

The Historico-Political Parameters of Academic Feminism in Turkey: Breaks and Continuities

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INTRODUCTION

Academic feminism, which entails a reconsideration of academia as an invented space of maleist power and status, became prominent in Western universities during the 1960s. This institutionalization of feminism in universities as an extension of second-wave feminism into the academic *milieu* signified a challenge to the male-dominant scientific discourse that rendered knowledge on women invisible and worthless. Such an academic move, comprising both epistemological and theoretical dimensions, had repercussions for the feminist mind-set, bringing new concerns, arguments and future perspectives into the feminist agenda. The emergence of

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academic feminism in Turkey followed a path similar to that in the West, although with certain exceptions, particularly regarding shifts in feminist concerns and strategies.

The historical roots of academic feminism in Turkey can be traced back to the rise of second-wave feminism in the post-1980 period. However, the challenging intervention of feminist principles in the knowledge production process took a different course both theoretically and practically, paving the way for more diverse debates than in the West. The cross-cutting effects of the idiosyncratic social, historical and political dynamics regarding modernization/westernization and nationalization, together with cultural codes shaped by the interaction of Islamic, Middle Eastern and Mediterranean social identities on feminist practices, laid the ground for the formation of a unique feminist agenda in the country. Nevertheless, regardless of the *sui generis* characteristics of feminist dynamics in Turkey, the overall concern of feminists in academia proved to be the same as that of their sisters elsewhere: to transform women's lives under the guidance of feminist knowledge.

Set against this background, in this chapter, we aim to analyze from a politico-historical perspective the production of feminist knowledge in Turkey with regard to major debates and issues. Our study is structured on two cross-cutting thematic axes. While drawing attention to women's/gender research centers as platforms of feminist knowledge production and dissemination, we also intend to provide a map of women-oriented scientific studies, which in fact date back long before the institutionalization of academic feminism in Turkey. As for women's/gender research centers, we choose to focus mainly on those in Middle East Technical University (METU), İstanbul University and Ankara University since they are among Turkey's most institutionalized academic bodies in terms of both feminist education and knowledge production.

The methodology of our research is based on documentary analysis of the main articles, books and research undertaken within the scope of the feminist paradigm, as well as primary qualitative research carried out through semi-structured interviews with the chairpersons of the centers and prominent feminist academics working there. As for documentary analysis, we do not aim to present an exhaustive account of all conducted studies but rather intend to offer an analysis of major works that are significant in depicting the thematic and epistemological breaks and continuities in the evolution of feminist studies in Turkey.

We propose a tripartite periodization that we consider to be illuminative for showing the paradigmatic breaks and continuities in feminist

knowledge production in conjunction with socio-political dynamics. In this context, we name the early years of the Turkish Republic (founded in 1923) until 1980 the early period, when gender studies evolved under the predominance of *women-related* works, and the post-1980 period up until the early 2000s the foundational period, which saw the first initiatives toward the institutionalization of academic feminism through the establishment of the women's/gender studies programs and centers in various universities. The foundational period is also distinct from the previous period for its production of *women-focused* studies, which in fact can be seen as the result of the interaction between the newly emerging second-wave feminist movement and academia. Last, taking into consideration the increase in the number of the women's/gender studies centers as well as ideological diversification among feminist approaches, we label the post-2000s as the period of plurality.

The chapter consists of three main parts. In the first part, we investigate the dialectical relationship between academic feminism and the feminist movement in the USA and Western Europe, with particular emphasis on the historical dynamics of the institutionalization of feminism in academia. The autonomy-integration debate and the arguments regarding naming alternatives, specifically women's/gender/feminist, are the major controversies in the institutionalization of academic feminism. The second part analyzes the evolution of feminist knowledge production and women's/gender studies centers in Turkey during the early and foundational periods. In this part, we particularly focus on institutional, administrative and academic practices at METU, İstanbul University and Ankara University. In the third part, we explore feminist research undertaken within academia in the post-2000s, providing a schematic overview that takes into consideration the epistemological and ideological diversification prevalent in feminist knowledge production. While mapping this plurality, we also elaborate on the implications of neoliberal policies on knowledge production and the institutional structure of women's/gender research centers.

THE MOVEMENT, THE ACADEMIA AND THE DYNAMICS OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION

The conceptualization of 'academic feminism' invites us to question and reconstruct the malestream meaning of academia. Entailing a reconsideration of academia as an invented space of maleist power and status, the feminist critique represents a transformatory initiative involving the

dialectics of theory and practice. In general terms, with reference to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2014), 'academic'—from the French *académique* or medieval Latin *academicus*—means 'not connected to a real or practical situation.' 'Feminism'—from the French *féminisme*—on the other hand, refers to 'the belief and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men, the struggle to achieve this aim'. Accordingly, when the academy is considered within the semiological borders of this broadly accepted meaning, the conceptualization of 'academic feminism' becomes a paradoxical category that, in the final analysis, makes it impossible to speak of academic feminism as a field of study. That is, the collocation of the academe and feminism in this context ultimately becomes oxymoronic.¹ Ironically, on the other hand, it is in this very context that academic feminism comes to life—through *problematizing the academe itself*. While questioning male-dominant norms and structures within the academia, academic feminism particularly prioritizes the interaction between knowledge production and practical experience, namely, the dialectics of theory and practice—the *praxis*. *Praxis* is inherent in feminism, both individually and collectively, as a theory shaped by experience and a movement rising through experience fed by theory, a continuing metamorphosis.² This chapter revolves around the different dimensions and the potentials as well as the breaks and continuities of this metamorphosis.

Academic feminism, aiming at questioning and transforming male-dominant rationales and practices in academia, incorporates many actors as well as institutionalized and non-institutionalized practices—feminist scholars and research, feminist student collectives, various initiatives and platforms, women's/gender/feminist studies, centers and academic programs. In this chapter, however, we limit academic feminism to institutionalized practices, specifically women/gender/feminist studies, centers and programs in universities.

Academic feminism functions at two levels. While aiming to transform education and research along feminist lines and create an academic *milieu* responsive to gender equality within the university, at the same time it aims to raise awareness on gender equality in society at large. In this process, the conceptual baggage that it provides for the feminist movement is particularly critical. For instance, Margaret Mead's well-known anthropological study of three New Guinea tribes, *Sex and Temperament in Primitive Societies* (1935), is regarded as one of the key intellectual sources for conceptualizing gender, with its strong implications for the evolution of the

second-wave feminist movement in the USA. Mead's account of different gender identities in New Guinea attributed disparate gender roles at odds with the mainstream pattern, in which men are regarded as strong, aggressive and success-oriented, and women are nurturing housewives:

If those temperamental attitudes which we have traditionally regarded as feminine—such as passivity, responsiveness, and a willingness to cherish children—can so easily be set up as the masculine pattern in one tribe, and in another be outlawed for the majority of women as well as for the majority of men, we no longer have any basis for regarding such aspects of behavior as sex-linked. (Mead [orig. 1935] 1963, p. 221)

By revealing the cultural dimension of differences between women and men, Mead's analysis functioned as a major reference point for future feminist generations in their efforts to conceptualize gender. In this context, the concept of gender, first used by Ann Oakley (1972) to highlight the centrality of cultural and social processes in the formation of sexual roles and identities, has made a critical contribution by providing an analytical instrument for future research and the feminist movement itself.

Apart from academia's contributions to the feminist movement, the interaction between theory and practice also encompasses the support provided by the movement to feminist knowledge production. For instance, the first course on women's studies, initiated in the Free University of Seattle in 1965, was influenced by and affiliated with the Students for a Democratic Society, a new leftist student activist movement in the USA. Likewise, the first official programs on women's studies in San Diego and SUNY Universities in the 1970s took shape in line with the second-wave feminist movement.³

On the Proper Naming

The proper naming of the field has been a controversial issue in feminist knowledge production and its dissemination in the institutionalization of academic feminism. The search for a name is a process of differentiation based on efforts to delineate the exact boundaries of the field in contextual terms rather than as a mere administrative process of labeling. Thus, each alternative name, such as *women's studies*, *feminist studies* and *gender studies*, represents divergent perspectives on gender inequality as well as concerns about the ways and means of guaranteeing and securing feminist effectiveness in academia.

During the early years, the widely used name ‘women’s studies’ was thought to be inclusive of feminist aims and concerns. Yet, the evolution of academic feminism led to counterarguments that the term women’s studies was marginalizing the field and preventing it from being taken seriously scientifically. Such critiques were in fact valid in most parts of the world—developed and developing—and prepared the ground for the shift in naming preferences from women’s studies to gender studies.⁴ For instance, in the UK, the assertion that ‘gender studies’ was a more academic and legitimate term that also appealed to more students than ‘women’s studies’ while including masculinity and sexual orientation studies alongside women’s studies played a critical role—very similar to the Mexican case (Stromquist 2001, pp. 373–374). The counterarguments against changing to gender studies primarily emphasized this expansion of the field, which, for advocates of the term ‘women’s studies,’ included topics such as masculinity and transgender that would inevitably shift the focus away from women (De Groot and Maynard 1993) and weaken motivation in the struggle to eradicate patriarchal structures, thereby depoliticizing the field (Evans 1991). However, for supporters of ‘gender studies,’ naming the field only with a focus on women was essentialist and far from academically neutral.

Drawing the academic boundaries of the field with reference to gender (studies) would make it possible to establish links with *queer*, *transgender* and *postcolonial* theories considered vital for ensuring the persistence and effectiveness of feminism in academia (Gillis and Munford 2003). The term ‘gender studies’ is in fact compatible with the poststructuralist *école*, which has become more prominent within the field. Yet, despite the academic value of its research,⁵ the poststructuralist approach has been severely criticized for undermining power relations in the society, as well as its weakness in transcending the confines of academia. The other alternative is feminist studies. Compared to the other two preferences (i.e. gender studies and women’s studies), feminist studies is distinguished by its stronger emphasis on the political nature of the field.

Autonomy or Integration?

Another major debate, alongside the naming issue, revolves around the question of whether feminist studies in academia should be organized as a separate field in its own right or as an integrated area within existing disciplines (Hemmings 2006). The aim is to find out the proper institutionalization mechanism to increase the effectiveness, transformative power

and authority of feminist knowledge and methodology. The arguments in favor of the autonomous organization of women's studies focus on the advantages of autonomy for enhancing interdisciplinary feminist dialogue, which would contribute to improving feminist knowledge production and dissemination. In seeing autonomy risking the marginalization of women's studies, supporters of integrity advocate an alternative organization in which women's studies operates within existing disciplines. Such a pattern can be considered as a strategic tool for increasing the competency of feminism in challenging malestream methodologies and curricula. However, the integration argument has a major shortcoming in that the operation of women's studies within strictly defined disciplinary boundaries could hinder the interdisciplinary practices of feminist academics. Moreover, since the workings of women's studies in the integrated model depend much more on the academics themselves than it does on the autonomous organization pattern, any absence or leave of an academic is thought to have negative implications both for the permanence and for the long-term development of the field. Some feminist academics endorse the co-existence of both institutional forms as constituting the most proper structuration. They argue that women's studies should operate through particular disciplines to transform them while simultaneously being organized as an autonomous discipline in order to be able to produce new models and approaches (Stacey et al. 1992).

Ultimately, it seems quite impractical to propose one universally accepted model of institutionalization since the effectiveness of a particular model is largely bound by the dynamics underlying the rise and evolution of the feminist movement in each particular historico-political context as well as the organizational culture of each university. For instance, despite high levels of gender awareness in both Spain and Holland, the academic institutionalization of feminism is quite limited there; instead, women's studies mostly operate through alternative platforms such as seminars, forums and working groups, rather than through autonomous units or programs (Stromquist 2001, p. 376).

ACADEMIC FEMINISM IN TURKEY: POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL DYNAMICS

In the Turkish case, the institutionalization of women's/gender studies in academia closely paralleled the rise of the feminist movement in the West, albeit with a significant time lag. The process whereby the Western

world was fueled by the radical feminist movement of 1968 only started to affect Turkey in the 1990s due to the rise of its own feminist movement post-1980. We therefore provide an overview of the evolution of studies on women in Turkish universities before the rise of its feminist movement in order to ground an analysis for detecting the breaks, continuities and transformations in feminist research both before and after the institutionalization of feminism in Turkish academia.

We should note that prior to the rise of Turkey's feminist movement post-1980, women's/gender studies were quite limited, being mainly carried out within the modernist paradigm rather than feminist epistemology. To borrow Ferhunde Özbay's (1990, pp. 2–7) periodization, the literature on women's studies in the period from the early years of the Republic until 1980 can be elaborated in terms of three phases that refer to diversification of the thematic focus of such studies.

In the first phase, comprising work produced during the 1920s and 1930s, gender equality mainly focused on the legal dimension. Emphasizing the centrality of the status and visibility of women in the public sphere for achieving gender equality, early work mostly problematized the political, educational and economic rights of women. The Kemalist modernization process and the Republican mind-set were praised in terms of their emancipatory effects on women while the socio-political and cultural dimensions of modernization were considered to be the best alternative to the Ottoman context.⁶ During the 1940s and 1950s, concomitant with the increasing significance of anthropological and sociological works in the social sciences literature, the women's issue was largely investigated through village monographs. These, however, did not focus on women's status but rather on debates revolving around the dynamics of family and village life, and the social division of labor, which in fact encompassed women's life experiences. The monographs in question signified a shift from the modernist to the economic development approach (Berkes 1942; Boran 1945; Yasa 1955). The third phase, extending from the 1960s to 1970s, witnessed an increase in fertility studies, reflecting the rising significance of family planning in the governmental agenda due to rapid economic and social changes, particularly population growth and rural-urban migration. While further emphasizing the role of education for bettering women's status, the fertility studies functioned substantially as confirmatory devices for Kemalist⁷ reforms through their provision of supportive empirical data (Karadayı 1971; Özbay 1975, 1979). Moreover, the period also welcomed studies in social psychology, focusing on women's social

roles. These studies particularly concentrated on the relationship between sexual roles and women's personal identity with reference to socialization theories (Kağıtçıbaşı 1972; Kağıtçıbaşı and Kansu 1976–1977).

Regarding women's studies during the 1970s, there appeared to be an ideological diversification of approach due to political fragmentation of Turkish society and academia. This diversification was solidified in the dominance of studies conducted from Islamic, Kemalist and Marxist perspectives. While Islamist studies suggested that women's problems only applied to those women with ideological stances outside the borders of the Islamic world view (Erdoğan 1979; İşler 1979; Topaloğlu 1980), studies conducted within the Kemalist paradigm continued to describe women who were unable to exercise their legal rights as subjects of the women's issue.⁸ Marxist studies, on the other hand, approached the issue from a class-reductionist perspective, focusing on gender inequality through an analysis of the problems and status of working women. However, despite differences in the arguments, approaches and strategies of these politically and ideologically rival positions, they all displayed a shared anti-feminist stance (Altındal 1970; Özbudun 1984).

Overall, most research conducted before the mid-1970s included women-related studies that viewed women as a variable in nationalist, modernist, socialist or religious social projects. Nevertheless, these studies had significant implications for knowledge production on the women's issue by laying the foundations for future studies. The late 1970s to post-1980s were a threshold between the early and foundational years, with the earliest examples of academic feminist studies in which women became the main focus of research (Sancar 2003; Kandiyoti 2010, p. 41). At this point, the supportive strategy of the United Nations (UN) during the 1970s should be noted as the key motivator for the emergence of women's studies in many countries, including Turkey, as Deniz Kandiyoti highlights:

As in many countries, the story of women's studies in Turkey is inextricably linked to the moment when the issue of "women in development" (WID) was put on the global agenda at the first international UN conference on Women in Mexico city in 1975, a conference that prompted the growth of a new administrative and ideational infrastructure. ... It is against the background of this new administrative and ideational infrastructure that women's studies (as distinct from women's movements that have a much longer history) started to take shape in Turkey in the 1970s. (Kandiyoti 2010, pp. 168–169)

The publication of *Women in Turkish Society*, edited by a highly respected scholar from Ankara University, Nermin Abadan Unat, is regarded as the founding step in establishing women's studies as a legitimate field of academic research. One of the earliest collections of work on the status of women in Turkey, the book includes presentations from the congress organized by the Turkish Social Sciences Association under the same title in 1978, three years after the Mexico City conference. Its significance lies in the fact of it being the earliest example of a multidimensional work on the women's issue, incorporating demography, health, work life, education, literature, religion and politics. Although it does not signify a radical epistemological break with prior research carried out within the modernist paradigm, it stands as a worthy effort at raising awareness on women's studies in academia through a direct focus on the women's issue through its multidisciplinary perspective. As stated in its introduction, the aim was to 'afford the reader a better grasp of the relationship between the status and the problems of women and such basic issues as underdevelopment, dependency and the struggle for rapid structural changes' (Abadan Unat 1981, p. XI). There are two main reasons to contextualize *Women in Turkish Society* within the scope of feminist literature in Turkey. First, the book's content laid the ground for a critical reading of Republican modernization with all its deficiencies and failures, rather than merely describing it as a success story. The second reason particularly relates to the personal identity of Abadan Unat, both as a feminist—which she claimed to be years later—and as a scholar with an active role in educating future feminist generations.

Most studies that followed Abadan Unat's work were based on a perspective that integrated women as a variable or subject matter into the research, carried out within the borders of existing social science disciplines. Although research conducted during these years cannot be considered novel in terms of its methodology and perspective, it nevertheless made a valuable contribution to feminist knowledge accumulation, particularly regarding women's political, economic and social status, albeit without problematizing the patriarchal structure and relations in the private sphere. At this point, we should note that one particular study of women's political participation by Şirin Tekeli, a feminist scholar at İstanbul University, was distinctive at the time both for its critical perspective toward Kemalist modernization and for Tekeli's analysis of women as political subjects.⁹

The rise of the feminist movement in Turkey during the 1980s led to a shift from studies focusing on the ‘problems’ of women to studies investigating the structural sources of these problems from a perspective aiming at empowering women and securing their visibility. These studies, carried out within different disciplines, including sociology, political science, law, history, economics, psychology and literature, largely focused on topics such as violence against women (Yüksel 1990), women’s labor (Ecevit 1986; Berik 1987), women’s political participation (Arat 1989; Koray 1991) and women’s human rights under the paradigms of their own disciplines (Ecevit 2015). By politicizing previously untouched problems, such as violence against women, harassment, intra-marriage rape, virginity, honor and domestic labor, which had long been confined to the private sphere, the 1980s feminist movement laid the foundations for a paradigmatic change in women’s studies carried out in universities. Such change was particularly crystallized in the edited book *1980ler Türkiye’sinde Kadın Bakış Açısından Kadınlar* (Women in 1980s’ Turkey from a Woman’s Perspective),¹⁰ published in 1989, ten years after Abadan Unat’s work. Like *Women in Turkish Society*, the new edited volume was the end product of a conference—the International Conference on Women’s Position in Turkey in the 1980s—held in Kassel University, Germany, in 1989. It included works focusing on women’s history, women’s roles in production and reproduction, their means of resistance within both the private and public spheres, violence against women and the struggle against violence, women’s sexuality and male dominance in Turkish society. The chapters were written by ‘women questioning the women’s proposition from a feminist perspective’ (Tekeli 1990b, p. 36), which made the book the earliest example of ‘women’s studies,’ conceived as a solid reflection of the women’s movement in universities. Despite differences in the perspectives of the authors about feminism, all the chapters reflected one common concern: ‘to understand how women’s status is determined by the system of patriarchal power relations in specific conditions, what kind of oppression women experience, and how they can resist oppression’ (Tekeli 1990b, p. 37).

The dividing line between the feminist studies of the 1990s, including the book just discussed, and previous ‘women-related studies’ is manifest in their approach toward Kemalist modernization. Whereas such modernization policies were strongly praised from the perspective of women’s emancipation during the early days, they became a focus of criticism in the feminist writings of the 1990s, which concentrated on two main

interrelated levels. The first concerned the silence of Kemalist cadres regarding private sphere relations, particularly the traditional roles of women as mothers and wives, while aiming at implementing equality between women and men in the public sphere through citizenship rights. In Turkey, the motto of the feminist movement in the 1980s—‘the private is political’—became reflected in research, aiming to highlight the links between the private and the public spheres, particularly regarding women’s (domestic) labor,¹¹ violence against women and maleist power in society.¹²

The second critique of Kemalist modernization concerns the modernist historiography that contextualizes the modernization project as a radical break with the Ottoman past.¹³ Kemalist historiography is seen as simply following a pattern of defining contradictions between the Republic and the Ottoman Empire and therefore criticized for ignoring women’s struggles during the Empire while taking up women as passive subjects who should be ‘indebted’ to the Republican cadres for ‘endowing’ them with rights. In this sense, the major implication of the feminist movement for scholarly research has been the erosion of the alliance constructed between the modern-citizen woman and Republican modernity. Feminist academic research on women’s history mostly scrutinized the inadequacies of the argument about women’s participation in the public sphere in the early Republican era. It offered instead a critical reading of Kemalist ‘ideal woman’ stereotypes and drew attention to the emerging women’s movement in late Ottoman times, particularly in the Second Constitutional Era.¹⁴

Thus, studies conducted by second-generation women scholars guided and motivated by the feminist movement differ from those of the first generation in their critical approach toward Kemalism. However, such differences do not indicate a rupture¹⁵ as the two generations interact in various ways, whether supportively or in conflict. A close look at the evolution of women’s studies programs as autonomous graduate research fields in Turkish universities provides clues regarding relationships between these two generations. The establishment and institutionalization of women’s studies programs in İstanbul University, METU and Ankara University are critical in this respect, as they are the oldest programs in Turkey based on feminist principles.

The evolution of the institutionalization of feminism in Turkish academia dates back to the establishment of the Women’s Problems Research and Implementation Center (*Kadın Sorunları Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi*—KSAUM) in İstanbul University in 1989. KSAUM was followed

by the Women's Problems Research and Implementation Center (*Kadın Sorunları Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi—KASAUM*) founded in Ankara University and the Gender and Women's Studies Graduate Programme (*Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Kadın Çalışmaları Yüksek Lisans Programı*) founded in METU in 1993 and 1994, respectively.

The establishment of KSAUM coincided with the Association for Supporting Contemporary Life (*Çağdaş Yaşamı Destekleme Derneği—ÇYDD*), a non-governmental organization established in 1989 working for modernization of the country in line with 'Atatürk's principles and revolutions.' KSAUM was initially established to strengthen and support ÇYDD, as KSAUM's founders, four women professors from İstanbul University, were also members of the administrative board of ÇYDD.¹⁶ In fact, ÇYDD was not a women's organization as far as its aims were considered, as all its founding and administrative board members were women with an unconditional attachment to Kemalist modernization. Accordingly, the major concern motivating the establishment of ÇYDD was the rising Islamic movement in the 1980s, with all its political and social implications, such as the increase in the number of *imam hatip* high schools, vocational schools for training *imams* and the issue of women's headscarves.¹⁷ Because secularism was thought to be the foundation of women's rights, it was prioritized even above the women's issue itself. During its early days, KSAUM adopted a similar stance, which explains the dominance of the Kemalist perspective seen in the works of first-generation women scholars. One year after its establishment, in the 1990–1991 academic year, a 12-hour interdisciplinary master's course on women's studies was introduced (Berktaş 1992), followed by an autonomous women's studies program under the Institute of Social Sciences.

Alongside its positive effects on the development of academic feminism, the program in question was instrumental in establishing an interactive relationship between Kemalist first-generation scholars and second-generation feminists, enabling the former to acquire knowledge on feminist perspectives and theories. However, this transformative effect was limited in İstanbul University, as became particularly apparent as opinions between the two generations diverged regarding the struggles of women who wanted to wear a headscarf for their educational and employment rights during the 1990s. Once first-generation women scholars retired,¹⁸ the program and the center (KSAUM) were run by second- and third-generation feminist scholars. Fatmagül Berktaş, Professor of Political Science in İstanbul University, who has played an active role since

KSAUM's early days and acted as Director for 2010–2013, explains the respective positions of Kemalist and feminist scholars during the founding years of the center:

The master's program was established two years after the foundation of İstanbul University, Women's Problems Research and Implementation Center ... While the Center had a largely Kemalist-modernist inclination, the program involved women from the feminist movement who were critical of the Kemalist modernization perspective. But Necla Arat was the head of both the program and the center, and in this sense these two were integrated. However, they should have been separated and, in fact, they were *de facto* operating separately. Despite the differences between the feminist and Kemalist perspectives, we did not face any resistance to get involved in the center, which was established through the efforts of Kemalist women. They knew what we were thinking but we were able to act together. (Interview with Fatmagül Berktaş, 10 October 2015)

Serpil Çakır, Professor of Political Science in İstanbul University, a feminist scholar working actively in KSAUM, highlights the significant role played by the first generation in establishing KSAUM:

The women who established the center in İstanbul University were Kemalists, yet they were sincere in their efforts to achieve something for women. They worked very hard to convince both YÖK and the university administration to open the center. The university allocated an office yet did not provide anything else. Everything else, such as tables, paper and computers were donated. They established the Women Research Association to raise funds and donations. (Interview with Serpil Çakır, 12 October 2015)

In the case of Ankara University, the relationship between the two generations of women scholars followed a somewhat different path characterized by a more cooperative and collaborative type of interaction. Serpil Sancar, Professor of Political Science in Ankara University, who has been the director of KASAUM since its early days, recounts the supportive attitudes of the first generation during the foundation of the center:

Before us, there was another generation in the university. The first generation of the Republic, so to speak, the Kemalist women. The students of Nermin Abadan Unat, let's say. They acted as our representatives, organizing our formal affairs with the rectorate. Since our language was more feminist [the administrators in the higher echelons, in the rectorate,] were

looking at us as if we were weird creatures. The other generation opened our way and invited us to do the job ourselves. There was cooperation between the modernists and feminists. (Interview with Serpil Sancar, 2 July 2015)¹⁹

METU, on the other hand, presents quite a different model in the evolution of academic feminism compared to İstanbul University and Ankara University. In METU, women's studies was institutionalized without any established center directly through the foundation of the master's program in 1994. Yıldız Ecevit, the chair of the women's studies program in METU, elaborates on this:

We started out with scholars or activists or scholar-activists associated with feminism. In my opinion, we are the first generation; our students, most of whom are associate professors by now, are the second generation; and our current students are the third. In Ankara University, there was another generation before us. If you consider like this, there seems to be four generations; yet, if we are talking about feminist studies, then it started with our generation. (Interview with Yıldız Ecevit, 2 July 2015)

Another distinguishing feature of the establishment of the women's studies program in METU is the role of United Nations Development Program (UNDP), as Ecevit notes:

İstanbul University established the center. I was curious about how they did it and got in touch with Necla Arat ... I spoke with Feride Acar for us to follow the example. However, we learned that it was not easy to establish a center, and we gave up the project. At that point, UNDP made a suggestion to us. With KSGM [*Kadın Sorunları Genel Müdürlüğü* (Women's Problems General Directorate)], UNDP opted for METU to promote the gender issue at the universities. Me, Feride Acar, Yakın Ertürk, Zehra Kasnakoğlu, Ayşe Saktanber; all of us were involved in the process. UNDP signed a protocol with us and funded us to establish a master's program. We worked on the schedule for a year, examined some of the models abroad, and we opened the program. (Interview with Yıldız Ecevit, 2 July 2015)

Regarding the issue of naming of the centers and programs, the debate revolved around two alternatives, namely 'women's studies' or 'gender studies.' Of these alternatives, women's studies/problems was generally preferred. Although 'feminist studies' was considered as a viable option by all the scholars interviewed, this option was ignored by their particular

centers and programs and others in Turkey. Ecevit's view of the METU case helps to understand the various arguments regarding naming:

When we first established the program, its name was 'gender and women's studies', but in those years, in 1994, the concept of gender was not that much used in Turkish, so we opted for women's studies. 20 years have passed since then. Now, we applied to change the name of the program to 'women's and gender studies.' Historically, these studies were first founded as feminist studies. Later on, to get accepted, not to be marginalized, they were changed to 'women's studies.' For me, the best would be feminist studies. To call it gender is useful; it is as if you embrace everybody. When you call it gender and women's studies, you don't overlook women, you emphasize them as political subjects. (Interview with Yıldız Ecevit, 2 July 2015)

Berktaş's arguments on proper naming follows a similar pattern to Ecevit's:

It might be more proper to use gender studies instead of women's studies, but in those years this never was on the agenda. Certainly, the proper name would be feminist studies. This name moves women's studies or the woman category away from identity politics. There is also a risk of LGBTI and queer theory getting confined within identity politics. The emphasis on woman on the other hand involves the risk of being trapped in womanism. In fact, there is no difference between womanism and essentialism. (Interview with Fatmagül Berktaş, 10 October 2015)

The prevalence of the Women's Problems Research and Implementation Center as the *proper* naming can be interpreted both as a reiteration of the very first center established in İstanbul University and as a sign of the similarity between academia's perspective while approaching the *women's issue* and a *problem* area. Another conclusion that can be drawn with reference to this particular naming, more specifically to the co-existence of research and implementation, relates to the desire of such centers—similar to their counterparts in the West—to construct a bridge between academia and women's real-life experiences, to use the research and knowledge produced in universities to transform women's lives.

In other respects, we can argue that, although the operation and presence of a women's studies master's program can, at first sight, be regarded as indicating autonomy, it is hard to consider the field as truly autonomous, particularly in the institutional sense of the term, since the programs

are usually run by women academics affiliated to different departments, such as political science, sociology, economics, law and history, rather than having their own academic cadres. This also makes it harder for the field to integrate with other social science disciplines. The sub-department of Gender Studies, established under the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, in Ankara University in 2011 can be considered as a significant model in terms of autonomy, although it is too early to argue that the department has eliminated the risk of ghettoization. As mentioned earlier, it is not possible to propose a universally recognized model for the institutionalization of women's studies. Taking into consideration the evolution and operation of women's studies in the Turkish context, Serpil Sancar highlights the advantages of a hybrid model:

This is not a question of autonomy or integration, the two should coexist. You refine the mainstream through integration and you produce knowledge through autonomy. If there is no autonomy, you cannot produce knowledge. You can produce graduate work only if you are autonomous; you organize your own juries, give them [students] your own degree. We are afraid of, we abstain from affecting the mainstream. We didn't think about that enough. (Interview with Serpil Sancar, 2 July 2015)

While emphasizing the difficulties that scholars working in the field of women's/gender studies encounter, Çakır from KSAUM also highlights the advantages of such co-existence:

We already paid the price of doing academic research on women. You should be knowledgeable in many fields: psychology, sociology, history ... But still you are deemed worthless because of your research field. Yet, you are dealing with historiography, paradigms and all others. This moves women away from the field ... Thus, it loses strength. That's why we should have both autonomy and integration. There should be an autonomous program; but at the same time, we should open courses within existing programs. (Interview with Serpil Çakır, 12 October 2015)

RETHINKING ACADEMIC FEMINISM IN TURKEY IN THE 2000s

In delineating the borders of academic feminism in Turkey in the 2000s, two major dimensions come to the forefront. First, in the historical evolution of academic feminism, the 2000s refers to a period of plurality where

the academy witnessed a diversification of feminist research both thematically and methodologically, particularly with the ever-increasing effect of the postmodernist paradigm in social sciences. Second, women's/gender studies experienced a compartmentalization, fueled by the conservative-neoliberal hegemony. Newly established women's/gender studies centers in this respect proved to be effective platforms for conservative-neoliberal discourse to reproduce its ideological stance based on the prioritization of women's traditional roles in the private sphere and hence their identification with the family.

The Institutionalization Process—In the Wake of the Conservative-Neoliberal Intervention

Academic feminism, institutionalized in well-established universities during the 1990s, witnessed significant quantitative and qualitative changes during the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*—AKP) rule, which first came to power in 2002.²⁰ With the establishment of new universities,²¹ there was a dramatic increase in the number of the women's/gender research centers.²² At first sight, it seems possible to interpret such an increase signaling the further extension of feminism in academia. However, considering the dynamics underlying their establishment and their operational ineffectiveness, these centers are in reality a façade beyond the contours of academic feminism.²³ Contrary to the experience of centers established in the 1990s, most of the newly established ones have neither feminist concerns nor links with the feminist movement; rather, they have been founded directly based on initiatives taken by university administrations in conjunction with The Council of Higher Education (*Yükseköğretim Kurumu*, YÖK) and/or under the auspices of the political authorities.²⁴ By closely interacting with provincial administrative units—that is provincial and/or district governors—these centers lack a feminist perspective in their activities, such as the meetings and educational seminars that are usually provided to local women. A conservative discourse is clear in the thematic profile of the seminars organized by such centers, their mission statements and the curriculums of their programs, in which women are mostly addressed with reference to Islamic and/or traditional values and nationalist sentiments and confined within the borders of traditional gender roles. For instance, one may observe such a conservative pattern in the opening speech given by the Süleyman Demirel

University's Vice-Rector at the 'Woman in Islam' seminar organized by the university's Women's Problems Research and Implementation Center in 2012:

Whatever we say about *our* [emphasis is ours] women and daughters, all the words and sentences are insufficient to show how valuable they are as sacred trusts. Let's never forget that we, the men, carry women as sacred trusts. If we as men improved our perceptions regarding this matter ... we would then complete our task of establishing a free society. (Hüseyin Akyıldız'ın Açılış Konuşması, 2012)

Likewise, in a speech given by a woman scholar at Kars Kafkas University's Women's Problems Research and Implementation Center on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of women's enfranchisement, a nationalist-conservative stance was again apparent:

The Turkish woman, the Turkish mother is always strong. I think that we should follow in the footsteps of our predecessors, the brave patriotic Turkish women. We should work hard, very hard for the future of our children, grandchildren and our country, being aware of every issue and all the unfortunate events that we witness. (Where do we stand on Women's Rights Day? [*Kadın Hakları Gününde Neredeyiz?*] 2008)

The following opening speech was given by the university's vice-rector, a woman academic, at the International Interdisciplinary Women's Studies Congress organized by the Rectorate of Sakarya University in 2009. It is particularly striking for its explicitly anti-feminist disposition:

[W]omen are our mothers, wives, children, sisters. That's why there should not be gender discrimination, equality between the sexes. Respectability, virtuousness, kindness should be considered with regard to attitudes—behaviors—understanding ... [W]omen, the building block of the family and society, and hence family and society should be glorified ... Our aim is not to advocate feminism but the provision of equality of opportunity in the society ... the glorification of family and society ... the establishment of social dialogue and cooperation between woman and man, the participation of women in the political decision-making process and the labor force, respect for familial and social values, cultural values. (The 1st International Interdisciplinary Women's Studies Congress [*Uluslararası—Disiplinlerarası I. Kadın Çalışmaları Kongresi*], 5–7 March, 2009, p. 4)

As far as graduate programs are concerned, the master's program offered by Samsun Ondokuz Mayıs University's Women and Family Research Department provides clues about the conservatization of the educational process—as also implied in its naming.²⁵ Out of 23 elective courses, six consider women within the contours of family life (Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Kadın ve Aile Araştırmaları Merkezi Program Bilgi Paketi [*Ondokuz Mayıs University, Institute of Social Sciences, Women and Family Research Center-program information package*], 2015).

Accordingly, we may argue that most of the centers in newly established universities function as legitimizing *academic* units for governmental policies on women, further developing, reproducing and strengthening the conservative-neoliberal mind-set through their activities. Rather than indicating scientific knowledge production, most of their educational seminars—seminars organized for parents and/or career training provided in line with market demands—aims at fulfilling the goals of lifelong learning practices in accordance with the principles of the newly established Continuous Education Centers (*Sürekli Eğitim Merkezleri*). These were implemented under the EU's Bologna Process that paralleled the neoliberal restructuring during the 2000s in Turkey. Thus, it seems quite interesting that the mentality behind these vocational courses organized for adult women reveal a convergence between the interests of the conservative AKP government and modernist-Kemalist women, despite the latter's rigid dissociation of their stance from that of religious conservatives. Such convergence is particularly explicit in terms of the detachment of both sides from feminist principles, and the hierarchy that they have developed between *victimized* and *savior* women, which implies the instrumentalization of needy women as a group to be indoctrinated for the achievement of grand social projects.

The implications of these newly established centers that have popped up through conservative-neoliberal interventionist policies for the development of academic feminism can be explained at two closely interrelated levels. First, the politicization of academic personnel policies, specifically in terms of process of appointment and tenure, is worth mentioning. The elimination of specified academic criteria and the merit-based strategy from the appointment processes is a major obstacle undermining the transformative capacity and integrity of academic feminism. Such strategies, which are largely practiced to create new cadres and fill available positions in the universities, encourage the recruitment of academic staff

who lack the necessary knowledge and are disengaged from feminist politics. Accordingly, although this expansion increases the number of studies of women's issues, these studies are far from contributing to feminist knowledge production, qualitatively, as they do not share feminist perspectives and methodologies. To borrow Ecevit's conceptualization, the compartmentalization of research leads to a distinction between 'women-related studies' and 'women-focused studies.' The former signifies studies undertaken from within a positivist paradigm with no concerns regarding gender inequality while the latter refers to critical studies based on feminist epistemology and methodology (Ecevit 2015).²⁶ We should therefore distinguish between studies conducted by first-generation scholars and the newly emerging women-related studies. However, although studies conducted in the early period adopted a similar epistemological and methodological frame to current women-related studies, they differ radically regarding the former's formative role in providing data on women's social, political and economic status in the early Republic—then an untouched issue. In contrast, current women-related studies, produced long after the rise of the feminist movement and the academic institutionalization of feminism, can only be seen as a backward step. Second, and in addition to the politicization of academic personnel policies, the new structuration has implications at both the institutional and academic levels as it inherently risks weakening academic feminism through its adverse effects on possibilities for cooperation and solidarity while undermining feminist efforts to challenge the mainstream social sciences.

On Feminist Epistemology and Research—Toward a Juncture of Plurality

The 2000s witnessed growing diversification of feminist studies both thematically and methodologically. While the thematic focus of the 1990s, such as women's history, women's labor or violence against women, maintained its place within the field,²⁷ new research interests and approaches emerged that were particularly taken up by the third generation. These scholars, most of whom were students of feminist academics in Turkey or abroad during their PhD studies, have played a crucial role in the field's development in the 2000s through their contributions to feminist knowledge production with research on ethnicity, identity, body, media, militarism and masculinity, which are topics rarely problematized before the 2000s.²⁸ Apart from the expansion witnessed at the thematic level, the

2000s also saw methodological challenges in women's studies, particularly in a shift from a modernist to postmodernist paradigm.²⁹ By introducing a new conceptual and theoretical framework, such a shift represents a move from emphasizing equality to difference, from a focus on woman as subject to women's multiple identities, and from the conceptualization of gender structured on the dichotomy between men and women to a more comprehensive understanding that also includes LGBTI. While the postmodern approach has its valuable aspects in considering religious, ethnic and cultural differences between women, it also has its own limitations, which are most apparent in its ignoring of class distinctions and the relationship between capitalism and patriarchal society.³⁰ Similarly, while inspiring a pluralist-democratic approach to flourish in women's studies through its inclusivist perspective on different gender identities, the postmodern paradigm has also had certain negative repercussions for the development of feminist theory, as noted by Yıldız Ecevit:

Masculinity studies can be considered as an improvement, but it still was too early for that. It could have been better if masculinity research had been developed after the consolidation of the women's studies as a respectable discipline. The worst blow, however, came from postmodernism. When you look from a modernist perspective and believe in the indispensability of feminist theory, you may say that the coming of a strong postmodern wave during the maturation period of feminism left the work of modernist feminists, who were engaged with theoretical questions, unfinished. The significance of theory declined. (Interview with Yıldız Ecevit, 2 July 2015)

This paradigmatic shift seen in studies conducted by some third-generation feminist scholars can be analyzed in terms of three interrelated dynamics.

First, the proliferation of poststructuralist, postmodern and postcolonial studies in social sciences, particularly within disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, historiography and literature, constitutes a critical turn. The second dynamic relates to the transformation witnessed within the feminist movement itself. During the 1980s, Turkey's feminist movement was dominated by middle-class, more educated women who problematized sexist relationships in the private realm. However, by the mid-1990s, the movement had diversified, particularly with the politicization of Kurdish and pious Muslim women. This diversification, and accompanying critiques, grew further with the rise of the LGBTI movement, with the traditional feminist perspective being denounced as conservative due to its

mentality based on men-women duality. However, while the relationship between the established feminist movement and these newly politicized subjects was tense and difficult during the early years, over time, it became more interactive and transformative. The third dynamic directly relates to the rise of neoliberalism, which we use here as an umbrella term denoting the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism, characterized mainly by flexible labor relations. However, within the neoliberal political *milieu*, we believe that the radicalism of the postmodern perspective is confined to theory, without affecting actual practical politics. All three dynamics encourage the fragmentation and erosion of women as feminist subjects, both theoretically and practically.

Another significant development during the 2000s that eroded the women's position as political subjects was the spread of *project feminism*, which gained wide currency in both the feminist movement and academia as a result of neoliberal policy preferences. Within the context of the *neoliberal university*, which instrumentalizes scientific knowledge in accordance with the demands of the market, project management is conceived as a means for creating resources or revenue for funding an institution's expenses, whether private or state sourced. Scholars are then pressurized to get involved in a competitive project market, depicted as a prominent aspect of academic performance and enforced through certain intra-institutional mechanisms for academic promotion and recruitment. This leads both to the instrumentalization of reason, which hinders the development of critical thinking in academia, and also, through project fetishism or project-oriented production, risks transforming universities into *higher education institutions* operating through market rules without any autonomy and/or independence.³¹

Alongside such threats to knowledge production, the project-oriented perspective also damages the dissemination of the knowledge produced, in total contradiction to the foundational principle of the feminist work ethic of using knowledge about women for the empowerment of women.³² In establishing the basis for marketizing the academy, the dominance of a project-oriented mentality within universities hinders the establishment of solidarity, shared research and knowledge accumulation, which are vital for the development of women's studies. In such a neoliberal *milieu*, feminist scholars risk becoming 'career opportunistic'³³ competent subjects, which is a significant threat to the transformative power of feminism. The lack of a holistic feminist perspective in most projects also renders women-

as-subjects invisible, creating yet another conflict between project fetishism and the feminist perspective.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The evolution of women's/gender studies began with interventions in the dominant approaches to social sciences from a feminist perspective. The field then gradually organized itself and started to operate according to its unique research themes and methods. Almost everywhere, the initial step had involved historical studies aiming to develop women's collective memory.³⁴ Following a similar pattern, studies conducted in Turkey enabled women to be perceived as historically active subjects in contrast to their passive and invisible positioning within the contours of masculinist historical writing. After initially focusing on the narratives of *heroines*, feminist historiography expanded to include stories about the daily practices of *ordinary* women. However, academic feminism's intervention in social sciences was not restricted to studies on women as it also emphasized that studying gender relations was essential for deciphering relations and structures of power and domination, which simultaneously proved to be methodologically instrumental for comprehending the linkages between micro- and macro-power mechanisms.

The ongoing development of academic feminism is strongly associated with the feminist movement as a whole. While forming an interactive relationship, each realm also empowers women in society on their own accord. However, such a relationship did not evolve without limitations. In particular, the relationship lost its initial power with academic feminism becoming confined within its own theoretical, academic discourse. The issue of how to (re)build an effective relationship between theory and practice still largely applies for both academic feminism and the general feminist movement in different parts of the world, including Turkey. As is commonly recognized, feminist knowledge produced in academia can only be reflected in practical actions through a continuous, mutual trans-fusion between the wider feminist movement and academia itself.

In this chapter, we explored the historical evolution of academic feminism in Turkey in relation to two interconnected dimensions. In providing a schematic overview of women-oriented scientific studies produced during the Republican era, we also focused on women's/gender research centers as platforms where feminist knowledge is produced and disseminated in Turkey. As elaborated throughout the chapter, we argue that

women's/gender studies in Turkey has been largely the product of socio-political contingencies, with nation building and modernization the major dynamics underlying the evolution of the field. The post-1980s' rise of Turkey's feminist movement as a social opposition platform subjectivizing women stimulated the field to start considering women's particular conditions and needs or demands. Yet, women's/gender studies currently faces a constant threat, both in Turkey and elsewhere, due to the hegemony of neoliberalism in academia. As with the dominating effects of nationalist and modernist political projects on the field, neoliberal politics weakens and transforms feminist knowledge production in line with its own political and strategic priorities.

Hence, at present, alongside the prevailing obstructive institutional practices in universities, there are also structural obstacles preventing feminist knowledge becoming a transformative power. In this regard, the pragmatist perception of knowledge and its instrumentalization in line with market rules, as the two key constituents of the neoliberal hegemony in academia, impinge on women's studies, as well as the university as a whole. The conceptual confusion fueled by the neoliberal setting also further aggravates the current crisis in academia. The use of the same concepts in both neoliberal discourse and feminism, yet to denote different meanings, is critical in this regard. For instance, while interdisciplinarity within feminist discourse signifies *a practice of transgressing* disciplinary boundaries to produce new forms of critical knowledge, in neoliberal terminology it denotes a strategic option for knowledge production involving the modularization and compartmentalization of knowledge, which (it is claimed) increases the competitiveness and effectiveness of the university in the market (Alvanoudi 2009, pp. 45–46).

Universities in the neoliberal context can thus be considered as operating like enterprises in which students are 'customers/consumers,' knowledge and education are 'commodities' and tuition fees are 'prices' (Alvanoudi 2009, p. 39). Through such transformations of academia to shape it in accordance with the needs of the market, neoliberal policies produce structural obstacles against critical thinking, particularly for feminist studies, which is founded on criticizing the relationship between knowledge and power. In this context, the only way for academic feminism to continue toward its ultimate aim of transforming women's lives is to politicize itself in a way that eliminates the distinction between feminist activism and academic feminism.

NOTES

1. For an elaboration, see Stacey (2000).
2. Most of the research that focuses on the relationship between theory and practice is normative and theoretical. Studies elaborating on the dynamics behind such a relationship, on the other hand, are largely based on the authors' experiences and observations, and generally lack a holistic perspective. For the US, Spanish and Australian experiences regarding the theory-practice interaction, see Messer-Davidow (2002), Threlfall (2006) and Simic (2010), respectively.
3. In the years that followed, programs expanded to other universities in the USA while new courses and programs were initiated in Western Europe during the 1980s, Latin America in the mid-1980s and Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia in the 1990s (Stromquist 2001, pp. 373–374).
4. For particular country cases, see Stromquist (2001).
5. See Butler (1990), Irigaray (1977), Cixous (1976) and Kristeva (1982).
6. During the period, debates on women's social status were largely brought onto the agenda as a substantial part of national identity building. In this context, women's civil and political rights were legitimized by reference to pre-Islamic Turkish society in the nationalist discourse, including arguments for the localization of Westernization. Ziya Gökalp was the pillar of such an approach (see Gökalp, [1923] 2015). Similar themes can also be seen in the speeches of academics in public conferences organized by the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP*) (Ansay 1939). The writings of Afet İnan, one of the key women figures of the time, completely reflect the dominant perspective of the early Republican period (İnan 1964, 1975).
7. Kemalism, named after Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founding leader of modern Turkey, is the official ideology of the Turkish Republic. Its major principles are republicanism, nationalism, populism, statism, secularism and revolutionism.
8. Research on the repercussions of Republican reforms on the betterment of the status of women, conducted on the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Republic, was either published or sponsored by the state. See, for instance, Taşkıran (1973). The

declaration of 1975 as Women's International Year encouraged Kemalists to conduct more studies and organize a congress on women's issues. See Topçuoğlu (1978) and Türk Üniversiteli Kadınlar Derneği [Turkish Association of University Women] (1978).

9. Tekeli's work was first published in 1978. For the full text, see Tekeli (1982). Years after completing her thesis, Tekeli pointed out that, although she herself had no feminist inclinations then, her findings had a crucial impact on the development of her feminist identity. In protest against the hierarchical structuring of universities under the Council of Higher Education (*Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu*, YÖK) established after the 1980 *coup d'état*, Tekeli resigned from her university position to continue her struggle as a feminist activist, albeit with strong ties to academia. Alongside her active involvement in civil society initiatives, being among the founding members of the Women's Library and Information Center Foundation (*Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi ve Bilgi Merkezi Vakfı*), the Association for Supporting Women Candidates (*Kadın Adayları Destekleme Derneği*, KADER), Tekeli continued her academic studies outside the university. Tekeli's experience well illustrates the interdependency of theory and practice and academia and the movement.
10. For the full text, see Tekeli (1990a).
11. Yıldız Ecevit's study on the implications of gender inequality in production and the labor market within manufacturing, and Nükhet Sirman's research on the repercussions of the relationship or cooperation of village women in production are among the pivotal studies in this respect. See Ecevit (1986) and Sirman (1988).
12. Research on violence against women is mostly produced with reference to feminist field experiences. The Purple Roof Women's Shelter Foundation (*Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınma Vakfı-MOR ÇATI*) played a crucial role in challenging the dominant perspective that considered violence against women as an individual, psychological problem and/or normalized it on the basis of religious beliefs and traditional values (see *Evdaki Terör: Kadına Yönelik Şiddet* [Terror in the Home: Violence against Women], 1996; *Geleceğim Elimde* [My Future is in my Hands], 1998). These studies collect the research of various scholars, lawyers, psychologist-psychiatrists and sociologists working in the field, as well as

- incorporating the experiences of women subjected to violence. In considering the physical, economic and psychological dimensions of violence against women, these studies challenged arguments that explained violence in terms of personal or cultural factors, particularly focusing on the relationship between male dominance-patriarchal power and violence. Apart from MOR ÇATI's publications, another pioneering study in this respect is İlkaracan et al. (1996).
13. For a discussion of feminist historiography in the Ottoman-Turkish context, see Çakır (2007).
 14. The Women's Library and Information Center Foundation, established by a group of feminist women in 1990, documented 1500 issues of 38 women's journals published between 1895 and 1927. It should be noted, however, that this does not cover all women's journals, as it only includes those journals catalogued in various libraries in İstanbul. See Kadın Dergileri Bibliyografyası (1993). On the women's movement in the Ottoman era, see Çakır (1994) and Demirdirek (1993). Regarding Kemalist women's identity, see Durakbaşa (1998a, 1998b). For a critical reading problematizing women's subjectification within the contours of Kemalist modernism, see Kandiyoti (1987, 1989, 1995).
 15. For a discussion of the implications of the Kemalist modernization project for the emergence of Turkey's feminist movement in the 1980s, and hence the links between the two generations, see Arat (1991, 1995).
 16. Türkan Saylan and Aysel Ekşi are both professors of medicine, Aysel Çelikel is a professor of law, while Necla Arat is a professor of philosophy. Türkan Saylan was the president of ÇYDD while Necla Arat was the president of KSAUM. For further information on ÇYDD, see www.cydd.org.tr.
 17. Some of the initial activities of the association included the organization of seminars on secular education, a petition campaign aiming to attract the public aware that secularism was under threat and a march for 'respect for secularism.'
 18. Necla Arat remained as the program coordinator and president of the center until her retirement from the university.
 19. Sancar mentions Mine Tan, Ülker Gürkan, Aysel Aziz and Berna Alpagun as the first generation.

20. The changes were certainly not restricted to the universities, but also included government policies regarding women. For more, see Coşar and Yeğenoğlu (2011).
21. The number of universities was 79 before 2002 and reached 193 in 2015. For a list of universities in Turkey, see <http://www.yok.gov.tr/web/guest/universitelerimiz>
22. As of March 2015, there are 62 women's/gender studies research centers in various universities in Turkey. According to YÖK's official figures, 28 offer master's and Ph.D. programs. However, in practice, the total number of graduate programs appears to be 12: 7 master's and 5 Ph.D. programs.
23. There are no particular studies of the newly established centers. These evaluations are based on information provided on the web pages of the various centers as well as observations during our visits to some of them.
24. The establishment of women's/gender studies programs must be approved by YÖK as the central authority governing higher education.
25. In the naming of several women's studies centers operating in different universities, the word 'women' is associated with the 'family': specifically, the Women and Family Problems Research and Implementation Center. Examples of such centers include Yalova University, Bingöl University, İstanbul Ticaret University, Hitit University, Hasan Kalyoncu University and Gediz University.
26. Such differentiation has been most apparent within the context of presentations at interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary conferences on women's studies in Turkey, which became widespread during the 2000s. Starting with the seminar organized by Ankara University in 1996, many conferences have been held in various universities: Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi-İstanbul (1997); Çukurova University-Adana (1997); Ege University-İzmir (1998); TODAİE-Ankara (1998); Ankara University (2002); Yeditepe University-İstanbul (2004); Sakarya University (2009); Dokuz Eylül University-İzmir (2009); Dokuz Eylül University-İzmir (2012); Dokuz Eylül University-İzmir (2014); Çukurova University-Adana (2015); Middle East Technical University-Ankara (2015).

27. On the history of women, see Durakbaşa (2000), Çakır (2006), Kerestecioglu (2001), Akşit (2005), Akay (2003), Berktaş (2003), Zihnioglu (2003) and Sancar (2012). For studies on women's labor, see for instance Dedeoglu and Öztürk (2010). For ethnographic research on the relationship between working middle-class women and women working as housekeepers, see Bora (2005). On violence against women, see Altınay and Arat (2007) and Özkazanç (2013).
28. For studies on the relationship between nationalism, militarism and gender, see Altınay (2000), Akgül (2011) and Sünbuloğlu (2013). The shift from 'women's studies' to 'gender studies' also involved the emergence of masculinity studies. For example, see Sancar (2009), although Sancar analyzes masculinity from within the modernist paradigm. Other studies approach masculinity through postmodern lenses, considering gender status from a pluralist perspective. For example, see Mutluer (2008). With the pluralization of the feminist movement, 'Kurdish feminism' proved to be one of the newly emerging research areas. See Çağlayan (2013, 2014).
29. See, for example, Özkazanç (2015) and Yardımcı (2013). See also *Cogito* (2011).
30. In fact, some feminist studies do employ class analysis to focus on the links between patriarchal structures and capitalism. For example, the theoretical work of Gülnur Acar Savran (2004), a prominent figure within the socialist feminist movement, provides a critical reading of postmodernist and poststructuralist approaches from a Marxist perspective. While Savran's discussion is rather philosophical and theoretical, other feminist studies from within the Marxist paradigm concentrate mostly on women's labor. See, for instance, Özbudun (2015).
31. What we criticize at this point is the production of scientific knowledge under the dominance of the project-oriented rationale. Certainly, running projects is a common process in knowledge production. Given that it has been accepted since Aristotle that theory production relies on empirical data, the critique here does not imply a concern with field studies, but rather is related to the commodification and marketization of scientific knowledge.
32. This not only concerns academia but the feminist movement as well. The survival of feminist organizations depends more and

more on their performance in projects, so much so that, in time, some of them have become so alienated from the *raison d'être* of the wider feminist movement that they have abandoned feminist principles. For a discussion about the threat of the neoliberal rationale, with particular reference to the dissolution of public space and the capacity of feminist politics to develop alternatives, see Coşar and Özkan Kerestecioglu (2016) and Coşar and Özkan Kerestecioglu (2013), respectively.

33. We borrow this concept from bell hooks (2000). Here, it should also be noted that the critique of project feminism does not imply a rejection of conducting projects, as ‘the project of feminism’ is not identical with ‘project feminism.’
34. For an elaboration, see Scott (1991).

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