

Call for Papers for the Special Issue

**A Century of Gender Equality Struggles in Turkey:
Feminist History Revisited**

Editors: Dr. Elife Biçer-Deveci (ETH Zurich), Dr. Selin Çağatay (CEU)



Nakiye Elgün (1882-1954), first woman parliamentarian in Turkey, giving a speech about women's political rights in Turkey on December 7, 1934, at the Beyazıt Square in İstanbul.

To be published in:

[GTOT/ Diyâr. Journal of Ottoman, Turkish and Middle Eastern Studies: 100 Years of the Republic of Turkey and the Engineering of a Nation.](#)

October 2023 will witness the centenary of the Republic of Turkey. On this occasion, we invite young scholars and established historians to revisit feminist history and reflect on the hundred years of modern Turkish history from the perspective of gender equality struggles. With this special issue, we wish to present novel research, cutting edge perspectives, and conceptual advances in feminist historiography of Turkey. Drawing on recent developments in women's and gender studies towards more inclusive, de-centred and transnational accounts of feminist and LGBTI+ activism (Canning 2006; Cobble 2005; de Haan 2018; Hunt 2009; Laughlin et al. 2010; Motta et al. 2011; Orr and Braithwaite 2011; Roy 2016; Sangster and Luxton 2013), we seek contributions that examine gender

equality struggles from a long-term perspective or with a focus on a specific period, and those that inquire into the interaction between national, sub-national and supra-national processes in gender politics.

With the term ‘gender equality struggles,’ we refer to all kinds of social and political activism (formal and informal, collective and individual) with an agenda of equal access of women and LGBTI+ people to the realms of economy, society, politics as well as cultural practices. At the same time, we set out to explore how the contested notion of ‘gender equality’ was shaped by various actors over time and different political projects existing side by side, such as feminist and antifeminist movements, competing over its definition (Kandiyoti 2011; Özcan 2020). Similarly, we have a broad understanding of activism that include not only collective, institutionalized, and contentious forms of activism and/or women-only organising, but also mix-gender organising, community-oriented efforts, and minor strategies of resistance for equality and liberation.

In recent years, significant contributions in women’s and gender history in Turkey investigated previously unexplored topics, destabilised established paradigms, and utilised new sources and methodologies (Akgöz 2020; Azak and Smaele 2016; Çakır-Kılınçoğlu 2019; Davaz 2014; 2020; Pervan 2013; Sarıtaş and Akıllı 2015; Satı 2016; Tuncer 2018). Such contributions, however, are yet to be systematically analysed or brought together in anthologies, edited volumes, or journal issues – which is the aim of this special issue. At a time when gender equality and sexual rights are under attack and feminist research is jeopardised in Turkey and globally, we believe that a reassessment of feminist history is necessary to show the multiplicity of gender equality struggles throughout republican history across the categories of class, ethnicity, religion, and cultural belonging.

We expect original research papers dealing with, but not limited to, the following issues:

- Struggles for equality among non-Turkish, non-Muslim, and migrant communities
- Impact of global gender equality agendas on gender politics and equality struggles
- Strategies of resistance and empowerment within small communities (e.g. family, workplace, village, province)
- Cross-cultural aspects and concepts in women’s and gender history
- Emotional histories of gender equality struggles
- Women in social movements and social justice struggles
- LGBTI+ and queer histories
- Struggles around sexuality (including sex work)
- Reproductive rights and politics of motherhood

We particularly welcome papers that expand the field of women’s and gender history in the following directions: documentation of cross-border activism, influence, and exchange; inclusion of understudied groups, time periods, and forms of activism; and cross-cultural and comparative analyses.

A publication-oriented workshop is planned take place on July 8–9, 2022. Depending on the availability of funding and the Covid-19 pandemic situation, the workshop will be held in person in Zurich or Vienna with the possibility of online participation or fully online.

Articles will be submitted as part of the special issue “A Century of Gender Equality Struggles in Turkey: Feminist History Revisited” to the academic journal *Diyâr: Journal of Ottoman, Turkish and Middle Eastern Studies* on 15 September 2022. Upon submission, a peer-review process will ensue.

Please submit your abstract and short bio to elife.bicerdeveci@gmw.gess.ethz.ch and cagatays@ceu.edu by 28 February 2022. Abstracts should be 500 words maximum and include the title of the paper, aim of your research, and some words about your methodological approach and empirical data.

Timeline:

- 28 February 2022: Submission of abstract and short bio
- 25 March 2022: Communication of decision on abstracts and invitation to workshop
- 15 June 2022: Submission of draft papers
- 8–9 July 2022: Publication-oriented workshop in (depending on funding possibilities) Zurich, or Vienna, in-person, hybrid or online conference
- 15 August 2022: Submission of revised papers to editors
- 15 September 2022 – 15 January 2023: Revision and second round if review
- 15 January 2023: Submission of final manuscripts to *Diyâr*
- 29 October 2023: Publication of the special issue

For any questions and concerns, please send an email to elife.bicerdeveci@gmw.gess.ethz.ch and cagatays@ceu.edu.

We look forward to receiving your abstracts!

Bibliography

- Akgöz, Gorkem. 2020. "Citizens on the Shop Floor: Negotiating Class, Citizenship and National Identity in a Turkish State Factory." *Labor History* 61 (1): 24–35.
- Azak, Umut; de Smaele, Henk. 2016. "National and Transnational Dynamics of Women's Activism in Turkey in the 1950s and 1960s: The Story of the ICW Branch in Ankara." *Journal of Women's History* 28 (3): 41–65.
- Çakır-Kılınçoğlu, Sevil. 2019. "The Radicalization of the Left in Turkey and Iran in the 1970s and a Comparative Analysis of Activist Women's Experiences." PhD dissertation, Leiden: Leiden University.
- Canning, Kathleen. 2006. *Gender History in Practice: Historical Perspectives on Bodies, Class, and Citizenship*. Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press.
- Davaz, Aslı. 2014. *Eşitsiz Kız Kardeşlik: Uluslararası ve Ortadoğu Kadın Hareketleri, 1935 Kongresi ve Türk Kadın Birliği*. İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları.
- . 2020. "An Annotated Archive of Entangled European Feminist History: The Union of Turkish Women, the Second Balkan Conference and Cécile Brunshvicg's Visit to Balkan Feminists (1923-1935)." *Feminist Encounters: A Journal of Critical Studies in Culture and Politics* 4 (2): 1–11.
- de Haan, Francisca. 2010. "Continuing Cold War Paradigms in Western Historiography of Transnational Women's Organisations: The Case of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF)." *Women's History Review* 19 (4): 547–73.
- Hunt, Karen. 2009. "Rethinking Activism: Lessons from the History of Women's Politics." *Parliamentary Affairs* 62 (2): 211–26.
- Kandiyoti, Deniz. 2011. "Disentangling Religion and Politics: Whither Gender Equality?" *IDS Bulletin* 42 (1): 10–14.
- Laughlin, Kathleen A., Julie Gallagher, Dorothy Sue Cobble, Eileen Boris, Premilla Nadasen, Stephanie Gilmore, and Leandra Zarnow. 2010. "Is It Time to Jump Ship? Historians Rethink the Waves Metaphor." *Feminist Formations* 22 (1): 76–135.
- Motta, Sara, Cristina Flesher Fominaya, Catherine Eschle, and Laurence Cox. 2011. "Feminism, Women's Movements and Women in Movement." *Interface* 3 (2): 33–64.
- Orr, Catherine M., and Ann Braithwaite, eds. 2011. *Rethinking Women's and Gender Studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Özcan, Esra. 2020. "Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Turkey| Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Turkey: Struggles Over Media Representations and Discourses in the Past and Present—Introduction." *International Journal of Communication* 14 (2020): 5455–5462.
- Pervan, Muazzez. 2013. *İlerici Kadınlar Derneği 1975-1980: Kırmızı Çatklı Kadınların Tarihi*. İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yayınları.
- Roy, Srila. 2016. "Women's Movements in the Global South: Towards a Scalar Analysis." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 29 (3): 289–306.
- Sarıtaş, Ezgi, and Yelda Şahin Akıllı. 2015. "Feminist History of Periods of 'Stagnation': Women's Movement in the 1950s." Paper presented at the International Conference on Knowledge and Politics in Gender and Women's Studies, 9-11 October 2015. Ankara: Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi.
- Satı, Büşra. 2016. "Gendering Trade Unions: Women in Tekstil, 1965–1980." MA thesis, Budapest: Central European University.
- Tuncer, Selda. 2018. *Women and Public Space in Turkey: Gender, Modernity and the Urban Experience*. London; New York: I.B. Tauris.