THE NATION STATE AND THE INDIVIDUAL: ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES OF CONSENT 'FROM BELOW'

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The Turkish nation state project introduced itself with drastic reforms which had without doubt great influence on the institutional levels of society as well as on the private life of the people. However, a Western type of state-subject relationship did not develop. The nation state model and the introduction of a Western type modernity was introduced "from above" and remained to a large part at the legislative and administrative level alien to the individuals' experiences. Thus, in Turkey we can witness an articulation of a relatively modernized institutional body together with strong traditional family/kin networks which act as alternative means of social control and organization. These alternatives are perceived by the members of society as more efficient mechanisms to gain access to their goals. How do the individuals or better family/kin networks develop strategies to overcome the inefficiencies regarding the state institutions in responding to the needs of the individuals? It was seen that mainly through such individual strategies access was gained to resources concerning for example housing, employment, social security, education and health. We argue that these individual strategies constitute an alternative social organization "from below" which does not necessarily contradict the state's modernization goals, and in effect it completes the inefficiencies of the state institutions.

I. Introduction

The concept of the state developed in the 18th century European tradition was understood as a dimension of society, thus, state had the right to direct every aspect of social life on the basis of a social contract with the individuals and/or families (Hobbes, 1962; Rousseau, 1968; Zaretsky, 1983). On the other hand, a debate emerged discussing this understanding of the state and stressing that state interference should be on a minimum level and only function as a coordinator. In the nation state formation processes of 19th century Europe, however, the theoretical perspectives which supported state intervention gained predominance (Held, 1982). In the experience of Turkey, an attempt was made to shape a nation state after the modern model of a European nation state and a concomitant nationalist ideology was to be created (Hann, 1994). The nation state experience of the Turkish Republic was in a sense a continuation of the central oriental state of the Ottoman Empire. Hence, a tradition of central authoritarian rule has become the "rule of thumb" in determining the political, social and economic affairs of Turkish society.

The Turkish model tried to eliminate the historical, cultural and geographical barriers which separated the country from "modern" Europe. There was an attempt to construct a new "national" culture, new institutional arrangements and establish "modern" behavioural patterns and values taken from European "modernity".

The emphasis on rationality and science which emerged out of the Western Enlightenment also put great marks on the Turkish modernization perspectives. Thus, laicism (secularism) took its stand against the Islamic traditionalism of the Ottoman period; a modern state bureaucracy, representative government and an electoral system against the centralized Ottoman rule; the nation state against the imperial state; a European (Swiss) civil code against the Islamic law. The technological developments, the institutions of law, education, finance and the bureaucratic administrative structures were all borrowed from the West. Thus, legal codes were imported; script, dress, and personal names were changed; religious matters became subject to state control; women were enfranchized; industrialization was promulgated by the state and an ethnic nation of Turks was supposed to emerge from the ruins of the Ottoman society. On the whole, those modernization attempts *"were based on the assumption that modernity is a 'neutral' model, not a stage in the development of a specific socio-cultural formation, but a blueprint adaptable to different conditions. However, Kemal's view of modernity was rather 'holistic' compared to later more naive assumptions that technology, science or whatever aspects of modernity are considered beneficent can easily be separated from the social and cultural 'super-structure' of modernity."* (Käufeler, H., 1988: 21).

The major ideology in the formation of the Turkish Republic was to achieve a radical transformation into a society which was expected to be ruled by a Western rational mind and scientific reasoning. This approach stood counter to the traditional Islamic ethical norms of Ottoman society. The reforms introduced were particularly confusing since they entailed economic, political and legal matters besides cultural core elements such as language and script, or personal matters such as name or dress, which are relevant for individual and collective identity. Thus, a radical transformation at the institutional level and at the socio-cultural level was aimed at. Just like the European modernization perspective, the outlook of Turkish modernization determined 'from above' was based on creating citizens, conforming and acting according to objective, legal and positive ideals. However, while doing this, not much consideration was given to particular features of existing social life, motivations, personal feelings, understandings and attitudes. An interesting point here is that among the majority of the individuals a high level of support grew for this national ideology. The claim of the national ideology was to catch up with the progress and development of the West. A simplistic view might argue that this claim provided the basis for legitimization for a large-scale consensus of the individuals for such a radical and daring transformation. The aim here is to present a more sceptical and sociological analysis of the relations between the nation state and the society in recent Turkish experience.

Social change and transformation is understood as originating not only from above, but equally from below, through the initiatives of masses of people. In the history of the Republic while some people took the officially presented ideology as given and circulated within it filling a space, others contributed to the momentum of change by creating new spaces. In any case the range of possibilities for an individual, a given social group, or family are limited and shaped by restrictions such as lack of economic, social or cultural resources as well as the prejudices and privileges prevailing in the society. Individual strategies are constructed to overcome these restrictions and deprivations. For that reason, the above-mentioned structural and socio-cultural changes were implemented, but the reforms have not been able to eliminate visible cultural, religious, political and economic discrepancies in society at large. The reforms remained as blueprints without adapting to the different social conditions. Discrepancies can be still observed to continue in rural and urban variations, regional and class differences, alternative belief systems, identity formations, and in everyday life with norms related to family, marriage, life styles, socialization patterns, work relations, educational expectations as well as the attitudes, motivations and future prospects of individuals. So, a question crops up here to what extent these discrepancies were effected from and reflect specific choices and patterns of strategies emerging from individuals, families and/or communities. In other words, our aim is to look at the variation in choices of the agents, developing strategies 'from below' mainly to handle the deprivation of economic, social and cultural resources.

In this paper, we will focus on the use of different networks by the individuals and/or families, which we accept as strategies from below. Those strategies appear conventionally in the economic, social and cultural spheres, but using different levels of networks. At the same time the relations between the institutional structure of the state and the individuals become questionable in each sphere.

II. Strategies 'from below' to overcome economic deprivation

After the 1950s Turkish society underwent a massive period of rural-urban migration parallel to economic transformations in agriculture with highly complex consequences. This complex process might be simplified as the movement of labour set free by the introduction of new technologies and mechanization into towns or cities looking for new means of survival. In the towns, however, the infrastructure was not adequately developed and it could not meet the demands of the inflowing migrants. The demands were first to find shelter, then a regular income, and then a share in better health and educational opportunities. In the European model of nation state, provision of all welfare support to its citizens falls into the responsibility of the state. However, in the Turkish case the nation state model had only a limited vision of provision of socio-economic welfare, besides the fact that the demand was too great to be easily answered in a short period of time. Thus, we see that individual strategies and family/kin networks of economic solidarity have taken over the initiative at this moment.

Migration processes followed upon the great mobilization of Turkish society during the 1950s. The principal feature of the economic development experienced in the 1950s derived from the post-war re-ordering of the international economic system under the principles of market liberalism. Under such a design Turkey was advised to abandon its industrialization projects whose social impact had remained anyhow only limited. Attention was directed at a transformation of the agricultural sector. The introduction of mechanization in agriculture led to a rapid increase in the area under cultivation and in agricultural output. It is misleading to argue that mechanization replaced labour and former sharecroppers were driven to urban areas out of poverty. It would be more correct to argue that general underemployment in agriculture constituted the push factor. On the pull side we may indicate the employment creation impact of growing urbanization and industrialization (mostly in light manufacture). However, it might be stated that social and physical mobility rather than specific factors classifiable under push or pull determined migration. What is certain, is that economic transformation was instigated by the transformation of the countryside.

Migration processes can be described to a large part as chain migration, where one person moves out as a "pioneer" (usually unmarried male) and other members of the family, wider kin and village community follow. Although, a 'pioneer' initiates the migration process, the decision to migrate is mostly taken on a household or family level. Upon arrival in the city they first find refuge in a relatives' or villagemates' house in the squatter house (*gecekondu*) areas surrounding the urban centres.

II.1. Housing

Finding a place to live on his/her own had to be solved within this network of family/kin faced with the fact that there were no housing policies formulated by the state institutional system. In fact the state institutions functioned as if there was no housing problem, since the individuals seemed to fill in the gap of finding solutions to their housing problems. Often the establishment of squatter housing area lacked the major infrastructural facilities of tap water, sanitation and public transportation. Almost all such housing was build on state owned land, sometimes even on land owned privately by absentee land owners, on an illegal basis.

In its origin mostly illegal housing, nowadays constitutes up to 70 % of the urban settlements in metropoles like Ankara, Izmir and Istanbul. The word "*gecekondu*" literally means "built over night", and only under this condition the state authorities did not interfere in spite of the fact that they were occupying public property. The growing inflow of migrants, increasing need for housing and lack of definite policies to deal with these problems, led the state authorities into a situation of 'involuntary' acceptance of these illegal houses. In fact, gradually ownership permits were granted and these areas were even provided with infrastructure, like roads, electricity, running water, sanitation and public transport. Thus, these areas went through a process of consolidation in due course (Ruisque-Alcaino, 1982). Additionally, it can be claimed that a kind of clientelism arose between the state authorities and the individuals trying to construct their houses especially during election times.

After the 80s the state started to accuse these attempts at housing of 'unorganized, unwanted' use of urban space, potentially open to crime, distorting the 'modern', 'civilized' image which was intended to be constructed within the national modernization policies. Hence, some legal measures to prevent such illegal housing were formulated, however they were rarely effective. On the other hand, growing urbanization and the scarcity of urban space resulted in an increase of the speculative value of urban land. Thus, some squatter housing areas appeared to be most suitable for a further extension of middle class residences. Former migrants and occupants of squatter houses, suddenly gained an unforeseen opportunity of exchanging their old houses for luxury flats. Hence, a pauper turned into a relatively rich houseowner.

The problem of housing and solutions found by the family/kin networks ignoring the state institutional mechanisms is one of the examples of our above mentioned strategies 'from below'. Despite the efforts of the Turkish nation state to implement reforms with the aim of creating a modern, western society, these reforms could not infiltrate into the family/kin networks. The decision to come to the town; the choice of the site for a '*gecekondu*'; help while dealing with bureaucratic authorities; financial support; provision of building materials and physical help in the construction process itself are only part of a complex network of mutual aid. Such a "choice" of the site of residence also provided an atmosphere of belongingness, security and protection on a psychological level.[1] In fact, these networks were articulated into the given state structure, whenever the official policies were unable to cope.

II.2. Integration into the Labour Market

As in the case of the housing problem, the state again formulated only limited policies for employment. Labour legislation in Turkey was put into effect only after migration began to be experienced on a large scale in the metropolitan centres (1963 Labour Code) Again state interference lagged behind the actual socio-economic phenomena. The urban industrial infrastructure could not ab-

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[1] These findings were confirmed in our ongoing research in various neighbourhoods of Ankara, in which we collected life-stories of first and second generation migrants. The majority of our collected life stories start in the 1950s and 1960s periods when migration processes were at their peak. These internal migration processes are sometimes interlinked with international migration, and actually support our argument about family/kin networks even across national borders as means of overcoming economic deprivation.

sorb all the incoming labour in the 1960s, but one secure opportunity was to find a job in the public sector factories or in the civil services. Thus, it is not surprising that the first comers always headed for and preferred state jobs. In the meantime the informal service sector expanded and provided an additional option for employment in spite of the insecurity and casual nature of the jobs offered. The specific nature of the informal sector is that it managed to avoid any labour legislation, e.g. evading social security payments; keeping labour unorganized and applying arbitrary sacking of labour.

To counter these negative aspects in employment opportunities, individuals again use their family/kin networks quite efficiently. Finding a job remained limited to the extent of these networks. As mentioned above, a second significant demand was to obtain a regular income. Here again it is possible to observe the functioning of family/kin networks. The patterns of employment of the incoming migrants can be described in basically two paths: firstly, using the connections already established through former migrants, some regular jobs are secured in factories, small work places or in the public service and only then the whole family moves to the town. The alternative option is for a single male member of the family to move to town, looking for any opportunity he can grasp. He may start from the low paid, insecure, casual jobs in the informal sector, while keeping an eye open for more secure and stable opportunities in the formal sector (public or private).

Within the wide range of the informal sector, entrepreneurs' first choice is to employ their affinial or consanguinal kin. Often they may be even members of the same household. The reason for this preference is the 'trustworthiness'-principle which Dubetsky (1977: 366) describes as follows: *"In the small factories, workers are hired according to the patron's evaluation of their trustworthiness (dürüstlük), a quality more readily found, more clearly recognized, and more easily controlled among kinsmen, hemșeri (men from the same region), or members of the same sect. These relationships of trust are both an indicator of and a force in perpetuating deep bonds of solidarity between worker and patron; bonds which seem, in many cases, to override class differences. They are particularly significant for the patron as they guarantee him a loyal and, hence in his eyes, relatively productive work force. For the workers these relationships represent a traditional system of social obligations that the patrons must fulfil in relation to the workers' social welfare. These bonds not only determine the nature of the social relationships in the work place, but concomitantly structure the nature of social alignments there. "*

Following the same pattern, in our research on paid domestic female workers working in middle class households in Ankara, the employer-employee relations were also found to be based on trust. In our investigation (1996), paid domestic female workers were found to be 91% first generation migrants from rural areas, mainly from Central Anatolia. The female employers, on the other hand, originate largely from urban backgrounds and most of them had not experienced a rural-urban migration. When these two groups of women with very different backgrounds meet within the context of a work relation, a conflicting situation is normally expected. If the workplace is a house, which is considered the private sphere of the family, those conflicts take a different turn. We found not only labour conflict, but social and cultural conflict appearing as well. However, the results of the investigation proved that although the potential for such conflicts existed, and the individuals were aware of such conflicts, they developed strategies to cope by establishing a deferential relationship with the employers, i.e. a patron-client relationship.

The informal sector is also suitable for face-to-face relations. Especially, the type of work studied, takes place in the private sphere of a family (employer), the paid domestic female workers (more than in any other work relation) expect the employers "to inquire about their health and well-being"; "to respect and take into account their feelings"; "to give sincere consideration as any person will expect from another". In other words, the women want their employers to be sensitive about their family problems and to offer solutions, e.g. finding jobs for their husbands and children or arranging private courses, paying education expenses or doctors' bills or also solving problems with the bureaucracy. These expectations lead to a pattern which can be described as "understanding and generous patron vs. loyal serf". However, this is a mutual expectation. The employer, too, through this kind of paternalist relationship can guarantee "a good cleaner" and a "trustworthy person to whom she can leave her house". Within the structure of employment the paid domestic female workers clearly calculated their gains and losses. Thus, they did not judge their jobs only in material terms, but also as offering wider opportunities for members of their family. In a society where the state social security system is only limited, informality and paternalism gain more importance. These alternative mechanisms provide not only income, but further advantages and protection.

II.3. Family Welfare

The first generation migrants' demands focused mainly on self-sufficiency, thus, shelter, regular income and a share in health and educational opportunities were aimed at. In fact, in most cases they actually realized their expectations, because they still could find empty land for their squatters-homes and also they were not very selective in their choice of jobs. The capital necessary for survival was also limited in absolute and relative terms. They also still had close relations to family/kin in their villages of origin, who provided them with some basic necessities concerning food and fuel.

The conditions of shelter and employment however, became much harder for the following generations. Hence, the support of the original family gained significance for their survival. Although, the second generation had better chances of formal and professional education their skill level remained limited and the demand in the labour market for skilled labour increased even faster. Empty urban space for settlement became a rare commodity. It can be concluded that all aspects of socio-economic life became highly competitive. The family of origin constitutes the major means of support in this context. People still try to find jobs using the existing family/kin networks, although the jobs do not necessarily correspond to the much higher expectations of the 'educated, skilled' youth. Life style and consumption patterns have changed, so that a newly married couple requires a fully furnished and equipped flat. To answer these demands alternative mechanisms have to be developed.

One of these mechanisms is to put the needs of their children into order. The expenses for the marriage ceremony (for the boys), the dowry (for the girls) have to considered first; followed by the provision of a place to live (fully furnished flat or house), and finally durable household goods. Secondly, the nuclear family of origin, including all married and unmarried sons and daughters, put their savings into a common pool. Thirdly, although rarely used debts are made to relatives (often working abroad and economically better off).

We can give as an example a family of four persons we observed in one of our case studies. The father works as floor cleaner with very low pay in a hotel in Ankara, the wife is housewife. They have an 18 years old unmarried daughter and a ten years old son. While they were living in a village close to Ankara, the man was offered a job in Libya. He worked there for 5 years and made some savings. Then he bought two squatter houses in Ankara and they moved to the city. They used one house for themselves, the other one they gave for free usage to the husband's elder brother. A second elder brother is working in Germany and every summer, when he comes to visit, he brings to or buys in Turkey some durable household goods to give to his younger brother, who fulfilled his 'family duties' by providing a free house to his other brother. The family network among these three brothers is a good example of an improvement of family welfare not giving privilege to only one but to all members.

III. Strategies 'from below' to overcome socio-cultural deprivation

As a consequence of migration processes the situation of the migrants is usually discussed in terms of "how will they adapt, integrate and become part of the urban way of life?". There are different answers to these questions, seeing solutions in models of individual or group assimilation, melting-pot, or multiculturality or pointing out that the migrants hold a marginal position, which in a Simmelian sense stands for the "stranger". Here the migrants' identities play a major role; how far do they retain their "rural" identities, will they transform them into an "urban" identity or will they become hybrids? However, sticking to rigid categories of cultural dichotomies, typical for the modernization approach which explains the consequences of migration in a traditionality-modernity continuum, this discourse remained limited in understanding the complexity of social reality.

In our studies we have seen that a simple dichotomy is inadequate to explain the identity formation of migrants. It seems to be more appropriate to evaluate the socio-cultural consequences of migration within an articulation perspective. In other words traditionality and modernity is not a continuum but coexists, so the complexity of social reality contradicts the modernization approach.

To start with, we have to understand that the first generation migrants coming to town were confronted with hostile reactions from their environment. Firstly, they were blamed for being uneducated, without manners, not knowing how to dress. Secondly, they were seen as unskilled peasants, who could not compete in the labour market and thus were open to exploitation. Thirdly, their culture (e.g. music, belief systems, dialects) was not accepted. All in all, an exclusion mechanism worked against the migrants, which led to socio-cultural deprivation. Possible responses in the modernization discourse would be either deviance or delinquency, deference, fatalism or resignation. However, in the Turkish experience we witnessed alternative mechanisms to cope with this situation.

One of such alternative mechanisms was to choose to live next to their townsmen, in clusters in squatter housing areas. This can be interpreted in a modernist negative sense as an effort to stick to their rural links and results in a relative isolation. On the other hand, it constitutes an efficient mechanism for the formation of solidarities to overcome marginality. Besides, as mentioned above, these clusters provide the means to solve their economic deprivations. It is also a guarantee to obtain the opportunities of the city, either using patron-client relations for a variety of needs, from finding jobs to solving health or educational problems, or forming common family savings to become more consolidated through buying real estate. Stirling, P. (1993: 12) states that *"A great many Turks, and not only villagers, seem to assume that if you want something from, or within a large organization, then to get it, what you most need is not a formally correct case, nor even manipulative knowledge of the working of the system, but a personal link to someone of power above or within the organization who is prepared to use that power on your behalf. Thus personal networks, 'patron-client relations', are thought to be the most crucial factor in the daily running of organizations (Güneş-Ayata, 1990)."*

Another alternative is to develop a strong feeling of self-esteem based on their places of origin. In our research on paid domestic female workers we observed that this rural-urban duality helped them to locate themselves in the urban environment. This location is clearly differentiated from the employers. In other words, they do not aspire to the employer's status or lifestyle, or well-furnished houses. The place which they attribute to themselves in the social hierarchy describes a well-known and socially respected identity: that of a villager. The fact that they are able to refer back to their roots gives them a superior feeling of self-esteem, in a strange environment.

A further possibility was to develop flexible world views as survival strategies. In our case studies we also found an emphasis on style of dress, which was reported again demonstrating a dualism. Firstly, "a fashionable style of dressing" and/or "liberal style of dressing", was considered to be indecent or immoral, because it does not fit into the traditional values and norms. This is a negative emphasis referring mainly to a degeneration of moral and ethical values in the urban society when compared to their traditional rural community. At the same time the respondents in the case studies pointed to the necessity of living a ‘modern and easy-going life’, where the lifestyle of the wealthy sets an example. Both aspects, although partially contradicting each other, had a combined effect on their worldviews and everyday life.

IV. Conclusion

The Turkish nation state project introduced itself with drastic reforms which undoubtedly had great influence on the institutional levels of society as well as on the private life of the people. Following the European model, the aim of this nation state formation was to create a state taking over responsibilities from the family. However, as it turned out, this large scale attempt remained rudimentary in a sense. It might be possible to argue that there are two apparent reasons behind the state’s lack of realization of its ideals. One is that the different historical and state traditions of the East, coming from Ottoman times, influenced the Turkish experience of nation state formation. The Ottoman state was authoritarian and was only related to its subjects through tax collection (Mardin, 1962). The educational, administrative and bureaucratic facilities were not extended to the subjects. Thus, a Western type ot state-subject (citizen) relation did not develop. The other one, as mentioned also by Käufeler (1988) is that the state tried to create modernity ‘from above’ as a neutral model. It remained largely at the legislative and administrative level alien to the experiences of individuals and families. A spontaneous socio-cultural formation, as expected by the modernizing elites, did not take place parallel to this. In Turkey we can witness an articulation of a relatively modernized institutional body together with strong family/kin networks which can be seen as alternative means of social control and organization. These alternatives should not be understood as resistance to the goals of the constructed model of modernity, but are perceived by the members of society as more efficient mechanisms to gain access to such goals. In Turkey, the patriarchal state corresponds to the patriarchal family. The patriarch, male household head, being assured of his absolute authority position inside the family, remains mostly outside the personal spheres of the family members, as long as they do not question the existing order. In the meantime, alliances for manipulation between mothers and children may appear. Clientelism appears to be an example of a manipulation mechanism to benefit from the limited opportunities offered by the state. This kind of clientelism may even extend into the state institutions themselves.

The individuals, or to be more precise family/kin networks, develop strategies to overcome the inefficiencies regarding the state’s policies and their realization of resources concerning housing, employment, social security, education and health. We argue that these individual initiatives constitute a transformation ‘from below’ which does not necessarily contradict the state’s modernization goals. In other words, they are attempts to become a part of the social system, following their own patterns. On the other hand, the families or individuals, who appear to be impoverished relative to others are those, who for some reason are unsuccessful in establishing and locating themselves within a family/kin network. The limited state welfare agencies, too, are not capable of offering solutions to their problems. Hence, such individuals/families become drop-outs in society.

In conclusion, we argue that, the strong state image which gives way to the openly declared high expectations of the individuals should be read reversely. It could be claimed that these expectations are actually attributions of failures to the state. Thus, the acknoledgement of the state's inefficiency in the fulfillment of its duties, people seemingly paradoxically demand even further state services. These expectations can only be realized very rarely and are actually not assumed to take place anyway.

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