

## Comparing women's movements in different cities in Turkey

The research project „ Comparing women's movements in different cities in Turkey“ analyses the diversity and agency of women fighting for gender justice in Turkey with a focus on the various identity and alliance policies among multiple women's and gender-based political movements.

International feminist debates have been changing since the 1990s, when differences within the category of gender were acknowledged. Since then, questions of identity and related distributions of power have become all the more central.<sup>i</sup> In contemporary Turkey, especially after critical interventions by Kurdish and Muslim feminists, women's groups and feminists have also begun referring to differing identities:<sup>ii</sup> Radical, lesbian, queer\*, socialist, religious-conservative, disabled, Kurdish, Alevi, Armenian, and other groups exist. The unifying category of “woman” has been deconstructed – but structural discrimination and violence against women still persists. It must therefore be considered how alliances and common activities based on solidarity and constructive cooperation can still be possible.<sup>iii</sup>

Qualitative empirical studies are carried out in Ankara, Istanbul, Diyarbakir, and smaller cities at the Aegean and the Black Seas. Data is collected through documents, field research, and interviews. Identity and alliance policies within the different groups and movements are being analyzed and compared, with special emphasis on the possible impact of different socio-economic and political parameters. Transnational, national, and local networking processes are also being studied.

The findings will be presented to the German and Turkish public through publications, project presentations, university seminars, and a multilingual project report that will also constitute a contribution to the relevant scientific discourse.

At the end of the project there will be a workshop to discuss the results. In cooperation with the women's and gender research centres of Istanbul University and Ankara University academics and activists from Turkish and German women's NGOs will have the opportunity to develop and initiate strategies for common action and cooperation.

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<sup>i</sup> Schulz, Ulrike (2007): Feminismus zwischen Identitätspolitik und Geschlechterkonstruktionen. Gibt es einen Raum für internationale feministische Solidarität? [http://web.fu-berlin.de/gpo/pdf/tagungen/ulrike\\_schultz.pdf](http://web.fu-berlin.de/gpo/pdf/tagungen/ulrike_schultz.pdf) (26.06.2014).

<sup>ii</sup> Arat, Yeşim (2008): Contestation and Collaboration. Women's Struggles for Empowerment in Turkey. In: Resat Kasaba (Hg.): The Cambridge History of Turkey. Cambridge, S. 388–418 sowie Somersan, Bihter (2011): Feminismus in der Türkei. Die Geschichte und Analyse eines Widerstands gegen hegemoniale Männlichkeit. Münster.

<sup>iii</sup> Müftüler-Baç, Meltem (2012): Gender Equality in Turkey. Hg. v. Europäisches Parlament. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/document/activities/cont/201204/20120424ATT43808/20120424ATT43808EN.pdf> (26.06.2014).