



A Feminist Analysis of Security in Turkey Neoliberal Patriarchy, Authoritarianism, and Package Politics

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Abstract

This article analyzes the securitization of the political space under the Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party, AKP) governments in Turkey with a critical feminist lens. We argue that a feminist reading unpacks the connection between AKP's discursive strategies in the spheres of social and national security. We focus on the AKP's proposals that address social policy and defense policy spheres—namely, the “Women’s Employment Package;” “Family Package;” and “Internal Security Package.” In our analysis, we start from the argument that the AKP’s terms in office represent the last phase of neoliberal transformation in the country. Packages in this phase also speak to the patchwork style of neoliberal policy making. They function as means for checking, and then, manipulating public opinion. Analysis of the packages provides insight into the AKP’s increasing resort to violence vis-à-vis opposition as well as the deepening of the economic crisis in the country in the last two decades.

Keywords: AKP, Feminist Security Studies, National Security, Social Security, Turkey



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Turkey's political landscape has been characterized by increasing insecurity due to the frequency and prevalence of state violence in everyday life, especially since the summer of 2013, when Gezi Protests erupted across the country, and were met by police violence. The post-2013 period is marked by alternative forms of non-violent opposition against the increasingly authoritarian rule of the *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party, AKP) and state oppression, including socio-political inequality and human rights violations. This state of affairs is in line with neoliberal order of things in its various versions across the capitalist world. We refer to neoliberalism as the reordering of the socio-political sphere in accordance with the prerequisites of the post-Fordist accumulation regime that is characterized by the preference for transnational commercial activity over production, and private investment at the expense of public investment (Harvey 2005). In particular, for the purposes of this work, neoliberalism also contains an ideological project that works through securitization, and in times of crisis, authoritarianization. In this article, we offer a feminist analysis of the junction between social security and national security under the AKP's neoliberal rule in Turkey. We focus on AKP's proposals that address social policy and defense policy—the “Family Package” (January 2015), “Women's Employment Package” (2013); the Draft Law on the Protection of Family; and Dynamic Population Structure on the one hand, and the “Internal Security Package” (February 2015), which became the Law on the Amendments to Law on Police Duties and Authorities, Organization, Duties and Authorities of the Gendarmerie and Some Law, on the other.

We start with the contention that neoliberal capitalism is currently in a crisis phase on a global level (Saad-Filho 2010). In Turkey, the crisis has so far proceeded with the last stage of regime transformation that accompanies neoliberalization (Coşar 2021). AKP governments have so far sustained the neoliberal order, relying on a certain gender regime—which we relate to neoliberal patriarchy, working through the marketization of civil society and forcing feminist organizations into activism in a competitive environment (Coşar and Özkan-Kerestecioğlu 2017). Alternatively, this same gender regime is named as neopatriarchy (Buğra 2014; Donaghy 2017; Moghadam 1991; Sharabi 1988; Toksöz 2012). In trying to connect social security to national security we bring in the workings of this new patriarchal setting in our analysis. The ways in which policymaking is securitized, especially since 2007, are important for analyzing neoliberal patriarchy because the security discourse—frequently integrating militarist symbols—has increasingly accompanied the AKP governments' move to authoritarian politics through neoliberal policy agendas.

Feminist analysis underlines militarization as an essential part of the securitization process (Åhäll 2016; Wibben 2018). Here, militarization means the extension of terms, uses, devices, tools, and policy patterns that originate from within the strictly military institutional settings into other spheres of policymaking and everyday politics (Enloe 2016). As such it is a useful category for considering the gendered connection between AKP's social and national security packages (Åhäll 2016; Enloe 2016). The feminist intervention to security studies does not stop at the borders of “men do this women do that” (Cockburn 2004). It considers gender as an asset in looking at different spheres of policymaking. Thus, the feminist perspective that leads us to have a relational reading of the mode of patriarchy and securitization implicates the intertwining of social policy

and defense policy. In reading the connections between the packages for social security and national security, we rely on the feminist epistemological priority “to make sense differently, to unmake the common sense, to make ruptures and dissonances that make us think anew” (Åhäll 2016: 159). We consider social policymaking and defense policymaking as different means for governments to interfere into the everyday experiences of citizens in nation-states. As Wibben (2018) underlines, feminist analysis offers the outlet for security studies to go beyond research on military institutions and war practices. By bringing regulations on social security into conversation about national security policies we tend to “raise problems, not to solve them; to draw attention to a field of inquiry, rather than survey it fully; to provoke discussion, rather than serve as a systematic treatise” (Sjoberg quoted in Åhäll 2016: 159).

Our focus on AKP’s policy proposals is an attempt to connect the seemingly separate policy spheres, which share the same style of policymaking that we name as “package politics.” “Package” here refers to the draft bills and/or amendments to existing laws presented to the Turkish Parliament to become law. The AKP governments brought in a new vocabulary in law-making processes by calling a composition of relevant or irrelevant amendments, repeals, and new bills as packages (i.e., family package; internal security package; tax package; European Union adjustment package; jurisdiction package) hence attempting to divert public attention away from significant decision-making processes. These self-claimed “packages” have also been controversially called “omnibus bills.” Although the related regulations became laws in due processes, we continue to refer to them as packages in order to address AKP’s “package politics” as well as the fact that items in packages have mostly been enacted within the scope of separate legal amendments and/or decree laws. The term package also refers to women’s genitalia in vernacular Turkish, especially for waxing.¹ This usage mainly originates from women’s coded language that aims to escape male gaze. The coincidence here is not arbitrary but relates to the patriarchal net which hosts both the symbolic and material aspects of securitization. The relationship between the Family Package and Internal Security Package addresses two important assets of the new regime in Turkey: conservative familialism in alliance with Sunni-Islam and Turkish nationalism. This alliance is not difficult to form. What differentiates the AKP’s performance is that it has benefitted from the neoliberal political flexibility.

The article is composed of three parts. First, we tackle a theoretical question: how to read the connection between social security and national security through the lens of neoliberal patriarchy. Next, we provide a brief historical account of social and national security policies in Turkey. Lastly, we analyze AKP’s Family Package and Internal Security Package to demonstrate the role neoliberal patriarchy plays in the regime transition-state (re-)formation process. We pursue textual analysis to understand the gradual buildup of the new patriarchal mode through “speech acts” that reinvent nation-state militarism (Mabee and Vucetic 2018). We believe that this reinvention is

¹ In English slang the term package means “male genitalia.” In Turkish language there are other connotations of the term. In Turkish slang the verb ‘to package’ is in family resemblance with a deeply masculinist swearword: “eff off.” In a masculinist culture depending on male physical violence “beating bad,” and “forcing out” somebody are masculine acts of assuring one’s masculinity over the rest—mostly those who are not male enough.

manifested in the juxtaposition between the speech acts in spheres of social and national security. In line with our epistemological priorities that we outlined above, we focus on the relationship between discourse and materiality. Following Hekman (quoted in Aradau et al. 2014: 58) we approach “meaning-making activity [constitutive] of our social world,” and “materiality...[as] the matter out of which the world composed of the nonhuman things that make up our everyday existence.” The text, here, refers to a political setting where the AKP governments devise, present, and pass their policy proposals as laws of the land. Thus, it calls for reading the symbiotic working of the packages, and the way they are presented, legitimized; justified in the words, rhetoric, and claims of the AKP spokespersons, as well as their symbolic and material implications.

Bridging Social Security and National Security: Neoliberal Patriarchy

Lazzarato (2009: 109) reads neoliberal structurations through shifts in security discourses, and notes that the “strategies of individualization, securitization and depoliticization [are] used as part of neoliberal social policy.” Security discourses are embodied in the varieties of capitalism: the term “*social security* emerged and exists as a way of dealing with *economic insecurity*, [...] rooted in the nature of a system founded on private property” (Neocleous 2000: 64). Considering that the modern state is coterminous with a bourgeois-capital economic system and a patriarchal social order (Corrigan and Sayer 1985), one can approach security as a thread that ties patriarchy to modern state formation. In parallel, it connects the organization of the familial and public spheres with the neoliberal restructuring process.

Security is an active and unfinished project (Rigakos 2011). A social project refers to rationalized, somewhat consistent, carefully planned tasks with certain targets, agents, means, technologies, and strategies (Hunt 1996). Thus, the security projects are always incomplete, producing unintended consequences due to the resistance of the governed, which leads to their alteration, abandonment, or significant transformation in their structures depending on the response. In times of crisis, the security projects appeal to the general public through the manufacturing of common sense based on safety concerns. The security discourse politicizes daily activities in the seemingly depoliticized or apolitical spheres of action; embracing the contingency of security risks (Aradau, Lobo-Guerrero, and Munster 2008) defining “universal adversaries” (Neocleous 2016: 6). Construction of security risks is processed through a masculine lens; it also reinforces gendered imaginaries (Chan and Rigakos 2002).

The concept of social security emerged in the 1930s; and the concept of national security followed in the 1960s (Neocleous 2006). Social insurance, which is included in the social security system today, was issued in Bismarck’s Germany for the first time. Between 1881 and 1889, the insurance acts existed for paid workers (including diseases, job accidents, disability, and aging insurance). In England, Lloyd George, following Bismarck’s example, passed the National Insurance Act in 1911, also applying only to wage earners. Then, in the United States, the Social Security Act was passed in 1935. The name was carefully chosen; not national; not insurance; it was identified with both social and security so as to connote that it was neither a political nor an

economic preference, but a concern for the social, a concern of security, which are bigger and more encompassing than insurance. Both in terms of social aids and social policies governmental practice prioritized heterosexual nuclear families. Patriarchal relations persist through social policies while social policy regimes feature as sites for the changes and transformations in patriarchal patterns (Eisenstein 1999). A brief historical account of the social and national security policies with a feminist perspective is useful to discern both the changes and the continuities in today's patriarchal patterns that characterize AKP's authoritarian Islamic rule in Turkey.

Nation-state construction in Turkey involved discursive policies that called for constant alertness for enemies within and abroad, and hence for security in everyday life. The official history based on the Emancipation War (1919-1923), and the heroes combating against the conquerors of the land as well as the enemies within—defined in terms of an anti-secularist stance with a view to ethnic minorities not complying with Turkishness as the dominant ethnic identity—constituted the backbone of official ideology. The early-Republican era (1923-1945) hosted social policies which were devised to *fight* against poverty as both a citizenship and state responsibility. Social insurance was included in the first Labor Law (1936) of the Republic, within the scope of social aid while the law banned the right to strike and promoted state paternalism (Koray 2000). The concept of social security did not enter the governmental agenda until the establishment of the Ministry of Work in 1945. Both in terms of social aid and social policies, the governmental practice prioritized heterosexual nuclear families. The emphasis on familial ties among citizens as members of the same, unified (national) family was built on the denial of different ethnic identities. The rhetoric of familial bonds constructing the nation has been utilized to fight the causes of disharmony in times of crisis. As is the case with social security, the term national security was first put into institutional use in 1962 with the establishment of the National Security Council (*Millî Güvenlik Kurulu*, MGK), after the first military coup d'état in the country. The same period also hosted the first comprehensive attempts to bring in social security as a priority for workers-as-citizens' rights.

Sketching the Republican Security Discourse

Throughout Republican history, feminists called for help from the state in their struggle against oppression. Yet, these demands were hardly considered part and parcel of the social policy agenda. As Buğra (2016) delineated, the history of social policy making in Turkey offers a rather indecisive route. While social policy agendas from a securitarian perspective can be observed by the 1960s, state aids, subsidies, and assistance extended to different segments of the workforce based on differing tendencies of the governments, are observed as early as the 1920s. In terms of familial caring services one can note a continuum among different governments despite the differences in political preferences of the governing parties as well as the structural dynamics of different periods (Talas 1992).

Until the early 1950s, the dominant understanding of social policy was centered on philanthropy. Talas (1992: 118) notes that the first Labor Law of the early-Republican era

entrusted the state with the duty to organize and regulate social insurance for working citizens. The state was to aid the citizens in need in return for loyalty, and the well-off were responsible to *help* the disadvantaged out of compassion that was ingrained in the emotional politics of the Republic. In either case, those at the receiving end of the social policy regime were situated as weaker, passive, and less than citizens. Social solidarity for egalitarian re-distribution that connects to the social rights aspect of citizenship was not a priority (Marshall 1987).

Social policy agendas throughout Republican history have been shaped in terms of patriarchal priorities. Women were called for citizenization; they were called to identify with the male attributes that dominated citizenship practice. At the same time, they were essentially imagined in motherhood roles (Arat 2000). Gendered allocation of social aid was the rule: women had the right to receive social aid through their children. The gendered pattern merged with the class pattern: lower-class women were identified in terms of their motherhood responsibilities, middle- and upper middle-class women were expected to have professional lives—their symbolic responsibility to embrace motherhood of the nation was significant (Buğra 2016; Sirman 2005).

Although the 1960s ushered in attempts to create rights-based social policy considerations at the state level, the social security scheme continued to be limited. First, entitlement to social security was defined within the contours of the labor market. Second, the breadwinner model that inspired the policies connoted the exclusion of women's domestic labor as well as their subordination through dependency structures (Kılıç 2008), producing familialism in social policy regimes (Akkan 2018; Buğra 2020). It is important to note that it was with the military interim government that social security as an aspect of labor rights was introduced within the government program. The program was submitted to the approval of the National Unity Council (*Millî Birlik Komitesi*, 1960-1961), which assumed legislative authority during the 1960 coup d'état. This introduction was followed by the formation of the MGK as a constitutional organ in 1961, which was designed to act as an advisory to the cabinet for issues regarding national security. The term "national security" was also new for the Western allies of Turkey. While the social policies in the two decades were functional in ensuring "the security of the social system" (Neocleous 2000: 64), and thus the existing gender relations, the relation between social policy making and social rights was not systematized. But the military's hold on the security of the society-as-nation was in place and would persist through the years to follow:

In this country, from rice prices to highways to touristic places there is nothing that is not related to national security. If you are thinking too deeply, that as well becomes a matter of national security. (quoted in Ahmad 1999: 156, our translation)

After the 1980 military coup, the scope of the term national security was expanded in the new National Security Law (1983): "protecting and watching the constitutional order, national being, totality of the state as well as all its benefits including political, social, cultural and economic benefits and its contractual law against all kinds of internal and external threats" (Bayramoğlu 2004: 87-88, our translation). The MGK's role was expanded and its decisions became binding. Thus, in the name of national security, the military cadres obtained executive authority to regulate

social, cultural, economic, and technological developments in the country (Bayramoğlu 2004). This extension in the meaning of national security fit into the spirit of the post-1980 period in Turkey: Immediately after the coup, the rehearsal of neoliberal transformation process was staged. The interim military regime (1980-1983) laid the foundations for the convenient socio-political space through the pacification of opposition; exclusion of any claim to social rights; as well as the passing of legislation. The process, in general, worked through two layers. First, already pervasive militarist national security discourse that identified the society with the nation assumed monopoly in the social policy realm, while “deploying gendered myths and images” in discursive and non-discursive practices (Wibben 2018: 142). Second, deepening of national security discourse fit well into the neoliberal order of things, as the latter relied on the prioritization of community and/or nation as the safeguards against individual insecurities, excluding women’s security (Hudson 2005).

The socio-cultural configuration in the post-1980 era can be understood with reference to conservatism that accompanied the transition to neoliberalism in Turkey. The two main components that persisted in the process were economic neoliberalization and Turkish-Islamic synthesis on the socio-cultural axis (Coşar 2012). In accordance with the IMF and World Bank-commanded structural adjustment programs, new regulations suggested a decrease in the state’s economic role: privatization, an end to subsidies in agriculture, the liberalization of foreign trade, encouragement of foreign investment, and liberalization in imports. The aim was to integrate Turkish and global capital (Yalman 2002; Balseven and Önder 2009). In this respect, the military regime received support from Turkish capital. In fact, two years before the military coup, in 1978, a report published by the Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association (*Türkiye Sanayiciler ve İşadamları Derneği*, TÜSİAD)² clearly stated the new paradigm:

If the state tries to do everything, it ends up doing nothing...If the state produces can food, raises turkeys, makes shirts, opens grocery stores, these efforts take all its time and sources away; the state then cannot find the required time and resources to perform its key function, that is protecting the nation’s borders and maintaining the security of people and property. (Haspolat 2012: 173, our translation)

The neoliberalization process had ups and downs with crises first in 1994 and again in 2001. The business circles held the coalition governments responsible for the crises. Technocratic management of the early 2000s, and the AKP government that took office in 2002 with the majority votes, were not exceptions in this respect. Familialistic practices in social policies and familialistic discourse in the national security agenda were among the most persistent factors in this process. These discursive policies have consistently hindered the rights-based prioritization in the making of social policy agendas.

Considering social policy making as an aspect of wealth redistribution within nation-state boundaries, it can be noted that rights-based approaches have proved to be weak and discontinuous

² The male term, “businessmen,” was replaced by “businesspersons” in the 48th General Congress of the Association, in January 2018.

where paternalistic philanthropy has been a persistent theme in social policy schemes. The main difference between the resonance of philanthropic priorities in the early years of the Republic and prevalence of charity in the post-1980 period can be noted in the following factors: first, the weight of Islamic motifs is ingrained into the social aid programs; social rights are relatively weak; women's rights have been almost absent from social policy agendas. Second, family has been privileged, specifically as a unit of *solidarity*. Taking its base from the socio-cultural reconfiguration of the 1980s and economic structuring that took its final shape in the turn of the 2000s, the AKP's rule has so far signified the final phase of the process in the country. Below we offer an outline of neoliberalization through the familialization of society-as-nation and securitization of the public order. As we argue, these two aspects merge in the mode of patriarchy, and that is where we uncover the connections between social and national security.

AKP's Package Politics

Neoliberal insecurities ask for a different set-up for security as compared to the welfare state design. This new order of things openly claims risk while dispensing with the social aspects of rights—i.e., limiting rights to the individual level; excluding or moralizing women's risky behavior (Chan and Rigakos 2002); subjectively interpreting women's needs as risks (Hannah-Moffat 1999); relying on actuarial-like qualitative data and speculations (Aradau, Lobo-Guerrero, and Van Munster 2008); and introducing a “logic of radical uncertainty in legal reasoning” (Kessler and Werner 2008: 290). All relevant terms, risk, security, and the social are simultaneously pushed into a matter of national interest through the promotion of national security. This discursive set relies on the materiality of social policies. In the aspired frame citizens are called into a bifurcated state of existence: on the one hand, privacy and domesticity permeates the social identity of the citizens, bringing in familialist priorities, mostly defined in religious terms. On the other hand, social rights of the citizens are absorbed by the rights of the entrepreneurial individual. The contradiction between these two states of being is managed by moral economies. Under the AKP's rule, the site of moral economies links both to the family and the public order. Family is claimed to be a site for reproduction and social imagination. Public order, on the other hand, is envisaged as a religio-communitarian site of police regulation. In this respect, the AKP's concomitant Family Package and Internal Security Package exemplify the neoliberal-conservative tactics to soothe anxieties, caused by the competitive individualization of social rights. Herein the family and the state intertwine by appeals to moralistic and authoritarian discursive policies.

Packaging the Family

The return to family under neoliberal-conservative regimes has been part of neoliberal agendas, carried unequivocally by both the liberal and conservative governments alike for decades. The neoliberal call to the subjecthood of an insulated individuality has always been accommodated by the de-economized, de-politicized notions of cultural spheres—family construing one important site in this respect (Lazarrato 2009). The emphasis on family as the basic social security

mechanism gained increasing prevalence at a time when workfare long replaced welfare, job security was understood first and foremost as the security of business circles, and when social security and health insurance systems were increasingly individualized. The AKP did not start anew; it continued the post-1980 transformation process. While it amended the Labor Law (2003) to design the labor market in line with the notion of workfare and flexibility, it also tried to bring in a legal structure that would curb the possibilities for opposition to the transformation of work life. The AKP continued with devising new legal arrangements for social security and public services. These arrangements can be outlined along three points. First, the new legal regulations recognize the state's responsibility to contribute to the individual social security schemes. Additionally, the new legal structure brings in mechanisms that ensure the integration of the workers in the informal sector within the scope of social policies. Second, it brings in the privatization of social security as well as of public services by turning them into commodities (Çelik 2015); an example is the restructuring of social security based on a pay-as-you-go system. Third, the new legal arrangements rely on a religio-familialistic discourse that envisages the Turkish family as offering an ideal locus for social solidarity; thus, turning a matter of social rights into a subject of the intimate sphere. An emphasis on the notion of charity through non-governmental organizations runs alongside this familialism. This might parallel Republican philanthropy. The difference between the two as channels for remedying the ills of respective versions of capitalism can be observed in the calls to citizens. In the Republican form, the citizens were directly addressed; they were called into the *good citizenry* as a matter of *good humanness*, with a slight implication for secular ethics. In the AKP's Islam-blended conservative call, one directly observes the religio-communitarian liabilities.

The Women's Employment Package (2013) can be considered as a step towards the adjustment of labor market regulations in response to the 2008 global neoliberal crisis. This package was later integrated into the Family Package (January 2015), and it was also echoed in the Package for Supporting Employment, Industrial Investment and Production (April 2015). The last package was not solely focused on women and/or family but included specific provisions for integrating women into the flexible labor market and extending microcredits to (potential) women entrepreneurs. The regulations which called for women to withdraw from the corporate labor market in favor of domestic care labor were included in different by-laws, decree laws, and/or omnibus bills. Those that invited them as micro entrepreneurs and/or as part-time workers into the free market were integrated into separate bills and amendments. All packages share the emphasis on the balance between women's domestic/household obligations and in the labor market, defined as work-family balance as part of work-life balance.³ For women's employment, it implicates the balance between two private spheres: the privatized labor market and the domestic/familial sphere, which in practice means prioritization of domestic responsibilities as essential tasks for women. The packages are marketed by the incumbent Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu (2014-2016) as

³ We would like to put a critical reservation on the term work – life balance. The separation between work and life-as-such is an asset of the neoliberal order of things. Putting work outside the life, signifies a step toward the de-socialization, de-publicization of work. It also parallels the dissolution of the social into the private.

means to protect the family and the dynamism of the population, alongside with improving women's status in the labor market (Toksöz 2016).

The promotion of (heterosexual) marriage is constant in the packaged regulations. For example, as one tactic to promote marriage, the government provides payment to those who marry for the first time before the age of 27. Here, the harmony between finance and family—between neoliberal economic priorities and conservative moral priorities—through juridical setups is worth noting: “Turkish citizens... who open a savings account [to be called “dowry account”] in Turkish Liras in the banks and stay in the system at least for three years are set as eligible for state-financed marriage support” (memurlar.net 2015). The amount of the state contribution is not fixed; but it was designated to be a minimum 20 percent of the accumulated amount, and maximum TL 5,000. This particular example outlines the comforting alliance forged between the banks, the heterosexual family, and the state. Each of the three institutions of capitalism is assigned a specific role in the current neoliberal phase. Banks function as conduits to delay the accumulation crisis through the creation of new investment pools from individual savings accounts. Heterosexual families function as units of neoliberal patriarchy. First, they have a symbolic role in the heteronormative gender order, with its securitarian assumptions that are based on “gendered myths and images” (Wibben 2018: 142) of the nation. Second, they play a material role in investment, reproduction, and financial security. The state's role in this alliance hints at ever-increasing state involvement beyond regulatory functions. Considering that the neoliberal state is ideally confined with effective regulation through juridical arrangements, this increase reveals the deepening of the crisis that has been unfolding for almost a decade.

Another comforting alliance that can be observed through the packages is between the state and (potential) Turkish mothers, exemplified in the provision of “birth assistance.” This accords with President Erdoğan's persistent calls on women to give birth to at least three children, from his prime ministerial period on. The relevant regulation reads: “[The state gives] birth assistance to Turkish citizens; TL 300 for the first live born; TL 400 for the second, and TL 600 for the third child. This assistance is extended to the mother or father, whoever is Turkish citizen; and if both are Turkish citizens then it is the mother who receives the assistance” (memurlar.net 2015). The two comforting alliances are merged in the discourse that frames giving birth and motherhood in terms of national military service. In this frame, the priority is not recognizing women's social rights as citizens but conditioning women's social rights on giving birth and motherhood: “Just like men deserving the right for promotion relative to the time they spend in compulsory military service, women will have the same right by giving birth” (memurlar.net 2015).

The provisions, directly concerning women's social rights within the scope of different packages, borrow from long voiced feminist demands for equality in the labor market, including equal pay. However, the way they are advertised and enforced, and the way discursive constitution unfolds into practice, exemplifies the manipulation of demands for gender equality to enhance conservatization through familialism.⁴ As clearly noted in Davutoğlu's statements, the AKP's

⁴ Toksöz (2015) argues that related measures opt merely for increasing birth rate in Turkey.

packaging of gender equality rests on the contention that “the protection of the family and dynamism of the population” would work for women’s empowerment (memurlar.net 2015). The gradual exclusion of women’s rights/feminist organizations from the preparation, discussion, and implementation of related packages is also telling. The measures were presented as opportunities for married working women to balance their work-life with domestic-life while deepening their insecure position in the labor market (Akgökçe 2015).

Read together with the recurrent introduction of the Private Employment Agencies (PEAs), the packages risk women’s participation in the work life, except under flexible conditions, (Karaca 2016) and offer the legal grounds to increase identification with reproductive functions and with the familial sphere (Toksöz 2015). The PEAs are important in this respect. They are among the clearest manifestations of the flexibilization of labor force through moralistic appeal to the heterosexual family (KEİG Platformu 2015). The PEAs are not new in Turkey’s labor relations, they date back to the 2003 Labor Law. What is new is the introduction of temporary work as a desirable work relation, administered by the bureaus. Here the nuance is important: The Labor Law gives the authority to the employer to hire their employees to other firms for a period of maximum six months—renewable for two times—thus legislating interim work. The new regulations bring in the full implementation of temporary work relations through specialized agencies. The AKP’s policy packages that follow one another, and especially the measures in the Family Package as part of the 10th Development Plan (2014-2018), position the PEAs and temporary work conditions side by side with the goal to increase women’s employment (KEİG Platformu 2015). This ordering is functional in disguising the connection among the PEAs and feminization of labor (Vosko 2006). Here we shall note that we do not take PEAs as the sole means that facilitate the feminization of labor in Turkey. They exemplify the mentality behind the packages: locking working conditions and work itself into the privacy of temporary contracts, and positioning workers as commodities in contract relations. Considering that under capitalist patriarchy women are treated as commodities, it is apt to note the multiplied jeopardy in this instance. As a follow-up, “flexible forms of employment as a miracle cure for low labor force participation by women appear in both the 9th and 10th Development Plans and the National Employment Strategy (2014-2023)” (Toksöz 2016: 77). Thus, labor force is feminized by the increase in women’s employment in temporary works, in the informal sector (Arslan 2020; Oğuz 2020), and “in social services without accommodation” (Toksöz 2016: 78).

Flexible work conditions that epitomize the alliance between free-market priorities and conservative morals are presented as the right of women-as-mothers both to keep their “job guarantee, [and] to spend time with their children...so as to fulfil their mothering duties” (memurlar.net 2015). The difficulty to locate (individual) rights in conservative imagination is managed through free market requisites for flexibility, and conservative recourse to liabilities. Related legal amendments that spring from various packages, which share the plans of reorganizing women’s (already flexible) work-life in line with conservative family values have so

far been introduced separately.⁵ Buğra (2020: 453-454) comments on the National Employment Strategy for 2014-2023: “Apart from the implications of flexible employment relations for both male and female workers, this attempt at work-family reconciliation closely reflects the objective of keeping women at home as care providers while also enabling them to contribute to family income and making them appear to be part of the workforce.” Thus, emphasizes Oğuz,

March 2019 labor force statistics, released by the Statistical Institution of Turkey show that the reasons for the exclusion of more than 60% of women from the labor force in Turkey are household and care work or familial responsibilities. On the other hand, while the ratio of women’s employment has been rising over the years, most of the employed women work in insecure, flexible, low-income jobs and in the informal sector. (Oğuz 2020: 36)

Oğuz’s research documents that women’s employment increases in times of crisis, further severing their insecurity in domestic and public workspaces.

Packaging Security

The AKP governments take family as a reference point in governing the nation. Their national imagery, based on the Sunni-Islamic Turkish family, has also been functional in the (re)construction of the public order. While fixing risk-taking and insecurity as the new normal of labor market, the AKP governments speak the populist language in appealing to the poorest of the poor with overwhelming emphasis on charity—calling citizens-as-believers to charity work,⁶ and naming the state as the compassionate elder in enabling benevolent help to the “losers,” side-by-side with the family, to create “one enormous family which has only one opinion and one interest” (Arendt 1998: 39). This required deepening the internal security measures, also in line with the neoliberal world order.⁷ Hence, the securitization of labor markets is accompanied by the increase in internal security measures, and by the intensification of familialism as a social security tool. The new structuring of family and public order in relation to each other in a time of regime change can be traced through AKP’s national security rhetoric. In this rhetoric, the place spared for the perplexing diversity and multitude of the foes of the nation-as-terrorists, the glorification of martyrdom, and the inevitability of the idea and practice of war has consistently widened.

⁵ By-laws on Maternity Leave or Part-time Works That Will Be Performed after Leave without Pay was enacted on 08 November 2016.

⁶ President Erdoğan’s son Bilal Erdoğan seems to be taking the lead on this: he founded a new charity organization, New Turkey Education Foundation (*Yeni Türkiye Eğitim Vakfı* 2018). The aim of the foundation is “contributing to the development of education, implementing education services and contributing to the youth development and realizing other aims, stated in the foundation voucher in order to reduce the state’s share in public services” (Birgün 2018).

⁷ One can observe similar security measures in other capitalist countries, as in the cases of Counter-Terrorism and Security Act in the UK (2015); Safe Streets and Communities Act (2012), Anti-Terrorism Act (2015) in Canada; U.S. Freedom Act of 2015.

The Internal Security Package is one of the most exemplary manifestations of AKP's authoritarian politics—increasing hostility to social opposition; fostering intolerance to citizen-based claims that counter the party's policy preferences; increasing resorts to physical violence; increasing tendency to identify alternative structural, ideological, cultural proposals as anti-systemic; and calling for securitized counter-measures. The package was an immediate follow-up to the October 2014 Kurdish Protests, also known as Kobane Protests. The protests were part of broader protests going on at the time across Europe against the Islamic State's attack on the city of Kobane in Syria, near the Turkish border, and the lack of Turkish military support in the fight against militants in the town (BBC 2014). Despite the disproportionate use of force by the police/military towards the protestors, which killed 35 protestors and wounded many more (Amnesty International 2015), the government used the protests to justify the Internal Security Package (Hürriyet 2015g). However, most articles in the package speak to previous social events such as the Gezi protests or increasing labor disruptions and strikes (Kaygısız 2014). The package contains a broad scope of policy-proposals, securitizing a wide range of social, cultural, and moral issues hinting at the relationship between social and national security; and for methodological concerns, between discourse and material in policymaking.

The security package increases the powers of the police as well as Gendarmerie (military police, responsible for rural areas including Kurdish provinces) and equips them with authority in intelligence services. It expands the authority of the police to use firearms (Article 4); to conduct searches without a warrant (Article 1); to take plaintiff, victim, or witness statements anywhere as they see fit (Article 3); to undertake intelligence acts by way of wiretapping any telecommunication between citizens for up to 48 hours without permission until the written permission from the Judge is obtained (Article 5); to “take under guard” (not to capture or to detain) and; to “move away” or “displace” (not to take to the police station, leaving it to the officer how far and where) those whom they think prevent the police from doing their job (Article 2). The regulations have reiterated the AKP's commitment to keeping its control over already vulnerable populations including non-(Sunni) Muslims, non-Turkish communities, LGBTIQ+ people, the poor, along with women. The police's historical role is to create and maintain inequalities (Vitale 2017). Increased power of the police is functional to further inequalities while widening the gap between the privileged and the underprivileged. Similarly, preventative measures are meant to pacify the poor and the underprivileged, to preempt effective opposition.

The package further criminalizes oppositional collective action of any kind. It regards the possession of stone, wooden, or plastic sticks, as well as face masks in mass demonstrations and protests as akin to possessing firearms. If the protests turn into (or the police assume that they turn into) propaganda for a terrorist organization, then the punishment for the same crimes cannot be less than four years of prison sentence (Article 10). The length of pre-trial detention is increased to 48 hours (Article 13) for crimes in the Law on the Struggle against Terror. If the crime is committed in conjunction with others, then this time can be extended to four days, with up to two renewals. The changes in the law expanded the intimidation of protestors with longer prison sentences as well as longer pre-trial detention. The latter has been widely used by the police as a

preventive measure, pre-empting ongoing protests from expanding in time. The precautionary language and strong emphasis on “security risks” in the package can be read in terms of increasing arbitrariness in police force.

The internal security package also endows city and district governors with authorities that surpass those of elected city and district mayors (Articles 15 and 16). The governors have the authority to give direct orders to the police to protect the public order in their mandates. Moreover, all public institutions and organizations located in the governor’s district, functioning at national or local levels, governed either by elected or appointed bodies, are required to put all the vehicles in their possession to the orders of the governor, including fire trucks, ambulances, tow trucks, and heavy construction equipment. If the elected authorities do not obey the governor’s orders, the governor would have the authority to use police force against those authorities’ will. This further expands the paternalist power of the central government while *civilian* vehicles and their operators now serve national security purposes. Since 2015, the scenes of city busses and/or heavy construction trucks blocking roads of planned protests or supposedly planned protests became familiar (DemokratHaber 2017; GazeteEmek 2018). One precedent to these measures can be observed in the 78-day long TEKEL protests that started in December 2009. The protests came at a time when the state budget was shrinking and the AKP government attempted to limit the workers’ rights to retirement and health insurance by changing their status to temporary work (Özcan 2019). The government’s attempts were met with workers’ solidarity, leading to strike. The government responded with securitarian measures, police attacking the peaceful demonstrators among whom women stood at the front. Besides demonstrating the link between crisis and authoritarian measures this example also hints at the patriarchal order that multiplies the burden of protests for women. Neocleous (2006: 376) calls social security and national security “the warp and the weft of economic security.” In times of crisis, the new powers of the police and the city and district governors come in handy against strikes, work interruptions, and other work-related disputes. This is clearly stated in Erdoğan’s address to the business circles in the first anniversary of 2016 coup d’état attempt:

We implement even the state of emergency for the sake of our business circles, so that they can operate more comfortably...When we first came to power 15 years ago, there was also a state of emergency, but all factories were under the threat of strike. Now, thanks to the state of emergency, we immediately step into those places where there is the threat of strike. We say, we do not allow strike here; you cannot disrupt our business world. (Yeni Çağ 2017)

The Internal Security Package received considerable criticism and protests from all opposition parties and civil societal organizations. Regardless, many items in the package were made into laws: 68 of 131 articles, including the laws concerning the increased authority of the police, and the law regulating mass demonstrations and protests were enacted on March 20, 2015. The last 63 articles were removed from the package to be considered at a later date (Hürriyet 2015a). The controversy around the passing of this law and the government’s justification contribute to in the AKP’s failure to receive enough parliamentary seats to form a majority

government in the June 2015 general elections. Eventually, the elections were repeated in November 2015, and the AKP managed to get enough seats to form a majority government. This was certainly related to new security measures changing the social order with involvement of law enforcement officers' hand-in-hand with non-law enforcement government employees, doing the security jobs during the whole election process.

The official discourse in defense of the package, gives clues about the new social order being built around an authoritarian-securitarian nexus. The nexus also defines politics with actual heteronormative familial ties, and the patronizing role of the state. The package has been defended on many fronts. The claim that it is in line with the practices in developed countries, particularly in the EU member states (Hürriyet 2015f) was prevalent. Another attempt to normalize the new security measures was to shift the emphasis from "security" to "freedoms" and "peace." This was part of the government's tactic of operationalizing the security-liberty dilemma in marketing the package by renaming it, "Protection of Freedoms Package" (T24 2015).

Another basis for defending the package was found in public conscience. The public was defined as a body consisting of heterosexual families with more than one child. This definition reaffirms the neoliberal-authoritarian nexus, built on simultaneous moralization and securitization. Davutoğlu claimed that the package had the capacity to protect "innocent young boys and girls" from the destructive effects of Molotov cocktails in times of social unrest (Hürriyet 2015e). He also highlighted "the war on drugs" in the package by referring to the importance of protecting the "purity of the nation's youngsters." The Minister of Internal Affairs defended the package by recourse to citizens' will and explained new conveniences: "when there is a break-in...families will not need to go to the police station to provide witness statement, the police will go to them and take their statements at their homes" (Hürriyet 2015d). The Minister of Culture and Tourism, similarly, expressed his concerns for the security of those families "sitting in their balcony in the evening" and the security of "children going to the corner store to buy bread" (Cumhuriyet 2015), and hence demonstrating the reach of the package into the private realms. The discourse evinces that the public order is defined on the basis of a monolithic image of the Turkish-Muslim family, denying the existence of different ethnicities, religions, and gender identities. The interweaving of morals and security through the family that underlies this discourse was also observed when feminists took to the streets on March 8th International Women's Day demonstrations, in their calls for rethinking the family, and in protests against the government's attempted backlash. In resonance with the official promotion of the single, heteronormative family, LGBTIQ+ groups started to face increasing rights-violations and violence from the police during the June 2015 İstanbul Parade and onwards (BBC 2015).

The package was defended via criminalizing and questioning the "manhood" of male demonstrators. On more than one occasion, President Erdoğan claimed that the protestors hid behind masks and put on skirts to conceal their identity, and in turn questioned the manhood of those who were against the package: "Why do you wear masks? Uncover your face if you are not a terrorist. He says that he is a man. What a man! Men wear pants; why do you wear skirts? Unfortunately, they wear these; as if they can hide themselves" (quoted in Hürriyet 2015c). In

other words, the Internal Security Package aimed at reassuring the place of masculinity in the public order. First, as hinted in the president's rhetoric, women are not supposed to demonstrate—he does not acknowledge their agency as protestors. Second, when there is disorder due to collective action on the street, protestors' masculinity can easily be questioned, since they threaten the masculinity of the desired public order. Thus, the discretionary and intelligence powers of the police are increased to re-create and maintain the masculine public order. The authorities given to city and district governors with the package brings in similar moral(izing) responsibilities, originating from neoliberal patriarchy. In addressing governors, Erdoğan emphasized the importance of family as part of their work (assuming that the governors are heterosexual married men): “Work night and day. Not only you...your wives as well...I see that some leave their wives in Ankara; he [sic.] performs his governor duties in Van. You shall not govern like that; you shall take your wife with you. People want their governors with their wives” (Hürriyet 2015b).

Along with the nation's imagery, based on gendered myths and composition of heterosexual families, Erdoğan emphasized security, while excluding women's security in the name of the nation's security (Hudson 2005). Deploying national security discourse this way fits well into neoliberal patriarchy. Data show that the government's internal security expenditures increased 23.91 percent between 2013 and 2017. Between 2006 and 2017, Internal Ministry's security expenditures increased 471 percent while the General Directorate of Security's expenditures increased 333 percent—the biggest increase being the personnel item which made up 89 percent of the total budget (Yentürk 2018). These expenditures do not translate into safer public or private spheres for women. In 2019, 474 women were (reportedly) murdered—the highest number in the last ten years when at least 3,000 women lost their lives to femicide (Kadın Cinayetlerini Durduracağız Platformu 2020). In parallel, in 2019 women's unemployment rate was 16.5 percent—the highest since 2014. Turkey has the lowest women's employment rate among other OECD countries according to 2019 data (OECD.Stat 2020). The main reason for women's unemployment is still domestic work and other care responsibilities (Çerkezoğlu 2019).

Conclusion

The securitization of socio-economic and political spheres can be traced back to the coding of any phenomenon and policy in terms of national security and justification of security measures via socio-economic benefits. The first axis of securitization is manifested in policies that are related to women's employment and/or social benefits whose goal is to protect the family. In a rather contradictory parallelism, the familial sphere is presented as a place where individuals should seek security to endure the necessary insecurity in labor markets. This safe place-setting speaks directly to the presentation of the family as the main unit of solidarity in the Turkish nation. The availability of women's labor for informal domestic labor to comply with the requisites of flexibilization fits well into the nation imagery that permeates into the familial sphere as a unit of national security. It also accords with the imagination of the family as a means for social security. The increase in women's employment in the second decade of 2000s, thus, coincides with significant

unemployment and precarious working conditions for women (Toksöz 2016), and with the calls for motherhood as a national duty.

We should underline the convergence between the two sets of security packages: conservative familialism colored with Sunni-Islam and Turkish nationalism. Both packages work on a slippery neoliberal slope, which functions in terms of risk-management, subjectification of all the citizens through consumption, and the notion of the social that involves de-publicization and leans on the family as the locus of social existence. This scheme belies feminist calls for gender equality, hosts maleist claims against gender equality, and stigmatizes any alternative political style, moral claim, and/or rights-based claims as security problems. Women's rights to equal conditions in the workplace, in labor markets, and equal pay are thus contained into a broader interest of the state-as-nation-as-family. Thus, rights claims are displaced from the frames of democratic rights and/or citizenship rights and/or social rights. They are re-defined as assets of national order and security.

The feminist reading that we attempt in this article starts from the argument that critical feminist epistemologies offer the means to read the reality in its pieces—by splitting reality (Haraway 1988). This runs counter to the assumptions of masculinist knowledge production that prioritizes the wholeness of reality as the unit of analysis. It is our contention that reading the pieces and revealing the (dis-)connections among them, as well as the way they harmonize, contradict, consent and/or oppose to each other gives a dynamic picture of the whole in a certain time and space. The package politics that we brought into attention in this article is one such piece in Turkey's neoliberal experiences in the twenty-first century. Critical feminist epistemology offers the means to further analyze this whole and the way crisis politics helps power-holders secure their wealth and evade mass opposition.

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