “dressing reform”. In the initial phase of the Republic, the first parliament headed by Atatürk made a lot of radical changes on dressing, replacing Islamic- or traditional-style dress with western-style dress and accessories, hence the above-mentioned “hat reform”. The Turkish Civil Code in 1926, inspired by the Swiss Code, outlawed veiling. The most controversial changes introduced by the reform have been about the women’s dresses. Afterwards, the debate has hence been concentrated on whether the turban has a symbolic meaning against the secular social order. Indeed, by stressing its difference from the traditional headscarf, laicists argue that it is a political symbol of reactionary and retrogressive activities. Nevertheless, advocates of the turban say that it is a religious requirement. In a related vein change of female dress-codes in Turkey points to the end of separation of women and men in the public spaces.

Conclusion

This work does not particularly enter into the debate on the relationship between political representation of women and state feminism, but masculinities in the practice of governing. It is clear that the state feminism experiences in Turkey have not significantly affected both descriptive and substantive representation for women in the political process. Almost all the political leaders in the experience of the former state feminism were male. For the contemporary experience, all the

⁹ Its application is, however, controversial in the country, especially the exception of the Alsace-Moselle.

bureaucrats in the government dealing with women's issues may female but not feminist. In the end, male politicians, senior civil servants and bureaucrats play an active role in state feminisms of Turkey.

The ongoing political discussion concerning the women body in Turkey leads to some blind spots by keeping the women and their subjective experience out of the center of sociological accounts. The deadlock of the women question in Turkey reminds sociologists of Spivak, one of the key figures of post-colonial theories. She underlines the discourses employed by brown and white men concerning the brown woman body, and the silence of brown women on their own bodies. Inspired from this sociological approach, feminist literature and Foucault's theory of biopolitics; I debate the Turkish case of state feminism and its different paradigms. I argue that Turkey has experienced a shift from sex-segregated social spaces to a division between private space and public space, via the former state feminism paradigm. Participation of women in the public space does nothing but revealing the patriarchal gaze towards women since women are still perceived as "invited" to the space of men. Men hence debate how women bodily integrate to the public space and how they deal with this challenge. As a consequence, Islamists defend turban as a human right of conscience freedom since it keeps women from "sinful" gaze, whereas Kemalists are against it in the name of protecting the "enlightened" woman position in laicism. It is obvious that the way women are supposed to look and be perceived entails the question of emancipation of women in general.

Foucault explains the dependence of bio-politics on knowledge as power apparatus. Accordingly, both state feminism experiences in Turkey use woman body by producing their own paradigmatic knowledge. The former one prefers to save itself from its recent history, reminds the history of backwardness relating with Islamism. Furthermore, it attempts to produce a new local knowledge and to write a fictionalized woman history in this road. For example, Kandiyoti's mention of "pre-Islamic golden age for women" and exploration of woman's place with equal rights as powerful in egalitarian and democrat Turkish far past in a contradiction with Ottoman Empire's experience are meaningful in this context (Sirman, 1989). In fact, Atatürk assigned to one of his spiritual daughters, Prof. Dr. Ayşe Afet İnan especially for this work. This fictionalized historical knowledge function the "isolation from their femininities" (Çaha, 2004) while giving self-reliance to women and creating "docile bodies". Nowadays, Erdoğan by declaring pro-natal policy of Turkey emphasizes the reproductive and motherhood roles of women. Both the former and the latter state feminism paradigm experience Turkey within "authoritarian modernization," referring to working authoritarian and disciplinary power together from Foucault's viewpoint.

Yuval-Davis (1997) explains the patriotic orientation of women in a nation-building process and its ways to the positioning of women as citizens. She mentions a kind of axes shift in roles of women *from biological reproductions of the nation to cultural constructions of nations*. The Turkish government at the turn of the 20th century – the period of establishment of the nation-state – determined gendered constructions of nationhood via rights and duties of citizenship and fictionalized its female citizen (See İnan, 1964; İnan, 1969). However, the new paradigm concentrates on biological-theological reproduction. Turkish experience is out of step with everyone else; even it has a reverse direction in women's role for the nation-state, namely *from cultural to biological-theological reproduction*.

With the mediation of governmental discourse and reforms, Turkish state feminism experiences show a different picture for gender studies. Regarding the Turkish case, state feminism becomes a highly controversial topic, since it shows the difference between institutionalization of woman movements and institutionalizing the woman movement. As well as, it unrolls the necessity of reconsidering on possibilities of suppression or weakening of woman movement via institutionalization. As a result, feminists of Turkey still consider whether the women movement should be institutionalized from above.

Bibliography

1. Abadan-Unat, Nermin and Tokgöz, Oya. "Turkey: Turkish Women as Agents of Social Change in Pluralist Democracy" in *Women and Politics Worldwide*, ed. Barbara J. Nelson and Najma Chowdury. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994.
2. Altıok, Özlem. "Reproducing the nation," *Contexts* 12, no. 2 (2013): 46-51.
3. Arat, Zehra F.. "Kemalizm ve Türk Kadını" in *75 Yılda Kadınlar Erkekler*, ed. Ayşe Berktaş Hacımizaoğlu. İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1998.
4. Berktaş, Fatma. "Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Feminizm," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce: Cumhuriyet'e Devreden Düşünce Mirası, Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birikimi*, ed. Mehmet Ö. Alkan. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001.

5. Berktaş, Fatma. *Tarihin Cinsiyeti*. İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2003.
6. Bora, Aksu. "Feminizm: Sınırlar ve İhlal İmkânı," *Birikim* 184-185 (2004): 106-112.
7. Çaha, Ömer. "Türkiye'de Kadın Hareketinin Tarihi: Değişen Bir Şey Var Mı?" *Açık Toplum Yazıları*. Ankara: Liberte, 2004.
8. Çalışlar, İpek. *Latife Hanım*. İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2006.
9. Celis, Karen and Petra Meier. "State Feminism and Women's Movements in Belgium: Complex Patterns in a Multilevel System," in *Changing State Feminism* ed. Joyce
10. Outshoorn and Johanna Kantola. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, 62-82.
11. Dedeoğlu, Saniye. "Eşitlik mi Ayrımcılık mı? Türkiye'de Sosyal Devlet, Cinsiyet Eşitliği Politikaları ve Kadın İstihdamı", *Çalışma ve Toplum* 21, no.2 (2009): 41-54.
12. Delaney, Carol. *The Seed and the Soil: Gender and Cosmology in Turkish Village Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.
13. Ferguson, Kathy E. *The feminist case against bureaucracy*. Temple University Press, 1985.
14. Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, vol. 1, An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Pantheon, 1978.
15. Gordon, Lina. ed. *Women, the State, and Welfare*. Wisconsin&London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1990.
16. Hernes, Helga. *Welfare State and Woman Power: Essays in State Feminism*. Oslo: Norwegian University Press, 1987.
17. Hürriyet Daily News. "Turkish PM ups the ante in call for more children," 21 January 2013. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-pm-ups-the-ante-in-call-for-more-children.aspx?PageID=238&NID=39513&NewsCatID=338>

18. İnan, Ayşe Afet. *Atatürk ve Türk Kadın Haklarının Kazanılması: Tarih Boyunca Türk Kadınının Hak ve Görevleri*. Atatürk Serisi No. 10. İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basınmevi, 1964.
19. İnan, Ayşe Afet. *Vatandaş İçin Medeni Bilgiler ve Kemal Atatürk'ün El Yazıları*. Ankara: TTK Yayınları, TTK Basımevi, 1969.
20. Jayawardena, Kumari. *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*. London: Zed Books, 1986.
21. Kandiyoti, Deniz. ed. *Women, Islam and the State*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1991.
22. Kandiyoti, Deniz A. ed. "Emancipated but Unliberated?: Reflections on the Turkish Case," *Feminist Studies* 13, no.2 (1987): 317-338.
23. Kandiyoti, Deniz. "Bargaining with Patriarchy," *Gender and Society* 2 (1988): 274-90.
24. Kandiyoti, Deniz. "Emancipated but Unliberated? Reflections on the Turkish Case," *Feminist Studies* 13, no.2 (1987): 317-339.
25. Kantola, Johanna. *Feminists Theorize the State*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
26. Kaynar, Hakan. *Cumhuriyet İstanbul'unda Modernlik Fragmanları*. Unpublished PhD Thesis. Ankara: Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Tarih Anabilim Dalı, 2007.
27. Lovenduski, Joni. ed. *State Feminism and Political Representation*. With contributions by Diane Sainsbury, Claudie Baudino, Marila Guadagnini and Petra Meier. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
28. MacKinnon, Catharine A.. "Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: Toward Feminist Jurisprudence," *Signs* 8, no.4 (1983): 635-658.
29. MacKinnon, Catharine A.. *Toward A Feminist Theory of The State*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989.
30. Martin, Patricia Yancey. "Sociologists for Women in Society: A Feminist Bureaucracy?: SWS Presidential Address," *Gender & Society* 27, (2013): 281-293

31. McBride Stetson, Dorothy and Amy G. Mazur, ed. *Comparative State Feminism*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995.
32. Outshoorn, Joyce and Johanna Kantola. eds. *Changing State Feminism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
33. Özerdem, Füsün. "Avrupa Birliği Sosyal Politikası ve Türkiye'nin Uyumu," *Yardım ve Dayanışma* 1, no. 1 (2010): 17-29.
34. Rankin, L. Pauline and Jill Vickers. *Women's Movements and State Feminism: Integrating Diversity into Public Policy*. Ottawa: Status of Women Canada, 2001.
35. Şeni, Nora. "Osmanlıdan Cumhuriyete Kadın," *Yapıt* 9 (1985).
36. Şeni, Nora. "Ville Ottomane et Representation du Corps Feminin," *Les Temps Modernes* 456-457 (1984): 66-95.
37. Showstack Sassoon, Anne. ed. *Women and the State: The Shifting Boundaries of Public and Private*. London: Hutchinson, 1987.
38. Siim, Birte. "Towards a feminist rethinking of the welfare state" in *The Political Interests of Gender: Developing Theory and Research with a Feminist Face*, ed. Kathleen Jones and Anna G Jónasdóttir. London: Sage, 1988.
39. Sirman, Nükhet. "Feminism in Turkey: A short history", *New Perspectives on Turkey* 3 (1989): 1-34.
40. Skjeie, Hege and Birte Siim. "Scandinavian Feminist Debates on Citizenship", *International Political Science Review* 21, no. 4 (2000): 345-360.
41. Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1999
42. Tekeli, Sirin. "Türkiye'de Feminist İdeolojinin Anlamı ve Sınırları Üzerine", *Kadınlar İçin*. İstanbul: Alan Yayınları, 1988.

44. Tekeli, Şirin. "1980'ler Türkiye'sinde Kadınlar", *1980'ler Türkiye'sinde Kadın Bakış Açısından Kadınlar*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1993.
45. Today's Zaman. "Erdoğan lashes out at birth control in campaign rally", 26 May 2011.
46. http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&newsId=244165&link=244165
47. TRT Haber. "Doğum kontrolü oyununu artık bozuyoruz," 18 June 2013.
<http://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/dogum-kontrolu-oyununu-artik-bozuyoruz-89956.html>
48. Van Os, N. "Osmanlı Müslümanlarında Feminizm" in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce: Cumhuriyet'e Devreden Düşünce Mirası, Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birikimi*,
49. ed. Mehmet Ö. Alkan İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001.
50. Woodward, Alison and Agnes Hubert. "Reconfiguring state feminism in the European Union: Changes from 1995-2005", A paper presented at the ECPR Third Pan European
51. Conference in İstanbul 21-23 September 2006.
52. Yuval-Davis, Nira. *Gender & Nation*. London: Sage Publications, 1997.