

## **IS ISLAMISM GOING TO BE WOMEN'S RIGHTS FRIENDLY? COMPROMISES AND CONFLICTS ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AGENDA IN TURKEY**

What is observed as recent social transformations in Turkey is that Islamism is gaining a new engendering perspective. One of the new faces of this fact is increasing number of pious women in public. Their voices and discourses are involving a new kind of women's rights language. These women are combining religious and women-friendly concepts together like gender justice, gender equality, elimination violations of women's rights, etc, generally called as Islamic women's movement. Considering this fact my presentation will analyze the one feature of these Islamist women's activities that is building political coalition with secular and feminist women's rights organizations and improving a specific women's rights agenda to handle it.

This presentation will propose some outcomes of my research. The data that I am presenting here was collected from four different women's rights campaigns, launched by Islamist or/and feminist organizations, in different times and contexts, in the last decade in Turkey. By going through these data I will try to propose several positions of compromises or conflicts came true between feminist and Islamist women's rights (WR) actors. Actions came through during campaigns were like discussions, agenda settings, backing supports, staying apart or acting together. By this mean I can point out to their steps headed towards converging or diverging issues on their agendas, realized during these campaigns. My presentation will conclude with a brief comparison between contexts in which these feminist and Islamist politics of WR interacted and similarities and differences occurred between their WR agendas.

During my presentation I will point out to the successes in building overlapping activities or falling apart because of various reasons. When synchronized activities between different WR actors were reached, the success was almost certified. Success was generally opening doors towards reserved chairs on the table to bargain with public authorities. This provides them to translate their agendas into draft legislative provisions. This came true with recent legislative reforms and policy design for the elimination of violence against women. By the agency of these joint actions, WR actors from both feminists and Islamists are welcomed to

political platforms, such as discussion program on tv channels and have a chance to voice their opinions.

But this dialogical politics was not always the case reached by all WR campaigns. The last part of my analysis will be on the non-converging cases that will unfold us the limits of this new collaborative political strategy of Islamist and feminist WR actors. My findings concerning divergent actions are specific to body politics. When an overlapping agenda is impossible it is an issue of WR dealing with individual freedom specific to female bodily actions or right to choose. Underlying reason is that Islamist WR agenda is incorporated to communitarian values specific to female bodies. From this perspective they treat female bodies primarily responsible for communitarian well beings, like child bearing and sexual modesty, thus women should not be violating their communitarian responsibilities. This positioning is something like going back to square one that is a well-known dichotomy separating communitarian-conservatives and liberal-democrats when gender equality rights are concerned.