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**Türk Modernleşmesinin Tarihsel Sosyolojisi: Tasnifler, Tipolojiler  
ve Yanılgılar**

Historical Sociology of Turkish Modernization: Classifications,  
Typologies and Fallacies

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## Türk Modernleşmesinin Tarihsel Sosyolojisi: Tasnifler, Tipolojiler ve Yanılgılar

### Öz

Her türlü bilimsel uğraş aslında bir tasnife dayanır. Tasnifler de ele alınan olgunun doğası kadar metodolojik kabullerden ve bu tasnifi ortaya koyan zihnin tarihselliğinden etkilenir. Türk modernleşmesine yönelik tasnifler de tarihsel konumlanışların, paradigmaların, ideolojik pozisyonların ve bilimsel seçim ve sınıflandırma sürecini çoğu zaman kaçınılmaz olarak etkileyen göreceliğin izlerini taşır. Bu makalede, tarih ve sosyolojinin metodolojik yönelimlerini uzlaştırmak için ortaya konulmuş bir çaba olarak düşünülebileceğimiz tarihsel sosyoloji ve bu bilimsel gelenek içerisinde geliştirilen alternatif bakış açıları tanıtılmıştır. Bu tanıtım Türk modernleşmesine yönelik tasniflerin değerlendirilmesine yönelik metodolojik çerçeveyi teşkil etmektedir. Türk modernleşmesi deneyiminin çeşitli bakış açıları bağlamında nasıl sınıflandırıldığı ve tarih, siyaset bilimi ve sosyoloji disiplinleri içerisinde geliştirilen tasniflerin modernleşme deneyiminin bütüncül kavranışına katkısı bu bağlamda sorunsallaştırılmıştır. Bununla hem tarihin sosyolojik incelemesine hem de Türk modernleşmesine ilgi duyan sosyal bilimcilere yönelik bir çerçeve ortaya konulması amaçlanmıştır. Bu çalışma tarihsel sosyolojinin yöntemsel kabullerine dayanmaktadır ve kaynaklar ve okumalar açısından kaçınılmaz bir görecelik barındırmaktadır.

### Özet

Tarihin sosyolojik incelemesi yapısal farklılaşmalarla toplumsal dönüşümler arasındaki ilişkinin gözlenmesini temel alır. Tarihsel sosyoloji incelemelerinin başarısı toplumsal eylemlerle yapısal bağlamlar arasındaki etkileşimi gösterebilmesine bağlıdır. Modernleşme gibi hem yapısal farklılaşmaları hem de zihniyet dönüşümlerini içeren süreçlerin incelenmesi tipolojik tasniflere dayalı açıklayıcı genellemeler üretmeyi zorunlu kılar. Fakat bu tipolojiler benzerliklerin ve farklılıkların ayırt edilmesi yanında temel olguların tespitine de imkân vermelidir. Böyle bir tipoloji tarihin ele alınışında tekil, organize edici bir ilke yerine pek çok tarihsel, toplumsal değişkeni bir arada düşünmeyi gerekli kılar. Tarih ile sosyolojinin metodolojik yönelimlerini uzlaştırma girişimi olarak tanımlayabileceğimiz tarihsel sosyoloji, Türk modernleşmesine yönelik tasnif ve tipolojileri değerlendirebileceğimiz ve bizi yaygın bazı yöntemsel sorunlardan uzak tutacak ölçütler sunar. Bu yöntemsel çerçeve tarihsel ve/veya sosyolojik yanılgı, anakronizm, indirgemecilik gibi bilimsel hatalardan korunmak için elzemdir. Söz konusu hatalardan ilki genel bir modelin özgül tarihsel bir duruma uygulanmasından kaynaklanır. İkinci hata ise modernleşmeci perspektifin ve Batı'da geliştirilen modellerin doğrudan Türk modernleşmesi deneyimine tatbikinden kaynaklanır. Kayıt ya da kanıt bulma arayışı ile genelleme veya soyut modeller inşa etme arasında nasıl bir strateji izleneceği ise başlı başına bir sorundur.



İki yüzyılı aşan bir süreci kapsayan Türk modernleşmesi deneyiminin siyasal ve kurumsal düzlemde izlenebildiği ilk aşamayı Tanzimat reformları oluşturur. Bu yenileşme çabalarının zihniyet ve kültür dönüşümüne ve farklı toplumsal mukabelelere yol açması ise toplumsal yaşamın doğası gereği tedricen gerçekleşmiştir. Dinden hukuk ve siyasete, eğitimden bürokrasiye ve yönetim anlayışına kadar toplumsal yaşama pek çok yönden tesir eden bu deneyim farklı ve çelişen talep ve beklentilere yol açmıştır. Bu farklılıkları ve çelişkileri Osmanlının son yüzyılında ortaya çıkan düşünce geleneklerinde ve bu geleneklerin temsilcilerinin görüş ve düşüncelerinde izlemek mümkündür. Bu fikri çeşitlilik yanında ıslahat çabalarına yol açan tarihsel ve toplumsal değişimlerin boyut ve mahiyeti de tek biçimli ve tek yönlü modernleşme analizlerinin yetersizliğini ortaya koyacaktır. Modernleşme deneyiminin coğrafi sınırları ve siyasi temsilleri bile, aralarındaki bazı temel benzerliklere rağmen kuşatılması güç bir zenginliğe ve çeşitliliğe işaret eder. Tarihsel sosyolojik perspektif hem modernleşme sürecinin hem de söz konusu alternatiflerin değerlendirilmesi için uygun yöntemsel araçlar temin ettiği düşünülebilir. Bu yöntemsel araçlar Türk modernleşmesinin ele alındığı tipolojik tasniflerin sosyolojik açıdan sorunsallaştırılmasını da mümkün kılmaktadır.

Türk modernleşmesinin tasnifi ve temel niteliklerinin tespiti paradigmaların, tarih görüşlerinin, metodolojik yahut ideolojik kabullerin izlerini taşır. Temel bir organize edici ilkedan yola çıkan tarih okumasının, toplumsal ve kültürel çelişkileri, güç ilişkilerini veya farklı statü grupları arasındaki çatışmaları görmezden gelme ihtimali yüksektir. Modernleşme benzeri uzun erimli toplumsal değişim süreçlerini siyasal ve toplumsal yapıda meydana gelen değişimler kadar dini ve kültürel gelenekler ve tevarüs edilen zihniyet kalıpları da etkiler. Bu süreçte yaşanan devrimsel değişimler karşısında geleneğin, kültürel muhtevanın ve kurumsal hafızanın bugüne nasıl taşındığı kadar söz konusu 'geleneğin' nasıl bir süreklilik inşa ettiği de tartışılmaya değerdir. Türk modernleşmesi literatüründe sıkça kullanılan modernliğin muhafazakâr biçimlerine, çoğul ya da alternatif modernliklere dair analizler bu değişkenlere odaklanmaktadır. Kuşkusuz, modernleşme hem uyumun hem de muhalefetin toplumsal ve siyasal temsil bakımından kolektif nitelik kazandığı bir süreçtir ve bu süreci tanımlayan sosyolojik değişkenlerin ayırt edilmesi önem arz etmektedir. Adına gelenek ya da geçmiş denilen durumdan moderniteye geçişin tek ve evrensel bir biçiminin olmadığı ve ilerlemeci perspektife dayandırılan sosyolojik varsayımların bizzat sosyolojik gerçeklik tarafından geçersiz kılındığı bu sayede fark edilebilir. Bu bağlamda, siyasal tarih perspektifinin Türk modernleşmesi deneyimini yapısal, kurumsal reformlarla ve hukuki normların düzenlenişi ile sınırlayışı sorunludur. Benzer bir sorun ıslahat teşebbüslerine yönelik tepkilerin gelenekçilik yahut irtica kalıpları içerisinde değerlendirilmesinden kaynaklanır. Oysa aynı süreç, dinin, geleneğin ve bu ikisine fikri temel teşkil eden İslamî tefekkürün yeniden değerlendirilmesi açısından göz ardı edilemeyecek bir düşünce birikimi vücuda getirmiştir. Böyle bakıldığında Türk modernleşmesini belli indirgemeler veya özdeşlikler çerçevesinde ele alan ve bu çalışmada bazılarına değinilen tasnif, tipoloji ve



değerlendirmelerin ciddi tarihi ve sosyolojik yanılığara yol açtığı, açacağı görülebilecektir.

Türk modernleşmesini bütünüyle bir batılılaşma, sekülerleşme deneyimi olarak okumak kadar devletin yahut modernleşme deneyiminin taşıyıcısı olan kesimlerin tutumlarını esas alarak bu deneyimi muhafazakâr, radikal yahut popülist olarak tipleştirmek de sorunludur. Türkiye özelinde, siyasal tercihlerin ve bunlara uygun biçimde gerçekleştirilen kurumsal reformların 'beklenmeyen' sonuçlara, çoğul deneyimlere yol açtığını gösteren çok sayıda çalışma mevcuttur. Modernleşme analizlerinin bu sonuçları, bir tarihsel sapma yahut geriye gidiş şeklinde değerlendirmek yerine kendi tarihsel ve sosyolojik bağlamları içerisinde okuması gerekir. Toplumsal süreçlerin karmaşıklığını, göç ve kentleşmenin yol açtığı değişimleri, küreselleşmenin yerel sonuçlarını ve gündelik yaşamın dinamikleri göz ardı eden yaklaşımlar çoğu zaman ideolojik bir tarihsel sınıflandırma yahut indirgemeci bir okuma ile sonuçlanır. Türk modernleşmesi literatüründe geleneksel tarih yazımına, siyasal tarihsel perspektife ve temel zihniyet biçimlerine dayalı olarak geliştirilen ve yaygın olarak kullanılan tasniflerin tarihsel sosyolojik metodolojiler çerçevesinde yeniden değerlendirilmesi bu bakımlardan önem arz etmektedir. Bu mütevazı çalışma temsil kabiliyeti yüksek bazı örneklerden hareketle ve başlangıç düzeyinde böyle bir çabayı yansıtmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sosyolojisi, Tarihsel Sosyoloji, Türk Modernleşmesi, Din, Muhafazakâr Modernleşme

## **Historical Sociology of Turkish Modernization: Classifications, Typologies and Fallacies**

### **Abstract**

Every scientific endeavor contains a classification. Classifications are influenced as much by the methodological assumptions as the nature of the phenomenon under study, and by the historicity of the mind that sets out these classifications. Classifications for Turkish modernization also contain traces of historical positions, paradigms, ideological positions and relativity that may be involved in most scientific selection and classification processes. In this article, historical sociology, which can be considered as an effort to reconcile the methodological orientations of history and sociology, and alternative perspectives developed within this scientific tradition are introduced. Then, how the experience of Turkish modernization was classified in the context of various perspectives and the contribution of these classifications to the holistic understanding of the modernization experience is problematized. Thus, a framework for guiding social scientists interested in both the sociological examination of the history and the experience of modernization of Turkey has been put forward. This study is also based on the methodological assumptions of historical sociology and has inevitable relativity in terms of resources and readings.



## Summary

Sociological analysis of history is based on observing the relationship between structural differentiation and social transformations. The success of historical sociological studies depends on its ability to show the interaction between social actions and structural contexts. Modernization is a process which involves both structural differentiation and mentality transformations, and the examination of this process necessitates producing descriptive generalizations based on typological classifications. These typologies should reflect historical and social reality in the widest possible framework. Such a typology makes it necessary to consider many historical and social variables together instead of a singular, organizing principle in the handling of history. Historical sociology, which we can define as an attempt to reconcile the methodological orientations of history and sociology, provides a suitable framework for the experience of Turkish modernization. This methodological framework is essential to avoid from scientific errors such as historical and/or sociological misconception, anachronism and reductionism. The first of these fallacies stems from the application of a general model to a specific historical situation. The second mistake arises from the application of the modernizing perspective and models developed in the West directly to the Turkish modernization experience. What kind of a strategy is to be followed between seeking records or evidence and generalizing and building abstract models is a problem in itself.

Tanzimat reforms constitute the first stage in which the experience of Turkish modernization, covering a process exceeding two hundred years, can be followed at the political and institutional level. These reforms have lead to mental and cultural transformation and different social responses gradually, due to the nature of social life. It is possible to observe these differences and contradictions in the traditions of thought that emerged in the last century of the Ottoman Empire. The size and nature of historical and social changes leading to reform efforts will also reveal the inadequacies of uniform and one-way modernization analyzes. The historical sociological perspective provides appropriate methodological tools for the evaluation of both this process and the possibilities in question. These methodological tools also make it possible to problematize the typological classifications in which Turkish modernization is evaluated.

The periodization of Turkish modernization and the determination of its basic characteristics carries the traces of paradigms, historical views, methodological or ideological assumptions. Historical readings based on a fundamental organizing principle are likely to ignore social and cultural contradictions, power relations or conflicts between different status groups. Modernization analyzes are influenced by religious and cultural traditions and inherited mentality patterns, as well as changes in the political and social structure. It is also important that how tradition, culture and institutional experience have been carried to the present day and what kind



of continuity has been built in the face of the changes experienced. Analyzes of the conservative forms of modernity, plural or alternative modernities, which are frequently used in the Turkish modernization literature, focus on these variables. Undoubtedly, modernization is a process in which both harmony and opposition become collective in terms of social and political representation, and it is important to distinguish the social components of this process. Therefore, the transition from tradition to modernity does not have a single and universal form and sociological assumptions based on a progressive perspective are invalidated by sociological reality. The political history perspective limits the experience of Turkish modernization to structural, institutional reforms and the regulation of legal norms. A similar form of reduction is the evaluation of the responses to reforms in traditionalism or reactionary patterns. Based on these two examples, it can be seen that the classification, typology and evaluations addressing Turkish modernization within the framework of certain reductions or identities, and some of which are mentioned in this study, lead to serious historical and sociological misconceptions.

Reading Turkish modernization as a purely secularization process, as well as classifying this experience as a conservative, radical or populist by looking at the attitudes of the state or the groups that bear the modernization experience leads to fallacies. It can be said that in Turkey, political preferences and institutional reforms lead to 'unexpected' results and multiple experiences. Modernization analyzes need to read these results in their historical and sociological contexts, rather than evaluating them as a historical deviation or retrograde. Approaches that ignore the complexity of social processes, the changes caused by migration and urbanization, the local consequences of globalization, and the dynamics of everyday life often result in an ideological historical classification or a reductionist reading. In this respect, it is important to re-evaluate the classifications commonly used in the literature within the framework of some methodological principles. This study reflects a modest effort to evaluate some classifications on Turkish modernization within the framework of historical sociological methodology.

**Keywords:** Sociology, Historical Sociology, Turkish Modernization, Religion, Conservative Modernization





## Introduction

Sociology aims to reach general theoretical explanations on socio-historical structures and changes, but history is interested in concrete historical phenomena and periodization. Historical sociology can be regarded as a general approach to the study of social structures, changes and the selection of research objects. Historical sociology makes these choices and evaluations based on continuity, contextuality and social and cultural differences without ignoring the specificity of historical phenomena. The periodization or classification of history has been a very warm debate in many fields of social sciences including social history and historical sociology. This debate is deeply rooted in the questions of “what is history and/or “what history stands for”. There is a growing trend in the history of social thinking, which regards history as a positive science. This trend can be seen in the dialectical tradition of Hegel and, of course, in Marx’s historiography (dialectics) which can be defined as a master plan for human existence and as a foreseeing device capable of prediction. Like Hegel, Marx adopts an approach that prioritizes society and “builds” history from social laws. Another branch in this trend can be identified with positivism and functionalism, as its application in behavioral sciences it is identified with Auguste Comte’s imperialist approach to history as a faculty of universal human science: sociology (Hall, 1992).

The growing prevalence of the Marxist thought and the progress achieved in functionalism paved the way for a theoretically informed type of historical analysis regarding historical matters. As Skocpol argues (1987: 19)

“The explanatory approaches applied to their materials by social historians have included Durkheimian ideas about societal modernization, along with Marxian ideas about modes of production and class conflict. These new theoretical apparatuses provided historical minded social scientists, especially historians with revolutionary ideas and methods.”

Despite this dialogue sociologists and historians remained apart regarding their fundamental differences stemming from their respective view of social reality. As the late Philip Abrams (1982: 194) wisely put it -even in a book arguing for the common purposes and methods of history and sociology- the “historian uses a rhetoric of close presentation (seeking to persuade in terms of a dense texture of detail) while the sociologist uses a rhetoric of perspective (seeking to persuade in terms of the elegant patterning of connections seen from a distance)”. Skocpol (1987: 28) in this context finally asserts that “the differences between these two fields will remain, and social historians will continue to have more to say about lived experiences, while historical sociologists will have more to say about structural transformations.”

The matter with general theories is strictly related to the abovementioned causality debate that aims to resolve historian/social scientist's role in historical inquiry. General theory connotes the universal trends in historical inquiry governing change. These trends can be identified with causal



relationships stemming from abstracted factors in history. In Mahoney's (2004: 460) words "general theories are postulates about foundational causes. More specifically, general theories identify particular "causal agents" and particular "causal mechanisms" Causal agents and causal mechanisms together constitute the "hardcore" of general theories. Causality as a scientific term connotes a naturalistic perspective. This problem is overcome "by attributing final causation to an abstract mechanism that lacks specific temporal and spatial content." In doing so, the empirical adversities and incompatibilities in matching factors and outcomes could be avoided. In this sense, three general theories (functionalism, rational choice and power theories) and two additional (Neo-Darwinian and cultural) theories emerge.

The main point common in these branches of history which enables us to classify them in the same category is their evolutionist historicism. This trend also coincides with the growth of human knowledge regarding the universe surrounding us. However, there is persuasive evidence for us to blame this on the quest for abstract laws governing human social life alike. This nomothetic quality left its mark on social scientific inquiry until 1950's. This linear concept of history which is dominated by idealistic or materialistic drives of human nature is strictly connected to modernist and colonialist approaches towards primitive and/or non-western societies. From a methodological perspective, these assertions regarding abstract, universal laws of human history stand for general theory in historical sociology. In this regard, the major periods of history can be analyzed through empirical data which makes sense only in connection to a general theoretical plan. In addition, it is possible to say that empirical data must be selected and eliminated in relation to grand theory. In case of incompatibility between empirical data and the theory, it is empirical data to be ignored for the sake of the theory.

Although this comprehension exhibits a tendency compatible with a scientific view of universal history and society, it is challenged by several different approaches. Max Weber's model of analysis regarding the importance of meaning (*verstehen*) in human behaviors and his method consisting of the ideal quality of scientific concepts resonate with a hermeneutic quality and a humble social scientific knowledge. Weber's contribution to the historical inquiry, on the other hand, does not depend on the rejection of the universal constants in history; rather he names them as methodological abstracted generalizations and ideal types that enable us to draw a precise, (but also biased by the comprehension and the context of the historian) picture of history or historical trends. These generalizations depend on the differentiation of similarities from disparities and on the differentiation of fundamental facts from diversity (Skocpol, 1994). There is a major obstacle of objectivity emanating either from the relationship between thought and specific social contexts or from fact - the value debate which every research has to deal with. Weber's (1949: 11-13) advice is intended to free the researcher from the burden of objectivity on the level of conceptualization/typification. This level also provides a possibility of causality in historical events... "Explaining a historical event is conditional to





understand the objective causes of it as well as scrutinizing subjective meaning attached to it. Historical-causal explanations must be proficient on the "level of meaning". In sum, a historical event can be explained "externally" in terms of causality and "internally" in a cultural context (Sunar, 2008: 27). In Weber's words (1949: 90) ideal type,

"is not a "hypothesis" but provides a guidance regarding the formation of hypotheses; it is not a description but aims to provide clear means for these type of descriptions . An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct (Gedankenbild) cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality. It is a utopia. Historical research faces the task of determining in each individual case, the extent to which this ideal-construct approximates to or di-verges from reality, to what extent for example, the economic structure of a certain city is to be classified as a "city economy."

At all times the aim of ideal-typical concept constructing is to make apparent the unique characteristics (and not the characteristics emanating from classification or average characteristics) of cultural phenomena. As long as we keep in mind that ideal-typical developmental constructions and history must be separated and the construction mentioned here is nothing more than a means of attribution to the real causes for a historical event, this operation poses no methodological doubt (Weber, 1949: 101-102).

In addition to Weber's approach, the theoretical orientation identified with the Annales School can also be mentioned as an alternative to traditional historiography. This school of history suggests not to think of any single organizational elements such as class and class struggle, geography, collectivity, tribalism, and political events, but rather to think of these and many other variables together (Chirot, 1994: 40). The notions of Polanyi's "social totality" referencing the context and social whole in order to grasp individual social dynamics or Bloch's "integrative history", are the basis of the historical analysis embodying this orientation. Thus, for example, it would be possible to prevent the misunderstandings of economical delusion of taking supply and demand, production and organization as organizing principles and Marxist delusion of taking classes emanating from property and production as the carrier of social structure (Block and Somers, 1994: 62-63).

This approach allows us to make a comparison between history and different layers of society and between different levels of analysis. The relationship between ideas and social change in relation to the historical roots of mentality forms are unique and inclusive. These forms are not reducible to actual and historical examples. This schema of historical analysis inspired Wallerstein's work (namely "world system approach") which takes sociological phenomena as a part of a broad system (Block and Somers, 1994: 73-75). Wallerstein (2003: 122) asks "if we are to be able to



revise the past now, history is a means, but for whose benefit?" Considering certain phases of history within the framework of certain classifications can be interpreted as a sign of attempting to revise the past. We do this within classifications that depend on a few methodological assumptions since it is not possible to deal with the past in all its details.

The history, methodology, ideological orientation and assumptions of the mind (who is responsible for the classification) are also influential as well as the quality of the historical/social fact. The factors on the election of evidences and resources also determine the nature of the knowledge grasped or the truth that is mentioned. Studies in which the scientific basis of its methodological principles, classification or typology is not explicitly stated most likely reflect a discursive reality or an ideological position. For our case, periodization or establishment of dominant character of Turkish modernization covering almost two hundred years also bear the traces of the abovementioned historical reading forms; methodological or ideological positioning. The application of a general model on a specific historical situation is a widespread methodological problem. There are many examples of the application of the modernist perspective and the western made models to Turkish modernization experience. Another problem with the case is stemming from the contradicting demands and expectations of historians and sociologists. As opposed to historians' hurry of finding and exhibiting individual examples and archival documents, sociologists pursue repetitive strategies and general outcomes. This situation corresponds on the one hand to the methodological positioning of social sciences and to the discussion ground related to the generality and relativity of historical facts on the other. Whereas, in Duverger's (1999: 35-38) words, if microhistory is left aside then it is possible to grasp permanent structures through cyclical historical researches which are related to periods and periodical interrelations. In this context, the outcomes stemming from that kind of historical researches have the chance of gaining a form of generality as to be taken sociologically. On the other hand, the general quality of social facts is valid only in the context of some specific historical contents; it is impossible to assert the absoluteness of typologies and classifications and express a generality that does not exclude historicity.

A historical reading starting from a fundamental organizing principle at least undermines the contradictions on the societal and cultural level and clashes between different status groups. Religious or cultural motivations stemming from tradition (which is being criticized and overcome by change) effect modernization and similar change processes as well as political processes. The quality which gives the modernization its main characteristics is related to how cultural content and institutional memory are carried to this day, and which part of them is included and excluded. Revolution and discontinuity, as well as continuity or progress, also mask the differentiating of social harmony or opposition. In the situations like modernization as a process in which harmony and opposition both gain collective quality and opportunity of representation on political and institutional level, the explanation regarding the sociological sub-elements



which express and convey the general process becomes more important. By focusing on the conveying elements of modernization, it became clear that there is no single and universal form of transition from tradition to modernity and those sociological hypotheses are to be broken by sociological reality. The outcomes regarding the transformation of collective action and qualities of social organization found by Charles Tilly (1978), through his scrutiny of the transforming effects of collective action in *From Mobilization to Revolution* exemplifies this. Interests can organize violence and rivalry depending on the choice, in proportion to the sources of action at hand. This hypothesis moved Tilly towards a critical position against generalizing models and focusing on organization forms rather than social stratification and socioeconomic statuses (Hunt, 1994: 248-250). The transformational effects of structural differentiation on collective action (i.e. opposition towards political representation of modernizations) embody in the shape of political choices.

In the next parts of the study, classification and typology examples selected from the Turkish modernization literature will be discussed based on the mentioned theoretical framework.

### **Classifications Based on Transformations in Social Structure and Change in Mentality**

In this section, some classifications which are widely used in the literature and noteworthy in terms of considering the changes in social structure and mentality during the modernization process are discussed. The stages of Turkey's, almost two hundred years old modernization experience are identified with different names. Reform efforts in the late Ottoman period generally called "conservative modernization"; the period starting from the first years of the Turkish Republic to the establishment of multi political party-parliamentary period is called "radical modernization"; lastly, the multi political party period is called "populist modernization." Another classification attempt worth mentioning is from İlhan Tekeli and Selim İlkin (2007: X). They call the 1839-1923 periods as a "shy modernization project"; the 1923-1950 periods as "fundamentalist modernization period"; the 1950-1980 periods as "populist modernization project" and lastly, the post-1980 period as "erosion of modernization project". In his study, Tekeli (2007) identifies the periods of Selim III and Mahmut II as the second period of modernization. However, he also identifies this period with the foundational period regarding establishment and production of the market mechanism, education, institutional reorganization, press and several political solution alternatives. These transformation processes correspond to the third period which is characterized by the reigns of Abdülmecit, Abdülaziz and Abdulhamid II.

In Tekeli's (2007) classification the modernization project is based on structural elements such as the transformation of bureaucratic roles and the governmental system. He identifies radical modernization project with the change in the governmental system and draws the attention to the development of a political type of thinking corresponding to the



manipulation and formation of public opinion as an exception. Description of modernization in the perspective of historical sociology is expected to contain at least several points. The most important two of these points are the economic activities and societal transformations related to this and the emergence of the nation-state (Kasaba, 1997). Modernity itself can be defined differently in the context of diverse modernization experiences such as plural, alternative, local and non-western modernity. It is possible to read non-western modernities in the context of specific historical and sociological peculiarities; in Göle's (2007: 60) remarks, "rather reading modernity on the mirror of non-western societies than reading non-western societies on the mirror of modernity."

An evaluation of the modernization concept makes several tendencies and categories visible. If modernization is expressed as the institutional structural evolution which makes modernity possible then it is more suitable to call Turkish experience as modernization. This experience accepts westernization and the social organizations that represent westernization policies as an obligation. The failure of this modernization project in the creation of expected social transformations entails an ideological attitude and a dominant class discourse. This result kept aside modernization from realizing its undertakings (Çiğdem, 2007).

Another similar typology takes westernization as the main bearer of mentality, institutions and identity formation processes of modernity. In this typology, westernization is identified with the processes of knowledge transfer, hybridization/internalization and, means of political institutionalization. At the beginning of the westernization experience (Tanzimat period), recognizing and transferring the scientific and technological superiority of the West is apparent. The manipulative quality of westernization on the political and sociological thought corresponds to the period of political institutionalization. This period includes the Second Constitutional Monarchy and the early Republican periods. Typical characteristic of this period is the identification of political power with cultural potency, education and the cultural policies matching this identification. The late hybridization/internalization period corresponds to the multi-party democratic era to this day. In the last period, conservative modernity became apparent and the influence of political power in cultural ground is limited. Similarly, the center's effort of protecting its influence permanently and the inclination of periphery towards the center produced prevalent tensions. In these tensions, the periphery's internalization and utterance of the economic and political means of modernization in a selective fashion is also visible. The period characterized by the transfer of knowledge and technique also determines the latter periods by its contribution to the formation of bureaucracy that enforces modernization (Kahraman, 2007; Kaliber, 2007).

Most of the examples reflecting the evolutionary, progressive understanding of history presuppose an inverse relationship between religion and modernity share the arguments of the classical secularization paradigm. Şerif Mardin (1997), who is trying to propose an alternative to evolutionary



models, criticizes the paradigm which dominates Turkish modernization literature as being based on state and government elites and neglecting cultural institutions, elements of identity and other complex sociological factors on micro-level. He refers to the incompetency and conspiratorial quality of such a paradigm. According to Mardin (2001) modern history of Turkey is neither a conflict between republicanism and a sultanate nor a conflict surrounded by Islam and secularism. It is rather a complex and multi-layered confrontation of two intertwining elements of traditional powers and modernity. The history of modern Turkey is also a story of new grounds on which these powers meet and transform. He exemplifies the continuity by stressing the transfer of secular discourse -in contrast with the religious discourse of the ulama of Ottoman bureaucracy to the republic. The break occurs when tariqahs (in this instance Mujaddidi Khalidi Naqshbandiyya) as the constituent element of traditional social order meets secular discourse. Reconstruction refers to the fundamental codes' own transformations and the transformations that they formed on political ground. Bureaucratic, secular and elitist discourse's pursuit of permanence is an evident trait in every stage of Turkish modernization.

It is possible to assert that traditional mentality and social conception - through tariqahs and religious communities- reflect the sociological character of modernization experience in the context of opposition and the effort towards conformity. It is possible to identify the Tanzimat era with normative and institutional regulations; Tanzimat and especially the Second Constitutional Monarchy era with mentality and representation; and the Republican era with the historical experience linked with continuity, break and reconstruction on the levels of reform, mentality and representation. Military and civil bureaucracy's search for continuity -depending on secular discourse accompanied by mostly normative, legal and institutional regulations and even including de facto interventions- is inherited by the republic from the Ottoman period. Similarly, the reconstruction effort of religiously motivated communitarian social order and thoughts emanating from it also displays a significant effect on transforming civil society as well as political representation. Mardin uses this approach in several of his works like Turkish Modernization.

Şerif Mardin (1997: 70-71) refers to the concept of "kameralism" for the protective reflex towards the state (namely towards themselves/elitism) of the elites as a major characteristic of conservatism. This trait is common in all the modernization era intellectuals from Mahmud II to Tanzimat, from Young Ottomans to Jeune Turcs and finally to the founding staffs of the Turkish Republic. Mardin asks "was there really no change in the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic?" He states that his focus is (in a Weberian sense) on the absence of civil society and on the effort of Republican elites to dislocate religion in the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the republic. Mardin, despite his controversial evaluation that there was no civil society in the Ottoman Empire or that it had not developed sufficiently, discovered a social ground for activity free from state power while studying religion. The expansion of civil society provided





religion with new functions. He even criticizes himself for focusing on the state. He advises an approach towards the real world instead of a positivistic-functional view in order to avoid such limitations.

The history of Turkish modernization bears the traces of periodization of scientific paradigms in which the studies were built. When taken in turn, the most widespread writing styles are on the one hand based on the break or rupture from Ottoman heritage, and on the mental and institutional continuity on the other. Feeding on quite different sources and having different political action principals, Ottomanism, Islamism and Turkism (when taken as modernizing mentality forms) correspond to the continuity, however, Westernism represents rupture. Furthermore, Akçura's and Gökalp's typologies reflect this formulation, too. İsmail Kara (2012: 39-44) while pointing out to the limitedness of current classifications, states that "the main divide is between traditionalists/conservative and modernists/reformists-revolutionists." He also states that the divides in details can be seen in the concepts such as Ottomanists, Islamists, Westerners, and Turkists. According to him, when taken in detail, there are conservatives and reformists in all the fractions. In the Islamist group, for example, there are different tendencies which can be called as traditionalists, modernists and, anti-modernists. He also criticizes Hilmi Ziya Ülken's work *Contemporary Thought History in Turkey* for including only modernist Islamists, and Peyami Safa's *Insights towards The Turkish Revolution* for neglecting modernist interpretations of religion and Islam and establishing divides in the shape of contradictions.

The analysis of the modernization process in the sociological paradigm focuses on reductionist approaches based on classical modernist perspectives on one hand and on the strategies of tension, conflict and conformity between several levels on the other. Niyazi Berkes' work (2002) represents an example of the reductionist reading based on rupture. This is a tendency regarding the creation of history accompanied by a rupture from "traditional order" and the making of a nation, starting from absolutist monarchy to constitutional monarchy, from constitutional monarchy to the republic step by step. The reductionist attitude of the classical modernist paradigm which takes politics in the center gives credit neither to the diverse readings regarding modernity nor to the economic or intellectual sources/changes. The Sociological paradigm entails taking several variables into consideration. In this context, a sociological inquiry focuses on factors such as the transformation and transformative effects of economic activities, the tensions as a result of the reformist efforts of the center and the transformation of state-society relations. Although it poses some parallelisms to the classifications of classical modernization theory, a sociological inquiry can also present a different view in terms of its own problematization. For instance, Şerif Mardin (2001: 186-189) in *Turkish Modernization* performs his analyses through these sorts of subjects.

### Classifications Based on Political Perspectives





Politically oriented studies treat the state as the dominant or even the only actor of the modernization processes. This approach focuses on the determining role of bureaucracy on the social transformation and neglects social, cultural and economic dimensions in the process of the reconstruction of public life. In the historical literature that adopts this orientation, the ideological priorities and expectations of the state are decisive. As a result of the pioneering position at the beginning of the modernization period, the process gave the bureaucracy an opportunity to surround the state. This orientation includes the active control of social appearance of modernization links critical thresholds of modernization process to the administrative elite's efforts of improving their own positions. Similarly, the economically oriented approach takes the modernization process almost entirely results of the transformations of economic relations in close connection to the reproduction of social relations and political order. This approach also focuses on the transformation of major infrastructural elements such as Ottoman land organization, class structure, organization of production and their effects on the determination of political structure (Kaliber, 2007). Halil İnalçık's effort for reading Ottoman modernization over the transformations of land and tax system and the tensions created by reconstruction of the social system in this context can be classified in this approach. Because the arrangements made in these areas have led to the loss of the privileges of some social areas. Regulations on the fields of justice and education also resulted in the transformations of social class organizations which were sometimes connected to the opposition taking place as a result of property and tax regulations (İnalçık, 2011a; 2011b).

Political approaches take the state as the sole and the main subject of modernization history, as the founding element of social relations and as the nation's identical twin. This perspective neglects modernization's social and cultural manifestations and subjects' modernization history to a reading in which statist discourse is central. A Political reading of history identifies the state as an ontological existence, neglects its constructed nature and internal dynamics of modernization (Kaliber, 2007). Handling modernization process with categorically differentiating social reality (political, cultural and economic) in the context of the abovementioned paradigms is a major critique towards modernization theories. In addition to this, handling modernization as a uniform, universal and unavoidable process is another critique (Akgül, 1999). This critique touches historians as well as political scientists. Because, in this type of classifications, the modernization process is taken in three phases which are accompanied by official historiography and tradition invention processes: The centralization/bureaucratization of the state and in relation to this, a degradation of the traditional sources of authority and legitimacy crisis. Also, approaches based on legal reforms can be taken in this fashion.

Political differentiation as a second trait can be taken as a base regarding the analysis of the approaches entailing the restoration of the former order, or vivification of the existing one. A third one is a public interest and participation in politics. Through this trait, it is possible to read the ideas



related to concepts such as freedom, progress, arts, literature and the development and transformation of economic mentality. In this period, according to Alkan (2009), there are efforts to meet the need for new political situations, and requirements stemming from the reforms in education and justice. In this classification form (Lewis, 1968; Berkes, 2002), which is popular among historians and political scientists, listing of modernizing tendencies and practices in related areas, starting from the pre-Tanzimat era, is highly appreciated. This classification entails a periodization starting from pre-Tanzimat reform movements to Tanzimat and the Second Constitutional Monarchy to the Single Party Period. In this periodization type, the reign of Abdulhamid II labeled as despotism (istibdat) and the Union and Progress (İttihad and Terakki) movement are mostly treated as distinct topics. Multi-party period, for instance in Zurcher (1996) is also taken under the topic of anxious democracy. This topic, in turn, includes classifications such as Democratic Party Government (1950-60), Second Republic (1960-80) and Third Republic (1980-). His classification also includes the problems of historiography which ignores historical sociological phenomena and prioritizes political processes. These classifications based on the change occurred in the organization of state in the context of the perspective place focus on several problems that are produced by the modernization process such as politics, religion, education etc. Reşat Kasaba (1997) blames Bernard Lewis' work *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* as an epitome of compressing Turkish modernization experience into a predestined framework; elite who is responsible for creating essential conditions for progress. Lewis (1968: 128) for example summarizes the situation in the Tanzimat era as "...the reform had already gone far enough to make a simple policy of reversion to the past impracticable. The destruction of the old order had been too thorough for any restoration to be possible; for better or worse, only one path lay before Turkey, that of modernization and Westernization. She could move fast or slowly, straight or deviously; she could not go back."

### **Classifications Based on Fundamental Mentality Types: Militarism and Conservatism**

Belge in his work *Militarist Modernization* (2011) problematizes the military which is an independent variable used in the modernization process as a representation of the militarist mentality. Belge (2011: 13-14,) describes militarism as an ideology and a social activity ground aiming to reshape the society based on the practices of this aim. He points out to military's benefits as either a conveyor or a founding and protective figure throughout the Turkish modernization process. Taking Tanzimat as a starting point of westernization and civilization change, he later takes Vakâ-i Hayriye (abolishment of janissary corps) as a beginning... According to him, although at the beginning of the modernization period the militarist ideology or mentality is hardly visible, between 1908 and 1950 (he calls as middle term) military and civil bureaucracy created a de facto hegemony. The process starting from transition to multi-party democracy period (as his calls short term) to the present is characterized by the enforcement of military norms to the society. Belge (2011: 541-546; 608-611; 617-618) stresses the Vakâ-i



Hayriye as the beginning of the endeavor for creating an army in order to pioneer modernization. He also links the radical modernization process to military defeats. This process which feeds radicalism, paves the way to Second Constitutional Monarchy and enforcing the political role of military is characterized by an amalgamation between the military and the government in the course of 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, Balkan Wars, First World War and makes a peak with Sevres treaty, lasted until the democratic change in 1950 depended on a foundational, protective and conveyor mission. The process after 1950 is characterized by the military's diminishing faith in civil politics and interventions to civil politics in order to reshape the political ground. The trend, emanating from Constitutive Assembly (Kurucu Meclis) to technocrats, from technocrats to National Union Committee (Milli Birlik Komitesi) and National Security Council (Milli Güvenlik Kurulu) points out to a practice which consists of an autonomous military-civil bureaucracy's control over civil politics by means of brute force and law. According to Belge (2011: 635-649) when the era 1950-60 is taken as an exception, throughout the history of the republic, society and politics were in the hands of the military as can be seen in the experiences of administration, control or seizures of power. Belge lists a few examples of how militarist mentality produces its own legitimacy in family, economics, religion and international relations. He stresses how militarist ideology penetrates all social fields, using codes of social memory, arts, and literature after outlining the trend which carries military to the position of intellectual pioneers in the modernization process.

Finally, conservatism is also regarded as an example of a classification based on fundamental mentality. In several modernization classifications, conservatism is stressed as the dominant characteristic of Turkish modernization. Through these analyses conservatism's stress on the nature of society, the functions and the continuity of traditions and institutions, and emphasis on the hierarchy and statutes can be seen (Nisbet, 1952: 169-172). Conservatism refers to the limitation of the urge towards change and to be controlled in a way that does not lead to new social crises. These control mechanisms are derived from history and tradition. This process of derivation causes conservatism to be instrumentalized and presented in a popular fashion (Özipek, 2011: 23-24).

A distinct aspect of conservatism is its revolutionist attitude towards material elements of civilization while being conservative towards cultural matters. Conservatism poses a legitimizing, instrumentalizing, and popular quality in the experience of Turkish modernization in a political context. The Conservative modernist perspective always keeps the effort of presenting social change as reasonable and legitimate in special reference to a specific tradition and historical memory. Conservative modernist attitude generally takes the side of the Westernization, Republic and democratic politics while opposing the radical interpretations and practices of laicity which openly rejects religious symbols and values. This situation can be best seen in the quality of conservatism as being the main characteristic of right-wing politics as a modern political attitude in Turkey (Mert, 2006).



Nazım İrem (2008) stresses the key role of conservatism towards the operation of cultural and economic structures and establishing relationships between them as well as giving meaning to the relationship between the state and the citizens in the process of modernization. Conservatism can be seen firstly in several intellectual trends, then in the process of construction of nation-state, and lastly in the effort of modernization (depending on the classical separation between modernization and westernization) which gives priority to the technique throughout the modernization period.

The attitude of Turkish right-wing politics which combines the trust in the state authority and institutions with technical modernization made conservatism the dominant element of politics. In Öğün's (2006: 542) words "official political modernization processes in Turkey are made depending on the highly institutionalized elements." Republican era modernism also displays the paradoxes of the conservative modernization process. A revolutionist endeavor's adoption of a nationalism based on the conservation of elements of Turkish culture with the claim of being a nation-state also exemplifies the paradox in question. The resemblance between the Ottoman conservative modernization and republican era modernist project or another paradox of modernist conservatism can be seen in the pursuit of legitimacy in history, culture, and religion. This means that the totalitarian character of Turkish modernization experience in the context of the state-society relationship goes on (Köker, 2004: 279, 288).

## Conclusion

The interest of scholars in history and society is versatile and this versatility is reflected in the perspectives within several disciplines. Although history seems to be related to the past and sociology to the present, the desire to build the future (taking lessons from history, the discovery of laws subject to social change) is accompanied more or less both in the arrangement of past and the effort to comprehend today. This difference in the dimension of experience and time is also reflected in the methodological acceptance of the disciplines. This also applies to the character of historical reality in the face of the generality of social phenomena. The discoveries of the generality in history and search for avoidance from the relativity created by the historical and cultural diversity of social phenomena in sociology have brought these two disciplines closer. Alternative perspectives developing in history, to begin with Annales School, the historical sociological tradition and Weber's approach characterized by ideal types in sociology and the perspective of the sociology of knowledge, have all this convergence reinforced.

Whether it has been called a social examination of history or examination of social history, how a period of the history of a particular society is handled is directly related to the methodological assumptions and scientific perspectives. It is possible to see the influence of methodological assumptions and scientific perspectives in the treatment of the period called Turkish modernization. At the same time, it is also possible to discover in these endeavors the efforts regarding projects towards the future; to take or give lessons from history, in short, the effects of history and social



engineering. In the context of Turkish modernization, it can be said that social engineering is based on a considerable degree of history engineering. As understood from the classifications made, the way in which the social scientists have dealt with history has seriously influenced the views of the society and the imaginations towards the future.

In this study, it is seen that some basic orientations of Turkish modernization can be determined by means of typologies and classifications. These classifications emphasize changes in social structure and mentality, while also clarifying political orientations. In these orientations, it is possible to see the influence of modernity and progressive history, social reactions, ideologies, and elitism as well as the influence of the methodological positions and the scientific paradigms. Even in certain instances, it is also possible to trace several of these variables together. It is also noteworthy that in most classification attempts epistemological assumptions and methodological preferences are not explicitly stated. This situation necessitates the handling of the literature from a distance and to subject the texts to sub-text analysis. A detailed examination of the reflection of the scientific, methodological or ideological orientations of one or more studies can provide more useful results in future studies. For example, the sociological enrichment of the classifications of history and political science will make it possible to assess some of the tensions, dilemmas and adaptations that are experienced today, as well as a better understanding of the Turkish modernization experience. This, of course, depends on the ability of scientists in purging their minds from the demands and expectations of modernity and from a politically oriented way of thinking, orientalist influences and utopias. The direction of history and the social sciences requires the minds to be "reorganized" as well as a rearrangement of the data.

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