

MAJOR CHALLENGES FACED BY TURKISH WOMEN: LEGAL EMANCIPATION URBANIZATION, INDUSTRIALIZATION*

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Introduction

As we are entering into the last quarter of the 20th century, it becomes more obvious that the customs and manners of two thirds of the women of the world are changing to a greater extent in our lifetime than they have changed during the past two thousand years. These fast changes are directly related to deep rooted structural modifications as well as to challenges caused by wars, revolutions, and the belief in the value of women's liberation. Thus the U.N. decision to attempt to create a kind of world opinion, some sort of universal consciousness by declaring 1975 Women's Year, is by no means accidental. It is the consequence of the intertwined processes of decolonization, national liberation movement, and the desire to create sound bases for universal values of equality and equity.

Glancing quickly back over the evolution of feminism, a causal relationship may be detected between massive social structural changes and changes in the status of women. In the West the first strong move was inspired by the French revolution. As Olympe de Gouge said correctly, "As a woman has the right to mount the scaffold, she should also have the right to the tribune."

Indeed the emancipation of women, as a rule, has proceeded hand in hand with a lessening of class differences or as in

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the case of the United States with a demand for egalitarianism based on achievements for both men and women. In Europe, where the dismanteling of feudal structures took a long time, the newly emerging bourgeoisie classes did not only fight for larger political rights, but encouraged also the educated women of the middle classes for more comprehensive political participation. Inspired by writings such as John Stuart Mill's "The Subjection of Women", long established Western democracies attempting to solidify the bourgeoisie class position, started to extend the right to vote. As a result of successful public campaigns, the first state in the United States gave the right of franchise as early as 1869 in Wyoming, while in Europe the pioneering role fell upon the Northern countries such as Finland (1906) Iceland (1907), Denmark (1910), Norway (1915). Upheavals such as the First World War induced conservative political systems such as Great Britain too to give their women the right to vote.

Parallel to these political rights, the vindication for more legal protection of the married women in regard of the administration of their property and the demand for better educational opportunities represents hot issues to be debated for decades.

However the more significant phase of women's emancipation remained to be the industrial and economic ones. While the democratic aspirations of women involved a struggle of one sex against another, it was also between classes. The mechanical process and the industrialization which changed the structure of Western societies towards the middle of the 19th century also shifted the center of social gravity from the home to the factory. The home was no longer the unit of the social organism. The harsh working conditions of new industries, which employed preferably cheap female and child labour required comprehensive social welfare legislation to remedy its sharpest injustices. This is the starting point of a long struggle, best known under the motto "Equal pay for equal work" One of the major reasons why this goal is partly not achieved even in the West lies in the fact of the concentration of women in occupations that are closely related to tasks they have fulfilled in the past of their traditionally defined scope of activities within the family.

With other words, as long as work division as one of the determining factor of class structure, remained unchallenged, the achievements of the first phase of Western feminism remained unchallenged. Furthermore this type of emancipation served almost all developing countries as an unquestioned model of modernization.

Yet new challenges are not provoking responses solely from passing traditional societies. With the move towards gigantic corporations, fused even in competitive systems with the state, new problems are emerging. These highly industrialized societies, which definitely want to escape from the overwhelming controlling power of new Leviathans, are putting question marks in front of all kinds of societal intersection such as majority minority relationship, social integration versus segregation, changing attitudes of the working class, tacit approval of consumption oriented action patterns. This is the main reason why during the 70's we are confronted in the West with a new women movement, labelled shortly as "Women's Lib". This movement challenges job discrimination based on sex based protectionism, degrading advertising which reinforces a doll-like female role, marriage solely for security, socialization of children according to authoritarian lines and tries to create new sex mores, more positions for leadership for women, the right to abortion, the free choice of maternity.

While the West is wrestling with the magnitude of new proposals formulated by radical thinking women, yet containing important problems of the future society, the Third World is challenged both with the achievements of their emancipated counterparts as well as with bold proposals, which oddly, while not echoed by the concerned part, still receives much attention and concern by planners and politicians. Such is the problem of family planning, which is in many cases so far not spelled by innumerable suffering mothers, while the population explosion itself causes serious concern to the policy makers of any given society.

This short recapitulations helps us to realize that despite of different traditions and religious values, modern socio-economic developments have brought to each society under different forms an extensions into the middle class of certain features

which for a long time were characteristic only of lower or working class women. With other words, all agrarian societies have their women actively participate in the production process - without considering their equitable remuneration. Only when new technologies and a new division of labor intrudes in modernizing societies and the so far idle living middle classes witness the entrance of their daughter in the active population that equilibrium seeking measures are sought after and the redefinition of women's place in society becomes necessary. Moreover, the degree of participation of women in the labor force, provided this participation is accompanied with efficient legal protection, can be used as an index for the "advanced" status of a country, in the same manner as its per capita income, literacy, newsprint, consumption, transportation, communications, life expectancy, morbidity, and so on. Briefly change in the status of women appears to be primarily the product of strong challenges coming from outside or inside of a given society.

This reflection brings us to our specific topic: What have been the major challenges faced by Turkish women which changed drastically their status both in the family and in society?

Legal emancipation

No doubt that the bold reform undertaken by the founder of the Turkish Republic Mustafa Kemal ATATÜRK, especially in regard of the status of women, is a gigantic swing towards the West, which no Islamic society so far ventured upon¹. Furthermore it has to be stressed that Atatürk in formulating his reforms related to the status of women, was thinking first on their place within the Turkish family. By liberating Turkish women, he wanted to lay down the foundations for a more egalitarian and harmonious family life. He wanted that Turkish women's goal, like that of men, is to develop a life style that uses her energies and capabilities in such a way that she functions in her various roles, efficiently and productively. Atatürk was determined to liberate women from their secondary and subdued role that consisted solely of being a commodity of exchange, a producer of offsprings, shortly a sex object. He said in March 1923:

1 Halide EDIP, *Conflict of East and West in Turkey*, Sh. Muhammed Ashraf, Lahore, 3rd Ed. 1963, Sh. 111

"Our enemies claim that Turkey cannot be considered a civilized nation, because she consists of two separate parts, men and women. Can we shut our eyes to one portion of a group, while advancing the other and still bring progress to the whole group? The road of progress must be trodden by both sexes together, marching arm in arm²."

Of all Atatürk's westernizing reforms, the emancipation of women carries a double distinction: it definitely represents priority over a number of planned reforms. As an example one can cite the administrative decision of Istanbul's head of the police four days before the proclamation of the Turkish Republic to abolish the segregated compartments on the street-cars of Istanbul, October 24, 1923³, and the fact that none of the vital innovations concerning women were embodied in any law. Whereas the turban and fez were outlawed by the Hat Law (No. 671-25.11.1925), only local ordinances were directed against the veil. Actually Atatürk similar to his approach of all his reforms preferred to ripen a receptive positive public opinion by setting a style, showing inspiring examples⁴. It was during the early years of the Republic that encouragement for the appearance of women on the stage, enrollment in universities, participation in sports, intermingling of sexes on social occasions was mostly encouraged under his leadership. But Atatürk was not satisfied simply by introducing bold innovation in relatively narrow, closed circles. He wanted above everything else to change the fate of Turkish women at large. And because his remarkable attachment and respect before law and organization⁵, he set out to introduce a complete new legal framework

2 Enver Ziya KARAL, (ed.), *Atatürk'ten düşünceler* (Ankara: İş Bankası, 1956), p. 52

3 50 Yıllık Yaşantımız, 1923-1933, Vol. I, Milliyet Yayını, 1975, p. 115.

4 Mustafa Kemal had admonished Amanullah Khan, the king of Afghanistan on the King's visit to Turkey to go slow on the issue of prohibiting the veil. But the progressive King apparently did not heed this advice. When Mustafa Kemal received the news that the King had promulgated a decree to prohibit the veil in his country, his immediate response was, "Pity we will loose the man; I have instantly told him not to take this issue, it is a pity". Soon enough a reactionary uprising, forced Amanullah Khan to leave his country. Hasan Rıza SOYAK, *Atatürk'ten Hatıralar*, (Memories from Atatürk), Ankara 1957, Vol. 1, p. 278.

5 Dankwart A. RUSTOW, Atatürk as Founder of State in *Abadan's Armagan*, SBF Yayını No. 280, Ankara 1969, p. 545. Throughout his career this thought prevailed in Atatürk's decision: "There certainly is a Right, and Right is above Force."

for the regulation of family relationship in order to solidly implant his most cherished ideal, equality between men and women.

The most important date for the advancement of Turkish women was the adoption of the Swiss Civil Code on October 2, 1926. With the adoption of a complete system of Western private law, Turkey's legislators wanted to emphasize the importance they are attributing to firmly implant equality before law irrespective of fez and to strengthen the status of the Turkish women within the family. This decision, qualified in legal terms as "reception", made polygamy illegal, gave the right of divorce to women as to men, made civil marriage obligatory, by its significant silence allowed marriage between Muslims and non-Muslims, lifted any difference between men and women in terms of inheritance⁶. In one respect, however, the weight of custom had forced a change in the new code. The minimum age for marriage, which was twenty for men and eighteen for women in the Swiss Civil Code, were reduced first to *eighteen* and *seventeen*, later in June 1938, to *seventeen* and *fifteen* respectively.

The Turkish Civil Code, in line with its Swiss prototype, does not allow absolute equality between husband and wife. The husband is the head of the family, the wife must follow the husband, who alone is entitled to choose a domicile, unless the wife by applying to court, may justify on acceptable grounds such as health, etc. her own choice. The wife is required to participate in the expenses of the household by assuming tasks in the household. In case the wife wants to exercise a profession, she has to obtain the open or tacit consent of her husband, in case of refusal she might apply for arbitration to court. Since the rule is a system of separate ownership of property, she may dispose freely of her material goods and has unlimited rights of ownership over all her acquisitions⁷.

The Turkish Civil Code grants both sides the right to ask for divorce. The grounds for divorce can be classified in two

6 Nermin ABADAN, Turkey in Raphael PATAI, (ed.), *Women in the Modern World*, Free Press 1967, p.p. 94-95.

7 Sabine DIRKS, *La Famille Musulmane Turque*, Paris, La Haye 1969, Mouton, pp. 34-40 The French Civil Code as well as the German were rejected because they attribute a too subjugated role upon the woman within marriage. See SAUSER-HALL, *Reception des droits europeens en Turquie*, p. 3344.

groups: specifically stated ones are desertion, ill treatment or adultery, and those of general nature such as incompatibility of character. Since the adoption of the Turkish Civil Code divorces have rapidly increased; divorce is mostly sought in big cities, by couples married from six to ten years. The majority of the divorces are those of childless couples and the most frequent quoted grounds are incompatibility of character, followed by desertion⁸.

Another innovation brought about by the Turkish Civil Code is temporary separation of the marriage partners (Art. 38) with a duration of 1–3 years. At present much discussion goes on in the media about the rigidity of the Turkish jurisdiction in regard of divorce.

Legally religious marriages are not recognized. They may be carried out after the civil ceremony. This practice is widely practiced in rural areas of Western and Central Anatolia. However religious practice as the sole basis for marriage is still widely spread in the countryside under the name of "Imam marriage". The absence of formal registration of a large number of newly formed households has given way to urgent demands in the field of legitimization of children. The recognition by law of these children born out of wedlock has been realized by a sequence of special laws: Nr. 2330–1933, Nr. 4727–1945, Nr. 5524–1950, Nr. 6650–1956. The total figure of registration under these laws is 7.724.419 children⁹. Since then another set of laws have been discussed and promulgated which concerns the fineless registration of children born of illegal unions, the enlargement of the competence of local authorities in terms of recognition of these illegitimate children and the establishment of a legal link between the child born and her mother. These laws are Nr. 461–11.3.1964, Nr. 4–8.4.1965, Nr. 578–17.4.65¹⁰.

How was it possible to transplant a complete alien legislation in a country of totally different culture and able to admi-

8 Sabine DIRKS, *op. cit.*, p.p. 40–44; Nermin ABADAN, *Social Change and Turkish Women*, SBF Yayını, Ankara 1963, pp. 21–23; Kemal KARPAT, *l'Etat de la famille Turque*, CAGDAS, Istanbul 1946.

9 Nermin ABADAN, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

10 A.I. INAN, *Fili birleşmelerle bunlardan doğan çocukların tesciline dair kanun, yönetmelik ve sözleşmeler*, (Les lois, l'administration et les conventions concernant l'enregistrement des enfants des d'unions illegitimes), Ankara 1965.

nister these laws with success since about half a century? The answer lies as much in the attachment to the values produced by Western civilization, Atatürk so fervently attempted to implant in Turkish society, as in the changes produced by the slow but constant evolution which already began during the Ottoman rule. Although these early attempts did not result in any successful and meaningful reform, nevertheless it was these kind of social challenges that prepared the ground for the later decisive deep changes.

Indeed emancipation of women began in Turkey in the first half of the nineteenth century. Those in favor of a radical Westernization of Turkish society asked for the introduction of monogamy into the imperial household, including the elimination of the Sultan's odalik (concubine); free choice of feminine garments; non-interference of the police in the private life of women; greater consideration toward women in general; freedom of choice in matters of marriage; the suppression of intermediaries in marriage arrangements; the creation of a medical school for girls the adoption of a European civil code; the abolition of polygamy in general; and the outlawing of repudiation, that is arbitrary and summary divorce¹¹.

Another group of intellectuals of that period, deeply imbued with ideas of Turkish nationalism, who qualified the call for European education nothing, but Montmartrian immorality deplored polygamy, repudiation and the veil.

Even the Islamic traditionalists who advocated the detention were ready to coincide women the right to dispose of their own property, to walk alone in the streets, to frequent women's organizations and to attend primary and secondary schools.

Although women's life in the Ottoman empire was hemmed in by innumerable restrictions, it would be erroneous to assume that they were completely passive sufferers. Their struggle for more and better education was carried on vigorously in the last quarter of the 19th century. As a matter of fact already under Sultan Abdul-Aziz in 1863 a college for the training of women teachers was founded in Istanbul, followed by the ope-

11 Pervin ESENKOVA, *La femme turque contemporaine, éducation et rôle social*, Extrait de la Revue IBLA, Tunis 1951, B. 285.

ning of primary schools for girls. The first women magazine, entitled "Progress" (Terakki), appeared in 1869¹². Under Sultan Abdulhamit another weekly, called "The World of Women" began to be published. Its contributors and editorial staff were all women. Women writers of that time were no longer mere poets singing of love, of nightingale and nature; they studied deeply the social and educational questions which affected their lives¹³.

Turkish women got their real chance in 1908. The return to constitutional monarchy brought men into power position whose political and social creed laid strong emphasis on women's education. During this period women started to organize themselves. The first women club, "Taali Nisvan", not only invited lecturers and opened courses, but founded under the vigorous and energetic leadership of Halide Edip, the famous writer, day care centers for children. During the Balkan war, the women section of the "Red Crescent" founded in 1877, trained the first nurses. After the creation of some kind of "Women university" (Nisvan Darulfünun), regular courses for women students were started from February 7, 1914 on in the university of Istanbul. On January 1914 the first seven Moslem employees were recruited by the telephone company in Istanbul¹⁴.

Nevertheless all these innovations and achievements were the accomplishment of members of a privileged, urban elite. The prevailing majority of the Muslim-Ottoman population still clinged to the idea, that there is a definite male supremacy. Reknown writers such as Namik Kemal and Tevfik Fikret repeatedly deplored the traditional anti-feminine attitude in the realm of education¹⁵.

It was the big challenge from outside, the death blow which the imperialist states of the West attempted to administer, which helped the Turkish average urban women to accede new fields

12 Gotthard JAESCHKE, Die Frauenfrage in der Türkei, *SAECULUM* X, Heft 4, p. 361.

13 Halide EDİB, *op cit.*, p. 194.

14 Charlotte LORENZ, Die Frauenfrage im Osmanischen Riche mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der arbeitenden Klasse, in *Die Welt des Islams* 6 (1918), p. 82.

15 Enver Ziya KARAL, Kadın Hakları Sorunu ve Atatürk, *TÜRK DİLİ*, Vol. XXXII, No. 290, Nov. 1975, p. 608.

of activity such as employment in banks, public schools, central and municipal administration, hospitals. Its most obvious evidence was the astonishing high participation of women protesting on the square of Sultan Ahmed in May 1919, the occupation of İzmir by the Greeks. The political consciousness of Turkish women found its most eloquent in the speech of Halide Edip. The innumerable, anonymous female soldiers during the war of independence were the proof of this astonishing process of politization. This explains why Atatürk started his speech on February 3, 1923 with a deep acknowledgement of the deeds of Anatolian women. Rightly he promised: "The Turkish women have fought bravely for national independence. Today they should be free, enjoy education and occupy a position equal to that of men; they are entitled to it"¹⁶.

This brief assessment shows that Turkish women indeed did not agitate massively as suffragettes for their political rights, but when mortal danger fell upon the country, they contributed substantially to its salvation. Thus the rights and liberties which were bestowed upon them, were actually fought for and are more than deserved.

Atatürk's most striking characteristic was his habit to provoke open discussions, seeking constantly to ferment public opinion and then to proceed to action in order to set innovating examples. In his major speeches prior to the adoption of the new Civil Code, he constantly underlined the necessity to acknowledge the inherent equality between men and women, the necessity to train better educated mother since the future is bringing Turkey as well as other countries more complex structures needing more qualified human beings. It is through these means and under his leadership that the social resistance slowly melted of its own accord as women are admitted to the various professions and finally to politics. Whereas in 1923 there was not one secretary, in 1927 the first lawyer appeared before court, the first woman judge and prosecutor occupied their respective chairs in 1930 and the first woman diplomat was admitted into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1932. Political rights were

16 Enver Ziya KARAL, (ed.) *Atatürk'ten düşünceler*, Ankara 1956, p. 52. For a detailed account of Atatürk's statement about Turkish women, see Tezer TASKIRAN, *Women in Turkey*, Translated by Nida Tektaş, Redhouse Yayınevi, İstanbul, 1976, pp. 49-65

given to the Turkish women in three phases: in 1930 in municipal councils, in 1933 for the eldermen councils in villages and in 1934 in parliament. As a result in 1935 seventeen women were elected deputies to the Grand National Assembly¹⁷.

The explanation for the spreading and strengthening of Atatürks bold reforms which no doubt created as an indirect impact sharper contours of cultural dualism than ever lies in the fact that the fertile ground which was prepared through the unrelentless intellectual efforts for modernization, finally found effective leadership to translate these aims into measurable actions. One may say Atatürk acted as a kind of societal Pygmalion, who produced the new symbols of the young Turkish Republic on a production line.

The legal emancipation certainly strengthened the position of the Turkish women within the family. The threat of repudiation, of polygamy, being banned at least partially and especially among the younger generation, a new concept of family life has emerged which is based on mutual rights and duties. Equality within the family not only changed the status of women, once widow or orphan by equalizing inheritance, but also by supplying the women to some extent with coercive legal power. In case of adultery, if the husband's involvement was proved "in fragranti", the Penal Code provides - upon grievance on behalf of the other spouse - a penalty for both partners starting from 3 months up to 30 months. (T.C.K. Art. 141). These penalties can be dispensed in case the complaining part, in this case the wife, takes back her complaint.

Even so, traditional institutions such as the paying down of the bride price and elopment of minors - punishable by law are still exercising their influence as their disappearance largely depends of the economic evolution of society.

Status of women in urban and rural setting

The drastic change of the status of Turkish women be it within the family or in a larger context, became meaningful

17 The representation rate of Turkish women in parliament have been since 1935 as follows:

1935: 4.1 %; 1939: 3.4 %; 1943: 3.3 %; 1946: 2 %;

1950: 0.6 %; 1954: 0.7 %; 1957: 1.3 %; 1960: 0.7 %;

1965: 3.1 %;

Nermin ABADAN, 1965 *Seçimlerinin Tahlili* (The Analysis of the 1965 General Election), SBF Yayını, Ankara 1966, p. 349.

only in urban settings. Today still traditions, mores and even superstition still prevails with the impact of rigid social stratification. The essential reasons for the traditional, secluded behavior of its rural womanhood is closely related to isolation and autarchy. The greater the observance of the "Gemeinschaft" type of social patterns, the less any attempt to make use of personal abilities for the development of a free personality. As Mübaccel B. Kiray correctly points out¹⁸, not the internal cohesion and rigidity of the extended family structure and value system intensifies intergenerational conflicts, on the contrary, even extended families - as it will be shown in the case of external migration - are showing an unexpected amount of flexibility. The real reason for traditionalism lies within the rigidity of social stratification. When, and if better distribution of wealth, appropriate institutions such as rural social security insurance, efficient cooperatives, good public services, hospitals or whatever other devices become established as aspects of social life in villages, then only the family cease to provide alternatives and under given circumstances to continue to reinforce the authoritarian decision making pattern.

The big discrepancy between rural and urban centers no doubt explains the sharp difference of skill acquisition, educational level, vocational orientation between rural and urban women. In spite of its fast degree of urbanization, - the annual average rate of population increase in big cities was 5.2 in 1940-50, 9 % in 1950-60 and 11.1 % in 1960-70. Turkey still accounts as an agrarian society¹⁹. 62 % of its total population of 40 million lives in 1975 in rural settlements, Again 75 % of its active population of 10,9 million belongs to the peasant class. When we consider that 49 % of this active population is female and that in Turkish villages, females between 7-70 are engaged in all kind of agricultural activities, one comes to the conclusion that half of the agricultural output of Turkey lies on the shoulders of its female peasant population, which still is far from being able to benefit of the legal reforms, implemented half a century ago. While the fertility rate in the urban sector amount to 3 %

18 J. HINDERINK and M.B. KIRAY, *Social Stratification as an Obstacle to Development*, Praeger Publ. New York, 1970, p. 195.

19 Baha TUNALIGIL, Kutsal kesimde kadın, *Politika*, 4/11/1975, p. 6

it climbs up to 7 % in rural surrounding²⁰. Until the early 1960 s, the Turkish government's official stand was for the encouragement of population increase. It was only after 1960 that the idea that existing policies might be in opposition to national goals gained some recognition. Thus a change in the existing laws was formulated in the First Five Year Plan, which went into effect in 1963. A General Directorate of Family Planning was subsequently established within the Ministry of Health and from 1965 on, a new law passed legalizing the sale of contraceptives and the dissemination of information concerning them. However the impact of family planning remains still limited due to the fact that among the rural female population it is predominantly women who already have behind them an average of 4-5 live or 8-10 live still births who are volunteering for the usage of intrauterine devices and other contraceptives.

The Turkish peasant woman continues her life cycle far from any social security, in midst of a myriad of exploiting relationships. Economic, social, religious and traditional dependencies are still depriving her from claiming those legal rights her urban counterpart are so able to claim and to defend.

One of the most important criteria enabling us to measure the degree of modernization of the Turkish women is the rate of fertility. According the findings of the Hacettepe Institute of Population Studies, fertility is varying according economic and social development rate. While the average number of children in rural areas of Turkey 6.12 % it is around 3.88 % in urban areas. Further broken down, we see that it totals to 3.30 % in Ankara, 2.91 % in İzmir and 2.65 % in Istanbul.

It is often claimed that the most important determinants of fertility are the level of education and level of income. Both of these determinants are tightly related to urbanization and industrialization, since increased urbanization also means increased literacy and higher degree of education. While the average amount of fertility among illiterate women is 4.2 %, this average falls to 3.2 among literate, to 2.8 among primary school graduates, to 2 % among secondary graduates and to 1.4 among

20 Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, *Türkiye'de Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Gelişmenin 50 Yılı*, (50 Years of Turkey's Social and Economic Development) Ankara 1973, Publ. No. 683, pp. 62-63.

university graduates²¹. The same trend can be witnessed in terms of income. The relation between yearly income and fertility reveals itself as follows:

Table 1: Number of Children according to Income
(Average of married women between 14-44)

Yearly income per persons (TL)*	Number of births
11- 500	4.6
500-1000	4.3
1000-2000	3.8
2000-4000	3.0
4000-	2.7

Source: Serim Timur, *Nüfus Artışı ve Mesleklerle göre Ailelerin Nüfus Sorunları* (18 TL.=1 \$)

In so far as education is the only door of escape for all "second class citizen" women of the Third World, it can not be looked upon as an independent vehicle of change. Because education becomes only meaningful when its recipients are able to use it as a tool for given economic and social functions. This observation explains partly why inspite of the tremendous efforts spent on education for half a century in Turkey, the picture of its rural female population is still far from representing a liberated, independent minded, self conscious womanhood.

One of Turkey's brightest young social scientist, in fact a woman, Serim Timur, attempted to verify the hypothesis whereby as a result of social change, industrialization and urbanization, the extended family is being superseded by the independent nuclear family. Her findings have proven that family types vary depending upon the types of economy and relations of production and that property ownership (especially land) is an important determinant of the extended household. The proportion of nuclear families is highest among illiterates and the highest educational group, where as it is lowest among those with middle level education. Nuclear families predominate

21 Serim TİMUR, *Türkiye'de Aile Yapısı*, (The structure of family in Turkey), Hacettepe Yayını, No. D-15, Ankara 1972, p. 176.

among farm workers and small farmers in rural areas and among unskilled laborers in urban areas, all of whom are mostly illiterate or poorly educated. The characteristic family type of among professionals and civil servants in urban areas who have university education is also nuclear. On the other hand, extended families are prevalent among large land owners and among those who own middle-sized farms in rural areas and among artisans, retailers, etc. in urban areas who have medium level of education²².

When the family ceases to be the unit of production, the patriarchally extended family breaks down. Economic limitations prevent all but the fairly well-to-do from actually maintaining such extended households. Extended households, functioning as common production and consumption units, form a small percentage of village households; one of the major factors to sustain the bride-price tradition, is the extended family.

Family types thus not only determine the continuation or end of institutionalized traditions such as the "bride prize", but also help to define the status and roles of the family members. It is the family type which determines the power structure in the family and family modernity. In both urban and rural areas, the patriarchally extended families represents the most traditional and nuclear families the least traditional.

According the national wide sample of Timur's survey, the distribution of intrafamilial relations according family types has been established by using a set of modernity indexes. These indexes are as follows: visiting friends with the husband, permission to go out without a covered head, wearing short sleeved dresses, permission to shop by herself, permission to visit female friends alone. The results reflect a very interesting pattern:

22 Serim TIMUR, *op. cit.*, p. 178

TABLE 2:

Degree of modernity according to family type and settlement places in percentage (22)

Degree of modernity	Nuclear	Family type Transitional	Extended	Total
	Three big cities / Villages	Three big cities / Villages	Three big cities / Villages	Three big cities / Villages
Modern	69- 5	59- 3	47-22	62- 3
Transitional	27-25	32-26	7-13	28-24
Traditional	4-70	9-70	46-85	10-72

Source: Timur, Serim Türkiye'de Aile Yapısı, Hacettepe Yayını, No. D-15 Table 60, P. 111

Three big cities: Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara

The table clearly indicates that where ever extended (patriarchal) family relationship prevails, which means even in metropolitan centers, such as Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara, traditional behaviour on behalf of the women is expected. One of the most blatant example of the impact of family type on the status of women reveals itself on the eating pattern of rural women.

Timur's inquiry on eating pattern in villages according family types has shown that while in nuclear families living in villages 91 % are eating together. Among the extended families of rural background only 71 % are eating together. In 23 % of these families there is segregation at meal time and with 5 % of them, the daughters-in-law are eating even separated from the other female members of the family²³. This pattern varies also according to the regional belongingness, the extended families of Eastern provinces ranking with 60 % first and Western Anatolia with 8 % last.

Migration and emancipation

The strength of the family structure in determining a given pattern of behaviour which promotes or suppresses the free development of women, can be once more witnessed when measuring the impact of external migration on left behind family members. A recent comprehensive survey on family members of the town of Boğazlıyan and the surrounding villages in the

23 Serim TIMUR, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-113

province of Yozgat, which ranks high in the migration quota of Turkish migrant workers in Federal Germany and Holland provides similar data. The question how the money sent from a migrant abroad is to be spent and how other important issues related to the family are taken has been answered as follows:

TABLE 3:

Financial and other decision making according family types in Bogazliyan and villages in percentages

	Nuclear		Extended		Total	
	Finan- cial	Other	Finan- cial	Other	Finan- cial	Other
Male in household	7	9	34	43	17	22
Male out of household	7	28	2	8	5	21
Elderly female in family	5	6	18	23	10	12
Wife	68	50	28	20	53	39
Others	6	4	11	2	8	4
No answer	7	3	7	7	7	4
	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Nermin ABADAN-UNAT, R. KELEŞ et al., *Migration and Development*, A Study of the Effects International Labor Migration on Bogazliyan District Ajanstürk Press, Ankara 1976, pp. 334

Indeed the absence of sizable portion of males especially in villages with a high rate of migration have definitely shaped two types of married women in rural areas: the one which remains under the tutelage of the extended family and because of the long absence of the husband is even more subjugated and suppressed than ever. The other one, who is living alone with her children - this being obviously the preferred and more typical solution. She enjoys through the means of sustained financial independence an unaccustomed amount of social freedom of movement and choice. How this relative freedom, which increases with age - the younger women being also subject to social control -, is used, whether it actually contributes to a larger extend to conspicuous consumption²⁴ rather than production is a separate question which cannot be discussed in the context.

24 Nermin ABADAN-UNAT, *Implications of Migration on Emancipation and Pseudo-Emancipation of Turkish Women*, Paper presented at Wellesley Conference, June 3-6, 1976

While no doubt the peasant women due to the spreading of radio and TV takes more and more interest in politics, being less mobilized and more motivated and nourishing great aspirations in regard of the education of her children, by and large the most universal characteristic of most Turkish families in rural areas, and to some extent also in urban areas, seems to be the subordination of women. We would like now to investigate to what degree the non-agrarian employment conditions of Turkish women have changed this prevailing pattern.

Turkish women in industry and professions

The flux of Turkish women into industrial jobs, at home and abroad as well as in the professions is no doubt one of the consequences of rapid urbanization and industrialization. In 1970 35.8 % of the Turkish population was living in urban areas and it is estimated that the last census will round up this figure to 40 %. Not only the percentage of urban population, but at the same time the number of cities, namely those settlements of 10,000 and more increased to a great extent in the last three decades. The number of cities has risen from 98 in 1945 to 264 in 1970 and it is expected to reach 350 in the last census. Since this urbanization is not a healthy one, but a "demographic concentration",²⁵ the first question to be treated is whether the surplus population pouring out from the villages into the towns due to the mechanization of agriculture are able to find any employment and what is the position of women in this respect?

Legally speaking both urban and rural female citizens enjoy since 1961 on special protection within the framework of the Constitution, which stipulates in Art. 35 that "the foundation of the Turkish society is the family. The state and other public organizations are bound to take necessary measures for the protection of mother and child. The same constitution stipulates in Art. 43 special conditions according which children and women are not allowed to be put to work, finally Art. 58 guaranties all Turkish citizen the right to take up public service irrespective of any discrimination on the basis of sex, race, re-

25 Turan YAZGAN, *Türkiye'ye şehirleşmenin nüfus ve işgücü bünyesine tesirleri*, (The impact of urbanization on population and manpower), unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Istanbul University, Faculty of Economics, 1967.

ligion. Yet appearingly all these guaranties seems to be insufficient to extend the newly accumulated women population in cities protection for the obtainment of employment. Since the great majority of rural women constitute the majority of illiterates in Turkey - according the census of 1970 out of 29.4 million who are 6 years and above, 4.6 million (38 %) are male, 8.7 million (62 %) are female - they enter the labour market with a minimum level of education, skill acquisition, work experience and discipline. This fact explains too, why practically their only outlet is the service sector. Indeed there is a remarkable increase within this sector: 75.334 in 1960, 103. 968 in 1965.²⁶

In this respect the most relevant fact is that economic participation within the active population decreases as the size of settlement increases.

TABLE 4:

Male and female participation of the economic population according size of settlement (Census of 1960)

	Active men Mill.	Active women Mill.	Total Mill.
Settlement with a population less than 10.000	5.34 (42 %)	5.00 (39 %)	10.35 (81 %)
Settlement over 10.000	2.21 (17 %)	196.686 (2 %)	2.40 (19 %)
in other words:			
out of a total of	9.50 mil. women in rural areas		
	5.00 mil. are active		- 52 %
While out of a total	4.08 mil. in urban areas		
	196.686 women are active		-4.8 % (24)

Those women who due to an unfinished or completed primary school education are able to find gainful occupation in industry, where they can benefit of a multitude of social security measures, are in an overwhelming majority concentrated in the category of production workers, craftment and repair work. The number of women employed in these occupational groups increased from 136.670 in 1960 to 144.948 in 1965.

The steady flow from villages to the cities and further to foreign labour market has also lead to an astonishing number

26 *Statistical Yearbook, of Turkey, 1973, Ankara 1974, D.I.E.- State Statistic Institute Publ. No. 710, p. 48.*

of women migrant workers. Mostly employed in the automotive, electronic, textile and food industries, their number rose alone in Federal Germany from 173 in 1960 to 135, 575 in 1973²⁷.

While the active women in agriculture so far have not been covered by any substantial social security organization except for sporadically scattered mother and child health centers, attached to the Ministry of Health, the Turkish female worker employed in industry is in a much better position in terms of legal protection and social welfare, although a great amount of it remains so far only on paper.

To begin with the vital question of equalization of wages between sexes has been settled within the Labour Law according which Art. 26 guaranties equal pay for equal work and prohibits any discriminating provisions in collective bargaining. The same Law prohibits the working of female workers six weeks prior and six weeks after birth (Art. 79). Furthermore the General Hygiene Act (Art. 177) precludes that pregnant women may not be employed in any functions which endangers the health of mother and child three months before birth. In addition mothers who are nursing their babies have to be given permission to go home one hour earlier to nurse her baby or rest at work during the first six months twice every day for a duration of half an hour during working hours (Art. 177). A new decree treating spacial conditions concerning night work for women workers (Decree Mr. 7-6909-27-7-73), prohibits extra work at night, classifies the various of dangerous work unsuited for women, prescribes the obligation for the employer to provide transportations for female workers employed in night shifts, prohibits the employment of women at night until six months passed of their last birth giving. Another decree promulgated also in 1973 (Nr. 7/6821 - 20.7.73) deals with the obligation of establishing nurseries in work places with 20 female workers, day care centers and kindergarden in establishments with over 100 women workers. The nursing rooms have to be at a distance not more than 250 meters, the day care centers for children of 0-6 years not further than 1000 meters (Art. 6). The financial aid providing agency to the expectant mother

27 Nermin ABADAN-UNAT, *Turkish Workers in Europe, 1960-1975*, A Socioeconomic Reappraisal, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1975, pp. 7-9.

in case of delivery, during her nursing period and for regular medical visits are elaborately cited under the heading of "Motherhood insurance" (Art. 43-51) in the comprehensive Social Security Law, Nr. 506 of 17/7/1964.

As briefly indicated, similar to the pioneering efforts of Atatürk, which lifted the Turkish women literally speaking on the highest pedestal of equality, the Turkish law makers since attempted to meet the needs of the gainfully employed women in industry by covering her demands through a farsighted legislation. However as it can be witnessed even in the most advance countries, legal provisions are by themselves unable to ameliorate or change a given situation.

The undeniable fact remains that the constant growing number of gainfully employed women in the services and industry are confronted with a myriad of new problems for which they are far from being equipped. Starting with the implementation of a rationally applied, mutually agreed upon family planning approach - demographic research indicates that especially in working class milieus this responsibility still is placed solely upon the women²⁸-the heavy and tiring double function of breadwinner and mother/wife demands for quick solution of a great array of problems. The most essential ones are better possibilities for appropriate education, sufficient pre-school/establishments for the youngster. Considering that early socialization determines to a great extent individual and collective behavior, the seriousness of these problems speaks for themselves.

Looking over the remaining part of Turkey's industrial female manpower one should not forget that almost the equivalent of the gainfully employed women within Turkish industrial establishments works abroad as migrant workers. It is quite relevant that of the great majority of the women migrant workers in Federal Germany, 78 % is married and of these 88 % are together with their husbands²⁹. In many cases a complete reversal of the traditional roles can be/witnessed. Because of the scarcity of employment at home a great number of husbands

28 Serim TIMUR, *Fertility and related attitudes among two social classes in Ankara*, unpublished Master Thesis, University of Cornell, 1965.

29 Bundesanstalt für Arbeit, *Repräsentativ-Untersuchung* 1972, Nürnberg 1973, p. 20.

to an astonishing amount from less developed provinces too have encouraged their wives to seek employment abroad in order to benefit from their spouse gainful employment. Although a considerable amount of children are trusted with grandparents at home, other relatives, neighbours or acquaintance during mothers employment in Europe. There are a considerable amount of cases in which fathers try to assume the responsibilities of child care³⁰. Here we witness a clear-cut role reversal in which the wife is the principal breadwinner and the husband the primary child-carer. While such arrangements often lead to serious conflict within the family such as divorce, taking a second wife, this shift in role assuming nevertheless leads toward an increasing participation of the husband in household duties. However the rule remains to keep the traditional division of labor. Serious conflicts are arising about budget.

Independent wage earning wives wants to establish separate banking accounts, which to decide mutually on joint investments. All these innovative changes, together with the grave problem of raising children either in an alien surrounding as "bilingual" illiterates" or deprived of parental care and affection represents only some of the many problems which Turkish families are facing abroad³¹. The fact that most of these families are extremely conscious of their religious affiliation and are scrupulously following religious rites such as fasting, praying, pilgrimage has to be emphasized. It could even be said that living as a minority with low social status reinforces, instead of decreasing, religious feelings.

Professional women and their problems

Looking on the developmental trend of Turkish women, it is not surprising to find out that the most conspicuous, positive development has taken place among the various groups of educated women in the field of liberal professions and public services. Although so far we are not in possession of detailed sta-

30. At the end of 1972, an estimated number of 195.000 Turkish children were living with their parents in Federal Germany. 46 % were in the age group of 0-6, 22 % between 6-11, 17 % between 11-16 and the remaining 15 % were elder than 16. *Repräsentativ-Untersuchung* 1972, p. 23.

31. Aysel KUDAT, *Stability and Change in the Turkish Family at home and abroad: Comparative Perspectives* International Institute of Comparative Social Studies, Berlin 1975, Preprint, p. 91.

tistics according to their marital status, one can assume that at least half of the women of this group are spouses and mothers at the same time. It also has to be added that while they do not constitute an important proportion, their numbers increase at a higher rate than of their male colleagues³².

Indeed the percentage of women among administrations related to the general budget has increased from 7.7 % in 1938 to 21.6 % in 1970. Similarly in the economic state-enterprises their rate has doubled from 10 % in 1938 to 19 % in 1970. The distribution of women among the various branches of the public sector is also interesting. The highest number of women working in government agencies in the Ministry of Education (31.6 %), followed by the Ministry of Tourism and Information (26.3 %), the Ministry of Health and Social Assistance (22.2 %) and the Ministry of Labour (19 %). It seems that women officials show a tendency to work in increasing proportion in services which are being slowly pre-empted by men and which generally have a social service content³³. Trying to find out which are the major reasons which push women to work as public officials, one has to cite at first hand economic ones. Secondly, while the percentage of illiterate women at large is very high, the schooling (mainly elementary) of girls has covered quite a remarkable ground. At present about one fourth of the students in higher education are girls. Out of 104,304 newly registered university and higher education students in the academic year of 1974/1975, 25,574 were girls. About the same rate prevails among the teaching staff. There were a total of 14,210 academic personnel at the same date, out of which 3,423 were women of various academic rank³⁴.

Another important development to note is the impact of work on the fertility rate of urban employed women. A study carried out in 1968 shows that the average live birth rate of urban women at work was 2.9, while that of women who never worked outside the home was 3.5.

32 Mesut GÜLMEZ, "Türk Kamu Görevlilerinin Sayısal Evrimi", (The numeric evolution of Turkish Public Servants), *Anıme İdaresi Dergisi*, Vol. 6, No. 3, September; 1972, p. 44.

33 Oya Çitçi, Women at Work, *Turkish Public Administration Annual*, Ankara 1975, p. 159.

34 State Statistic Institute, Statistical Figures related to Higher Education Enrollment in 1974/1975, Ankara 1975, Publ. No. 734, p. 119.

The necessity to combine career and the function of homemaker given way as in many other countries to certain conflict situation. This might explain why a substantial portion of employed women in public services (42 %), consider it difficult to make a balance between family life and career. This fundamental conflict, according a recent survey leads women to discontinue work³⁵. In this respect education plays the most important role in keeping the desire of professional activity alert. While only 16.6 % women with higher education wanted to discontinue work, this ratio went up to 47.8 % among women with technical education. The decisive factor in continuing or giving up work is not primarily concerned with harmony in marital life, but rather economic necessities. Turkish women by and large are entering gainful employment in public services for financial reasons and are contributing to the family budget. Once a relative ease in income is secured, the likelihood of discontinuing depends largely from their professional background. A new legislation actually an amendment of the pension law effecting public servants (Nr. 1992 - 3/7/75) makes it possible for women public servants to act for retreat after the completion of 20 years of active service.

Interestingly enough four fifth of husbands with professionally active wives, are looking upon the participation of their wives in the professions positively. However an important point has been well observed by a promising young Turkish social scientist, Oya Çitçi; because women feel themselves compelled to work for economic necessities, their emotional ties to work are low and they are not particularly motivated to obtain advancement and promotion. The majority of Turkish professional women look upon work not as a mean to liberate them from social control and biased opinions, but rather as a mean to become a better family woman³⁶.

Summing Up

During the first half century of the Turkish Republic, Turkey's womanhood has been confronted with important challenges. Legal emancipation permitted Turkish women to free them-

35 Oya Çitçi, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

36 Oya Çitçi, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

selves of a legitimized disqualification in favour of men. They became equal before the laws. The second important challenge, the transition to multiparty system and the extension of franchise to all citizens over 21, placed upon the shoulders of the Turkish women voters a heavy and responsible task. The increasing share of political interest among women can be explained by urbanization, mobility, changed life expectancy, changing norms, development of contraception. However there is still a long way to go. Similar observations can be said in terms of the changing position of Turkish women due to industrialization and increased internal and external migration movements.