

## **A political economy of insecurity? Industrial relations in modern Turkey**

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Most of the contemporary literature on Turkey's industrial relations emphasises the impact of globalisation in bringing about fundamental institutional changes to labour markets that have both increased socio-economic insecurity for workers and reduced their capability to act as independent socio-economic actors. However, what is often overlooked in these accounts is the historical continuity of insecurity as an embedded rationale in the institutions regulating industrial relations, the roots of which can be traced to the first steps towards industrialisation following the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. The emergence of what I call the 'political economy of insecurity' in Turkey was carried out by generations of state managers and had two far-reaching consequences in the domain of industrial relations. First, it generated insecurity as an institutional outcome for labour on a continual basis. And second, it served as an effective tool for state managers to empower capital and state *vis-à-vis* labour, starting from the early years of the Republican period. Against this background, my study investigates the institutionalisation of insecurity as a rationale of Turkey's industrial relations during the 20th century. It highlights the centrality of the modern Turkish state in shaping the interests of, and interactions between, the socio-economic actors of modern Turkish society and economy, and adopts a long historico-institutionalist perspective, beginning with the early years of the Republican period and ending with Turkey's integration into the global economy.

This study has three fundamental aims. First, it attempts to offer a detailed historical account of institutional continuities, developments and changes in Turkey's political economy of industrial relations. Second, it seeks to provide a holistic approach to the history of Turkish industrial relations by laying equal emphasis on, and analysing, the circumstances, interests and interactions of labour, capital and state in consecutive politico-economic periods. And third, it aims to pin-point the role of the state in the (re)construction of Turkey's industrial relations. In order to achieve this, the study employs a historical institutionalist approach in identifying institutional path dependencies and historical legacies as well the discontinuities and ruptures that have shaped actors' interests in the field of industrial relations. Central to this approach is the role of the Turkish state in privileging some actors over others, either formally, i.e. in shaping 'the rules of the game', or informally, i.e. through practices like paternalism, patronage, etc. The study relies primarily on documentary research and its main data sources are: (1) archival records and official legal documents; (2) academic studies; (3) media sources; (4) publications of trade unions and employers' organisations; (5) parliamentary proceedings; (6) official and semi-official statistics. The study covers the period from 1839 to 1980.

## **Honour-based violence**

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Throughout the world and across all cultures, women have long experienced honour-based violence. In Turkey, this violence has deep traditional, cultural and even religious roots. Because of a strict patriarchal and traditional family structure, women's daily lives are restricted by the so-called 'code of honour' in many parts of Turkey. The code of honour is still accepted by some in the community as *jus non scriptum* (unwritten laws and customs) and considered as superior to the formal, written laws of Turkey. Therefore, any situation that tarnishes or attacks honour may be responded to with violence, as it is believed that only violence, or more extremely 'blood', restores honour and stops the attack on it. When asked whose blood restores honour, the community response is 'women's blood'. The significant reason for this is that women's bodies, their sexual activities and their bodily integrity stand at the centre of the concept of honour for both the family and wider society.

As a result of the increasing number of honour-based violent attacks across Turkey and Europe my doctoral research at King's College London starts by questioning and analysing the concepts of honour and gender relationships among Turks. Following this, it analyses the motives of honour-based violence and how national and international laws respond to this violence. It aims to compare the existing laws of Turkey and the UK, from the aspects of both criminalising honour-based violence and protecting victims from it.

Although my research mainly comprises legal analysis and the study of case law, it also requires intensive empirical work both in Turkey and in the UK. With the generous support of the British Institute at Ankara, I have now conducted the first part of my empirical work in Turkey. Starting in June 2012, I travelled across Anatolia to collect data for my thesis. This was not only an academically productive period of time, it was also very exciting and interesting for me on a personal level. As an academic researcher, I collected a number of cases for my thesis, but, more importantly, I also conducted interviews with and met many people from the eastern and southeastern parts of Turkey. I engaged with different cultures and traditions during my visit. Without the wonderful Turkish hospitality I experienced, my empirical work would have been greatly lacking. During my interviews, I was introduced to indigenous cultures that have enabled me to understand and analyse better the concept of honour in the region. On a personal level, spending time in Anatolia also enriched my knowledge of wider Turkish culture and heritage; I had the opportunity to discover many parts of Anatolia and many aspects of Turkish life. This has been a great experience of my life and I really look forward to going back again to spend more time and discover more about Turkish culture and heritage. There really is no limit for knowledge and discovery ...