THE PROCESS OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN TURKEY*

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Before entering the subject I deem it necessary to make my approach clear to the social and political development problems in Turkey and the frame within which I will present my arguments. My approach will be a deterministic one because, in a given society, the political and economic organizations are the direct reflections of the basic modes of production. It would be futile to search for a bourgeois culture in agricultural societies where close market transactions are predominant. What is doubly important, however, in such societies it is impossible to find neither conscious proletarian movements which advanced economic systems would inevitably produce, nor conflicting classes that would create revolutionary, energetic, and progressive circumstances. On the contrary, the institutions of superstructure one could find in such societies are a political structure in the control of the landed gentry, a traditional and fatalist culture, and inert masses incapable of rationally determining their interests. Moreover, in such societies, low level of specialization, lack of cooperation, and economic inertia - all, by-products of pre-industrial close market economy - would create a static social structure. And, low level of conflict of economic interests would be insufficient to give way to a society of classes and society would be a "status society" giving real credit to birth and title instead of accomplishment and specialization.

It would be impossible to base the reasons of underdevelopment on a social-economic foundation and to pinpoint the factors hindering Turkey’s development into an industrial society in

* Translated from the Turkish by Dr. Oral Sander.
the class structure of the Turkish society unless we deal Turkey's development and transformation problems with such a structural analysis.

It is important to start our analysis with the Ottoman Empire. There are manifold reasons for this: first, if our main theme is the reasons behind Turkey's underdevelopment, the need for going into the roots of this process would clearly manifest itself and to look for these roots in the socio-economic and socio-cultural structure of the Ottoman Empire would be inevitable. Second, when Mustafa Kemal proclaimed the Turkish Republic in 1923 he was in no position to create a totally new society. Some groups, classes, and structural peculiarities, along with the relations of production were transferred into the young republic.

Political and Social Development

Political and social development is a process in which a traditional society transforms itself into an industrial society. A traditional society is a society with a fatalist culture where relations of production are exercised in a feudal edifice and where feudal landlords and spiritual leaders exercising monopolistic powers are the dominant forces; it is based solely on agriculture. And there lies in the direction of political and social development the modern industrial society. To put it bluntly, in modern industrial society privilege is given to specialization and accomplishment and blood, in-law, and tribal attachments are transformed into national attachments. It has a pluralist power structure, atomized family, incessant cooperation and specialization, all emanating from industrialization. Thus, when we accept the process of transformation from a traditional into an industrial society as a process of social and political development, our aim crystallizes as finding the reasons behind Turkey's lack of industrialization and in this sense her underdevelopment.

The Class Basis of Development

It must be stated clearly that development can only be realized through classes which would benefit from such a development. In this sense political and social change is not a process that can be directed by divine power. Political structure is the
superstructure of a socio-economic order, and in this sense it has an economic and a class basis. Why in one society a military-bureaucratic political elite has the political power, and in another a balanced parliamentarian regime is popularly supported? Or, why a certain society is able to produce the necessary elements of fascism and the other directs its energy toward a communistic economic development? The only plausible answer we can give to these questions is that they are not mere coincidences. Such political organizations as dictatorship, democratic regime, evolution or revolution develop and are materialized in their most appropriate circumstances. Briefly, they are closely related to the nature of the infrastructure. In this sense, in a political structure where relations of production are traditional and feudal, the political structure emanating from feudalism will reflect the power of the landlords. Such political power, by its very nature would desire to prolong its duration in power by hindering social and economic progress, simply because transformation in the relations of production will also give way to change in power structure and the new dominant classes depending on a new mode of production will bring down the classes depending on the feudal mode of production. For these reasons, as the interests of the feudal landlords lie in defending the feudal infrastructure, industrialization could only be realized through classes benefiting from it.

Now at this point it can be stated that the most important reason behind Turkey’s and the Ottoman Empire’s underdevelopment is that in neither societies had the classes that would benefit from industrialization come to power. Chiefly because of this and because of foreign pressures exerted easily under these circumstances, the Ottoman Empire was unable to accomplish the industrial revolution and the Turkish Republic has been unable this far.

_Social and Political Order in the Ottoman Empire from the Point of View of Relations of Production_

Ottoman Empire had not chosen underdevelopment as a way of living; it was forced to remain underdeveloped. The reason is that classes benefiting from industrialization had never co-
me to power in the Ottoman Empire. In other words, it is very
difficult if not impossible for the socio-economic conditions
created by the corrupt order to give way to social forces that are
powerful enough to change the corrupt order. And such an
order was maintained by happy minority groups in the Ottoman
case. Now, let us take a brief look at the Ottoman history since
the XIX. century from the point of view of common and popular
allegations.

The reason of underdevelopment of the Ottoman Empire
was not narrow-mindedness; narrow-mindedness can only be
the outcome of underdevelopment. The elements hampering
industrialization in the Ottoman Empire were imperialism and
dominant groups in the Empire allied with it. These groups, in
close cooperation with imperialism, retained such an alliance not
because they very were much in fond of imperialism but because
their economic interests were pointing towards that direction.

The economic structure of the Ottoman Empire, where the
palace and people dichotomy determined the social structure,
could not prepare the grounds for the accumulation of capital in
definite hands and thus for a leap to capitalist mode of pro-
duction. As powerful a state as the Ottoman Empire dominated
by a military bureaucracy, was against every independent de-
velopment that could compete with itself. Agricultural regime was
a vivid example. State owned lands were distributed among peo-
ple rendering best service to the state in return for training a num-
ber of soldiers to the state. The son had no right to inherit or
make use of the plot. Thus, capital accumulation was scarce and
incapable of affecting the mode of production. In Europe, ho-
wever, the capital accumulation had resulted in the establish-
ment of independent trade centers challenging the state authority and
in the appearance of a new class, the bourgeoisie, having large
sums of capital in its service. In the Ottoman Empire, on the other
hand, the Palace bureaucracy, while crushing every element capable
of independent development for the purpose of maintaining its
dominance, had not only hampered the development of a bour-
geois class but also put an end to industrialization and technology,
the consequent products of a bourgeois society.

The Ottoman State was not controlling the relations of pro-
duction only in the agricultural sector by way of this lease system.
It had established a similar control over industry. Industrial units which were held within the frame of "Ahilik Sistemi" (a kind of disciplined artisans guild) were originally attached to the government by way of their leaders. The government had a wide spectrum of influence from surveillance to price controls. Along with the fact that the apprentice, assistant-master and master were attached to one another in a disciplined hierarchy, this state control had hindered the development of an independent and competitive industry. On the other hand, agricultural measures, rendering the strengthening of an agricultural bourgeoisie impossible, had prevented the realization of the principal prerequisite of industrialization: the transfer of agricultural surplus to industry.

The government was applying similar and strict control measures over trade too. This control, which greatly hindered the rise of a trade bourgeoisie, was not only applied to import but also to export goods of the Ottoman trader. For example export duty was up to 33% in olive-oil. Some items were refused to be exported altogether and the Ottoman trader was tied up in bureaucratic requirements even in those which were permitted.

As a result of this strict control every single socio-economic development which could compete with the Palace was eliminated at its inception and while in the West the state apparatus was occupied by classes getting stronger with the changing economic structure of the society, power in the Ottoman Empire had remained monopolistic and unchallenged. In the West, as a result of bourgeois explosion, state had gradually become a police-state protecting the property of the dominant social forces. In the Ottoman Empire, however, state was like a dam stopping every current towards a bourgeoisie society and thus towards industrialization.

Western developing industry and technology had started to find raw materials and markets while the Ottoman Empire was maintaining its attitude running counter to historical trends. As production rose rapidly it rebelled against national borders being a part of the superstructure and the forces of imperialism began exerting pressure on the customs of the underdeveloped countries. Under these conditions the Ottoman Empire was forced to accept the superiority of Western technology in the
battle-fields and thus she was stripped off of her conquest in-
comes. Government was forced to change the regime of state lands,
which were, in turn, leased to contractors with the aim of increa-
sing income to the treasury. Thus, powerful contractors gained
control of the land. They preferred to export their product than
to sell it in domestic markets, because industrialized European
countries were in a position to give higher prices to raw materials
than the Ottoman industrialist, simply due to their low cost of
industrial products. Their pressing need was to find foreign mar-
kets for their increasing factories and industrial goods. Thus,
as a result of pressures from within and without, 1838 Trade
Agreement was signed. Ottoman Empire was now fully in the
orbit of Western imperialism. With the reduction in customs
duties the Ottoman Empire did not only lose her most important
state revenues, but also her industry was left without the protec-
tion of customs barriers against the increasingly developing
Western industry, and her already lean structure was left to deca-
dence. Henceforth, land contractors, who were economically
obligated to depend on foreign forces along with the class of tra-
ders created by free-trade conditions, became the dominant class
in the Ottoman Empire. This corrupt and parasitical coalition,
allying itself with the bureaucracy after the Tanzimat (Reforma-
tion of 1839), could not even maintain the integrity of the country
and forced the state into a position of receiving foreign aid for
its survival, let alone carrying out its responsibility in developing
the country. To give an example, it had become inevitable, for
the British interests to defend the Ottoman Empire against Russi
a in the Crimean War of 1854, because the former was a liberal
trade area as opposed to latter’s high customs duties.

In the following years German investments and railroads
policy formed the most rational way of exploitation in the Ot-
toman Empire. The first railroads investment in the Empire was
realized in 1856. This kind of investment not only secured for
the companies high profits but also opened new possibilities for
the industrial centres of the West of cheap and easy access to
Ottoman raw materials which they were desperately in need of.
For example, after the railroad had reached Ankara in 1893, Ger-
many’s export to the Ottoman Empire rose from 11,700,000 to
40,900,000 marks and its import from 2,300,000 to 16,000,000
marks. In the Empire, deprived of her protective customs bar-
riers, trade and industry entered a phase of decline and while industrial units were closing one by one the government was forced to receive its first foreign credit in 1854 for the purpose of covering the increasing budget deficit. As a result of these processes the land bourgeoisie had further strengthened itself in the society with the help of some legislative actions towards the establishment of land propriety and increased its political and economic investments in the name of its Western allies.

This coalition of land and trade bourgeoisie benefiting from Western imperialist exploitation transformed the Ottoman society into an agricultural society tied up to the West, and, as a last resort, established the Duyun-u Umumiye (General Debts Organization) under the control of the Europeans which made the Ottoman Empire the political and economic satellite of the Western powers by operating as an autonomous organization within an "independent" state.

Developments in the Turkish Republic

It is a widely shared view that Kemalist movement was a bourgeois revolution. I accept this assertion in so far as it was the Kemalist revolution that brought the parliament-the superstructure of a bourgeois system- to Turkey. But, the Kemalist revolution had, in itself, effective bureaucratic and military elements. The effort of these elements to build up a state in Anatolia had something to do with creating a structure within which they could serve and make a respectable living. In this sense it is quite possible to consider the political and economic actions of the military bureaucrats of the Republic as the extension of the Ottoman bureaucrats. In a justifiable anxiety of protecting the weak republic, every development and accumulation outside the frame of the state was viewed with suspicion and it prevented every possible competitive force. It must not be forgotten, however, that the Turkish Republic was not a static society as had been the case in the early Ottomans. There were classes in the Ottoman Empire, but these were generally represented by professional categories; the society was founded on the accord rather than conflict of classes. In such a static society brought together by an authoritarian religious framework, it was only possible to
speak of a dominant class, and that was the class of palace military bureaucrats. But in the later years of the Empire with the above-stated economic factors, we witness the advent of classes reflecting established economic relations and their role in the collapse of the Empire.

It is possible in the Turkish Republic to demonstrate positively, the existence of classes in a Marxist sense reflecting conflict of economic interests. Nevertheless, these classes were united together within one-party structure of the state. The dominant class of bureaucrats, in their historically determined tendencies, maintained their dominance vigorously against these economically conscious classes. Meanwhile the political developments of the world entered a phase of rapid change and we witnessed the victory of bourgeois democracies over Germany.

After the Second World War an effective wave of yearning for democracy dominated the Turkish political scene. When a new class of traders, which got rich by way of wet-time transactions, was tried to be crushed down by the state by way of income tax, loud cries for democracy gained strength, and, finally, when the economic interests of the powerful class of land bourgeoisie was threatened by way of an agricultural reform these dominant classes found it in their interest to break the narrow frame of one-party system and rally within a new party, the Democratic Party. And when land and trade bourgeoisie left the Republican People’s Party (R.P.P.) they also successfully left the blame of their thirty years of common mischieves entirely on the bureaucracy. The people with the bitter memories of the destitution of the one-party rule and the Second World War had supported these classes, the classes which were, in essence, completely alien and against their economic interests and went so far as believing that even “their ugly wives would seem to be beautiful” under their rule.

This coalition of dominant classes have dragged the society to the direction pointing towards their interest using the power of the D.P. as an appropriate means. Industrialization was still a distant future. A merchant earning millions from imports will desperately try to maintain the order of exploitation lest he should lose this profit as a result of industrialization. Those who own assembly industries and claiming to be national industrialists
are, in fact, in opposition to real industrialization due to the fact that they will lose their comfortable and easy gain. Taking into consideration that real industrialization could only be attained through agricultural surplus, it becomes crystal-clear why the landlords and land bourgeoisie oppose industrialization. They will refuse the taxes that will deprive themselves of large profits for the sake of industrialization.

The industrial, agricultural and trade bourgeoisie comprising the Democratic Party rule, was forced to abandon power for a brief period on the 27th of May, 1960, because of its economic blunders. Following a short interval we witness the return to power of this coalition by way of the Justice Party (J.P.), the heir apparent of the Democratic Party. But, in the mean time, it must not be forgotten that Turkey was no longer the Turkey of 1950's. Turkey was now a developing country even if she was in the threshold of a long endeavour. Development through foreign capital, the corner-stone of J.P.'s economic philosophy, has created a large number of small industrial units. These units -of which the majority were assembly industry - have strengthened the industrial bourgeoisie within the frame of the coalition of dominant classes, and crushed the dominance of the land and small trade bourgeoisie. It becomes clear that the latter classes will not benefit from capitalist industrialization if we were to take into account the examples of the establishment of an aluminium factory forcing many copper workshops out of business and such big cooperatives as Gıma playing with the "daily bread" of petty-bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, it is clear that large capital has started to crush down small business. In 1963 the worth of production per workshop was 1,131,298 T.L. In 1967 this sum has increased to 2,272,253 T.L. Value-added of workshops employing more than ten workers has increased from 100 to 220 between 1963-1967. The common increase of value added of small and large-scale production, on the other hand, has increased from 100 to 169 during the same period. Taking into consideration that in this average the place of large-scale business was 220, it becomes clear that small business has gained very little under the J.P. rule.

A rapid development of the bourgeoisie was witnessed in 1950's. In this period there had never been a clash of interests
between the big business and petty bourgeoisie. On the contrary they were in a power union. But developing industrialization has inevitably broken this coalition and the land bourgeoisie joined the rank of petty bourgeoisie against the big bourgeoisie rightly realizing that industrialization could only be realized at their expense. Consequently, this coalition of dominant classes is now in the process of rapid disintegration. The first symptom of this process was the so-called 41's voting against the budget within the J. P. And the fundamental reason of this uneasiness within the ranks of the J. P. is the revolt of the petty bourgeoisie against finance capital's crushing dominance.

Despite the appearance of development, Turkey will not attain a healthy industrial progress and it will be very difficult for her to create social forces working for that end so long as assembly industry remains the backbone of her economic endeavours. The big bourgeoisie will try to maintain this economic order being closely attached to foreign economies in place of industrialization which, they think, will be against their economic interest. Industrialization will benefit workers and peasants and therefore can only be realized under their rule.

Within this frame what is the latest political situation in Turkey? J.P. is a class party in the sense that although it seems to depend on a broad spectrum of masses it is in fact at the service of the dominant big bourgeoisie. The latest disintegration within its ranks clearly shows that Turkey is on her way of capitalist development which is in conformity with historical determinism. The R.P.P. on the other hand, is in the process of becoming a class party by breaking up of its mass party characteristics. Since the bourgeois elements left over from the split of the 1950's established a separate Reliance Party, the R.P.P. has become more worthy of its name. But there are still some elements within its organization defending economic interests falling counter the the latest strategy of depending on workers and peasants. If this dominant and fragile coalition breaks up and the disintegration within the J.P. materializes, Turkey will then be able to fight for democracy within a healthy sociological frame where everyone will find his right economic and social place.
The R.P.P. should come to power by social democratic means. This recent school of thought in the R.P.P., rightly diagnosing that the reasons for under-development and inability to materialize land reform is because of the economic infrastructure reflecting a political structure dominated by social forces opposing real industrialization, will have the strength to make these reforms when it comes to power if it starts representing classes benefiting from industrialization and land reform. If not, a R.P.P., maintaining right-wing social forces within its structure, will be doomed to remain as a spare part of the J.P. When this happens, Turkey will be unable to make necessary moves and thus the vicious circle will remain untouched.

I believe that Turkey will develop with classes benefiting from industrialization in a democratic process. The examination of the results of the 1969 elections has shown that Turkish political life has been reversed. The D.P. and the J.P. receiving most of their support from the developing and socially dynamic regions, lost considerable amount of support in these regions and increased its support in backward parts. The R.P.P., on the other hand, has increased its support in developing regions while losing its strength in the East and Southeast, the former strong R.P.P. pivots. What are the reasons behind this?

The J.P. is a political entity promising services that can be considered as primary for modern societies such as water supply, roads, electricity and schools. For this reason it has been very successful in provinces which have traditional cultures, which lack increased cooperation and specialization, and in which closed agricultural economy is predominant. Turkey's Eastern and Southeastern cities, whose political and economic consciousness could not reach national level like that of the Western ones, considered themselves within the narrow limits of citizenship and thus voted for the party that would respond to their regional necessities. Moreover, the unbreakable hierarchy of great landowners and the Sheiks, the power of which could not be abolished completely even as of today, is decisively against change and reform.

But, in the Western regions and the developed Black Sea coasts, the slogan of change in social and economic order has taken root. These atomized, specialized regions producing for open markets, have themselves lived within an economic and
political order working for the interests of the dominant classes. The producer, realizing that political power has the right to determine a minimum price for his product with total impunity has clearly understood on whose side the political power is, and made up his mind that the existing order of things must change. Although this decision was not given as yet by large masses, it will not be very optimistic to say that it will be shared by the majority of the people in those regions in not so very distant future.

The following table which compares city by city 1969 elections results with those of 1965, shows the increase and decrease in the votes of the J.P. and the R.P.P. If one examines the table closely one will come to the conclusion that the J.P. has lost support in the developing and the R.P.P. in the underdeveloped regions of Turkey.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>J.P. Decrease</th>
<th>J.P. Increase</th>
<th>R.P.P. Decrease</th>
<th>R.P.P. Increase</th>
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+ Cities where Justice Party showed a decrease and R.P.P. an increase.
* Cities where R.P.P. showed a decrease and the Justice Party an increase.
● Cities where both parties suffered decreases but where the J.P. losses were comparably more than the R.P.P.
× Cities where both parties suffered decreases but where the R.P.P.'s losses were comparably more than the J.P.
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Because of the Reliance Party.
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<tr>
<td>× Tekirdağ</td>
<td>-10,2</td>
<td>8,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because of the Reliance Party

In order to understand more clearly the nature of the distribution of votes and which parties do the developed and under-developed regions of Turkey vote for, it is worth while to show in separate tables the developed and underdeveloped provinces of Turkey according to Turkey’s averages. The ratio of employment of the economically active population in the sectors of industry and services, urbanization, distribution of income and the ratio of literates to the provinces are taken as indices of development.
DEVELOPED CITIES

Adana  Gaziantep  Manisa
Ankara  Hatay  Rize
Aydın  İçel  Sakarya
Balıkesir  İsparta  Uşak
Bursa  İstanbul  Zonguldak
Çanakkale  İzmir
Denizli  Kayseri
Edirne  Kırklareli
Elazığ  Kocaeli
Eskişehir  Kütahya

In the 14 of these 25 cities the R.P.P., has increased its votes and in 9 of them suffered less losses than the J.P. On the other hand, J.P. suffered great losses in all of the cities except in Isparta.

UNDERDEVELOPED CITIES

Adıyaman  Gümüşhane  Sinop
Ağrı  Hakkari  Siirt
Artvin  Kars  Tokat
Bingöl  Kastamonu  Tunceli
Çankırı  Maraş  Van
Çorum  Mardin  Urfa
Diyarbakır  Muş  Yozgat
Erzurum

Among these 22 cities the J.P. has increased in 9 cities and suffered less losses than the R.P.P. in 6. On the other hand, the R.P.P. has increased its support only in 4 cities and suffered considerable votes in 18 cities. Only in three of them its losses were
less than those of the J.P. Generally, while the J.P. has shown an increase of 3.2% in the Southeast, the R.P.P. has lost 9.4%. The ratio in the East are -3.6% for the J.P. and -6.7% for the R.P.P.

These tables show that those sections of the Turkish society which have reached national level of consciousness support the slogan of change in social and economic order. Turkey will undoubtedly develop and developing capitalism will yield its antithesis. This has already happened in the Western regions and will happen in the East as the inevitable result of the dynamic of development.

When a social democratic R.P.P. comes to power representing the interests that would benefit from industrialization, not only an independent industrial society will be created but also the social forces that will stubbornly and eagerly maintain such a society will rise.