

The Social Stratification Related With The Turkish Social Changes

Z. F. Fındıkoğlu

It will be useful from the sociological point of view to pay attention to the relationship between the social changes and the leadership or social classes in M. K.'s Turkey.

If one wants to explain the process of social changes in Turkey from the point of a theory of causality one has to take into consideration two types of factors:

- I — Individualistic factor (Leadership)
- II — Social factor (Group, body, class, collective bodies)

I — INDIVIDUALISTIC FACTOR

In the chapter dealing with the definition of social changes and especially at the end of the *historical preface*, we have shown that M. K.'s Turkey is closely related to M. K. himself and that if it were not for that relationship the changes in question would not perhaps have taken place, in the same direction and at the same speed. Therefore, there exists one undeniable link between the Turkish social change and the leadership of M. K. [1].

But as it has been shown at the introduction, this relationship must be considered in the light of a chain of events occurring in a certain society at a certain time in the XIX th century. M. K. being

[1] and [2] See: Speech, by Mustafa Kemal, 1927, French, German and English translation. The memories of other leaders aren't published until now. For this point see: C. Sherill, *Trois hommes, Roosevelt-Mussolini, Kemal*, French translation, Paris, Plon 1936. See our bibliography in: *Essai sur la transformation de code familial en Turquie*, 1935, Paris.

one of the links of the chain, has served a completing job. In other words, we are confronting a leader in a chain of leaders.

The relation between an individual like M. K. who plays the principal role and the social changes has been strengthened by the assistance to that individualistic factor, of the influence of a group of individuals. At the beginning and during the continuance of the changes, some of these individuals have deserted or have been made to desert the leader, because of the differences of opinion as to what direction should be given to social changes. This phase concerns those who want to investigate the political parties, not us^[2].

Both the national and the foreign researchers who have dealt with social changes, so far have focused their attention on the leader only. The group of individuals who have assisted the leader, and their participation in the social changes have not yet been investigated. An American Professor has conducted some research in this field, but this has not been adequate also ^[3].

We want to point out that there has been an intellectual group consisting of civil servants who now and then have supplied M. K. with intellectual assistance and support him in the social changes of Kemalist Turkey. This group is the heir of these persons who have worked at the experiments of westernization which has been going too far back, if one takes into account only the first two decades of the 20th century one finds who is the dominating leader of the third and fourth decades of the same century. In this connection one of the problems stressed both by national and by foreign thinkers is the relation between Z. Gökalp and M. K., first a sociologist, second a soldier and a politician. What is their relation and their influence as to the realization of the goal of westernization as compared to each other? This question has been answered in two ways:

1 — M. K. is much more far-sighted in westernization processes and surpasses Z. Gökalp in this field,

2 — Though Z. Gökalp has planned the process of westernization better, the decades (1920 - 30) and (1930 - 38) led by

[3] See Donald Everett Webster: The Turkey of Ataturk, 1939, Philadelphia, p. 103.

M. K., where the radical changes have taken place, have been fully internal and external events which have made that radicalism necessary. But the second M. K. period (1938-57) has caused some social changes, especially those concerning religious culture policy [4].

II — SOCIAL FACTOR

While examining the factors of social change in Turkey, one has to take into consideration besides the individualistic factor, inter-individualistic elements who assisting M. K., the social factor which consists of assisting individuals.

The statistical figures which help to enlighten the Turkish social stratification at the time of the beginning of M. K.'s Turkey, can be obtained from the 1927 census which figures Turkish population as 13 million and from other various sources :

The table below is an experiment made for that purpose [5] :

<i>Social groups</i>	<i>Population percentage</i>
Peasants	81,6 %
Workers	3,5 »
Industrialists-Marchants-Artisans	9 »
Civil Servants (Military and Administrative)	4,89 »
	100 %

Any sociological definitions concerning those figures has to consider these social groups :

1— Peasants, 2— Bourgeoisie, 3— Civil servants, 4— Workers.

[4] See Uriel Heyd: *Foundation of Turkish Nationalism*, 1950 London. For a general bibliography about Z. Gökalp see: p. 174 of this very interesting book. See: N. Berkes, Z. Gökalp, His contribution to Turkish nationalism, in «The Middle East Journal», 1954, N. 4, p. 375. One can also see our: Z. Gökalp et sa sociologie, 1935, Paris.

[5] See, *Annuaire statistique*, 1927, Ankara (Turkish).

Can the social groups which are included in the process of social change in Turkey be regarded as unities? In other words, are these social classes related to social changes and if so how can that relationship be established?

In all social evolutions occurring in the Moslem countries of the Middle East it is a social mistake to talk about well organised differentiated and conscious classes. Nevertheless it is possible to mention certain groups which show the tendency to transform into a class.

I — The Peasant class and the social change :

The Turkish peasant class which is important from the point of quantity, has importance not because of class interests, but because of the part it played in the struggle for life and death. All the way down in history, including the First World War, the Turkish peasant has never shown the close interest to the Turkish National Movement in the years 1919-23. The peasant class which had been used as a force in the formation of the Empire weakened and became smaller under the influence of external and internal factors and when these factors threatened the boundaries of the Homeland, Anatolia, the Turkish peasant began as a unity to feel the danger of existence very at hand.

That is why during the time of the war of Independence (1919-23) and afterwards in (1923 - 38) (1938 - 57) both M. K. and his assistant leaders and their followers used to have talks with peasants and had been photographed with them. This was something impossible to see in Turkey before M. K. The expression used since 1919 as «Peasant is the master of the country» must not be regarded merely as a phrase often heard in political literature [6].

As we have been explaining every Turkish social change holds as its aim the economic and cultural interests of the peasant totality. But there are also certain changes which regard their aim the Turkish peasant as a social class. These are :

[6] See, The Times (Turkish number), 9 August, 1938, See, Webster's Atatürk, p. 133.

a) *Change in financial policy :*

Before M. K. the peasant in Turkey had to pay a tax called «A'gar - The Tithe Tax» under the Moslev Law. The Tithe Tax had two characteristics :

- 1 — It was collected by a tax-collector not by the state,
- 2 — It was paid in kind from the agricultural product.

This tax system which placed the peasant in a very difficult position has been abolished in Kemalist Turkey [7]. And taxes directed to urban population have saved the peasant from a heavy tax burden.

b) *Change in administrative policy :*

Turkish villages which number over forty thousand, received an administrative Statute for the first time and the first Village Code was published in 1924. Since then the problems of training administrative elements in the proper sense as an administrator, needed for the application of the «Village Code» has been emphasized quite often. After the Second World War the establishment of an «Institute of Public Administration» attached to the University of Ankara might be considered in the light of that change of opinion [8].

c) *Cultural change :*

The greatest change which involves the peasant can be found in the field of «illiteracy». One of the main reasons of the changes connected with the institutions of language and alphabet was to provide an easy way of learning to read and write. In the second M. K. period, after 1939 village education has been handled separately from urban education, with all the characteristics, institution of education called «Village Institutes» have been established to train Students to conduct education in the villages. Solely, these

[7] See, E. Bisbee, *The New Turkish*, Philadelphia, 1951.

[8] This institute is founded with the U. N. help, attached to the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Ankara and is now independent. See especially: *Studies in Turkish local Government, 1955*, published by the «Public adm. Ins. for Turkey and the Middle East».

institutions are undergoing certain modifications within the unity of village and town [9].

d) *Economical change :*

Kemalist Turkey, for the first time, has dealt with village economy from the point of view of a credit policy and has established a cooperative system which aims to provide agricultural credit and the sale of the agricultural export products [10]. The production policy which had been rather neglected in the first M. K.'s period, has been handled with great care in the period 1938 - 57 and the use of machinery at agricultural production has been emphasized [11]. In both periods the economical policy dealing with the peasant has brought the village in touch with the town, later with the national economy and through the export products even with the world's economy [12]. It has also changed the village barter system to a monetary exchange system. Many national and foreign economists and sociologists have been observing and studying this change of structure and mentality which the Turkish village and the peasant are undergoing at the present.

e) *Change in property rights :*

The feudal system which was practiced in the west and in general in the East before the 19th century has always been unfamiliar to the Turkish social structure. However Turkey had a typical land regime, similar to feudalism which could be called «The great landholder system». Peasants in general used to cultivate by way of lease or changing system, the land the owners of which lived in towns or big cities. In addition to this the tithes tax which was pointed out above put the peasants in a difficult position. M. K.'s

[9] See, L. W. Thomas: Preface of «A. village in Anatolia», 1954, p. IX.

[10] See: M. Colombain: Rapport et avant projets des lois concernant la coopération en Turquie, 1950, Ankara (Publication du Ministère de l'Economie et du Commerce), p. 74.

[11] See: Richard D. Robinson, Tractors in the village (A study in Turkey), Journal of farm economies, 1952, See too: H. Nicholls: Agricultural investment in underdeveloped countries, 1955 in «American economic Review», N. 2.

[12] See: Richard D. Robinson, Report on Turkish Economy, 1952, (Turkish translation in «Türk Ekonomisi»).

Turkey by abolishing that tax lightened the heavy burden of the peasant. But the principal problem a proper land reform started later in 1945 by the political party formed by M. K. and a «Toprak Kanunu - Land Law» was published. As a land reform cannot be solved only by land distribution, and the rush from village to town cannot be stopped, the most important problem at the present is centered around the necessity of equipping the peasant who has been given land with protection means some way or agricultural credit [13].

In short the peasant has served in the salvation and formation of the national state : and new state in exchange has followed a policy of social and economical changes directed towards village and peasant.

Before M. K.'s period, many social reforms have been already realized, but none of them was related directly with the village and especially with the psychological attitude of the villagers. First in the Turkish social history we see that such interest appeared in M. K.'s Turkey. All the pictures and monuments which show us M. K. together with villagers who wear *fes* or *abanya* (till 1928) or hat and cap (after 1928) mean something to us.

This relation between the social changes and the villager class have two aspects. First positive. All the juridical, economical and financial reforms are realized under the motto of being a villager or working for the villagers. The villagers have had their profit of them, especially of the financial and administrative measures (Abrogation of all the heavy taxes, promulgation of a law of village... etc.) Beside this, there are negative relations which appear in the open or hidden resistances against some juridical and religious reforms. The interesting part of these two aspects of changes has been the object of several publications which represent in the same time the trends of thought of this period [14].

[13] W. H. Nicholls: Agric. invest. in underd. Coun. (Turkish translation in «İstanbul Ticaret Odası Mecmuası, 1956, N. I), p. 57.

[14] In fact the problem of villagers and that of villages in general has started to be a social cause or question first under the *new régime*. All the publications about this point take into account the distance between ideas which have oriented the leaders and the public administrators of the above mentioned changes and social reality. See M. Makal: A village in Anatolia,

II — Social changes and the Turkish Bourgeoisie :

First let us consider if one can talk about a Turkish bourgeoisie before or after the formation of M. K.'s Turkey. In its Western conception a bourgeoisie has never been present in Turkey. The Turkish small entrepreneurs and the artisans who might have give rise to a bourgeoisie class were not present.

The Western Powers who had the Capitulations at their disposal [15]. The Non-Moslem minorities who had been acting as middle-men for the extension with East and the Middle East, of the Western industrial and commercial capitalism since the 18th century, began to form a commercial bourgeoisie during the 19th century [16].

However this bourgeoisie has never played a positive part in Turkey either before M. K. or later in the processes of Turkish social transformation. On the contrary its role has been rather negative. The bourgeois minorities have acted almost as the representatives of the western countries who were always after «The sick Man of Europe» and tried to prepare the heritage of that Sick Man.

Nevertheless there existed some Turkish artisans and small merchants groups who worked in the interior of Turkey and completed the commercial work of the bourgeois minorities dealing in the big Turkish cities like *Selamika*, *Izmir*, *Istanbul*, *Samsun*, *Isken-derun* with imports from Europe. After these minorities were sent away from Anatolia, these two groups — the artisans and the small local merchants — having the tendency to develop, were welcomed as the corner stones of a new Turkish bourgeois class at the beginning of Kemalist Turkey [17]. A bourgeois class which would be understood in this sense has assisted in the social changes. But this assistance is not the kind of social and political help of a new so-

English (1954 - For the negative aspect of social changes), See Donald E. Webster: *The Turkey of Ataturk*, Philadelphia (1939 - For the positive aspect of social changes).

[15] See, Engelhardt: *La Turquie et le Tanzimat*, 1882, Paris, p. 72.

[16] See, G. Kessler: *Die soziale classen in Europa und in Orient*, in «*Revue Turque de sociologie: İş - Action*», 1936, N. 5.

[17] See D. Taft: *International Migration*, 1955 New-York, p. 120.

cial class having a class consciousness. It only consists of inspired elements submerged in the unity of Turkish people as a whole.

But between the first congress of Economy (1923) and the second one in 1930 private sector did not show any sign of improvement [18]. And for the problems of the capital formation and industrial investment all hopes were centered around the presence of one enterpreneur, namely the State. In 1930 economical etatism and state capitalism were born not as a result of a political or economical doctrine, but, because of the prevailing conditions in the country and the lack of possibilities [19]. The economical etatist policy of the first M. K. period brought about results which might be considered educational for the second M. K. period. The growing up of a class of private enterpreneurs which capital or with the conviction of the necessity of capital formation and having economical drives and notions, can be said to be one of these educational results.

In short, a bourgeoisie in the western sense which could influence social changes, has not been present in Turkey. But there has been a certain kind of bourgeoisie which formed the cornerstones of a nation fighting a life and death battle. This weak bourgeoisie has strengthened between the years 1923 - 46 and begun to help the liberal economy of a new political party e.g. Democratic Party, relying on that class since 1946 [20].

III — The civil servants class and social changes :

In general civil servant in the East is not merely a public administrator and a member of a group who performs public services, but it also forms the intellectual-class of the country in question [21]. It can be said that an elite group besides civil servants is non-existent. This is also true for Turkey before M. K.

[18] See, A. H. Hanson, Report on the Turkish state enterprises..., 1954, (Turkish translation by the Institute of Public Administration of Ankara)

[19] See, Orhan Conker: Redressement economique et industrialisation de la nouvelle Turquie, 1937, p. 95.

[20] See, Tarık Z' Tunaya: Political parties in Turkey (Turkish), 1952.

[21] See, M. Khadduri: The role of the Military in Middle East politics, in «The American Political Science Review», 1953, June. See S. F. p.

Civil servant when considered with this characteristics occupies a very important place in the process of social evolution in Turkey. When the army whose role we have pointed out at the beginning of our paper, would be included in the civil servant group in a broader sense, one could rightly talk about a civil servant class-consisting of two secondary groups, one military, the other civil. M. K. born in 1881 in Selonica into a family having an army officier as a grand-father and a custom's official as a father, is a typical representative of the Turkish civil servants class composed of military and civil elements [22].

This social group which was born in the 19th century with the foundation of a modern state and government organization, and always regarded by the mass as a representative of westernization can be said to play the part of a sole effector of the changes which took place during the evolutionary period following the important dates like 1839 (Tanzimat), 1876 (First Constitution), 1908 (Second Constitution), 1923 (New regime) and has been the only center of support for these changes. But the importance of the role it played between the years 1923-38 is beyond comparison. It is this group who understood the meaning of the westernization processes undertaken and supported the leader in this endeavour. During that time civil servant group itself, too has undergone an evolution peculiar to itself, which can be explained in the following way :

a) After Turkey had regained peace by the Lausanne Treaty, some of the high and middle military officials who were already performing civil duties became civilians as desired (The process of training of the military group into civilians). M. K. himself headed this group [23].

B) Kemalist Turkey as party and government trying to compensate for the weakness of private enterprise sector practiced a policy of economical etatism.

And as a result, civil servants who worked at the state enterprises gained an economical initiative which made possible the

[22] See, G. Sherill, p. 50.

[23] See, P. G. Frank, in S. F., p. 147 - 160.

transition from state economy to private enterprise when necessary (The process of providing training for private enterprise through etatism,) [24]

C) The formation of the nucleus of a typical bourgeois class in Turkey where industrial and commercial bourgeois class was non-existent (The process of formation of a bourgeois class through civil servant)

D) The Turkish Armenians who had cooperated with Russia during the first World War and the Turkish Greeks who had worked for Greece during the War of Independence (1919 - 1923) were made to leave Turkish towns, except Istanbul. As a result, their place has been taken up by a developing Turkish bourgeois class (The process of replacement of the non-Moslem bourgeois class by a new bourgeoisie growing out of civil servants and sometimes of the great landholders) [25].

In short, the civil servants group who worked in the administration of governmental services together with these who served in the state economical sector, assisted in all kinds of westernization undertakings. Sometimes this assistance consisted of services but at other times it has been all sorts of efforts to that effect. Without these efforts —both a duty and outside of duty— of the Turkish civil servants, the realization of Turkish social changes can be said, to have been impossible. Many of the reform operations were made to start from civil servants (Like reforms in attire and hat, change in alphabet... etc.). These reforms were planned to be appear to the other groups through them.

The influence of the civil servant group in the social stratification of the present Turkish society is a social event worth investigating separately as a very interesting sociological problem.

IV — Social change and Turkish working class :

First of all it is necessary to point out that a Turkish social evolution does not require to take into consideration organized social classes and the differential relationship of different social clas-

[24] See, Ch. Issavi, in S. F., p. 117.

[25] See, Report of A. H. Hansen, Turkish translation, p. 13.

ses, so the presence of a differentiated working class and its influence on social change cannot be talked about.

For the other classes, one might perhaps talk about an inspired disorganized differentiations, but even this possibility does not exist for Turkish worker class.

In Kemalist Turkey the workers consisted of peasants without lands, or with a very little land who went to work seasonally in the agricultural and rarely in the industrial areas and returned to their villages when the work was finished [26]. Of these who worked in Ereğli coal mines which was then considered to be the only industrial area; and of these who worked in the big cities like Istanbul, Izmir at streetcar and railway companies, agricultural workers worked in services of great landholders; coal miners and transportation workers worked for foreign companies. There is no reason whatsoever that a relationship should be established between these workers and social changes. At the most we may consider the sympathy of the new nationalist state for workers due to nationalistic ideology.

This one sided interest from the top had started between the years 1919 - 23. A law of social policy was passed in 1921 to protect the workers of Ereğli coal mines who were being exploited by foreign capitalists.

Some preparations were done for a labor law in a large preparation which would include all kinds of workers. As the result of all these efforts, the Turkish labour law passed in 1936 towards the end of the first M. K. period [27]. At one hand the former workers of foreign railway and streetcar and coal mine companies which were taken over by the state, on the other hand the new industrial workers who sprang forth through the movement of industrial and economical etatism emerging because of disorganized and inefficient private enterprise, indicate a tendency to form a differentiated class. During the second M. K. period new labour and

[26] See, our: «The workers of Erzurum, in *Revue de la Faculte des Sciences economiques*», 1942. See, *Les problems du travail en Turquie*, 1950, Geneve, Publication du «Bureau international du travail».

[27] See, G. Kessler, *Arbeitsrecht in der Türkei*, 1936 in «*Is-Action: Revue Turque de sociologie*», N. 2.

labourer law followed one another. In 1946 a law for the establishment of a labour Ministry —something altogether new for Turkey— again in 1945 an insurance law for labour accidents, occupational disease and motherhood; in 1946 labour and employment law; 1947 Workers and Employers Trade unions law were passed [28].

The last one is very significant from the point of view of relation and influence between the Turkish working class and social changes. The national state by itself is preparing organizations and laws which of an organized and differentiated working class, but for satisfying the desires of the intellectual in the endeavour of westernization. However, during the second M. K. period, specially since the end of the Second World War, labour unions their number suddenly increasing, passed into an active state from a passive one. In this way one-sided relation is becoming rather two-sided. Their number being ever four hundred, the Labour Unions at the present have a National Labour Confederation of their own and establish relation with similar international organizations.

V — Intellectuals and social changes :

The problem of relation between the social classes and the social changes leads us to the following sociological conclusions: in a society of non-differentiated classes national changes result in influencing the birth and the development of classes which tend to become differentiated. The first and second Kemalist Turkey periods can be characterized by this point. The first M. K. period (1919 - 23 - 38) has prepared the way for a socially differentiated, westernized Turkey of the second period (1938 - 57). In this preparation work Turkish intellectuals have the leading role.

It is possible to talk about the presence of an intellectual group in Turkey outside of a military and civil servants groups. In a description about the beginning of Kemalist Turkey, groups which can be qualified as intellectual are the following :

- 1 — Civil servants dealing with public administration,
- 2 — Lawyers and doctors not employed in state services,

[28] See, our: *Le syndicalisme en Turquie, Conférence faite à l' «Institut des sciences économiques appliquées» de Paris en 1950 (Unpublished).*

3 — The Moslem clergy.

The first of these groups has been considered before, the last group is important from the point of being able to follow the process of social changes.

a) During the critical period just before the changes had started both «Medrese - Moslem colléges» and «Ulemas - Moslem theologians» or «Tekke - Convents of Dervishes» and «Sheikhs - » were included in the national unity. Some photographs of 1919 - 1924 show M. K. together with these two groups of religious intellectuals.

b) When the first steps of westernization and secularization were taken after 1924, there started a conflict between «Medrese - Tekke» and M. K. On this point is depending the closing up of Medrese, Tekke and the clearing of the first National Assembly from these religious elements [29].

c) M. K. and his group or party through a new Great National Assembly consisting of elements which did not show any sign of resistance to social changes, will apply social change measures to all manifestations of social life. At that instance members of Medreses and Tekkes, and newly established progressive Republican Party which is presumed to cherish resistance will be abolished and dissolved by varioud laws and also opposition movements like Sheikh Sait Rebellion (1925), the attempt assasinate to M.K. (1926), Menemen movement (1931); all these resistances have to be considered in the light of that event [30].

Nevertheless *ulemas* and *sheikhs* must not be thought to oppose social change as a unity. At M. K.'s milieu, who knew how to utilize moral forces, one could find people from the group of *ulemas* and *sheikhs* wearing hats in place of white, green, or black turbans and european attire in place of religious rebes. So the first and second Turkish intellectual group have supported the leader in all social shanges which took place in Kemalist Turkey. The names of many of them are involved in the process of change [31].

[29] See. S. R. Shafak: The clergy in Islam, in S. F., p. 188.

[30] For all these resistances See: Webster, p. 108 and Toynbee, p. 194.

[31] This group of *Ulema* and *sheikh* are inspired from a philosophical conception of Islamic religion.

While taking into consideration these groups which have influenced social changes, externally or together with individual factors and who later themselves were influenced by these changes is a point which must be emphasized. That these groups have to be handled not as ideal classes defined by the sociology of social classes, but as a groups belonging to the Turkish social structure and suitable for Turkey. Otherwise the characteristics of social reality will have been neglected by generalization, and as a result a wrong opinion will be formed. These characteristics which we point out can be a starting point for students and members of the I. S. S. who might wish to formulate rationalistic considerations.

We can say in short that each of all these changes have acquired the character of an «Social institution», replacing the old ones. If it is right that a social institution is «a functional configuration of cultur patterns, including actions, ideas, attitudes and cultural equipment, which possesses a certain permanence and which is intended to satisfy felt social needs, these changes are getting to be a part of this culture and penetrating into customs. However, any social change should not be regarded as a something done and accomplished, but as an occurrence in the process of transformation viewed as a frame or context. These frames are acquired contexts but their contents should be followed with the utmost attention and sociological insight and modifications, renovations have to be courageously undertaken when necessary.