

Gendered Patterns of Proletarianization and Violence against Rural Women: The Case of *Greenhouse* Women Workers, Western Anatolia, Turkey

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New Rural in Turkey after Structural Adjustment Policies: Impacts on Small-Peasant Households and Rural Women

- ▶ Aging population; migration of youth; dispossession; decoupling from production or sustaining it under difficult conditions; proletarianization in rural Turkey.
- ▶ The category of **peasant-workers** and the process of **proletarianization** are mostly discussed as gender-neutral and without feminist perspective in the literature in Turkey.
- ▶ İlkaracan and Tunalı (2010) takes attention to “**the structural break**” that refers to changing position of rural women: they withdraw from production, while only a limited number replace their previous status as unpaid laborer with waged laborer.
- ▶ **To Highlight the blind spots** in feminist studies that do not focus on rural labor and in rural studies that have limited number of research from a gender perspective.

Gender Analysis to Understand the Changing Position of Rural Women in Turkey

- ▶ **Research Focus:** the patterns of gender labor regime for rural women employed in an agribusiness called '*Greenhouse*' as waged labor in Western Anatolia

“Gender labor regime” investigates the experiences of women in small-production, at work and at home.

The *Greenhouse* is a large-scale, export-oriented agribusiness with non-traditional production. More than 80% of its labor force consists of women workers.

- ▶ **Methods:** Ethnographic fieldwork, in-depth interviews with 33 women who used to be tobacco, olive and cotton producers and agricultural laborers and gathered statistical data

Main Findings: Gendered Patterns of Women's Laboring Practices and Experiences

- *Performance System* as daily recording of a worker's performance; *mobbing* as the major managerial tool to control and discipline the labor force; *flexibility* in diverse forms; the *violations* of basic workers' rights characterize the precarious working regime.
- *Feminization of work*: the *Greenhouse* work as a woman's job on the basis of traditional gender division of labor - devalued and cheap woman labor
- *Reproductive Labor*: "double burden"
- *Empowerment*: earning money (separate budget, future plans), advantages of "formal employment", being able to work outside and have a social network on their own, escape from either male-based conflicts/violence at home or from tiring fieldwork or domestic chores, liberating their private lives (day offs)
- Still determinant not to be unpaid family laborers living in depopulating and aging villages and turn their faces to non-farm jobs that give them security and visibility.

The *Greenhouse* Work and the Stories of Violence

- ▶ Stories from the *Greenhouse* women: marital rape, underage/forced marriage, severe physical violence, death threat, psychological and economic violence, attempting suicides
- ▶ Different women, different cases:
 - Divorced/separated women are exposed more to violence and the *Greenhouse* work as an strong tool to leave behind abusive husbands and start a new life
 - The case of young women challenging patriarchal authority of their fathers
 - Unpaid or paid: prevalence of economic violence though in different levels
 - When women strengthen more, they become a threat to male breadwinner model more: violation of right to work through diverse forms of violence
 - Psychological Violence: devaluation of women's thoughts and experiences by their husbands, requirement of 'permission' of the males to make interviews, males sitting in on the interviews to control or giving their own responses to the question.

Thank you for listening!