

I want to start from the current situation in Turkey. Exactly one year ago there was the so called coup d'état organized allegedly by the Gulen movement. The president RTE said it was a gift from the god. Because immediately they declared state of emergency and started to govern the country with the delegated decrees, which means the government behaves like the judiciary. More than a hundred thousand people have been dispersed from their jobs in public sector, including leftists, kurdish and trade unionists. They don't have the right to go the court at all. They closed nearly two thousand associations and foundations including women's rights, human rights, children or minority organizations. Thousands of people imprisoned including journalists, academics, politicians and ordinary people who criticize AKP on social media. They increased the pressure on alternative media which is quite weak and captured all the judiciary. All the demonstrations are now subjected to the permission of the government, of course many of them are not given permission. In Ankara they even banned to sing song after six o'clock. Because people come together sometimes and sing songs. In sum, we are living a nightmare in Turkey at the moment.

In the last April there was the referendum on presidency. They stole the votes before the very eyes of the world and RTE declared his presidency. At the moment, parliament does not have a function at all. I think this should be called fascism although not a classical one. It is not right to define as fascist in the beginning of their rule. They define themselves as conservative democrats Their authoritarianism is more hegemonic, searching for the support of

The AKP government, which an islamist and a very neoliberal one, has been in power since 2002.

It has always distinguished itself as an opposite to the republican/Kemalist regime and elites which have allegedly repressed the religious groups and sects, banned headscarf, forced people to adopt the aliniated western values, so on.

In the first half of its governance, AKP could manage to gain the support of different segments of society including some feminist and socialist groups who thought the militaristic and monistic character of the state that excluded different groups would be eradicated by the AKP. Some well-known feminists welcomed AKP government for employing more women in politics, promoting gender equality, being determined to lift the headscarf ban, which they saw as a feminist issue.

AKP promised to solve the Kurdish question, they promised to lift the military domination on civilian politics without challenging neoliberalism and majoritarian form of democracy by no means. In 2010 referendum on constitution change the left divided into two as proponents and opponents of the constitution change. We as Yeniyol said no to the constitution on the grounds that it would ease the centralization of power and liquidation of the opposition. As a matter of fact they started to liquidate the opposition together with their ally –the Gulen movement- by the police operations against military officers, journalists, and writers in the name of eliminating coup and deep state. Hundreds of people were imprisoned on the allegation of organizing coup. In 2009, they arrested more than two thousand people linked with Kurdish movement. Most of them were released during the Resolution Process started in 2013. When the peace process ended and the fight with PKK started in 2015, another operation started against Kurdish people and politicians and Turkish nationalists became the new ally of AKP.

Until 2010, there had been comparatively close relations between women's organisations, feminist scholars and activist and AKP. Of course they were critical to AKP but they were participating their conferences, workshops. Between 2002 and 2004, a coalition was formed between women's organisations including Islamic feminist groups to organize a campaign for the changes in the New Penal Code, which came into force in 2004. The campaign was quite successful and led some positive steps in the new penal code such as criminalizing domestic rape and sexual harassment at work; lifting abatement in sentences for honor killings, rape and abduction. The government attempted to criminalize the adultery in the penal code but a vibrant campaign by women's organisations –not including islamist ones- prevented it. I should mention that the positive legal steps taken in the former periods of AKP was shaped by the aim of integration to the EU. Now the EU is one of the biggest enemies that try to prevent the development of turkey and leadership of Erdoğan. And there is no reference to the agreements with the EU or other international institutions.

After 2012, AKP government intensified the attacks on women. In 2012, when they almost monopolized the power, they attempted to ban abortion. We organized protests but AKP was quite powerful to defy those protests by the feminists. According to the public opinion poll they conducted it was revealed that they would loose by 2%. So they stepped back. However, in pr

Women's Employment

When we come to female employment, it is not difficult to guess the situation is bad too.

Since the 1970s, female employment has increased throughout the World due to the transformations in labour market. While similar transformations have occurred in Turkey, the female employment rates have decreased since the 1980s. Overall rate of female employment was 33.1 percent in 1988, 23 percent in 2007 and 27.5 in 2015, while it is 65 percent for men.

This cannot be explained solely by the patriarchal culture or Islam that prevents women to enter the labour force. The export oriented industrialization path that most of the developing countries adopted after the 1980s has not created enough jobs in Turkey as in many other developing countries because intermediate investment goods have been imported to a large extent, and the capacity to create new jobs have become limited.

Another factor is the demographic structure. Despite the decline in population growth rate the labour supply both for formal and informal sectors still increases, which effects the demand for women's labour besides huge amount of cheap male labour. In sum in the Turkish way of industrialization, the capital has not needed to challenge the patriarchy.

In Turkish case, the level of education has been a very important factor effecting the women's employment and labour force participation. By 2016, the level of labour force participation is 71.6 percent is for university graduates, around 40 percent for high school graduates and 32 for secondary school graduates.

In March 2012, AKP government passed new legislation on primary and secondary education usually called "4+4+4" system: The legislation divides primary education, which had been a single block of eight years since the 1997, into two levels and allows the children to attend religious vocational schools or other vocational schools after the first four-year period. Also, under these regulations, if the parents approve, students are able to continue their schooling through informal education outside of a standard school setting after the second fourth year. Statistics indicates that many girls of the poor families are taken from the school after secondary school, and unfortunately some of them are forced to marry soon.

The public provision of daily childcare is very low with only a very small percentage of children aged 0-3 in formal day-care centers, which are quite expensive, run by the private sectors and only half of all children aged 4-5 taking part in preschool education, which is provided both by the state and private sector. I should mention that both in private and public child care centers, only female employees are employed.

According to the law passed in 2004, employers employing more than 150 female workers are obliged to provide a childcare centre when the number of female workers exceeds 150. However, most of the workplaces are small and medium sized in Turkey and few employers employ 150 or more women. This law portrays childcare as solely women's responsibility and discourages employers to hire women. In addition, employers hiring more than 150 women prefer to pay the fine instead of providing child care.

In February, a government program was launched to provide monthly salaries to retired or non-working grandmothers who are taking care of their grandchildren during the working day. The grandmothers are paid around 100 Euros. Similarly, the women who care for their elderly or disabled relatives get a salary, around 250. These policies are welcomed by the women who have been giving unpaid care forever.

I believe that these policies are not palliative or random solutions to close the care gap but steps for conscious institutionalization of a care system based on unpaid or low paid women labour. In the reports by the AKP, particularly in their first years of their government, they made very rational analysis without referring the Islamic culture (now their discourse is more ornamented with Islamic values) and admit that they have to find solutions to elderly care and declining rate of population. They said that Turkey's high level of youth population and social system based on strong familial ties are its comparative advantage in the global economy but with this growth the population would be older, labour force supplied for the world economy would decrease and aged population would create social and economic problems. And for the solution they have always referred to strengthening the family. Erdoğan's calling for at least three children is very much related to this analysis more than aiming to increase the number of his supporters. But instead of developing a comprehensive welfare and employment policies they use ideological tools in order to make people to have at least three. But it does not work. ...

They have taken few steps to increase women's employment. In the employment Law adopted in 2008 in connection with the global economic crisis, the AKP rule promised

employers that the state would pay an employer premium if they employ women or young workers,. This caused a slight increase in registered female workers but still more than 50 percent of work is done informally and without insurance.

In the National Employment Strategy adopted in 2012, women were categorized as a vulnerable group like disabled people and creating flexible jobs was suggested as the main solution to increase the employment of them. It is said “By promoting flexible working types such as part-time work, obstacles that keep women out of labour market for long time will be prevented, a balance will be shaped between family and working and child care responsibilities will be shared between parents.

All forms of violence against women increased by a rate of 1400% since they came to power in 2002. At least three women are killed in a day (5406 women were killed between 2002 and 2015) mostly by their husbands or ex-husbands for seeking divorce. What they have done against the violence against women is to bring laws that strengthen the family, obstruct divorce. For instance couples have to go therapy or visit religious officials before divorce. Impunity is another big problem. It is one of the main focus of feminist movement to follow the court cases and build a pressure on the judges.

Gender issues have always been very important for AKP governments while establishing its authoritarian regime. As feminist historian John Scott put seven though governments do not often have direct benefits from keeping women under control, they resort to sexist practices to build and bolster their power. Gender provides a secure and natural source of reference to vindicate the authority and inequalities between people.

AKP politicians often need to tell that men and women are not equal by creation. As a threat to the so called natural order feminists and LGBT people are blamed as perverts. For instance you can follow the courses and activities of my department from the front page of a very reactionary pro government newspaper AKİT. The titles of the news generally start