

the causal ordering of these processes call for fairly complex empirical models not found in this volume.

Notwithstanding these critiques, there is much to learn from this volume. And, this volume is sure to spur future research in multiple literatures, given the importance of the questions it raises and its breadth of coverage.

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Endnotes

1. Peter A. Hall and David Soskice (eds.), *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

2. For example see Gøsta Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

3. See also Ann Shola Orloff, "Gender and the Social Rights of Citizenship: The Comparative Analysis of Gender Relations and Welfare States," *American Sociological Review*, No. 58, Vo. 3 (1993), pp. 303-328.

Gender and Society in Turkey: The Impacts of Neoliberal Policies, Political Islam and EU Accession

Edited by Saniye Dedeoğlu and Adem Y. Elveren

London: I.B. Tauris, 2012, 312 pages, ISBN 9781780760278, £ 59,50.

Women have been both the subjects and objects of Turkish modernization for a long time. They have always been at the forefront of burning questions in Turkey, either with the decades-old debate of wearing headscarves in public institutions, or, lately, with Erdoğan's agenda-setting remarks that women need to give birth to at least three children or abortion will be constrained. However, studies about their position in society or their role in modernization have not gone far beyond superficial repetition. Dedeoğlu and Elveren, to a large extent, fill this academic gap in Turkey through editing this book. It consists of thirteen valuable chapters dealing with different aspects of gender issues that are at the junction of tradition and modernity. To this end, the book mainly aims at understanding the impact of neoliberal social policies, political Islam, and EU accession on gender

in Turkey. Women stuck between formal equality on paper and social realities in practice are examined using different data sets and topics, from female labor ratios to payment policies, and from social security reform to the individual pension system. For all the diversity of topics, the authors' comprehensive analysis about the reasons for the secondary position of women in society and the possible outcomes of eager but not-yet mature governmental reforms makes this study a reference book not only for readers who want to learn more about gender, society and the neoliberal economy in Turkey, but also for decision makers who want to be aware of the margins of socio-economic dynamics in Turkey.

The editors have gathered the chapters into two main parts. While the first seven chapters contribute to the discussions around the gendered nature of the welfare

state and the labor market in general in Turkey, the rest of the chapters examine the effects of the welfare reforms on women's status, especially as the reforms have been accelerated with the EU accession process. After an introductory chapter by the editors, the book actually starts with providing the big picture of gender, society and neoliberalism in Turkey in a well-organized chapter by Buğra. This big picture is enriched with some sociological and historical details by the authors of the following chapter, Acar and Altunok. They discuss the evolution of the gender equality debate and the feminist movement in Turkey. In their praise-worthy study, they analyze the *de facto* split of women into "Islamist" and "Kemalist" groups around the headscarf issue (pp. 40-42).

Following these introductory chapters, the book begins to examine women's vulnerable position within the traditional social system, the neoliberal economy, and the reform process in Turkey. To put it bluntly, these chapters can be seen as roughly organized around two main topics, apart from the editors' partition of the book, since the subjects or methodologies are very similar. From this point of view, the chapters written by Toksöz, Dayıoğlu and Başlevent, Memiş, Öneş and Kızılırmak, Toğrul, Dedeoğlu, and Rittersberger-Tılıç and Kalaycıoğlu can be by and large defined as studies examining female labor in Turkey, which is either lower paid than men's work or is informal domestic work. A common point in all these six chapters, either in general or in details, is the questioning of the patriarchal system prevailing in the country by examining the seen and unseen contribution of women in the economic production.

After these discussions about the female labor force, a couple of chapters analyze the welfare, social security and pension reforms of the AKP government and looks at the impact of these reforms on the current position of women in Turkey. Following an introductory chapter by, again, Dedeoğlu, the authors M. Şahin, Ağartan, and Ş. Şahin and Elveren develop the analysis by comparing the theory and practice of change and the welfare state in Turkey according to gender gaps. Although they do not hesitate in giving credit to the ongoing reform process in the country because of its positive effects on making women and men equal before the law, the underlying danger of growing inequality between men and women due to these regulations is also highlighted. In fact, Ş. Şahin and Elveren's chapter deserves special interest because of its coherent analysis about the possible detrimental impacts of Turkey's newly introduced individual pension system on women, and the authors end the chapter with a clear-cut conclusion, pointing out the necessity of maintaining, and also developing, the traditional pay-as-you-go system instead of a private pension system in order to avoid any downgrade in the social security conditions of women (p. 185). The last chapter of the book is Yirmibeşoğlu's study examining the secondary position of women in trade unions in Turkey. This chapter, and also the book, ends with a thought-provoking conclusion by arguing that the "silence of the EU" (p. 221) is an important reason for the suffering of women in the trade unions in Turkey. If not another chapter about the EU's reaction to the ongoing gender inequality in Turkey, the book really deserves a conclusion chapter that evaluates the differ-

ent arguments and provides a general perspective.

One of the book's biggest contributions to the literature is its worthwhile assessment of the current social security reform in Turkey, which has been talked about a lot but is still not well known. Whether granting women the same rights as men is befitting for the social security system, employment policies or the pension system really brings out the question of whether there is equality for women. The authors in general come up with a common discourse that as long as women are seen as the "devoted" wives and mothers of the Turkish nuclear family, and while the men are considered the "breadwinners", most women will be stuck as dependents on their patriarchal family ties, i.e. their fathers or husbands. This patriarchal socio-economic system in turn degrades not only the position of women, but also the state welfare system in Turkey. However, ironically, it is also these family ties that are required for women's rudimentary position in the labor force and for their employment patterns in Turkey in the absence of welfare state social protection mechanisms. Within this context, the AKP's social security and general health insurance initiative and the individual pension system are brought into question. The negative impact of increasing the retirement age of women to the same as men, or encouraging maternal roles for women instead of being equal contributors in

formal employment, are two of the most prominent questions raised in the book as a way of deconstructing the neoliberal policies and the government's social security reform packages. For that matter, the AKP's contradictory policies, divided between its conservative supporters that promote the patriarchal family structure and the reformist attitude required for the EU accession process, are rightly highlighted, especially by M. Şahin, Ağartan, and Ş. Şahin and Elveren.

One criticism should go to the book's cover which shows a woman wearing a headscarf passing by a large mosque. At first glance, this photograph automatically arouses a feeling that the book sticks with political Islam and women in Turkey, a topic which has been well much discussed. However, with the abundance of analyses ranging from sociological to economic, from cultural to political, this book offers a far-reaching academic scope of analysis. It provides a full picture of gender and society in Turkey which has been shaped by the very tension between traditional values and the state's neoliberal reforms. Hence this book is an essential reading for anyone seeking to learn more on the behind-the-scenes role of Turkish women in prolonging the societal system, synthesizing Islam with modernity, and adapting to neoliberal economy policies.

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