

THE STATUS OF TURKISH WOMEN IN ANATOLIA

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When men settled down and began to work at farming for a living, there arose a natural division of work between man and woman. Woman, who was bestowed by nature with the duty of breeding, undertook the responsibility of household works. Among these household works there can be listed such primitive industrial handicrafts as making pottery, weaving carpets and making decorative lace-work in addition to the work on the farms. Man on the other hand was busy outside home with fighting and hunting that needed power and courage. In the primary farming communities, woman who beared and reared children gained a greater importance, because she recreated life. Woman's viviparousness was held equal to soil's productivity. Woman, who contained hidden seeds in her womb and who carried the vital, mysterious dark power of life like soil, had attained a great value and priority in the family. Thus in the primitive communities we observe a maternal family type where the mother's descendants are sovereign.

In relation with passing from stone age to bronze age, there was a transition from matriarchal family to patriarchal family and man caused soil to depend on himself by producing the necessary tools.⁽¹⁾ Learning different types of handicrafts and using his intelligence especially to become successful in the

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struggle of life, man created the necessary conditions which made him an inevitable master over nature, whereby he achieved the transition to working communities. We can see the effect of this struggle in Greek Mythology in the legend of Prometheus : Prometheus is a Titan who lived before humanity was created. His brother Epimetheus was assigned to create humanity. However when he was creating animals, he had given them a variety of abilities, but when man's turn came, he saw that he had spent everything. Seeing this Prometheus brought the fire from heaven in order to make humanity superior. This power enabled human beings to make weapons and to produce tools so that they could till the soil and warm their homes in order to protect themselves. Man learned handicrafts and produced money for trade. Woman is not created yet. While creating the woman, Zeus gave her beauty, the talent for music, the ability of convincing argument in addition to other perfections and he sent her to Prometheus and his brother as a present. However his aim in creating this woman, who is named Pandora, is to punish Prometheus. Epimetheus has a box in which there are all kinds of evils and ills that would leave humanity helpless. Pandora opened this box which she should not have done and all the evils ran away. What was left in the box was only hope. This aspect of character in Pandora revealed that woman is more curious and careless in her nature, but this story had another version. According to this, Pandora brought the box, which Zeus had given her as a marriage present, as a blessing to humanity. However she opened the box carelessly and all the talents that Gods had put in, escaped except hope. It is more sensible that the story is like this. (2) After this, man lived in his happiest age of righteousness, of virtue and of reality that was the first golden age. Yet the age of happiness did not last long. The ages, silver, bronze and iron which followed afterwards, brought such difficulties that hindered the happiness of man, but hope

was never lost. Man who passed to agriculture in silver age, became warrior in bronze age. The hardest of all times was iron age when crime increased, but actual honor and modesty disappeared. Hypocrisy and shrewdness reigned in their place. Being unsatisfied, man went to discover seas and making new weapons, fought to attain the riches of gold and iron. Sons desired to get rid of their fathers, family members did not trust each other. Finally goddess Astraea, the symbol of virtue and chastity, was left behind and she also decided to withdraw to heaven. Zeus who wanted to end off all the evils, sent the Flood to Earth. Deucalion, who was a just man and Pyrrha, who was obedient to the gods, were the only people who were left on Earth to continue the generation of Prometheus.

Although the mythology records that Pandora has been sent to earth to cause trouble, the goddess known under the names of Vesta or Hestia, was always respected because of her symbolical, and traditional womanly responsibility. Hestia is a sister of Zeus and she represents, the hearth of the family and home, so that the first born child in a family was circled around her to be sanctified before it was accepted to the family. Each meal is started and ended after an offering is presented to her. There is a poem which is addressed to Hestia:

"Hestia, in all dwellings of men and immortals
 Yours is the highest honor, the sweet wine offered
 First and last at the feast, poured out to you duly.
 Never without you can gods or mortals hold banquet."⁽³⁾

These lines are important because they reveal the honor and respect paid to Hestia for representing home and for that reason they emphasize the holiness of woman's universal duty.

Another goddess who symbolizes other qualities as earth and productivity is the Artemis of Anatolia (according to a source) ⁽⁴⁾. In *Iliad* she is known to be a goddess of wild animals who carries arrows and who hunts. Warrior Athena and

her mother Metis symbolizes the power of thought and wisdom. In spite of the plentifulness of goddesses in Greek Mythology who represent powerful abilities, in the Greek tradition woman was held same with the slaves and she lived under the supervision of either her father or her husband or her inheritor. The husband who was sovereign over his wife's personality, could flagellate and sell her. Homeros said that all men had right to make laws over their women and children.⁽⁵⁾ All the inheritance was left to the sons and it is clear that women did not possess an honorable status as she did have in mythology. Men who were called women, thought this to be an insult. In Hesiod's **Works and Days** it was denoted that any one who believed women, must be sure that he believed Cheaters. ⁽⁶⁾ In Plato's **Republic**, although in some works woman is acknowledged to surpass man, it is believed that in their nature women and men possessed the same power and women can do the works that men can, but women can never be as much as men can.⁽⁷⁾ In sewing, making cakes and sauces it was agreed that men could not compete with women. Thus it is clear that women became experts at the jobs which they undertook. However it is seen that the mythological goddesses lost their activities and popularity as time passed on.

Turkish people immigrating to Anatolia in various dates, before and after Islamism, mixed up with the Anatolian people, living with them hundreds of years long. Being the ancestors of the contemporary Turks, they accumulated a rich culture and established a living way .

The people of Hittite and Urartu States, who lived in Anatolia BC. 2000 and after, did not immigrate to anywhere else, therefore they are also the ancestors of the present Turks. Anatolian Turks are not only the inheritors of the Hittite culture, but they are also the inheritors of other Anatolian civilizations.

As we have felt the need to establish a relatedness with the mythological and classical Hellenistic woman, it is also necessary to see the relatedness of Hittite woman in order to observe the historical facts.

It has been recorded that the written part of Anatolian history began BC. 2000. People lived in Anatolia before this time, but the absence of written documents belonging to older times avoided to have exact knowledge.

As it was understood from Kayseri 'Kültepe' tablets (BC. 1950-1750), men and women had the same rights in marriage. Family law of this time was based on monogamy which meant marriage with one woman. One legal wife had all her rights, but after divorce it was prohibited to live like husband and wife and the penalty was death. Yet it was understood that men did have 'odalisk' (mistresses) beside a legal wife. At this time the women who were married with Asurian merchants had right to arrange receipts and to seal, to open suit in a court for every kind of legal problem and to be held as witnesses. ⁽⁸⁾ As a man had the right to divorce his wife a woman also had the right to divorce her husband. If a man wanted to divorce his wife he had to pay a divorce indemnity. If a woman wanted to divorce her husband she also paid indemnity to her husband. After divorce, children were left with the mother. In the religious beliefs of this time, gods represented natural powers and among these there were women goddesses.

Just before the establishment of Hittite civilization, there was matriarchy among the Anatolian natives, women possessed individual seals and had right to own personal possessions.

Hittite civilization occupied more than a 1000 years of Anatolian history. Hittites reigned in Yozgat, Boğazköy, in the middle Anatolia to the east of Ankara. As it is understood from the documents, there were social ranks among Hittites as in the previous period.

In the Hittite State the person of highest authority after the king is the king's mother and she is called 'tavannana' (The highest mother). ⁽⁹⁾ Only the royal queens could attain the rank and status of 'tavannana'. Thus the person who has

this status' comes next after the king in protocol during all the official ceremonies and religious festivals. In some public festivities only the queen represents the state.

In internal administration decrees were issued with the joint signatures of the king and the queen. A mother queen could be sentenced to penalty for wrong-doing. It was recorded that such a queen was punished by her son for failure to obey rules.

It is important that the queen of Hittites had a right to own her seal beside the king. After the conclusion of a war in BC. 1294 (Kadesh) between the Egyptian and Hittite empires, the conditions of the peace treaty was established between the two states. On the one side of the silver tablet, which was sent to Egypt, there was the seal of the Hittite king and on the other side, there existed the seal of the Queen, where it was written: "This is the seal of Pudu Hepa, the dominator of the country; the seal of the sun of the city of 'Arinna', the servant of the deity, the woman of the country, the priestess of the city of 'Arinna', the daughter of the country of 'Kızvadna', the Queen of the Hittites. The king and the queen signed the peace treaty representing the state, and having the same and equal right as indicated on the seal. On the other hand the queen of Egypt did not seem to possess this right, since the king's signature on the seal was single. This document was accepted as an important historical sample of an attitude of political right.

According to these documents, in the Hittite period, the princesses and the queens of the dynasty had the rights that were not given in the other Asian countries.

On the tablets of cuneiform script, which were found in Boğazköy (Hattushash), it was seen that laws were made and penalties were fixed and in this oldest civilization of our country the situation of the law was perceived.

Although with the influence of the previous period on the Hittite laws in Anatolia, some matriarchal rules remained, generally man having more rights had the priority and was the absolute authority over his children. The father could give his children to someone else as a compensation and if he caught his wife with another man, he could kill her. Unlike in the previous period, women were bought in marriages. In divorces children were left to the father.

In the Hittite laws of employment the payments for women and men were different. For the same work women received the half of the wage that men got.

However, the Hittite woman could own property and did have the right to use it as she required.

The Hittite women wore long clothes down to the ankles. The skirt was fastened with a belt and the blouse had long sleeves.

The source of the Amazonian stories, which the Greeks related, is thought to be the Hittite Sun goddess Hapat in soldier's costumes on her relief. Hittite's religious beliefs depended on polytheism. Among the gods which represented several powers of nature, there are goddesses and the most important of them all is Arinna, the goddess of the sun.

The Sumerians who were established in the southern part of Euphrates (Firat) and Tigris (Dicle), had one of the oldest civilizations in the history (BC. IV thousand). Many powers were attributed to women as qualities of gods. Although authority in the family belonged to the men in this society, if any woman perceived something damaging against herself, she could apply to court and protest the injustice done to her. The women had right to possessions and monogamy was essential in marriages, but men did have other marriages in addition to one legal marriage. In the second and other marriages, the mistresses could not stay in the same house with the legal wife. In the economical life the Sumerian women were

active. The women worked in the textile and other branches of the industrial field. In the Sumerian family the marriages of girls could be consummated with the acceptance of the parents of the girls who were to be married.

Kutadgu Bilig (1069-1070) is the first Moslem Turkish work written in the period of chivalry. Although the effect of the old Turkish customs is perceived to continue in this work, when compared with the Orkhon tablets, the mentality in **Kutadgu Bilig** is seen to depart from the old Turkish culture. The opinions about women are not appreciative and high in this work as they were in the old Turkish customs and folk legends. There are many interpretations in the opposite direction against women. Some advises which were stated in Kutadgu Bilig, for marriage, did arrive to our day. The girl who is to be married should have the following virtues:

"Seek for the good. Take a girl who is untouched and unseen by a man, take a house girl. She should love you and no one else. Take the one who is lower than you in status. Do not take any girl from a higher family. If you take from a higher order you would be a slave. What did the experienced say? If you are to get married take the girl who is lower and who is the right one. You would have a life in felicity. Do not seek for the beauty of her face. Do seek for her moral virtues. If her moral qualities are beautiful, she would enlighten your face."

And later on in the same text it follows:

"Friend, I shall tell you my exact word! It is better if a girl is not born or if she is born it is better if she does not live."(10)

With the acceptance of Islamism by the Turks, the Islamic law was taken and polygamy became the official family model. This new civilization and culture had negative effects on the Turkish women. We have perceived that before Islamism the woman had an important status beside the man, but after Islamism, the woman had been acknowledged restricted rights by the Islamic law. In addition to her loss in economical and political freedom, the moslem woman lost her rights as a citizen in the community and in the family and she was confined only to home life. The women were honored in their families, but this was paid them only when they became the mothers of sons and as a result of the remaining elements of the old culture. In one of his statements Hz.Mohammed said:

"Marry women who would bear children and who would love their families!"(11)

Islamism ordered justice for women, although it acknowledged the half value of testimony in court and in inheritance of possessions. In restricting the number of marrying women to four, **Kuran** restricted also the unlimited taking of women in Arabs. Rules about this topic are seen in the chapter called 'Nisa' in the **Holy Kuran**:

"If you fear that you would do injustice to the orphan girls with possessions, of whom you are the protector, not to them, but marry to other women; two, three and four whom you like. But if you fear to do injustice among the wives, then you must take one or be content with them that you have. This is the best that you should not go astray from the right path."(Nisa 3) (12)

No matter how hard one strives to establish equality among the wives, it is clear that to do justice in providing for emotional and economical needs, is beyond the power to accomplish. Thus the statement, 'But if you fear to do injustice

among the wives, then you must take one...', may indicate the possibility of monogamy and would not be against it at least, to interpret it in the optimistic attitude. Yet the application of this rule has not been in this way in the Ottoman period.

When advised in Koran that women should be cared for in a good and just manner it was also stated that they should be well behaved and obedient as in the following statement:

"Believers, it would not be honest to be heir to women by misuse. Unless they behave impudently, do not force them to return what you have given them. Get on well with them. If you do not like them, be patient. God may have declared somebody whom you do not like very favourable for you." (Nisa 19)⁽¹³⁾

Further on in the same text, considering marrying other women, it was suggested that injustice should be prevented:

"If you want to marry another woman instead of your wife, if you have given her a load of gold, do not take it back. Would you take back what you have given her by calumniating and by sinning?" (Nisa 20) ⁽¹⁴⁾

In one of his sayings it was noted that Hz. Mohammed stated the following suggestions in the favour of women:

"The most favourable of you are the ones who are most beneficial for their women..."

One who does not bury a daughter alive and who does not consider her lower than a son, would be put to paradise by God." ⁽¹⁵⁾

In the time of pre-Islamic Paganism, especially among the Arabs, girls were not wanted, and when girls were born they were buried alive and killed. In the other communities, for example among the Kurts of Trahya, when a girl was born, it was shouted in the front of her home: "who would take this girl as a fiancée?" When nobody wanted her, she was instantly killed. For this reason women were very scarce in that community and one woman became the wife common to all the members of the house and the children who were born were considered to be owned by the eldest man of the house.⁽¹⁶⁾ In 1205 the Kurts who lived on the Mountain called Medya were also called the Kurts of Trahya. These Kurts who were idolators were killed by the Persian soldiers.

The condition of polyandry as seen in the above example, the practice of having more than one husband at a time, was forbidden B.C. 3000 in the Sumerian period at the reign of Urukagina and was never applied among the Turks. The Moslem law not only prohibited the persecution of daughters, but also the application of such customs as polyandry. The polygamy which was applied before Islamism among the Arabs was restricted and controlled by the laws after Islamism, because it impeded the continuation of the family on stable foundations. Islamism holds both the woman and the man responsible for the honour of the family. These changes mean a great development for the Arabian societies from which Islamism proceeded. Yet in spite of the existence of all the moral rules, the idea of legal equality between the two sexes could not be realized. Islamic law gave more value and rights to the women than the old Arab and Roman Law.

In the period of Ottoman Empire, according to the Islamic law, the girls could not choose their husbands. The family of the suitor and the family of the girl decided on marriage. Engagement was considered an informal matter of right in the family. During the matrimonial ceremony, the "imam" (The Mohammedan

priest), had to receive the answer of the woman who should be unseen. The matter of divorcing was only the right of the husband, whose word "I have divorced" would be enough to discontinue the marriage. The woman had the right to claim the dower preestimated at her marriage.

According to these facts the Turkish-Ottoman family was essentially patriarchal, and the members of the family being the wife and the husband and the near relatives of the husband, had to live under the discipline and authority of the father. The management of the house was under the responsibility of the wife and the authority of the eldest woman was naturally respected by the other women in the house.

The women received less inheritance than the men. When the husband died, the wife took one eighth of the inheritance if she had children. If she didn't have children she took one fourth of the inheritance. In reverse, when the wife died, the husband received one fourth of the property if he had children, if not, he took one half of the property. From the children, the sons had right to have two shares and the daughters only one.

As to being witnesses at courts of law, two female witnesses were equal to one male witness.

In owning property, the Islamic law permitted freedom in separation of private property and allowed the women to use their possessions as they chose. In April 1, 1717 Lady Montague wrote in one of her letters:

"The rich Turkish women are not afraid of their husbands because they could use their own income. Even the council (divan) would respect them."⁽¹⁷⁾

The architecture of the houses being divided into two parts as "haremlık" for women and "selamlık" for men, reflected the way of living of the Ottoman families. The harem part of the houses was made at the interior part looking to the

garden so that it would not be seen from outside by the intruders. At the middle of the garden there was a summer-house where there were pools with water jets.

Covering the body was considered to be a rule of Islamism, but it was applied differently in various places. In the previous periods of Islamism veiling of women was not prerequisite. While praying women covered their heads, but their faces were uncovered. In the Ottoman period veiling became such an indispensable condition that the image of the covered Ottoman woman became international. The covered city woman was removed away from the social life and became slave of the inside life of the home.

A set of orders, firman in the 16th and at the beginning of the 20th centuries regulated the women's living. These firmans not only set the fashion of the women's dresses, but also restricted the hours of going out for shopping and assigned special coaches and places for them in the city. Some of the empire's strange commands in the firmans about the women were such:

"Women are forbidden to enter cream shops (1603)";
 "Women cannot go on excursions (1787)"; "Women can only go out of their houses four days of the week, (Firman of Osman III); "It is forbidden for women to walk together with their husbands and sons and to pass from public squares, (Hegira 1278)^(x); The separation of women and men continued in the vehicles and at the beginning of 1900, the women who went to the summer houses and to the islands of Marmara Sea had to travel apart from men at the bottom parts of the ships."⁽¹⁸⁾

The women being drawn away from social life and productivity, were

(x) Mohammed's flight from Mecca to Medina; Muslim era reckoned from this period (A.D. 622)

confined to home life totally and formed the harem of the men. At the rural areas the women worked like slaves not only at their homes but also at the fields to help produce food and to make them ready for consumption. In the cities, being economically tied to men the women were the slaves of the family, of the religion and of their husbands who were the loyal servants of the State.

It would be useful to consider the emancipation of the Turkish women with the general tendency of modernism in Europe. For instance, in 1789 during the French Revolution the French women had to fight for their freedom as the French men. Among these women, Rosa Lacombe and Madam Roland, who were revolutionists, were considered anarchists when they supported women's rights and they were punished by death. In France in 1790 the priority of boys against girls in attaining inheritance was abolished. Both Talleyrand and Rousseau were against giving the women their rights although Talleyrand accepted that girls should be educated by the state until 8 years old. The 18th century feminist and writer, Mary Wolf Stonecraft, who challenged Rousseau and Talleyrand, observed the French Revolution very closely and wrote **Vindication of The Rights of Women** (1792) indicating that woman is not only created as a consolation for man. She said that this false system was established on the sexual mistake which took away woman's honour and she proposed equal opportunities for the education of girls to break away the sexual suppression. As the French Revolution effected all Europe, it also influenced The Ottomans. This can be seen in 1830, in the speech of Kaptan-ı Derya Halil Pasha, commanding head admiral of the Ottoman Navy Forces. Halil Pasha had said:

"If we do not hurry in adopting Europe, we shall have to go back to Asia." (19)

In the period of Tanzimat, in 1839, the Declaration of Gülhane Edict was seen as the first step in the attempt of advocating and protecting individual rights without any prejudicial discrimination between religions, sexes and races. Gülhane Edict brings forth a number of reforms and in the mean time symbolizes the beginning of the women's liberation movement. Various ideological currents which had their origin in Europe began to replace the Islamic way of thinking. A new thinking class, knowing foreign languages, followed the sociological and cultural changes and whatever took place in Europe and reflected these incidents in local papers. The thoughts of enlightening and liberating the Turkish women, began to show its effects slowly in such a medium. In 1860, in the paper called **Tercüman-ı Ahvâl**, which was edited by Agâh Efendi and İbrahim Şinasi, the subject of matrimonial relationships among Turks was handled and Şinasi's play called **Şair Evlenmesi** (The Marriage of a Poet), which criticized the men of religion, was published.

Namık Kemal, who became a well-known Turkish poet, published an essay called "Aile" (The Family) in a newspaper called **İbret**, where he handled the subject of the women's suffering. According to Namık Kemal, one of the most important causes of the fall of the nation and the family was the ignorance of the women. The education in the Ottoman Empire should be replanned in equal level to match the European samples and girls should be able to go to the schools to learn the contemporary values.

Another journal **Terakki**, of the same period published a number of essays finding the slavery and the low position of the Turkish women in married life shameful and pointed that they should be educated like the European women (20). Again **Terakki** had been the first paper denoting the necessity of the women to attain their rights and to take part in voting. (21)

Ahmet Mithat Efendi (x)¹ defended the equality of the women and men in his works called **Felsefe-i Zenân** and **Diplomalı Kız**.⁽²²⁾

In 1876 the Ottoman State passed onto the first constitutional government by accepting its fundamental legislation. Being proclaimed in 23rd December, this constitution contained the democratic reforms inspired by the West and it announced the beginning of an important period for Ottoman people. A passionate reformist Mithat Pasha (x)² was the one who contributed most to this constitution. Unfortunately shortly after the proclamation of the constitution, the Sultan, Abdülhamit, dismissed him from his office and in consequence the Ottoman Empire moved into a period of hard autocracy and aimed to revive a Pan-Islamism against the movement of Westernization. However, in spite of preventions, the number of women readers increased in important numbers and the women's newspapers and the woman writers paralleled this increase. In this period the women's newspapers involved such themes as motherhood, womanhood and Islamism, but did not consider to approach the women's political rights. ⁽²³⁾

The second constitutional period did not only bring the freedom of speech, but it also introduced all the types of freedoms and allowed the intensive discussions of the women's problems. In this period our women were not yet able to take office and rights in the Ottoman State. However the population of women readers increased and a group of intellectual women were formed. The girl's schools became popular and the women teachers used their career to earn their living.

Professional schools for girls started in Ruscuk and İstanbul after 1869. It was decided in 1843 that the education of midwifery should begin. At last in 1922-23 girls could enter the faculty of medicine as students.

(x)¹ Master; formerly used after a name as 'mister'; gentlemen.

(x)² general

In the second Constitutional period there are three ideological trends which had different approaches to the problems of the women: Islamism, Westernization and Turkism.

According to Islamism the Ottoman women should be protected from the effects of the European way of life, should not have the right of word in the governmental affairs and should stay at her home. At the same time , the legality of polygamy and the man's one sided right to divorce his wife was defended.

The defenders of the Westernization were divided into two groups: The moderates and the originators. The originators thought that the matters of the religion and the state should be separated and the real cause of the fall of the Ottoman Empire was the religion. The poet Tevfik Fikret was one of them. The medical doctor, Niyazi, a member of the Committee of Union and Progress ^(x). Another doctor Abdullah Cevdet and Selahattin Asım, the writer of the book called **Türk Kadınının Tereddidi** (The Deterioration of The Turkish Woman).

The defenders of the moderate Westernization supported the reformation of the religion and adoption of the Western technique but they would protect the Turco-Islamic culture. Whereas the originators would not only take the technology but would also defend the idea that progress would be attained by the adoption of cultural and religious values of the West. In other words the secularism of the west should be accepted. In his book, **Türk Kadınlığının Tereddidi** (1905), Selahattin Asım related that with the pressure of polygamy, slavery and veiling in addition to the strict religious rules, the Turkish women were in a pitiful condition. Not only the Turkish women but also the Turkish men were seen in a state of deterioration.

(x) a political party in power after the revolution of 1908 (İttihat Terakki)

For this reason all the religious rules and ideals which hindered the Turkish women and the men in their goal to progress were not to be accepted. One of our most important men of thought Tevfik Fikret, believing that the progress of the men depended on the progress of the women, said; " if the women suffer, then humanity will suffer too " (24) He believed in the progress of the Turkish women and had given positive inspirations.

The third ideology of the second Constitutional period is Turkism. Such intellectuals as Ziya Gökalp, Mehmed Emin Yurdakul, Halide Edip Adivar, Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver and Halim Sabit Şibay joined this current of thought.

Under the leadership of Ziya Gökalp , this current started first in Salonika among the writers of such journals as **Genç Kalemler** (Young Pencils) and **Yeni Felsefe Mecmuası** (The New Philosophical Periodical) . The Turkists believed that the fall of Ottoman Empire was due to the attitude of the moslems who could not adapt themselves properly to the new conditions of a changing world. According to them Islamism pressed the national culture and caused its regression. Therefore the national culture had to be revived . Ziya Gökalp believed that to adopt European culture would mean to leave the Turkish culture.

He divided the development of the Turkish family into the periods of clan, province, mansion and home. In the clans the women had equal rights with the men. The children were owned by their mothers. Yet since the mother's brother had legal authority, the mother could not enjoy her rights in such a matriarchy. In the provinces the ancestors were worshipped and both the women and the men received equal benefits from this fact. The mansion period started with the acceptance of Islamism by the Turks. As the Turkish customs disappeared by and by , Byzantian, Arabic and Persian cultures changed the Turkish family. In the mansions the women were locked in the Harem and held back from social life until they became second class citizens.

In the fourth period of the development of the Turkish family in the 19th century, the status of the family, as well as the other social institutions were taken into account with a critical attitude. The social structure was now changing. The women had to fill the positions left open by the men who were either killed in the continuous wars or had to take other jobs because of the economical reasons. As the effects of the European and American industrialism spread out, it became inevitable for the Ottomans not to be influenced by this process and new values began to replace the old ones. There was a change in the status of the Ottoman women. The home which was defined by Ziya Gökalp as 'a shelter for a family of one mate', began to replace the large families of several wives in the mansions.

The thoughts of Ziya Gökalp were not only influential in the declaration of the family decree of 1917, but were also very effective later on, in the formation of the reforms of Atatürk. For instance one of the intellectual women of that period, Halide Edip Adıvar, defined the women in her works as industrious and useful women in the national development, who were out of the slavery of the mansions, free of veiling, but working side by side with their men. Halide Edip was severely criticized by the conservative circles, because she defended the equality of the women and the men and took into hand the problems of the women. (25)

The destiny of the Turkish women changed a great deal with the efforts and the resistance to hardship that they put forward during the time of the War of Independence. The Turkish women struggled with the men against the enemy by holding demonstrations of protestation against the invasion in organized associations. During the First World War, the women worked in most of the positions of the men who went to war including the Red Crescent. The industry of the girls who worked in the inner parts of Anatolia for the defense of the country

as well as in several other professions was appreciated. It is necessary to pay attention to a news in a newspaper called **Türkoğlu** , in 30th December 1921 which said :

" Twelve Turkish women who worked in the Eskişehir War from the beginning to the end with their own means were honoured with medals."

One of them corporal Fatma was promoted and became a sergeant and the names of these twelve women was listed in the paper.

In addition to the news above Prof. Afetinan related an interesting remembrance from this period before the Republic, indicating the importance paid due to the education of the women by their families even at a time of war:

"At that time we were in Biga with our family, where my father was a forest investigator. This was a place where The National Independence Army fought and finally the city was invaded by the army of the enemy. My father was appointed to duty and went with the Independence Army. During these years, when Anzavur, on the side of the Sultan, invaded Biga, he forbade the education of the girls. When The National Independence Army took over, the schools for girls were open again. But this condition brought such a fear to the families that they could not send their girls alone to the schools and the number of girls decreased. In consequence our class of 30 pupils dispersed and I was the only student who graduated from the six year elementary school." (26)

During the Independence War in 1919, when the people was divided and dispersed, the women and men of common sense struggled for Independence together

against many difficulties and hindrances under the uniting leadership of Atatürk before they attained the deserved success.

In 21 March 1923 in Konya, Atatürk delivered a speech to the women of the city indicating how he appreciated the sacrificial work of the Turkish women :

"In the passionately sacrificial and struggling life of these last years, the work, the labor and the painful sacrifice of each individual in order to save the nation from death and to lead the way to independence, became apparent. In the mean time there is a labor which should be exalted and always remembered with gratitude and this is the highest, the most sublime and valuable devotional self-sacrifice of the Anatolian Women. Nowhere in the world and in no other nation, can be said to exist a labor of women to match the labor of the Anatolian village women. No women of any other nation in the world can claim to have striven more than the Anatolian women in order to lead their nation to independence and victory.

In fact our women have always lived side by side with their men. Not today but since the old times, for a long time, our women have trod the way with men, in wars, in agriculture, in earning their living not remaining a half a foot behind the back of their men. Perhaps the men have proved themselves by forming a shield of their breasts against the bayonets of the invading enemy. But the life sources of our army was worked by our women. The cause

of being of our nation was and is prepared by our women. It cannot be denied that in this war and in the others before this, the ability of living was always supported by our women. It has always been those sacred, self-sacrificing and highest Anatolian women who plowed and sowed the soil, who cut and brought wood from the forests, who brought and sold the goods in the market places, and who brought money home to make the living go. In addition to these, it was them, who carried ammunition to the fronts, either at their backs or in carts, with their babes in their arms, not caring whether it was raining or cold or hot. It was them, those highest, self-sacrificing and sacred Anatolian women. For this reason we must always celebrate and honor with gratitude these women of high sensitivity and spirit."(27)

Kara Adile Hanım, a woman who fought heroically during the War of Independence, saluted Atatürk on her knees when he came to Tarsus. Atatürk held her up with tears in his eyes and said to her:

"You, the heroic Turkish women you are not to stay on your knees., but to be carried up, high on our shoulders."(28)

As the women of Hittites, Amazones and 'İskit's, the Turkish women can work in any job as well as in the military service. She had inherited the quality of warriorship from her ancestors told in the name of the fabulous legend of King

Oğuz, in the tale of Dede Korkut^(x). In these legends there is a mother, a heroic warrior called Burla Hatun.

Girding her sword, Burla Hatun went and saved her son and her husband from the enemy with her forty slim girls under her command. This legend shows that the Turkish woman is able to fight heroically when it is urgent.

Dede Korkut made the following remarks to define the qualities of motherhood:

"One of the most sacred and beautiful people are the mothers who suckled their babes till satisfaction. Legends of King Oğuz defined the right of mothers as the right of God" (29).

Referring to this universal duty of women, Atatürk delivered a speech in İzmir in 3, Feb. 1923 saying:

"The greatest duty of women is motherhood. If one realizes fully that education of both boys and girls start in infancy, the importance of motherhood becomes evident. Our people are resolved to become a powerful nation. One of our major needs is to secure enlightenment for our women in every field. They shall become educated in science and in arts; they shall have the opportunity to attend any school and attain every level of education. When that happens, men and women will work together and will help each other."(30)

Atatürk stressed the primary importance of the women and thought that whatever was seen on the face of the worlds should be considered directly or indirectly to be the work of women. Atatürk had expectations for the young

(x) Dede Korkut is considered a sacred Oğuz poet of the old Turkish legends written in the XIVth century Anatolian Turkish. The locale of the episodes is the north eastern part of Turkey and Russian Kaukasia-Azarbeijan.

Turkish women. For this reason he imposed the equal education of the women and the men in sciences and in various other branches of learning. Through a reformation in 1924, the Turkish women won their rights of equal opportunity in education.

How should the Turkish women be according to Atatürk? He said that:

"The Turkish women should be the most virtuous, serious and fully enlightened women of the world. What is desired in the women, is the fullness of the mind with morals, virtues and dignity. The duty of the Turkish women is to rear generations who would protect and defend the Turkish nation with their minds and bodies."⁽³¹⁾

Atatürk determined the qualities of the Turkish women with certitude and accepted the fact that a nation's progress is due to the power and unity of the family life. Injustices and disintegration in the structure of the family life not only influenced the life of the community, but also caused economical and political instability. The division of work between men and women both in social and family life, forming a united labor, would build a strong foundation of life for the community.

The Turkish Civil Law became valid in 4 October 1926 and all the women gained their rights by the civil law. With this law they attained equal rights with the men in matrimony and as a result of this, polygamy was abolished. Divorce was not the sole prerogative of men, the women were given right to divorce their husbands. However in Turkey husbands want to divorce easily stripping themselves from the rule of fault which is considered a life saver for the rights of women in marriage.

It is a reality, that although polygamy was abolished by the law, it reigned in the villages illegally and even in some parts of the cities.

As Prof. Veldet Velidedeoğlu acknowledged, complete equality is not yet actualized. If we say that the thought of paying respect to women and equality of men and women did not become the belief of the men, we would be expressing a truth.

To expect the legal independence of the women, who are still economically dependent, would be to turn our backs on the reality⁽³²⁾.

After attaining legal rights through the Turkish Civil Law, it was now the Turkish women's turn to step in the political life. In 3rd of April 1930, the conditions to vote and to become a candidate in the municipal elections were fixed and the differentiation of men and women was dissolved. In 26 October 1933, the Turkish women were given the right to elect and to be elected head to the committee of elders in the villages. In 5 December 1934, the Turkish women attained the last and the most important of their political rights, which is the right to elect and to be elected to the legislative organs of the nation.⁽³³⁾ In USA the women attained their rights of election in 1920 and in France, after 200 years of struggle, only in 1945. ⁽³⁴⁾

It can be said that the Republican period, which began in 29 October 1923, is the golden period of the winning of the rights of women. The Turkish women of the cities could make use of their rights and the village women are becoming fast aware of their valuable economical use and service. They are no longer the misused and exploited citizens of the country.

During and after the War, the Turkish women in general have been the most sacrificing, hard working and productive citizens, who strived for the economical progress side by side with their men, but things have changed a great deal and still

are changing. The conditions of economical life are continuously improving and the means of communication, such as radio, television and newspapers inform the villagers on the ways of modern living. The village women are being made aware of their rights of citizenship and they are encouraged to use their rights and to better their standarts of living as the city women can.

The reforms of Atatürk did not only effect the living in the cities, but they were successful in influencing and improving the life of the population of the villagers. The progress of the reforms is still continuing. This is a natural progress imbedded in the minds of the people and it will not be hindered.

NOTES

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- (3) Edit Hamilton, **Mythology**, A. Mentor Book USA, 1940 (p.35)
- (4) Azra Erhat: **Mitoloji Sözlüğü** (A Dictionary of Mythology) (Remzi Kitabevi, İstanbul, 1972) p.70-71.
- (5) Aristoteles: **Politika**, Trans. by Mete Tunçay, (Remzi Kitabevi, İstanbul, 1975) p.9.
- (6) Hesiod: **İşler ve Günler (Works and Days)** trans. by Yakup Baydur (MEB, İstanbul, 1949) p.20.
- (7) Eflatun, Devlet (Platon, **Republic**), Çev. Sabahattin Eyüboğlu-M.Ali Cimcoz (Remzi Kit. İstanbul, 1962) p.223.
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- (8) Prof. A. Afetinan: **Atatürk ve Türk Kadın Haklarının Kazanılması** (İstanbul, MEB. 1968) p.7.
(Atatürk and the Winning of the Turkish Women's Rights)
- (9) The same work, p.9
- (10) The same work p.36.
- (11) Topaloğlu, B. **İslam'da Kadın** (Women in Islamism), (Yağmur Yay. İstanbul, 1977) p.35
- (12) **Kur'an-ı Kerim ve Türkçe Anlamı (Koran and The Turkish Meaning)** (Ankara, 1973, Nisa Suresi 3)
- (13) **Kur'an-ı Kerim ve Türkçe Anlamı** (Nisa 19)
- (14) Ibid. (Nisa 20)

- (15) İbrahim Agâh Çubukçu: "İslamda Kadın Hakları" (The Rights of Women in Islamism); **İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi** (Journal of the Faculty of Theology) CXXXI, Ankara 1976, pp.41-42.
see: Prof.Dr.İbrahim Agâh Çubukçu "Törelerimizde Kadının Yeri" **Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi** (Review of Atatürk Research Center)
- (16) "Tarih Önünde Kürtler" (Kurts Before History) **Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi** (Review of Turkish History with Documents) 6 March, 1968 İstanbul (March 6, 1968)
- (17) Prof. Dr.A.Afetinan **Atatürk ve Türk Kadın Haklarının Kazanılması** (Atatürk and the Winning of The Turkish Women's Rights), p.55.
- (18) Nora, Şeni, "Osmanlı Cumhuriyetinde Kadın" (Woman in the Ottoman Republic) **Yapıt Dergisi** (Yapıt Journal), p.69. (Özel Kadın Sayısı, Şubat-Mart 1985), (A special addition for woman, Feb. March 1985).
- (19) Nermin Abadan, **Social Change and Turkish Women** (Ankara Üniv. 1963) p.4.
- (20) B.Caporal, **Kemalizmde ve Kemalizm Sonrasında Türk Kadını** (Turkish Women during and after Kemalizm) Çev. Ercan Eyüpoğlu (İş Bankası Kültür Yay. 1982) p.55.
- (21) Emel Doğramacı: **Status of Women in Turkey** (Meteksan, Ankara, 1984) p.146
- (22) B. Caporal, p.59.
- (23) Ibid, pp. 66-67.
- (24) Prof. Dr.A. Afetinan: **Atatürk ve Türk Kadın Haklarının Kazanılması** p.89.
- (25) Neclâ Arat, **Kadın Sorunu**, p.114.

- (26) Prof.Dr. Afet İnan **Kurtuluş Savaşında Türk Kadını** (The Turkish Women in Independence War) (TTK Ankara, 1985) p.7-8.
- (27) Doç.Dr.Türkân Arıkan (Deputy of Edirne) **Atatürk'ün Türk Kadını Hakkındaki Görüşlerinden Bir Demet** (T.T.T. 1985). p.13-15
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- (29) Prof.Dr.A.Afetinan: **Atatürk ve Türk Kadın Haklarının Kazanılması** pp.49-50.
- (30) Doç.Dr.Türkân Arıkan: **Atatürk'ün Türk Kadını Hakkındaki Görüşlerinden Bir Demet** pp. 23-25.
- (31) Ibid.
- (32) Günseli Özkaya: **Tarih İçinde Kadın Hakları** (T.T.K. Ankara, 1985) p. 37.
- (33) Ibid, pp. 40-41.
- (34) Necla Arat. **Kadın Sorunu**, p.5.

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