

## **CULTURAL CHANGE IN THE TURKISH TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES**

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Changes caused by the economic and technical development in the Turkish traditional societies are observed primarily in the field of material culture.

In spite of the change in socio-economic structure upon the introduction of money economy in villages, changes in values is extremely gradual.

### **Change in the rural Economy and its Consequences:**

The rural population of Turkey have realized the importance of money economy emerging from mechanisation and new techniques which have caused overproduction in agriculture and opened paths to find new markets for this production through the newly built roads. Farmers to-day, can establish close communication with the urban areas to sell their crops to the concerned state offices or other markets.

In the Turkish rural traditional society, those individual members of families who find it difficult to find a job in farms as a result of mechanisation and especially upon the introduction of tractors in farming, have had to migrate to urban areas to work. Such migration has on one hand caused the break-up of large family and on the other, it has introduced a division of labour within the small family as is seen in Çaltı, Örencik, Bataal villages. Whilst some members of the family run grocery or barber shop in the village, others have had to find a job in urban areas. Aside from this, mechanisation has

also caused 2/4 of the families to engage in farming for the first time. Among the other outcomes of mechanisation in farming has been the decrease of stock farming in rural areas due to the cultivation of the whole land. This also has resulted in the migration of those families dealing with stock farming to urban areas to find a job.

Beside other factors, urbanisation has been speeded up by demographic and economical factors. Rural families who own a little money and who realize the comfort and attraction of cities move there. In such a move, however, the pressure from the village itself play more important role than the economical possibilities and social conditions in cities.

Among the rapid changes in material culture, means and techniques of transportation, with modifications specific to each district worth mentioning, such as inventing new means by adding oto or plane wheels to old carts to carry nuts, wheat etc. as is seen in Battal and Gazi Antep. Moreover, modifications observed in inventing new means for farming through adding various parts of means of transportation is remarkable. e. g. adding two or three harvesters to a tractor for a new harvesting machine (Örencik village, Ankara).

The traditional village cart (kağn) have been replaced by horse-carts or tractors: tractors, besides cultivating purposes, are also used for carrying load and people.

Introduction of money economy as a result of mechanisation has caused changes in rural architecture as can be observed in the roofs of the buildings. Smooth, flat mud-roofs are replaced by red-tiled roofs in central, south and south-east Anatolia. Windows and fire-places are also changed as is seen in Söğüt, Çatal. (spanish windows). Traditionally there used to be one fire-place in each room. Now, one fire-place is built in each house; in most cases, a kitchen place is built in one corner of the garden for summer purposes (as is observed in Hal-with the name of Hubilik-Elazığ).

Changes in clothing in Turkish villages is also observable. Those under 40 years of age have already adopted city clothing. Women dress the native way in the village. The traditional "three skirts", "üç etek" is seen in older women and is about to disappear.

Changes in social structure and social moves are seen in family structure which is being broken up as a result of population explosion and mechanisation. This causes two sorts of migration towards urban areas namely first being permanent settlements in cities and secondly temporary moves for working purposes.

Other causes of family break-ups can be stated as below:

1. Young men of the village look forward for getting away from the strict discipline of the father,
2. It is difficult to manage a large family,
3. Breakup is desirable to prevent inner family conflicts after the death of the father (as is seen in south and south east Anatolia)

Transitional family types can be listed as follow:

1. Separation of the dwelling provided that the economy is shared; those who separate from the family either live in the next buildings or they live in separate units in the garden. In both cases, meals are either eaten together or separately.

Those living in different neighbourhood as independant family units are seen in central and south-east Anatolia.

2. Another family type is the type which consists of grandparents and children of those who move to towns or cities (as is seen in Örencik, Battal) or else the mother of the wife, bride itself and her children of the father who leaves the family for job finding (as is seen in Sün).

3. The family type which is not at all typical is the family where the mother of the husband lives alone to get away from the children and also due to economic and social independence, as is seen in Battal.

At present, however, in most vilages in the central, southern and south east Anatolia, families are large and are dependant upon the father. It is only with the approval of the father that one can get separated from his home.

### Change in Marriage:

Generally in most of our villages polygamy has been disappearing due to the civil law and to the economical factors.

In very few cases polygamy is seen due to the inability of the wife to bear children or, and if children not a son. In both cases, the first wife sees that her husband gets married again to carry on ancestorship (as is seen in central and eastern Anatolia). In most villages, however, wives refuse to do such a traditional task.

Third case is seen in the village with close contacts with cities where the husband wants to keep a mistress in a separate house. This is very difficult to do both for economical and legal causes. Some men have a legal wife plus a wife married with religious ceremony. In mechanized rural places such attempts are observed very often. Here is seen the influence of mechanization and money economy upon marriage. This influence, however, is on the illegal and negative way. Other influences of frequent contacts with the urban culture is seen in the case of inter-family marriages which has decreased to a great extent. Also, taking turns in waiting to get married is almost forgotten. The younger daughters had to wait for the marriage of their elder sisters before.

Engagement rings are used widely in villages as a consequence of contacts with cities. Bride-price has been changing both from the viewpoint of its nature and its content \*. Hundred years ago in our traditional mobile societies (Kiyevi, Şereflikoçhisar) around ninety "okka" (\*\*) of salt used to be given to the girl's family as the bride-price (salt was the most precious stuff for that community). In farming areas oxen, fields, or crops would replace the salt (\*\*\*) . At present, the brideprice is increasing as the villages are getting richer (as in south-east Anatolia-not villages) and in urbanized circles; this habit has been abolished altogether (in west and southwest). In the richer villages, the future bride is given jewelery and golden bracelets. The wedding procedures have also changed. The bride used

\* Money given to girl's family by the man's family.

\*\* Traditional turkish weight.

\*\*\* This would be nuts in some villages and also in others.

to go to the husband's house on horseback, whereas now, she rides on a tractor or an automobile and her wedding goods are carried on a horse cart or a tractor. In spite of the changes in some parts of weddings, the marriage rites and ceremonies have been changing rather gradually.

Contacts among relatives are still very strong. However, relationships with remote relatives have been decreasing. This is observed in mutual help. Terms used for expressing relationships have been changing to terms used in urban places.

### **Changes in the Status of Women:**

In spite of the fact that women still have to work more than men, the following changes are noticed in their status:

1. Women have already succeeded to impose their legal status upon men.
2. They have earned their right of inheritance (they get almost as equal amount as men).
3. They have the right in upbringing their children.
4. They have the right to talk on buying and selling procedures.
5. In western Anatolia, women use their right to vote.

In spite of all the conditions gained as is indicated above, men still beat their wives.

Women in villages have a great share in the developments in rural areas as they are much more receptive to modernization and new developments. Their status in society has been getting higher as living conditions have been improving.

Inter-community relations, co-operation, "Imece" in villages continue, except in cases when political tendencies spoil such traditional co-operation. This is seen in a school-building or road construction.

Among new developments in villages, is the co-operation between Imam (the moslem priest) and the school teacher (especially in matters of education and development). This is seen especially in western and central Anatolian villages where contacts have deve-

luped with urban centers (Örencik, Çaltı, Kurnia, Marmara villages) In fact the three agencies bringing novelties to villages are the rich people, teachers and military (administrative chiefs.)

**Changes in schooling:** Half proportion of girls used to attend school whereas now the proportion of attending school is almost the same as boys.

### **Changes in Values:**

In matters of health, people depend less on villages, especially in events of birth, than health officers. However, in spite of modernization in villages, there still are many cases, when the public have to depend on prayers of the religious authorities. This is an indication of a slow change in beliefs (Çaltı and Zirkaya villages). In spite of religious attitudes seen in central Anatolia, the behaviour of the people is different than what they believe. Changes in village economy and attitudes of people are strongly attached to the inheritance. Civil law is practised, however, traditional rules of inheritance are hiddenly implemented; sons are given the house and fields and the daughters are given the other goods. Home belongs to the son who will continue the ancestorship.

Political inclination starts at 14-16 years of age with the boys.

Introduction of money-economy in villages have resulted in changes in values which can be categorized as follows:

1. Increase in income has created superiority in social prestige of those who earn more than their neighbours.

2. Rate of bride-price has increased; high rates creates prestige and the consequence is competitive attitudes.

3. Values change in terms of bride choice. Coming from a good family, being hard-working, chastity is replaced by being beautiful, rich and making love (urban values).

4. Contacts with cities have increased, and some urban habits are introduced such as:

a, Setting table urban way and eating together with women.

b, Changes in clothing.

c, Attitude changes towards women, .

d, Language is being changed in daily living.

5. Some traditional arts such as hand-weaving is being neglected as is observed in Çaltı and Batal.

6. Pilgrimage has regained an importance. This is an indication of support of religious institutions by economic development. (Batal-G. Antep)

7. Generally there is not much difference in moral values (eastern and central Anatolia). No tolerance is observed for flirting or illegal marriages; in some instances consequence is crime. In such instances, both sides especially the woman is blamed.

### SUMMARY

The effects of technical (and economical) changes on the Turkish traditional societies (culture).

A) This is primarily seen in material culture:

a- The regional modifications in the medium of transport and agricultural tools.

b- In buildings (in roofs, in types and size of windows, in the number of storeys and stoves.)

c- In costumes: costume of men have become more urbanized than the women's the traditional "üçetek" costumes are seen more seldom, except on the ones who are between the ages of 50-70.

B) In Economy:

a- In agriculture: the peasants have realized the importance of money economy in agriculture owing the mechanization and opening of new roads.

b- In the family: the extended family has broken up.

c- This breaking up has given birth to division of labor in the family.

d- Some families have become farmers.

e- The decrease in pasturage has lessened stock-farming.

f- As a result of this breaking up of families, the individual families come into view.

Nevertheless, the extended families range in more than the individual ones. The tradition prevents the breaking up of land.

g- There are transitional types of families.

C) In marriage:

a- Resistance in change in marriage ceremonies and rites but not to marriage customs.

b- The traditional polygamy has almost ceased to exist.

D) Change in value systems of traditional societies owing to money economy.

E) In contrast to rapid change in material and in some part of the social culture, slow change occurs in beliefs and practices.

F) Slow change in some moral values.