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MODERNIZATION AND RURAL CHANGE IN TURKEY: A PERSPECTIVE FROM VISUAL HISTORY

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Abstract

The village question and rural change in Turkish history has been one of the most enduring debates in the historiography. In this essay, I propose to revisit modernization theory of 1950s and 60s by bringing in visual history. Turkish studies in the post-World War II era was at the forefront of modernization studies at the time. I argue that such works were not able to take into full consideration the transformations in daily life. To trace the changes in daily life brought by the Kemalist modernization project, I look at everyday visual artifacts and encounters. Particularly, I focus on the figure of the hoca and its representations in the public sphere in the early republican period.

Keywords: *Rural change, visual culture, secularism, modernization, Turkey*

TÜRKİYE'DE MODERNLEŞME VE KIRSAL DEĞİŞİM: GÖRSEL TARİHTEN BİR BAKIŞ

Öz

Türkiye tarihinde köy meselesi ve kırsal değişim tarih yazımında en kalıcı tartışmalardan biri olmuştur. Bu makalede, 1950 ve 60larda ki modernleşme kuramını görsel tarihi kullanarak yeniden değerlendirmeyi sunuyorum. İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrası Türkiye üzerine yapılan araştırmalar dönemin modernleşme çalışmalarının önde gelenlerindendi. Fakat gündelik yaşamın dönüşümlerini tam anlamıyla dikkate alamadılar. Kemalist modernleşme projesinin getirdiği yaşamdaki değişimlerin izini sürebilmek için görsel eserlere ve rastlaşmalara bakıyorum. Özellikle erken cumhuriyet döneminde hoca figürüne ve onun kamusal alandaki temsillerine odaklanıyorum..

Anahtar kelimeler: *Kırsal değişim, görsel kültür, sekülerizm, modernleşme, Türkiye.*

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In Turkey, the village and the shantytown had always been a battleground for competition over political influence. Although the intensity of the peasant problem had changed over time, political vocabulary always includes the dichotomies of elite and nonelite, progress and reaction, secular and the religious. In this essay, I explore these binary oppositions by taking two leads. The first one is about the institutional and geopolitical context in which the Turkish village has been problematized and conceptualized by the classical modernization theory. The second one is about the visual culture Kemalist projects had created. By doing a parallel reading of modernization theory and visual culture, I argue for a different way to study rural change in Turkish history.

Political transformations in Turkey are linked to the social transformation of rural life. After the end of the second world war, studies focused on how the economic and cultural changes in the countryside have paved the way for democratization and liberalization in the 1950s. Turkey's development towards a liberal democracy was exemplary for the path Global South should take in the postcolonial era. The peculiar progress Ottoman and Turkish history have shown, according to Turkish studies in the 1950s and 60s, had produced a model for other non-Western states to emulate. Furthermore, such a model would also be instrumental in coming up with a general theory to explain and correct underdevelopment. The theory was called modernization (Adalet, 2018; Citino, 2008; Göksel, 2016; Örnek, 2012; Sackley, 2011).

In the first part of this essay, I dissect the visual life-world of the Kemalist modernization project by doing a close reading of the figure of *hoca* in the early period of the republic. In order to do so, I will read through two representations of *hoca* in one of Münif Fehim Özarman's illustrations regarding Atatürk's reforms and in one of the plays written by İbnülreffik Ahmet Nuri Sekizinci, *Şer'iye Mahkemesinde* (At the Religious Court). In the latter parts of this essay, I will recount the general tendencies of modernization theory in explaining the historical and social dynamics in post-World War II Turkey through looking at the works of Peter F. Sugar, Daniel Lerner, Bernard Lewis, and Joseph S. Szyliowicz.

I. Visual Life-World of the Turkish Republic

In this essay, I complicate dichotomies prevalent in the nation-state and nationalism

literature such as center-periphery, urban-rural, modern-traditional, secular-religious, elite-nonelite. Using the Turkish case, I argue that other forms of history writing, such as visual culture used in this essay, provide opportunities to disentangle some of the most important issues in the field: Relationship and role of state and society in nation-state formation; local understandings and perceptions of nationalism; and success and failure of nationwide modernization projects. Through studying visual culture in the early Turkish Republic, I situate the history of nation-state formation in Turkey in a different context. By using stage-plays, photographs, and paintings of the era, I reconstruct the period in its visual manifestations. I argue that in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Turkish nation-state had a historically rooted visual culture in which all segments of the society took roles. In this regard, the historical materials I use are part of a visual economy, and together they make up what I call the visual life-world of the Republic and its population.

Visual and sensory aspects of Turkish modernity is still uncharted territory in Turkish Studies (Altan, 2005; Bozdogan, 2001; Göçek, 1998; Öztürkmen, 2003). In terms of the category of analysis, I am primarily interested in the visual aspects of *hoca*, and particular visual artifacts used will be *şapka* (hat), *sarık* (turban) and *fes*. The discussion on visual culture will be based on a historical analysis of everyday life, therefore I argue that people constantly see things in their everyday life, and it is this kind of visual culture I am interested in.

As other forms of history writing would enable us to question previous historiography, it is highly important to bring vision into historical analysis. While I bring vision into the analysis, my aim is not to reiterate the paradigmatic convictions of historiography; rather, writing visual culture of the early Republic would not only able us to write a history from a different angle but also to write a history that does not reproduce the top-down and elite-nonelite dichotomies of previous scholarship. The cases I take as historical analysis with the historical material in hand could not indeed lead one to a conclusive remark as they are fragments of Republican visuality, but could on the other hand make an intervention and open up possibilities for further exploration.

In this essay, I am interested in everyday practices of seeing. W. J. T. Mitchell argues that "to live in any culture whatsoever is to live in a visual culture, except perhaps for those rare instances of societies of the blind" (Mitchell, 2002, p. 174). Following his take, I see visual culture not only as the sum of visual artifacts but also of all practices of seeing that includes the street one lives on, the clothes one wears, the imaginations one has, etc. To write a history of such visual

culture is indeed a difficult task since reconstructing the visual life-world of a society is always dependent on the archive. Hence I use the archive creatively by moving between literary texts and visual materials.

One of the aspects of Turkish modernity is the attempt of the state-elite to modernize a largely illiterate population. Problems arising from this difficulty are persistent points of discussion in the historiography. Bringing vision as a category of analysis, then, would enable us to find new venues to discuss the Turkish modernization project. If educated Westernized elite of the new republic were predominantly unsuccessful in reaching the masses through texts, what role did visuality play in this process? The Turkish state was aware of the importance of seeing and performance to disseminate Western modern ideals to the masses. It was because of this sensibility that Mustafa Kemal and his party established *Halkevleri* (People's Houses) in 1932 to reach wider population. Founded as adult education institutions around the country, People's Houses had different sub-divisions, one of them being theater. Theater was an important tool to educate the public since the Ottoman era, but after 1932 People's Houses persistently attempted to reach wider population especially villages through theater. Current historiography argue that as other forms of modernization projects failed to reach masses, theater was also a failure as few plays were staged and attended by small number of people (Ari, 2004).

Furthermore, I seek to overcome the question of success and failure. In this regard, I take an approach to visual culture that sees it not as distribution of visuality by way of mass culture but as instances of visual encounter in everyday life which I call as "episodic visions." In other words, visual culture of the early republic is characterized not by repetitive but episodic encounters. This theoretical approach is based on Nadia Seremetakis' influential essay on Greek modernity. In her essay's section on the visit of grandma from village to city, titled "Dust," Seremetakis argues that grandma in the city becomes "the exposure of the inside to the outside, the rural to the urban." Coming from the village, non-modernized realm of Greek modernity, grandma, dressed up in urban outfit, forms a dialectical image. "The [grand]child witnesses the repression of the rural, its historical vulnerability and at the same time the inability of modernity to fully transform the grandma" (Seremetakis, 1994, p. 222). Serematakis' fascinating use of everyday visual encounter, in this regard, becomes a highly important framework for this essay.

The operation of this essay is through studying three visual artifacts, the hat, turban and

fez. These are three material and visual artifacts that form an important point of discussion in Turkish modernity. Turban was the headgear of *hocas*; fez was introduced in the late Ottoman period as a sign of modernization requiring military personnel and civil servants to wear it; hat was introduced with a compulsory law in 1925 by the republican state replacing all other forms of headgear including turbans of *hocas* except for those 'official' religious figures. Two other events are also important in this regard: first one is the abolishment religious covenants and dervish lodges, hence outlawing Sufi brotherhoods in 1925, and the second, replacement of Ottoman civil code with a Turkish civil code derived from the Swiss example in 1926 which marked the end of *Şer'iye Mahkemeleri* (Religious Courts).

Amidst these legalist modernization efforts, I argue that Turkish modernity was not only about modernizing the hearts and minds of Turks, but also instilling a particular visual culture. Visuality that emerged in this period is also an emblematic substance of the visual life-world of the inhabitants of modern Turkey. By visual life-world, I mean a social field in which every sector of the society took part.

Münif Fehim Özarman was a painter and a cartoonist; he worked for periodicals, book covers and also school textbooks in the early republic. The illustration (Figure 1) I use in this essay is most probably from the 1930s and created by him for a 5th grade history textbook. Titled, "Atatürk and Reforms," it is a work that brings together all sorts of fantastic elements. Mustafa Kemal is a sun shining on a disorganized world, almost as if shaken by an earthquake. If one looks closely the lines coming from the "Sun-Father of the Turks" are arrows clearly signifying the "six arrows of Kemalism" which are the six elements of the Kemalist Revolution. The world on which Atatürk shines is a disturbed one as the mosque in the background is warped, and the owl is trying to keep its balance in order to stand on it. It is not clear whether Atatürk shooked the world or it was already shaken and Atatürk has come to help and restore. The expressions on two hocas' faces are one of fear and a feeling of "the end has come." This gives the viewer an outright signal that Mustafa Kemal has come to bring an end. The snake wrapped around the necks of the hocas is as if there to take them away from this world, from the mosque. But it is still hard to situate what the mosque is doing with its crooked position and what kind of a role owl is playing on top of it.

I could indeed give a further symbolic exploration of this illustration. Özarman's fantasy-world could be further explored with a deeper reading in order to discern tacit meanings and hints to

Turkish politics. But what I am most concerned about here is the use of *hocas* as a category in this genre of painting. This is clearly the visual world of Özarman and it's not hard to decipher his ways of seeing. He is, first of all, a painter; he creates images and circulates them. But he is still a historical subject, part of the republican life-world, and hence a painter that operates in the visual economy of the new nation-state. *Hocas* then emerge here as primordial images of the visual life-world of the republic; images that are not only used for a particular kind of politics but also images that form a particular kind of agency that would act in the contentious political arena of Turkish modernity. This contention on visuality, everyday images of *hocas* not only in books and periodicals but also in streets and Ottoman memories opens up a space in which Turkish modernity is constantly negotiated, refuted, celebrated or fought over. Aesthetics and politics converge in the social as visuality itself becomes the site of modernity.

İbnülreffik Ahmet Nuri Sekizinci was a typical Ottoman/Turkish intellectual. Born in 1874, educated in Western schools, he became one of the leading play-writers of the late Ottoman and early Republican era. For a time he was the head of the "Committee on the Examination of Plays" at the People's Houses headquarters where he wrote reports on stage-plays determining if they should be allowed to be performed or not. His particular play of concern for this essay is *Şer'iye Mahkemesinde* (At the Religious Court) written for the 10th commemoration of the Turkish Republic in 1933.

Figure 1: Münif Fehim Özarman, "Atatürk and Reforms," Early 1930s, 5th Grade History Book

The play is a comedy, and its subject is one that we see throughout the late Ottoman and early Republican literature: corruption in the Ottoman religious legal system. Set in the late Ottoman period right before the proclamation of the Republic, the play takes place in a Religious Court. As two neighbors, a man and a woman, come to the court because of a dispute on the use of a water well, judge, unable to find common ground, marries the couple solving the dispute. In the process, he takes bribes as the dialogues written by Ahmet Nuri take a highly comedic tone.

Visuality at play in Ahmet Nuri's work is striking and illustrative of the visual culture I have been trying to sketch throughout this essay. At the beginning of the play, the judge and his friend talk about the political situation of the era. *31 March Incident* has taken place and Young Turks started a more rigorous modernization project against the "reactionaries." At one instance judge states: "Actually we are also not sure about our positions. Because *sarıklılar* (people with turbans) did the 31 March incident, *meşrutiyet* (Young Turks' constitutional regime) started to look askance at us" (Sekizinci, 2001, p. 306). The judge further states a question with a dose of fear:

"What will we do when the great father of *meşrutiyet* comes?" In reply to his friend's question of "who is that great father," the judge mentions the name Mustafa Kemal stating that he wants to bring "republic" as a regime. For the judge, Mustafa Kemal says: "as long as religious bigots [yobazlar] who wrap two pieces of cloth around their head exist, *meşrutiyet* cannot do anything to the country [memleket]" (Sekizinci, 2001, p. 306).

Visual imaginations of reactionary politics are evident here as Ahmet Nuri sees the headgear as the primordial aspect of the politics that led the Ottoman Empire to remain backward. As Münif Fehim Özarman's work points to a particular visual order, an order that attempts to create a rupture from the past, same visual concerns emerge this time in a fictional domain that moves the reader and the viewer to history. As these bodies embodied with an old visual order (Figure 2) literally come into action by way of performance; spoken word and bodily actions converge with presences of bodies to form a distinctive visual moment. Republican subjects write, organize, institutionalize, perform, attend and view this staged visuality participating and seeing the nation from different angles in a new visual life-world.

II. Modernization theory

One of the most critical aspects of modernization theory is its engagement with Western modernity and its impact on non-Western societies. In accounting for the historically specific development of modernity in the West, modernization scholars sketch a history that has moved in relative coherence. When looking at the non-Western historical development, it is inseparable from its contact with the West. It is indeed in these instances of contacts like war, colonialism, and education that non-Western societies, especially their state elite, acknowledge the necessity and urgency of modernization. I will, for a brief moment, sketch two arguments made by two modernization scholars informed by this general tendency. First is Peter F. Sugar's "organic-inorganic development" distinction, and second is Daniel Lerner's "transitional society."

Peter F. Sugar's article is "Economic and Political Modernization: Turkey." This article is part of a book titled Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey edited by Robert E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow. The book is a collection of articles that were presented at a conference sponsored by the Social Science Research Council's Committee on Comparative Politics. SSRC

established the Committee in 1954 as a way to transcend many area studies founded in the late 40s with a more thematic approach to the global level politics and social change. Led by Gabriel Almond and subsequently by Lucien Pye until its dissolution in 1972, Committee on Comparative Politics was an active and influential impetus in modernization theory (Worcester, 2001, p. 44).

Figure 2: Theater Section of Rize People's House performing, 1933 (Fatih Sultan Kar archive)

The relationship between American academia and Cold War US hegemony has been discussed elsewhere that various networks formed between the US federal government, private institutions, and universities supported and sustained intellectual output of modernization scholars (Cumings, 1997; Diamond, 1992; McCaughey, 1984; Rafael, 1994; Samuels & Weiner, 1992; Simpson, 1999). This does not mean that a conspiratorial relationship existed between these institutions; rather, an intellectual tradition, modernization theory, with a intellectual lineage, emerged at a particular moment in time intersecting with geopolitical concerns of the American foreign policy. In the end, what we see is a two-way relationship between the discourse (intellectual tradition) and the practice (institutional context).

At the onset of this historical development, the book I want to focus on, Political

Modernization in Japan and Turkey, was published by the Princeton University Press as the third volume of seven-volume series on "Studies in Political Development." The book is divided into 7 parts –(1) The Nature of Traditional Society, (2) Environmental and Foreign Contributions, (3) Economic and Political Modernization, (4) Education, (5) The Mass Media, (6) The Civil Bureaucracy and (7) The Military- making a division of labor among fourteen number of scholars of Japanese and Turkish modernization. Sugar's article is the Turkish section of the chapter on "Economic and Political Modernization." A prominent American historian of Southeastern European history and longtime professor of history at the University of Washington, Sugar has written a number of works on the Ottoman and post-Ottoman period of the region (Sugar, 1963, 1977; Sugar & Lederer, 1969).

Peter F. Sugar, in his article, illustrates an example of the grand distinction between organic and inorganic development in his discussion on the economic and political modernization in Turkey. Sugar starts his work with a peculiar sentence: "Since 1946 many excellent studies have been devoted to the political and economic problems of 'underdeveloped' countries" (Sugar, 1964, p. 146). The fact that those studies started after "1946" and they were about countries that were "underdeveloped" points to the emergence of a new scholarship that has been called as modernization Theory. However, Sugar is dissatisfied with the uses of such concepts as "industrialization, Westernization and modernization" in other works when they almost always stress the idea of progress. For him, then, "development" as a concept would be more suitable to use in the place of "progress." This is a highly important point for Sugar; it enables him to make a difference between Western and Turkish development since Western experience is about progress while the Turkish one is not.

"In Western Europe, a so-called modern or Western society developed organically," so says Sugar, the gradual development from "feudal society" to "town life" is what distinguishes the West from the rest of the world. "A new force in society" was formed according to him, which is defined as the economic and political aspirations of the new "citizen" or "urban dweller." The historical narrative Sugar puts forward is primarily concerned with first, a change in the economic structure and relations, second, emergence thereof a new socio-economic class that is bourgeoisie, third, establishment of a centralized state through a compromise between the state and the bourgeoisie, and finally, establishment of a constitutional government arising from a conflict and negotiation

between the same two classes. For Sugar, this is the four-stage organic development of the Western society that culminated in "a well-regulated but individualistic society" (Sugar, 1964, p. 147). The most crucial point in this argument, as Sugar notes, is the fact that Western Europe was developed through a process that took centuries "wholly in its own way" (Sugar, 1964, p. 147). This is the starting point for Sugar's grand distinction between the West and the rest of the world.

Turkish experience was entirely different, and its development towards modernity can best be identified with its relation to the West. This inorganic development, for Sugar, follows five stages: (1) an outside stimulus, (2) the emergence of a leader, (3) the creation of a new bureaucracy and a change in the political structure, (4) economic change planned by the central government and (5) the emergence of a middle class (Sugar, 1964, p. 149). The rest of Sugar's work analyzes Ottoman/Turkish history through these stages: (1) Western military and economic dominance over the Ottoman Empire, (2) various reform attempts by sultans and political actors in the Ottoman period and later by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in the Republican period, (3) bureaucratic and political changes in the Young Turk era and in the Republican period, (4) economic changes initiated by the government in the Republican period both in People's Party and Democrat Part governments with their principle of *étatisme*, and finally (5) emergence of a middle class throughout the Republican period whose aspirations, for Sugar, hold great prospects for the economic and political development of Turkey at the time he writes his work, the 1960s:

> "The new power of the middle class, and the independent spirit which it has manifested since the end of the last war are signs also of political health. A final token of the general national advance is an increasingly intimate and complex interrelation between Turkish economics and Turkish politics—arguing that the nation has in a manner come of age and that future changes within it will be primarily organic" (Sugar, 1964, p. 175).

Daniel Lerner, a prominent member of US Development Communication research, was a professor of Sociology and International Communications at the Center for International Studies, MIT, from 1958 till his death. He became one of the most distinguished scholars who used Public Opinion Research as a methodology in the fifties and sixties to explore the modernization process in the Middle East. Lerner was a social scientist whose work moved beyond nineteenth and early twentieth century Oriental Studies and provided the foundation for post-World War II American area studies. Although he was not part of an area studies department, nevertheless, his research

methodology and theoretical outputs provided a base for area studies scholarship. He was also a firm believer in social sciences' goal of providing expert knowledge for policymakers (Bah, 2008; Lerner & Merton, 1951). Hence his work was almost always concerned with the future; his research would closely monitor the present situation in the Middle East and bring this work to shed light on the future.

The Passing of Traditional Society (1958) was his most influential book (Lerner, 1958). "Arguably the bible of the modernization/dependency/media imperialism paradigm of development communication," Lerner's work was the initial step of area studies scholars to develop a theoretical field (modernization theory) and supplement this field with empirical research by way of conducting value surveys (Bah, 2008, p. 189). The book was funded by two crucial institutions in its two phases. The first phase, collection of data, was sponsored by Columbia University's Bureau of Applied Social Research, and the second phase, writing of the book, was sponsored by Lerner's host institution, The Center for International Studies at MIT. Before getting into his actual work, I would like to talk about these two institutions for a brief moment.

Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University was founded in 1944 as a direct descendent of Radio Research Project at Princeton University. Its first and longtime director was Austrian sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld, who initiated and directed other institutions before, back in Vienna, later moving to the United States first directing the Newark Center at the University of Newark and then becoming the director of Radio Research Project at the Princeton University. As Radio Research Project moved to New York City and, after a short time, became part of the Columbia University renaming itself to the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Lazarsfeld also became a professor of the sociology department at the university. Although supported by private grants at first, the Bureau became the focal point for American survey research multiplying its revenues and receiving huge grants from government institutions and foundations (Converse, 1987; House et al., 2004; Hyman, 1991). Survey research was one of the essential foundations for the emergence of comparative area studies. It was also a key contributing factor to US foreign policy, especially its decision making on development projects and USAID. Throughout its existence until 1977, Bureau supported many survey research projects, Lerner's work on the Middle East is one of them.

The MIT Center for International Studies' early beginnings can be traced to a State

Department project, code-named as Troy. Project Troy's initial aim was to provide a solution to Soviet jamming of Voice of America propaganda broadcasts. While solving the problem, the project also resulted in the establishment of the Center for International Studies funded by the CIA. Compromised by scholars from different disciplines, prominent modernization scholar Walt Rostow being one of them, Center "worked on problems concerning the economic and political development of emerging nations, the domestic and foreign policies of Communist states, international communications and United States foreign and military policies" ("MIT hints unit had link to CIA," 1964).

Daniel Lerner's The Passing of Traditional Society gives three stages to the modernization process: (1) Traditional, (2) Transitional and (3) Modern. It should be noted beforehand that these stages are not mutually exclusive, that they do not necessarily have to follow each other but can coexist in the same society. The crucial point is that social change will bring traditional and transitional to the modern.

Surveys and fieldwork conducted by the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University in 1950 on Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Iran provide the necessary data for Lerner to argue for these stages and carry out a comparative analysis. A crucial variable for these surveys and Lerner's scholarly endeavor is urbanization and its correlation with mass media, communication, and education. Urbanization, just like for Sugar, is the critical development for modernity to come for Lerner. As Sugar's work is about the different paths Western and non-Western societies took in history, Lerner's work is about the path through which non-Western societies will follow the modernity of Western ones. Turkey, in 1950, is one of those societies; it is not traditional anymore, nor it is modern; rather, it is transitional.

"The Ottoman regime failed to unify its diverse peoples through communication and education … how could be rallied, more generally, a population of 13 million in which 1% were literate in 1908? In fact, they were not rallied and the Ottoman Empire crumbled" (Lerner, 1958, p. 116). From Lerner's perspective, the goal of the Kemalist regime was then primarily about reversing this mistake by creating the "new Turks" (Lerner, 1958, p. 112). Modernization of Turkey or the creation of the new Turks would only be successful just like any other modernizing non-Western societies if they follow "the secular process of modernization as a sequence of four phases in social participation: urbanization, literacy, media, voting" (Lerner, 1958, p. 116). Hence, when looking at

the Turkish experience, Lerner finds points in the history of Kemalist modernization, which were geared towards accomplishing these processes. Alphabet change from Arabic to Latin script and mass education initiative primarily manifested in Village Schools and Institutes are two among many (Lerner, 1958, p. 121).

However, Kemalist modernization is far from being complete. Value surveys conducted in 1950 are a testimony to this for Lerner. The number of variables used in these surveys points out that while Traditionals are "firmly rooted in the ways of the Ottoman past" and Moderns have "incorporated the modern Western style that Atatürk publicized," Transitionals who are taught to be 30% of Turkish population according to Lerner, are those who are neither traditional or modern but on the way to becoming part of the "expansive cosmopolitan style of the Moderns." Lerner, hence, reiterates at the end, what Sugar argued, Turkey is on the road to modernity because of the "rising and spreading aspirations of the Transitionals" (Lerner, 1958, pp. 159–166).

III. The optimism of Modernization Theory: Incomplete Modernization of Turkey

In this section, I take a closer look at one of the most influential works in the historiography of modern Turkey, Bernard Lewis' Emergence of Modern Turkey (1961). However, before getting into the actual work itself, I would like to give some background to this influential work and the historian Lewis himself. Thus far, what I have sketched through Sugar and Lerner, and various institutions was an emergence of an academic endeavor that was principally interested in the development of the Third World after decolonization. This I claimed, was one of the foundations of the area studies, although these institutions were primarily working comparatively. Careers of many scholars who worked through these institutions intersected in number of ways since these institutions brought different scholars (historians, sociologists, political scientists) from different areas to work on greater collective projects.

Lewis' work and his career are somewhat distinct from what I have sketched earlier in this essay. Lewis studied at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. He worked along Louis Massignon, preeminent Orientalist scholar of the early 20th century. He then moved to the United States, taking the post of professor of history at Princeton University and the Institute for Advanced Studies. Lewis was a historian of the Middle East with particular emphasis

on Ottoman/Turkish history. Hence his work was much more historically rich and attentive to detail compared to survey researches carried out in the Bureau of Applied Social Research. Also, his historical works emerged at a time when histories of Ottoman and Republican periods based on the local archival sources were scarce. This point is evident in the reception of his book, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, when it was published in 1961. One reviewer, Roderic H. Davison notes: "One of the great virtues of the book is that Lewis has used not only Western sources but also a large number of older Ottoman histories and products of modern Turkish scholarship. The result is an integrated account better than anything now in existence in Turkish or any other language" (Davison, 1962). Given its attentiveness to history, Lewis' work was nevertheless still operating under the rubric of modernization theory.

Lewis, first of all, sketches the Ottoman legacy of Kemalist modernization. He is primarily concerned with the emergence of the new elite. This new elite for Lewis emerged in the Hamidian period through what he calls "social diversification of the educated elite" (Lewis, 1961, p. 454). Members of the new elite were different from the Young Ottomans, and the first constitutionalists since their "personal bond" to the "inner circle of prestige and power" of the Ottoman court weakened. The result was a more "sharper" and "fiercer" power struggle and advocacy for change.[2]

The Ottoman Empire came to an end after World War I and Kemalist modernization emerged within this historical context. What emerged in 1923 with the declaration of the Turkish Republic was what Lewis calls "Kemalist populism." Lewis' categories of analysis in this period are no different from other modernization scholars we mentioned before, Sugar and Lerner. "Great changes would be needed—the mechanization of agriculture, the development of industry, the improvement of communications" (Lewis, 1961, pp. 459–460). These wishes were pursued under the principle of *étatisme*, which was, according to Lewis, largely because of the Great Depression. Various economic, political, and educational reforms were enacted under the Kemalist regime; the result was, of course, short-lived policy changes, especially land reform, which were unable to make a significant impact.

The Democratic opposition between 1945 and 1950, which resulted in the replacement of the 28-year rule of People's Party government with Democrat Party in the elections of 1950, as a

[2] For more on this subject see the work published around the same time: (Mardin, 1962).

result of significant social changes in the Turkish society. Under the Democrat Party also caused a change in bureaucracy, political arena, and government institutions. As with other modernization scholars, Lewis' prime example for the prospects of modern Turkey lies in his firm belief in the aspirations of the middle class that gradually emerged in the course of history and found its most intense political expression in the Democrat Party. Both economic development immediately after World War II and the opening of the democratic process in 1950 resulted in the "awakening of the village" (Lewis, 1961, p. 471). The idea of awakening the village was very prominent in the People's Party period, but its realization only came about with a multi-party system. Lewis states:

> "With means, comforts, and amenities undreamt of in an earlier age, [the peasant] has become more confident and more independent. In recent years, he has begun to show an awareness of his political power and of his human dignity that is probably without precedent in the past history of the country … The problems of the Turkish peasant is far from solved … but the Turkish peasantry … have emerged from ancient submission, to participate in public affairs of their country … Kemalism had brought the revolution to the towns and townspeople of Turkey, but had barely touched the villages. A second, silent revolution was now reaching the deeper layers of the nation, and starting a new transformation" (Lewis, 1961, p. 472)

Lewis' take on the issue of modernization in Turkey is, as we have witnessed, entrenched in the general theoretical assumptions and framework of Modernization Theory. First published in 1961, Emergence of Modern Turkey, like other modernization works on Turkey of the same era, is concerned with the present (1960s). Furthermore, indeed, Lewis' and others' attempts at doing historical analysis while almost always finding themselves to reiterate their firm belief in modernity as a process. Turkey's centuries of reform movements are inorganic for a long period of history. However, they only become organic when sociological changes arising from this history of reform become natural outcomes of various state practices. Turkey was *not* modern until the late 40s and early 50s, but now after such long changes in the social structure, Turkey is a *not-yet* modern country. The optimism of modernization theory and its firm belief in the eventual emergence of true modernity in Turkey enables all three of these scholars to claim that indeed, the future of Turkey is bright like no other time.

IV. A Case Study from the Modernization School: Szyliowicz's Field-Work in Erdemli

Joseph S. Szyliowicz received his Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1961. After a brief period spent at Hunter College and Brooklyn College, he became a professor of Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver. His early career was focused on the Middle East with a particular emphasis on the Turkish Republic. His early work on the contemporary Middle East was followed by the work in concern for this essay, Political Change in Rural Turkey, Erdemli.[3]

The book is the outcome of fieldwork conducted in a Turkish Mediterranean town, Erdemli. Being published in 1966, I would argue that his work has a peculiar place in Middle Eastern Studies. His work is part of a different discipline than other scholars I have given as examples before. Hence the book is much more nuanced than others but still a member of the modernization scholarly community.[4]

Szyliowicz sets the stage for his ethnography of Erdemli: "Although Atatürk and İnönü had attempted to promote rural development, their programs had had little impact upon the peasant, who had continued to rely on ancient beliefs, customs, and traditions." Overlapping arguments between different modernization scholars reoccurs over and over again; Szyliowicz's work operates under the same assumptions his other colleagues have. "Today, this situation has changed drastically, and the villager is becoming an integral part of his country's social, political, and economic development. This is the result of the second wave of reform, spurred in large part by United States aid after World War II. A landmark in this process was the 1950 election, a turning point in Turkish history" (Szyliowicz, 1966, p. 16).

Szyliowicz's work is divided into two parts: first is "1941," and it is an attempt to show how distant the state elite and rural population was under the People's Party government. It is also an attempt to illustrate the failure of the Kemalist reforms in rural Turkey, wishes of the state elite not becoming realized. The second part is "1957," in which changes in the economic and political

[3] His works on the Middle East are the following: (Rivlin & Szyliowicz, 1965; Szyliowicz, 1966, 1973, 1991).
[4] For a review of anthropological studies on Turkey, see: (Magnarella & Türkdoğan, 1976; Olson, 1986).

system gave rise to an emergence of a new rural population who are much more eager to participate in the political and civil life and hence much more eager to become modern.

The Village Law enacted on March 8, 1924, by the Kemalist state, was an attempt to instate a more centralized rule in the villages. However, the reality was far from the intentions of the state elite, as Szyliowicz argues: “despite the intentions of its framers, the [Village] law had almost no influence on rural life, its impact being limited to administrative and legal matters” (Szyliowicz, 1966, p. 37). Other than some economic rulings, Village Law also instated a political structure in which the Village Council and the Headman would act as political actors in the affairs of rural Turkey. Although the intention was to create a political authority in the villages just like the central political authority, which presided over decision-making on a national level, the outcome was entirely different. The idea that the Village Law would enable Ankara to trickle down the reform efforts from national to rural level was unsuccessful since “in most villages the headman was selected by the heads of a few leading families who comprised the local elite” (Szyliowicz, 1966, p. 46). Since the local power structure was intact, the ability of the central government to reach the local level was weak. Hence, “the Village Council usually existed only on paper, and it did not play a significant role in the decision making process” (Szyliowicz, 1966, p. 47). This indeed did not mean that the villages were left to their own destiny. The state's presence was still evident in the villages through tax collectors and the gendarmes. So, there had to be some conversation and negotiation between the local elite and the state elite. Nevertheless, according to Szyliowicz, none of these contacts resulted in cooperation, especially between the local elite and the gendarmerie:

> “[gendarmerie] was one of the most hated agencies of the government because gendarmes showed little or no respect for the individual. Beatings of innocent villagers were frequent, and whenever the police descended upon a village to apprehend a lawbreaker, the best accommodations and food would be appropriated. Because of such petty tyrannies and injustices, the gendarmerie and the administration which supported it were intensely disliked” (Szyliowicz, 1966, p. 48)

Another example of the failure of Kemalist modernization to reach rural Turkey is *Halkevleri* (People’s Houses) and *Halkodaları* (People’s Rooms). People’s Houses and People’s Rooms were established for both education of the masses and production of a distinct Turkish national culture. Szyliowicz remarks that “these institutions had a profound impact upon Turkish

life, especially in urban areas, through their libraries (500,000 books), lectures (25,000), theatrical performances (15,000), concerts (8,000), exhibitions (13,000), and courses (4,000)." None of these profound impacts had found its place in Erdemli since the village did not have a People's Room as other many other villages did not (Szyliowicz, 1966, pp. 53–54).

The point in illustrating Szyliowicz's contributions to modernization theory is to give more context to the relationship between urban and rural Turkey. As do other micro-level historical and anthropological analyses give insight into social phenomena, I believe The Political Change in Rural Turkey emerges as a good example, although still operating under the gaze of modernization theory.

V. Conclusion

What I have sketched throughout this essay –government and academic institutions, scholarly actors, and the produced knowledge- was rooted in a particular historical moment. Since then, area studies have witnessed many transformations, those institutions I have talked about were either closed or restructured to a great extent, and different area scholars had different career turns. Although objects of study have changed, some departments –Middle Eastern and International Relations- at some universities did not critically face their past. Some, on the other hand, has moved to an entirely different direction, they became highly critical of past scholarship with new generation scholars taking the stage. Edward Said's Orientalism was the most influential critical work in Middle Eastern Studies, while Subaltern Studies in the South Asian studies was the most institutional attack against the old scholarship. One of the most striking characteristics of this newly emerging scholarship in the eighties was its poststructuralist intellectual tradition. Of course, poststructuralism was not the only direction as more economistic criticisms came from the Dependency School and the World-System Analysis in the seventies (Lockman, 2009; Said, 1979).

To discuss historical urban and rural life relationships in Turkey on a grander scale is beyond the scope of this essay. Hence the goal, here, was to point out to modernization theory's contributions to the field and to point out to institutional and geopolitical context of those contributions. As we have witnessed, modernization Theory, in the case of Turkey, does not argue for the success of the top-down Kemalist modernization. Instead, what it tries to do is to show how

different sociological changes in society gave rise to modern ways of living, inevitably transforming rural life too. So, tradition is not something that can wither away immediately, and nor it is a phenomenon that can be erased from the society through direct political and legislative reforms. Although reforms contribute to its demise, it nevertheless emerges in different contexts, as in the example of post-1950 Turkey.

In his argument, Dankwart A. Rustow points out to a "blend of tradition and modernity." This blend is not at the total control of the reformers as he states "the rhythm of political modernization is a matter not only of speed and total scope; it also depends on a series of choices about particular times of reform and their timing, about the specific blend of traditional and modern elements to be included in a given program." To find the exact blend is difficult, and the social outcomes of different distinct blends always produce other social conditions that would, in turn, affect the creation of a different blend. Hence as Rustow remarks, "the course of development may furnish a recipe very different from their prescriptions" (Rustow, 1967, p. 117).

Rustow's argument, and so is other arguments I have sketched throughout this essay, have a certain merit. However, what is missing in all of these accounts is the agency of the rural populations. Modernization scholars are almost always concerned with reform movements and their social outcomes. Although Szyliowicz, for example, is not hesitant to look at the village perspective, the kind of politics that arises from the Turkish village is always bound to state-level social and political structures. This does not, of course, mean that life in the village is free of social structures that surround it on the national level. However, negotiation between the village and the state seems to be the vital category of analysis to look at in order to draw a better picture of Turkish modernization and its effect on rural Turkey.[5] In this essay, I proposed to use visual history to get a better grasp of the history of rural change in Turkey, something which modernization scholars have failed to consider.

[5] Michael Meeker's work is an example of such a scholarship. In his ethnography of Of in the 1960s and later in 1980s, Meeker embarks on a journey similar to Szyliowicz only to end in a radically different way, arguing that the Turkish Republic was largely a continuation of the Ottoman Empire and that various reform attempts by the central government were always negotiated with local elites and adjusted accordingly (Meeker, 2002).

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