(Re-)Politicisation in Times of Crisis: Reflections on the Decade-Long AKP Rule and June Uprising in Turkey[1]

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The recent scholarship on (de)politicisation within the disciplines of political science and public policy aspires to move beyond the early conceptualisations of the couplet (Burnham, 2001) which is considered to have focused solely on economic policy area on the basis of a narrow definition of politics and the political (Wood and Flinders, 2014; Wood, 2015). It is crucial to assess societal dynamics of politicisation and the interaction and relationality of depoliticisation and politicisation processes across different multiple policy areas within a mode of governance (Dinerstein, 2003, 2007). Nevertheless this chapter highlights the enduring importance of building this future research on the early ('first wave') conceptualisation of (de)politicisation understood as the governing strategies of capitalist states and their managers (Burnham, 2001; 2014) for a thoroughly critical assessment of the underlying dynamics and 'social constitution' of these processes beyond mainstream approaches (Bonefeld, 2006).

The reasoning is two-fold: First, the research into the diversity of (de)politicisation strategies and processes would otherwise risk divorcing the interconnection between the economic and the political and conceptualise social relations, state and state policies as separate entities with distinct ontologies and logics. It would, in turn, suggest equally distinct epistemologies, models and typologies for these seemingly separate phenomena. Second, and more importantly, the research would risk becoming descriptive and uncritical without explicit acknowledgment of the existing class and power relations in society as well as the limits the latter pose on both governing strategies of (de)politicisation and radical politicisation experiences of social relations themselves.

A parallel shortcoming in terms of the absence of thorough analyses of capitalism for imagining and creating a fundamentally different organisation of social relations has been detected in the scholarship of social movements (Barker et. al., 2013). While the dynamics of social movements have been assessed in great length and depth, their intrinsic connection to the dynamics of capital relation and accumulation have been sidelined (Hetland and Goodwin, 2013: 86). Interestingly enough it has produced the reinforcement of a similar separation between the economic and political facets of social relations.

In this light the analysis put forward in the specific case of Turkey in this chapter adopts a critical political economy perspective which problematizes the *apparent* separation of the economic and political terrains with the emergence and spread of capitalist social relations. It argues that the mode of governance in Turkey has oscillated from a depoliticised form in economic management towards a visibly authoritarian politicised form both in discourse and policies since the early 2010s. It aims to show, however, that this process is not self-generated on the basis of a presumed peculiarity and exceptionalism of the characteristics of the Turkish polity and statecraft as a whole (cf. Onis and Guven, 2011) or the unexpected reversal of the discourse and policies of the governing Justice and Development Party (AKP). The latter explanations have been provided in large part by the different strands of the mainstream scholarship on state and society relations in Turkey. These explanations drew on either elite

struggles (i.e. between secular/Kemalist vs. islamist; centre vs. periphery; bureaucratic vs. political) within the state or the institutional (in)capabilities and (in)capacity of the Turkish state due to its historical peculiarity embedded in the Ottoman past or positioning at the periphery of Europe and therefore distinct from the cases of 'developed'/'advanced'/'Western' countries (Mardin, 1973; Heper and Keyman, 1998: 261; Heper, 2013). This chapter argues, contrastingly, that the recent developments in the Turkish statecraft towards what some deem 'authoritarian' form of governing cannot be divorced from its relationality with the post-2001 depoliticisation strategy in economic policymaking nor the large-scale politicisation of social relations since the summer of 2013.

Particularly visible in the field of economic management, the post-2001 strategy of distancing the decision making powers and accountability towards appointed, technocratic boards and agencies has allowed the government to insulate itself from societal pressures and denounce accountability in implementing unpopular policies in large part of the past decade. Simultaneously this process has allowed ample space and autonomy for the governing AKP to become more active in other issue areas (e.g. foreign policy, ethnic and identity policies, civil-military relations and religion) and politicise them in a controlled manner (Donmez, 2014).

The growing impact of the latest global crisis upon the domestic sphere from 2008 onwards has yielded a thorough politicisation at state level, enhancing governmental decision making authority and control over a number of policy areas to the point of explicitly authoritarian form of governing while leaving a number of other policy domains (e.g. monetary policymaking) formally depoliticised. In turn it has made the government responsibility and accountability for the failures and negative consequences of policies more visible in public debate and perception and contributing to fuelling of social and political dissent in the form of a full-blown societal politicisation openly targeting government itself in the summer of 2013 (Donmez, 2014a). The chapter aims to shed light on this conflictual coupling of different forms of (re-)politicisation at governmental and societal scales.

The case of Turkey is particularly insightful in order to assess the dialectic and dynamic interplay between these processes and caution against any rigidification and fetishisation of the concepts of (de)politicisation. It demonstrates that even within a single country case, it is possible to identify the conflictual co-existence and overlapping of these processes which warn scholars that the conceptual modelling and periodization on this basis risks neglecting the complexity of the dynamics under scrutiny. It further reinforces the argument that debates into (de)politicisation forms and strategies need to retain the focus on contextualisation of the spatial and temporal specificity of the particular cases in historical perspective in order for the concepts to retain their explanatory power. Therefore the analysis put forward in this chapter within the empirical context of Turkey calls hopes to contribute to the ongoing theoretical debate about the heuristic use of these concepts in the scholarship (Special Issue, Policy and Politics, 2014).

The chapter is structured as follows: The first section presents a perspective of depoliticisation and politicisation as social phenomena and conceptual tools within a broader understanding of the crisis and restructuring of capitalist social relations of which state constitutes a particular *form*. The second section presents an account of the counter-hegemonic/emancipatory/progressive forms of politicisation that aim to demystify the capital logic and class character of social relations as well as their reactionary form within the state that aims to re-instate the disciplining of the capital-labour relation in politicised fashion. The two subsequent sections present an overview of the long decade under AKP rule in Turkey and the unfolding politicisation in counter-hegemonic form as manifested in the Gezi Protests from June 2013 onwards as well as the enclosure of the political with the governing strategy of politicisation in the post-2013 context.

Capital, Class, State and (De)politicisation

The starting point of the analysis presented in this chapter is a conviction that depoliticisation and politicisation are not phenomena in and of themselves – to be assessed and measured as observably detached from the dynamics of broader social relations. For these concepts to be of any meaningful, critical use to scholars in their quest to understand the complexity of social reality, they first need to be understood in their embeddedness within the dynamics of social relations (Bonefeld et. al., 1995; Burnham, 2014).

As widely acknowledged in the existing literature, the multiple meanings of and attributions to (de)politicisation have left much unclear in terms of whether what is being studied is a moment, process and/or strategy; an all-embracing social, political and cultural process without discernible agency or whether it is always the (de)politicisation of a particular issue/policy area by particular social/political actor(s). Ultimately the clarification of the ways in which *the political* is understood has been paramount in order to proceed towards conceptualising politicisation and depoliticisation and the relationship between the two. However there generally has not been much clarity in these respects either. These concerns have consequently raised doubts about the overall analytical power of the terms in social science research. Scholars, in turn, have recently tried to alleviate these doubts by attempting to bring clarity to the concepts with further specification of different types/varieties of (de)politicisation (Wood and Flinders, 2014). The overwhelming sentiment behind such an endeavour has been that the scholarship has focused too much on the state, state managers and top-down policymaking with particular emphasis on economic policy. It has sidelined the multiple forms of political agency beyond the state and the governmental and policy areas outside economy (ibid.).

This chapter shares the concern of allowing space in the assessment of the societal politicisation and depoliticisation dynamics in scholarly analysis yet still calls into question the state/society, economy/politics distinction that the recent literature on (de)politicisation risks reproducing if it cannot conceive them as internally related yet different *forms of appearance* of social phenomena.

State is not merely an ensemble of institutions, organisations with top-down decision making structures against which society is to be essentialised as the terrain of bottom-up, emancipatory politics of resistance. State itself is a social relation and it therefore carries within it the latter's inherent contradictions. A non-reductionist Marxist account of state and social relations cautions against such a pitfall as it explicitly problematises the aforementioned distinction in its conceptual and methodological approach. Such an account is therefore grounded in this chapter as the basis upon which a critical understanding of (de)politicisation rests which in turn avoids essentialising and fetishizing not only the state but also assesses the limits of the presumed resistance potential of 'civil society'[2].

Instead of advocating a pluralisation of concepts, models and frameworks on this basis, this chapter presents an understanding of these phenomena in its intrinsic connection to the historical specificity of social relations in order to avoid conceptualising them as thing-like or as ends in themselves not anchored to the dynamics of the social relations that underlie them.

From this perspective social relations that underlie the contemporary structure and dynamics of states and forms of governing are argued to rest on the separation of the economic and the political on the basis of a "double freedom" of producers from the means, the owners of these means and the final product of production (Wood, 1981; Marx, 1990). This process yields the emergence of a seemingly distinct form of social relations- the state; in order to guarantee the continuation of capitalist domination over labour in the economic sphere by asserting the general interest upon particular interests in political form (Clarke, 1988: 122-4; Holloway and Picciotto, 1991: 114-6). This denotes the persistent need and impulse toward depoliticisation in so far as the plurality of interests/capitals within and outside the territoriality of the national state and the dynamics of the capital relation itself bring an inherent crisis potentiality to capitalist social relations (Burnham, 2014). However, due to this crisis potentiality, it is clear that depoliticisation is continuously contested by politicising dynamics. Therefore one may not discuss its persistent 'success' and consolidation under conditions of capitalist organisation of production and respective political structures which are embodied in formal representative democratic form.

This grounding of the concepts in class perspective is crucial in terms of understanding the role of (de)politicisation in the maintenance of existing power relations within society and coming to terms with the fact that political activity in different scales may have differential

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[2] From within a different but related class terminology and historical/political context of Italy, Antonio Gramsci ([1971] 2006: 80) has problematised the aforementioned distinction in his writings and proposed a relational and integrated perspective to state-society relations. In this understanding, state is defined in class terms and yet its externalised and dichotomous treatment vis a vis society in mainstream scholarship is challenged with a conceptual framework that brings the coercive and consensual elements of governing together. Despite Gramsci's own ambiguity in terms of conceptual clarity and multiple contested interpretations of his work by scholars subsequently, his conceptual toolkit of 'passive revolution' versus 'expansive hegemony' has been widely utilised in understanding contemporary Turkish politics by critical scholars. It is also insightful for the governing/resistance forms of politicisation under discussion in this chapter. For Gramscian analyses of the state-society relations in Turkey, see Yalman, 2002; Oncu, 2003.

impact on social processes (i.e. certain forms of agency carrying more weight vis-à-vis others because of their position and concentration of power). Without this emphasis, the question of why certain issues enter/exit the sphere of the political within specific spatio-temporal contexts while others remain excluded/included could not be satisfactorily answered.

On this basis the following sub-section specifies depoliticisation and politicisation as governing strategies of capitalist states where the main agents are state managers and the key objective is the governing of inherently crisis ridden social relations through perpetuating the separation between the economic and political domains. Ultimately they are both aimed towards removing the barriers to accumulation and inserting the market discipline over both capital and labour. This part is followed by an assessment of counter-hegemonic forms of politicisation of social relations which have the potential to contribute to the demystification of their capital logic and class character.

Depoliticisation and politicisation as governing strategies of capitalist state(s)

In line with the critical perspective grounded in Marx's social theory as outlined above, it is crucial to specify here the conceptualisation of (de)politicisation as different, yet often overlapping and continuously contested, governing strategies in particular historical and political contexts. Such an understanding complements the aforementioned abstraction of state as a form, that is mode of existence, of social relations and allows social historical inquiries across different contexts through close investigation of struggles over these strategies in policymaking processes (Burnham, 2006: 81).

An important point to emphasise at this point is the inherently global character of these class relations which are processed nationally in particular contexts (Burnham, 1996: 94). However the national states are not simply passive agents or containers through which global capitalism exerts its discipline in a functionalist and rationalist sense. The constitutive feature of global class relations is the conflict between capital and labour within the economic domain as separated from the political. Therefore national states, as part of global political economy yet operating in that seemingly separated political domain, cannot eschew reproducing this conflict in the long-term in their attempts to resolve it in interaction with their "various political, economic, cultural, and ideological attributes" in particular country contexts (Kettell, 2004: 24). They are called upon for both managing this crisis potential intrinsic to the organisation of contemporary societies yet at the same time preserve their positioning within this demarcated political domain (i.e. retaining office through electoral success, maintaining a seemingly neutral stance towards both capital groups and working class). The latter ultimately challenges the aforementioned separation of the two domains due to the politicisation of these class relations. Therefore a meaningful critical assessment on the basis of this conceptual framework requires a holistic approach to the economic/political and national/global characteristics of the complexity of social relations and their different forms of appearance.

This is the basis upon which the critical scholarship defines depoliticisation as the "process of placing at one remove the political character of decision making" by the state managers and politicisation is understood to retain and/or bring back the visibility of the political character of decision making in a discretionary fashion (Burnham, 2001: 128-129, 134). At the policy level, such an approach brings the close investigation of the economic policy area to the fore so as to dissect and reveal the contradictions and struggles manifested therein as part of the efforts to manage the capital-labour conflict. This does not suggest that the whole discussion of (de)politicisation is or should be reduced to a narrow assessment relegated to the economic policy domain only. However it should be added that the critical (de)politicisation literature is yet to explore the interconnections of these dynamics across different policy and issue areas and provide an account of alternative, anti-systemic forms of politicisation fully.

The key objective in *both* forms of governing is the maintenance of capital accumulation within the territorial boundaries of a given state and mystification of the class character and capital logic behind the policy measures taken to this end. In the context of the ongoing global crisis, we may observe this politicisation trend in a number of policy areas more visibly such as the recent practices of governments and state managers in the field of economic management, particularly in the changing character of central banking practices (Burnham, 2014; Jessop, 2014; Donmez and Zemandl, 2015). In addition migration and foreign policies emerge as newly politicised policy areas as witnessed increasingly across Europe since the summer of 2015 with specific repercussions in individual country contexts (e.g the building of the border fences in the bordering countries of Europe and the latest asylum legislation in Hungary which designates entry into the country on the borders as a crime, the politicisation of the UK referendum vote regarding UK membership in the European Union along the immigration issue) (see Rajaram, 2016 for a critical assessment of the recent border regime in Hungary and Europe).

The fundamental element in this form of politicisation as part of the governing strategies of states is that ultimately it *aims* to contain, close off and/or shape the political debate and politicisation dynamics within the confines of the class character and capital logic of social relations- precluding or diminishing the possibilities of political engagement and imagination beyond the boundaries of the existing social and political system (Burnham, 2014; Kettell, 2008). Therefore *politicisation as a governing strategy* ultimately cannot be conceived in a progressive, counter-hegemonic fashion as it is as much a state strategy as depoliticisation. This is however not to suggest that politicisation as a governing strategy can be permanently successful in achieving this aim. The perpetual crisis-riddenness of social relations and open-endedness of the struggles surrounding these relations leave open the potential to lead to the emergence of progressive forms of politicisation. Yet it would in large part be an unintended consequence instead of an explicit objective of governing strategy.

Such an approach eschews from positing dichotomous framing of these processes along strictly demarcated governmental vs. societal axis but allows a distinction on the basis of the

motivations and objectives of acts of (de)politicising in terms of either the maintenance or transcendence of capitalist social relations (regardless of their intended/unintended consequences of success and failure). To establish such a distinction is crucial in order to conceptualise what is meant by 'resistance' against (de)politicisation meaningfully and the constraints it continuously encounters without suggesting any direct normative association of societal politicisation with 'democratic', progressive characteristics as opposed to governmental forms of politicisation. Each concrete case and situation needs to be assessed specifically by taking into consideration the dynamics and forces of conflict and struggle at the heart of the social relations and the particular national, political attributes of the state under scrutiny in historical perspective (Kettell, 2004: 24). As noted earlier, otherwise existing approaches would not be able to eschew reproducing the false dichotomy of state versus civil society, governmental versus societal politicisation as though these pairs possess entirely different and unrelated ontologies and logics. The case of Turkey is a particularly insightful example to demonstrate the pitfalls of such an approach and substantiate the need for an alternative holistic perspective.

Politicisation as form of resistance: Demystifying the capital logic and class character of social relations, state and its (de)politicisation strategies

Against this background, it is important to re-think our conceptualisation of 'politicisation' on the basis of the historically specific separation of the economic and political in capitalism and assess its different forms and agency along the axis of maintenance/transcendence of the predominant character of social relations. Research into the subtleties of conceptualising (re-)politicisation is relatively scant in the existing literature in comparison to studies on depoliticisation as highlighted earlier. In large part this is due to the predominance of the depoliticisation strategies in policymaking processes across the globe since the 1990s and the need to devise perspectives to understand and critically assess them. Large scale political mobilisations and involvement across broad segments of contemporary societies have become more visible in the late 2000s and early 2010s due to the prolonged impact of global economic crisis and recession in Europe and the uprisings and occupations witnessed across the Middle East, North Africa and North America. The assessment of the underlying mechanisms and reasons for these mobilisations is not the subject of focus in this chapter. It is clear that there have been distinctive historical and political features of these politicisations in specific country/regional contexts therefore broad generalisations on their shared characteristics should be approached with caution. Still it is sufficient to say that these forms of politicisation have ultimately set off a renewed form of political agency and engagement involving multiple social groups and classes besides the offensive of the capitalist state and restructuring that we have been experiencing since the 1980s and 1990s. This alone deserves to be assessed critically without losing sight of the role of state and policymaking processes.

Scholars have thus far made at best passing reference to politicisation dynamics and solely in their contradistinction from depoliticisation (discretion vs. rule-based mode of governance)

and/or part of the identical logic of 'arena shifting' also found in depoliticisation dynamics within and beyond the governmental realm (Burnham, 2001, Hay, 2007). In Hay (2007)'s understanding, the conceptualisation of politicisation is grounded within the typology of movement of political activity from the realm of fate and necessity to the private, public and the governmental realm. Underlying this movement is a conception of politics defined as "capacity for agency and deliberation in situation of genuine collective or social choice" (ibid: 77). In essence politicisation is broadly understood as the expansion of this 'capacity for agency and deliberation'. However the limits of and constraints upon 'genuine collective or social choice' should be openly acknowledged due to the character of social relations in contemporary societies in order for such a framework to comprehensively account for the complexity of these dynamics.

When conceived within the critical perspective laid out in the earlier section, it is possible to conceptualise politicisation as form of resistance and challenge against the hegemonic forms of politics, political agency and engagement the boundaries of which are strictly defined within the parliamentary and governmental structure of formal liberal democracies under capitalism. Therefore such an understanding aligns itself less with the liberal doctrine and more with an inherent understanding of contestation and struggle that underlies politics. To put it differently, *politicisation as governing strategy* remains within the limits and boundaries set for the political agency within the logic of capital accumulation. Therefore conceiving *politicisation as resistance* needs to take a leap forward and imagine the possibility of organising anti-capitalist alternatives in a broader sense. This is why the motivation of demystifying the capital logic and class character of social relations, state and its (de)politicisation strategies needs to be the benchmark upon which the progressive/reactionary facets of politicisation could be delineated meaningfully.

One crucial point to emphasise here is that speaking of and challenging the capital logic and class character of these dynamics does not entail a reduction of the social into its economic forms. A non-reductionist perspective as the one proposed in this chapter does not demarcate the economic and political forms of social relations but adhere to the fact that they *appear* and exist in these modes of appearance under capitalism (Bonefeld, 1992: 93-4; Burnham, 2002: 114). As a result it refrains from attributing primacy to any preconceived 'economic' relationship between capital and labour, state and society but conceives it as one form of manifestation of a continual struggle within social relations. The latter point suggests that this struggle could manifest in a variety of other forms sometimes *seemingly* disconnected and unrelated to the capital-labour dynamic (e.g. LGBTQI, women's/feminist, migrant/refugee solidarity and environmental movements). They are nevertheless closely related to and influenced by one another by way of being part and parcel of the core characteristics of social relations that rest on capital accumulation and profit maximisation motive via the systematic exploitation of labour (Rioux, 2015: 195; Hetland and Goodwin, 2013: 91). In other words, the emphasis here is on the ways in which value-form in its

subjugation of human labour reproduces the capitalist mode of domination and oppression in social relations and how it can be resisted and challenged.

This argument is made strongly by Marxist feminist scholars drawing on social reproduction theory from a feminist historical materialist perspective which 'recognises that Marx's theoretical work is unfinished, and as such upholds his commitment to defitishization (sic.) and to the critique of political economy, including the frozen categories of orthodox Marxism' (Rioux, 2015: 195; Federici, 2004). Social reproductionists argue that 'gender and class are constitutive of the link between the production of life and the production of the means of life' (Rioux, 2015: 198). In other words, subjugation of human labour to the needs of capitalist production and profit maximisation yields gendered contradictions outside production but in the sphere of reproduction of this labour in the private sphere of households (Bakker, 2002: 16 quoted in Rioux, 2015: 197). As Federici (2004: 14) emphasises, 'if it is true that in capitalist society sexual identity became the carrier of specific work-functions, then gender should not be considered a purely cultural reality, but should be treated as a specification of class relations'.

Therefore when we speak of politicisation as resistance and demystification of social relations, we refer to the multiple forms of struggles in their complexity and *not* imply, in a reductionist fashion, the sole presence of a singular form of struggle as one between objectively defined class positions/identities- i.e. workers/unions and capitalists/capitalist state. However the degree and overall impact of demystifying the power dynamics of social relations rest in these struggles' ability to make the connections of their seemingly separate forms with the capital-labour conflict as the underlying dynamic of accumulation and exploitation in contemporary societies. It is on this basis the AKP-led governing strategies of (de)politicisation and politicisation as resistance will be assessed in the case of post-2001 Turkey in the subsequent sections.

From depoliticisation to repoliticisation? AKP's long decade (2002-2012)

The decade-long transformation of the Turkish economy and polity under the single party government of Justice and Development Party (AKP) in the aftermath of the November 2000-February 2001 double financial and political crises has been subject to numerous scholarly analyses and assessments from a variety of perspectives (Akcay, 2009; Bedirhanoglu and Yalman, 2010; Oguz, 2011; Onis and Guven, 2011). Mainstream scholarship, policy circles and commentators within and outside Turkey hailed the new party and its vision in bringing different segments of society together around the double objective of European Union (EU) membership and 'strong economy' under an IMF stabilisation programme as well as an alleged all-embracing stance of 'moderate Islam'. The party has been endorsed for articulating a 'democratisation' agenda in its programme in line with the EU acquis to address the long-standing issues in Turkish politics most prominent of which were civil-military relations and the Kurdish conflict and thus promising a clear 'break' with the *old* politics in Turkey (Patton, 2007). This discourse of 'rupture' is particularly visible in the early speeches

of the AKP senior officials in its first term of office (Prime Minister's Speech, 29 May 2003; CEC Regular Report 2003: 18-19, 23, 40).

Even though the restructuring of the economy and economic management had ensued from early 2001 onwards under the tri-partite coalition government, the subsequent elections sidelined the existent political parties from the political scene. The rise of AKP as a single party government in the 2002 elections has benefited greatly from this crisis period and left a lasting mark during the 2000s with its clear endorsement of capitalist restructuring along the lines of a governing strategy of depoliticisation as understood in the terms set in the previous section.

While mainstream analyses, intentionally or otherwise, perpetuated the hegemonic readings of AKP rule in the past decade as an effective rupture from 'old' ways of doing politics, at least for the large part of the 2000s prior to the so-called authoritarian turn, critical interventions have consistently approached the issue with a historical, holistic outlook that positioned these transformations within the continuity of the conflict-ridden dynamics of capital accumulation and class struggles (Ercan, 2002; Yalman, 2002; Akcay, 2009; Bozkurt, 2013; Yaka, 2015). The latter focus prevents these analyses from dissociating social relations from their different and seemingly separate modes of existence and problematizes their inherent power dimension. This scholarship has largely drawn on the Gramscian and Poulantzasian perspectives as well as Marx's social theory more broadly.

Through this lens, the post-2001 restructuring and the unprecedented rise and consolidation of a single party government, rather than being treated as a stand-alone phenomenon, has been traced back and connected to the social and political transformations that have endured since the 1980s across the globe in line with neoliberal capitalist restructuring of the national economies and polities (Yalman, 2002). These scholars have particularly focused on the class dynamics and actors of the European accession process, IMF-led economic restructuring and explicitly problematized the role of the state in the capital accumulation process and the management of the capital-labour conflict in a relational manner.

Recent scholarly analyses from this orientation assessed the role of the internationalised segments of the capitalist class in Turkey in these processes as part of a 'transnational capitalist class formation' and its role in the emergence of a power bloc around the hegemonic project of European integration (Yaka, 2015). The effective sustenance of the consent of the subordinated classes for the power bloc and its hegemonic project has also been assessed with reference to AKP government's 'neoliberal populism' and its ability to successfully articulate particular elements of societal 'common sense' within its rhetoric and material practices (Bozkurt, 2013). Scholars have also conceptualised this period in Turkey as a period of 'neoliberal authoritarianism', 'neoliberal authoritarian statism' and 'passive revolution' (Oguz, 2011; Bedirhanoglu and Yalman, 2010; Tugal, 2009). Studies that delve into the dynamics of capital circuit and accumulation more closely have focused on the mechanisms of restructuring in key areas of economic policy such as central banking (Akcay,

2009), public procurement (Ercan and Oguz, 2006) as well as the relationship between different capital groups and state (Yalman, 2004, 2006; Oguz, 2011).

Assessing politicisation and depoliticisation dynamics within this broad critical outlook, it is crucial to highlight that governing tactics and strategies of politicisation and depoliticisation in a variety of forms and politicisation as resistance strategies were present in the pre-2001 and pre-1980 context in Turkey. In the pre-1980 context, the former has taken the form of IMF-guided corrections to the capital accumulation process via devaluations and accompanying military interventions in the crisis nodes of the three decades (1960, 1971, and 1980). These depoliticising attempts at the national scale have mirrored the efforts to tackle the bottlenecks and crisis cycles of the global capital circuit (1958, 1968, 1978-9) as seen elsewhere in the world. Yet at the same time they marked key moments of the fiscal and political crises of the state in Turkey due to the intrinsic connection between capital accumulation and state as outlined in the previous section (Burnham, 1990: 183). There was also large-scale societal politicisation and political mobilisation in these turning points, especially in the late 1960s and 1970s, which persistently questioned and pushed beyond the contours of underlying social relations within a radical leftist emancipatory agenda. Therefore in the case of Turkey the governing tactics and strategies took specific forms (coupled with the military coups and formation of short-lived military-technocratic governments to insert the rule of market and value-form on social relations) on the basis of the adhered capital accumulation strategy and configuration of class forces.

In the post-1980 context, attempts to remove barriers to accumulation via privatisation and financialisation appear as the antecedents of depoliticisation attempts/tactics in economic management. This process was in line with the restructuring of global political economy in the post-Bretton Woods context and its 'national processing' as seen in full-fledged form in the UK under Thatcher and Blair governments and in the US under Reagan-Bush-Clinton administrations during the 1980s and 1990s. This period too has reproduced its own crisis dynamics in the form of public sector indebtedness and banking crises in Turkey in 1994, 2000 and 2001 due to the specific coupling of public sector financing and banking sector during extensive financialisation of the 1990s (Akcay, 2009, Central Bank of Turkey Annual Reports, 1996-2001; Parliamentary Debates, 20.Term, 1-2-3 Legislative Years and 21.Term 1. Legislative Year).

It is not possible to delineate the commonalities and differences between (de)politicisation dynamics across these historical junctures in detail due to the scope of this chapter. However such a stance is indeed important in order to challenge the aforementioned argument for 'discontinuity' that was allegedly brought by AKP government as well as caution against suggesting that depoliticisation is solely a post-2001 phenomenon in Turkey. This type of demarcated analysis ultimately enforces the notion that the changes in governing under the continuous single party rule since the late 2000s are unexpected or somewhat an anomaly in contrast to the so-called 'rupture' experienced with AKP's first term in office. Instead, state

managers during AKP period have substantially reproduced the dynamics of previous forms of depoliticisation attempts but in a more comprehensive form of a *strategy* in economic policymaking which marked its difference from its antecedents.

In a nutshell, the "process of placing at one remove the political character of decision making" in economic management has manifested in the process of internalisation of the IMF-led stabilisation programme and the EU Acquis as the economic and political vision of the new government in the post-2002 context. In more concrete terms, central bank independence, inflation targeting monetary policy, establishment and strengthening of a number of independent agencies in key economic sectors (e.g. banking, energy, sugar, tobacco), aspirations to restructure the tax, social security, public finance, labour market and health sectors along neoliberal capitalist lines were part of the governing strategy of depoliticisation in the early 2000s.

This process had already ensued from the early 2001 onwards as noted earlier with the appointment of a de-facto technocratic government in the immediate aftermath of the crisis with the close cooperation of the senior officials in the Central Bank, Treasury, Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency and Ministry of State responsible for economy which was now led by a former Vice Governor of the World Bank. Continuity on this front has been preserved and continued with full force in the first half of the 2000s delivering low inflation, high growth rates and continuous capital accumulation thanks to uninterrupted capital inflows, high volume of foreign trade due to expansion of trade with the EU and neighbouring countries (CBT Annual Reports, 2002; 2003; Turkstat Foreign Trade Data, 2001-8) leading to assessments of the Turkish case as a success story (IMFC, 2000; CEC Regular Report 2004; 2005; Economist, Jan-Sep 2005, Financial Times, 22 Feb 2006). These criteria of 'success' have often disguised and sidelined public debate on the unemployment and wage levels, current account deficit, high level of indebtedness of households, consumers and private sector due to cheap borrowing opportunities from abroad and further informalisation and precarity for labour (ISSA Report, 2008; 2009: 91-93).

Nevertheless depoliticisation in economic management did not mean that other policy and issue areas or the totality of the public political realm were respectively depoliticised. On the contrary, the placing at one remove of the political character of decision making in economic management led to the gradual politicisation of a number of issues such as unprecedented expansion of social assistance programmes (Bakirezer and Demirer; 2009; Bozkurt, 2013), substantial changes in foreign policy (Kaya, 2011; Donmez, 2014; Saracoglu and Demirkol, 2015) and the 'Kurdish initiative' in the resolution of this long-standing conflict (Casier et. al., 2011) among others.

The AKP government has made an effective use of governing strategies of both depoliticisation and politicisation in this respect; using the autonomy and space allowed by the depoliticisation in economic management in politicising other policy areas in a controlled manner. It seems to be on this basis that many scholars explicitly identify both the 'neoliberal'

and the 'authoritarian'/'populist' characteristics of the AKP period. This point also highlights the fact that politicisation of these issues by the government is highly constrained by the boundaries and characteristics of the very social relations it aspires to regulate. It also suggests that politicisation as a governing strategy of the capitalist state ultimately fails to articulate, let alone deliver, a truly progressive and emancipatory agenda as recently witnessed in the evolution of the trajectory of the foreign policy and the peace process with the Kurdish political movement.

The AKP government, when bringing these issues into the public realm, predictably did so within the confines of the EU accession agenda and the requirements of the stabilisation programme. It allowed adjustments and reversals whenever difficulties encountered in accruing broad societal consent over a specific unpopular policy change as long as these changes were not in significant obstruction of the restructuring agenda. This is especially visible in the case of the difficulties encountered in reforming the social security system, public procurement system, contested gender policy measures, and the minority political rights. In turn, this controlled politicisation has contributed to the enhanced popularity of the government, albeit in short-term, despite drastic disciplining of labour through numerous neoliberal reforms, as observed in the consistent electoral success during the course of the decade (Oguz, 2011; Bozkurt, 2013). AKP's ability to garner the support of the large segments of the working class through its social assistance programmes was particularly pronounced (Bozkurt, 2013: 391).

The aforementioned temporary 'success' mainly in economic performance, however, has been negatively affected roughly from 2006-7 onwards in Turkey and a period of downturn ensued with the deepening of the global crisis in Europe from 2008-9 onwards. It was reflected visibly in the macroeconomic indicators regarding inflation, unemployment, growth rate, financial stability (CBT Annual Reports 2006-9; 2007: 30, 34-5). Especially from 2009 onwards, public debate and questioning of the role of key institutions responsible for economic management, central bank in particular, have also become more observable both in the media and parliamentary debates (Akcay, 2009: 271-3; Parliamentary deliberations, Oct-Dec 2008). In response the Central Bank of Turkey has adopted a new set of policy measures guarding more closely financial stability and growth concerns alongside price stability from 2010 onwards (CBT Annual Report, 2010: 27, 32, 43). Senior government officials have also felt pressed to respond to these challenges yet, beyond rhetorical interventions, the commitment to depoliticised governing of monetary policy via the independent central bank has been preserved. The government has instead proceeded with intervening more closely into other areas of economic policy through fiscal stimulus/incentive packages, (Parliamentary Deliberations, Jan 2009; Prime Minister's Speech, 4 June 2009).

In terms of the other issue areas where AKP governments have cautiously treaded in politicising, the post-global crisis and its effects in Europe as well as the expanding regional instability with the Arab uprisings and Syrian conflict have revealed the limits of this governing

strategy. Indeed it was the extensive government-led politicisation of these contested issues which have ultimately brought governmental responsibility for failures of policies back to public attention. Among the precursors of this process were the rising domestic social and political discontent which took off with the tobacco workers' protests and occupations in Ankara in December 2009-January 2010 and Kazova textile workers' strike (Oguz and Ercan, 2015: 130, 132). They were coupled with protests and demonstrations against the increasingly oppressive policies and discourses of the government on issues of women's rights, minority rights and freedom of expression and media in the 2011-2012 period (Yoruk, 2014: 421). The gradual derailment of the peace process with the Kurdish political movement and widely documented increase in governmental failures (if not deliberate neglect) to address unprecedented increase of violence against women in public and private spheres were among other key precursors of the rising politicisation.

The subsequent section deals with the emergence of this widescale politicisation as a form of resistance which culminated in the Gezi Park protests in June 2013. The section then assesses the immediate effects and consequences of the protests from late 2013 onwards and the further deepening authoritarianism of the AKP government in the course of the following three years.

Gezi uprising and its aftermath

Against this background, what began as a small-scale protest and occupation of a local park in Istanbul to prevent its destruction for the building of a shopping mall rapidly transformed into a country-wide politicisation and mobilisation against the government in early June 2013. The peaceful demonstrations met with brutal police violence with the death of five protesters as documented by the Turkish Medical Association by August 2013 (TTB, 2013). There were approximately 3400 detentions across the country in the first three days of the protests from 31st May- 2nd June and more than 80,000 people were injured as of 10 July due to extensive use of tear gas, water cannons and batons (Amnesty International, 2013: 15, 41).

Eruption of an uprising at this scale was very much unexpected and caught most scholars and analysts of Turkish politics by surprise (Ercan and Oguz, 2015: 114). As Ercan and Oguz rightly argue, it was not so much that there were no prior protests and struggles but that 'the various types and fields of social struggle (such as those by public employees, professionals, students, feminist and ecological movements) came together for the first time' under the 'everywhere Taksim, everywhere resistance' and 'government resign' slogans (ibid.).

There have been numerous analyses on the underlying causes and dynamics of the protests and the class positions of the protesters themselves (Tugal, 2013; Yoruk, 2014; Yoruk and Goksel, 2014; Karakayali and Yaka, 2015; Baydar, 2015). There were also attempts to assess the defining elements of the protests in their differences from and similarities with other mobilisations elsewhere in Europe, Middle East and Americas in the post-2008 context as well as more historically with respect to 1968 movement in France and Paris Commune (Tugal,

2013). Some scholars largely focused on what they deemed to be the 'middle-class' characteristics of the protestors and identified the protests as the revolt of new middle-classes that have flourished during the AKP years (Keyder, 2013 cited in Yoruk, 2014: 424; Tugal, 2013: 158-9). Others have proposed the working class identity of the protestors within a broader definition as the 'non-owners of means of production' increasingly feeling the pressure of the neoliberal policies of the AKP government (Boratav, 2013 cited in Oguz and Ercan, 2015: 115). Rather than specifying the identity and characteristics of the uprising on the basis of the class position of the demonstrators, there were scholars who focused on a more relational and dynamic understanding of class as a social relation and process (Oguz and Ercan, 2015: 116). They investigated the dynamism of this particular process of 'recomposition of people' and 'commoning' on the basis of the emergence of new political subjectivities (Karakayali and Yaka, 2015) as well as their articulations across the spatial, gender and sexuality axis (Baydar, 2015).

From the viewpoint of politicisation and depoliticisation dynamics within the scope of this chapter, it is more plausible to focus on what Ercan and Oguz (2015: 115-6) identify as the 'political content of the demands expressed by the protest in relation to the moments of capital accumulation in Turkey today'. On this basis the authors suggest that Gezi resistance emerged 'as a struggle against commodification of nature in the context of the revalorization of capital and the reproduction of the state' and therefore carried within it 'working class content' rather than by way of association to the 'individual class positions of the protestors'. This approach is also effective in bridging what Hetland and Goodwin (2013: 91) identify as the gap between political economy and social movements studies as discussed earlier.

In other words, it is possible to suggest that the countrywide protests during the summer of 2013 constituted a distinctive form of politicisation in its attempt to demystify the capital logic and class character of social relations, state and its (de)politicisation strategies. The protests have articulated a variety of counter-hegemonic discourses as well as everyday resistance practices in intervening into the public space and debate when it comes to opposing against state governing strategies. In Baydar's terms, the Gezi movement, through these practices, produced 'intersectional spaces' that transcended the public/private, man/woman and heterosexual/queer dichotomies in spatial, gender and sexuality terms respectively (2015: 18). It also brought the long-standing and systematic oppression of the Kurdish people into public light and acknowledgment while exposing the bias and disinformation policies of the state and media more broadly. Therefore politicisation at Gezi protests was able to mobilise a variety of struggles that were *seemingly* separate and disconnected from the capitalist character of social relations around the resistance against commodification and destruction of environment and public space. In so far as it managed to unify these particular demands, it was successful in demystifying this underlying capital logic and class character of social relations that found its embodiment in concrete government policies.

In these respects Gezi resistance has emerged as a unique form of politicisation able to articulate a broad array of progressive political demands and expressions of societal discontent simultaneously and in direct opposition to the AKP government which had now come to represent the entrenchment of neoliberal policies as well as deepening authoritarian practices at domestic level. This large scale politicisation as resistance has deepened and spread across the country in the immediate aftermath of the June 2013 protests. Some scholars have also identified the visible parliamentary and party political representation of this new form of politicisation with the formation and unprecedented electoral success of the People's Democracy Party (HDP) in June 2015 elections.

Nevertheless it should be added that this progressive politicisation has been continuously challenged and constrained by the governing strategies of the state that aimed to delegitimise and demobilise the resistance dynamics through either active coercion or ideological means. The very fact that the politicisation of a number of issues as part of the governing strategy rested on the depoliticisation of the key pillar of economic policy that aimed to manage the capital accumulation process via the management of money limited the possibilities of thoroughly politicising and demystifying the totality of capitalist social relations.

Ercan and Oguz (2015: 116) identify this aspect of Gezi politicisation in their acknowledgment of the invisibility of industrial labour as its 'politically leading force'. They emphasise the changing mechanisms of control over labour via the dissolution of the peasantry, large scale participation of Kurdish peasants, migrant and seasonal workers in a variety of sectors in the labour force as well as proletarianisation, precarisation and subcontracting in the public sector and among professionals since the 1980s as the key dynamics behind this invisibility (ibid. 119-130). These dire circumstances surrounding the working class and class struggle in Turkey were exposed tragically with the country's worst mine explosion in the small town of Soma almost one year after the emergence of Gezi resistance, in May 2014, taking the lives of 301 miners.

Therefore, even though this process reverted the direct responsibility and accountability over the implementation and consequences of the policies in the newly politicised areas back to the government as noted earlier, the displacement of the political character of the management of labour-power and money shielded the government strongly from the economic and political consequences of the Gezi resistance and its aftermath and deepened the authoritarian capitalist characteristics of mode of governance in Turkey today.

The crisis-ridden developments during the three years following the June uprising in Turkish politics at domestic level cannot be detached from the dynamics and effects of the ongoing global economic and political crisis that as well as the neighbouring regional conflict in Syria. Even though the scope of this chapter does not allow extensive assessment of these dynamics and their impact on domestic dynamics of (de)politicisation, it is evident that an ever more oppressive form of governing capitalist social relations rapidly takes root in the country. The period of extreme violence that ensued following the June 2015 elections in suppressing the

opposition, renewed elections in November the same year as well as continual and systematic crackdown on freedom of expression, media, political and economic rights, academic freedom since early 2016 have been the major developments of this period. Nevertheless the predominant governing strategy in economic management, in particular its monetary pillar, continued serving the capital accumulation dynamics well despite the turbulent domestic developments due to its depoliticised orientation besides the rhetorical attacks against the central bank by the President Erdogan and efforts to bring monetary policy into public debate (Donmez and Zemandl, 2015).

In addition to the heavy suppression of the outside opposition against the government and state from the Kurdish political movement, the rights struggles of workers, women, LGBTQI community and minorities, one of the important dynamics exposed in the post-2013 period was the *internal* struggles within the statecraft itself which became visible with the corruption scandal in December 2013. It involved a series of AKP senior officials, their relatives and business circles close to the government. These struggles which were allegedly taking place within the police and military culminated severely in the coup attempt that took place in July 2016.

It is not possible to assess the underlying dynamics and motivations comprehensively due to the recency of these developments. However the intricate and highly contingent dynamics observed in the Turkish case is testament to the fact that governing strategies of depoliticisation and politicisation are continuously subjected to politicising pressures due to the conflict-riddenness built into the very social relations that they intend to govern. On the other hand the experience of widespread politicisation at societal scale in the Turkish case demonstrates the radical emancipatory potential of politicisation as resistance. Yet it also strongly presents the urgency and importance of this form of political mobilisation to envisage and actively push beyond the horizons of governing strategies of (de)politicisation in order to fully problematize and expose the unequal, asymmetrical dynamics of social relations that underlie the make-up of contemporary societies and realise alternative forms of organising social relations.

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the importance of assessing governing and resistance strategies of politicisation in a related manner. It has cautioned against rigidifying different ontologies/logics between these strategies and divorcing their inherent connection from the broader dynamics of social relations. In other words it has been argued that studies into (de)politicisation, when divorced from this holistic approach, has limited capability for pushing a critical, transformative agenda both in theoretical and practical terms. In that sense studies in politicisation and depoliticisation always needs to be contextualised in assessing particular governing and resistance strategies in particular contexts (Hay, 2014). This process ultimately takes us to the domain of power/class relations and asymmetries in contemporary

societies. It pushes us to incorporate theoretical constructs and methodologies to be able to understand and expose these dynamics fully.

To this end a critical understanding into this conceptual couplet has been proposed in the first two sections of the chapter in approaching depoliticisation and politicisation as governing strategies of capitalist states in their efforts in managing the conflict ridden dynamics of capitalist social relations as well as assessing politicisation as form of resistance and resistance strategy in exposing the underlying dynamics of these social relations. In this perspective, in so far (de)politicisation when deployed by the state ultimately precludes public debate, engagement and mobilisation in one form or another, it has not been conceived to have emancipatory, transformative potential in demystifying the underlying character of societal power relations. Politicisation as resistance requires the active engagement and coming together of people with the potential to imagine participatory and progressive forms of organising social relations.

The transformations within the Turkish politics in terms of state restructuring and policymaking during the 2000s have been assessed on this basis with reflections on the rising political discontent and mobilisation from the early 2010s onwards which culminated into full-blown societal protests in the summer of 2013. The Turkish case poses particular insights with respect to the specific and complex coupling of governing strategies of depoliticisation and politicisation as witnessed in the course of the decade-long AKP rule as well as the eruption and evolution of societal politicisation which carried within it strong elements of resistance and demystification potential. It similarly carries shared dynamics across Europe and its periphery since the onset of the latest global crisis. The latter has forced the states to push politicising strategies in economic management (with an objective to prevent wide-scale social and political involvement and dissent) as well as led to the emergence and evolution of a number of widespread political mobilisations and protests from the Occupy movements to anti-austerity struggles and beyond.

The post-2013 period in Turkey, on the other hand, demonstrates the consolidation of politicisation strategy of AKP government in increasingly authoritarian form -for some already oscillating between a 'Bonapartist' and 'neo-fascist' form (Tugal, 2016). It ultimately leads to depoliticising and narrowing the public political realm while systematically suppressing movements and mobilisations that have the potential to explicitly expose and challenge the existing power structures enfolding the state and social relations. Despite the fact that the existing political environment exerts unprecedented oppression over the resistance forms of politicisation and struggles, the need for cultivating anti-systemic and counter-hegemonic politicisation strategies beyond a mere anti-governmental or anti-AKP orientation is more urgent than ever.

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