

BSTRACT  
SOCIAL GENDER AND THE POSITION OF WOMAN:  
UNDERSTANDING THE RECENT CHANGES IN TURKEY

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In this study, the position of woman and the recent changes in the position of woman in Turkey are considered by virtue of social gender. For this purpose, especially the concept of social gender is taken into account and the feminist approaches are remarked upon. In explaining the historical transformation of social gender, an attention is paid to traditional, modern and postmodern societies. For understanding, the change and woman in Turkish society, some basic domains in ancient Turkish society, Ottoman and Republican period are noticed and evaluated. The changes after Republic are presented in three periods. The recent changes in the position of woman are influenced especially by the worldwide developments after 1980s. More specifically, globalization, liberalism and the process of European integration have determinant influences. The Republican reforms mark a significant turning point in terms of rights and freedom of woman. These reforms aimed woman's having an important place in public sphere, without touching the basic characteristics of Turkish family structure. But, the populist policies maintained after 1950s, in an important degree prevented the weakening of the traditional position of woman. Contrary to the legal arrangements the consequence of the process of globalization and the European integration, the social gender values and perceptions including the inequality of man and woman continue to exist, and the increase of the conservative trends in society limits the spread of rights and freedoms.