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IDEOLOGY AND RELIGION IN THE TURKISH REVOLUTION

Much of the meaning we commonly attach to the term 'revolution' grows out of our image of the French Revolution.¹ The social upheavals we associate with the latter have been deeply etched in the history of thought by Taine's accounts of bloodshed and terror, and later generations have only broken the spell with difficulty.

Behind these superficial impressions of anarchic mobs on the rampage lie the more basic truths of violent social and political change. These changes were not only violent but also fundamental: the French Revolution was a watershed in European history.² A structure of legitimacy already undermined was now totally questioned. Privilege, and its bearers, the nobility, were the structures that the Revolution was intent on destroying. Bourgeois insubordination, peasant insurrection, and communal rioting were the forms protests assumed.

To Alexis de Tocqueville who looked back upon this wreckage and who attempted to understand in what ways the French Revolution had been more than an insurrection, a number of characteristics seemed crucial. The first was that a revolution was marked by 'violence . . . rather than the degree of change'.³ Tocqueville also remarked that a revolution could remain purely political, assume a political and social dimension, or a simultaneous political, social and religious dimension. He placed the French Revolution in this third category.⁴ What he meant by social revolution were changes in the system of 'ownership, production and distribution'.⁵ He also meant the replacement of one élite by another,⁶ which could sometimes go so far that a whole class of citizens were deprived of their citizen's rights.⁷ In taking up the religious dimension of revolution, Tocqueville meant to point out that if religion is seen as a total ideology,

¹ For a recent treatment of revolutions see Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1966), from whom I take Arthur Bauer's definition of revolution: 'Les révolutions sont les changements tentés ou réalisés par la force dans la constitution des sociétés.' Also, *Revolution*, ed. Carl J. Friedrich (New York: Atherton Press, 1969).

² For Tocqueville, see Alexis de Tocqueville, *L'Ancien régime et la révolution*, ed. J. P. Mayer (Paris: Gallinard, 1967).

³ See Melvin Richter, 'Tocqueville's Contribution to Theory of Revolution', in *Revolution*, ed. C. J. Friedrich, p. 81.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 82.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 83.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 84.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 83.

then the Revolution involved a similarly inclusive ideological system challenging the former one.¹ If we add to this that ‘revolutionary theories join fundamental change and the resort to violence as elements to be taken into account’² we have the main elements that have to be sought in an upheaval to be able to call it a revolution according to Tocqueville.

If the French Revolution is seen as revolutionary because violence suffused it, and, in particular, marked the methods used by its political leaders, and if it is adopted as a benchmark for comparisons with the Turkish Revolution, then the Turkish Revolution was and is no revolution. This comparison is not as artificial as would seem at first sight, and the contrast between the two movements underscores characteristic features of the Turkish Revolution. Such a comparative perspective is, therefore, used throughout this study. The Turkish Revolution is, in fact, the name given to a period of Turkish history of indefinite length during which the Turkish political system was transformed, but not by unleashed social violence. One feels less assured in stating that, in Turkey, the break with the preceding political system was gradual, but this too can be argued. When the Sultanate was abolished and later the Republic established, this caused much intellectual commotion, but ‘sudden and violent overthrow of an established political order’³ was not involved. Neither were the usual sequels of such violence to be seen: there was no real Turkish Vendée, and no body of conspiring *émigrés*.⁴ As to the social system, not only was there no short-term severe violence (and corresponding violent dislocation) but even the pervasiveness of the dislocation is questionable. Whether the Turkish Revolution is understood to cover the years 1908–38, or 1919–23, or the period between 1919 and 1929, or even later years, systematic violence was not its characteristic.

The revolutionary activities of the leaders of the Turkish Revolution were marked by controlled political intimidation rather than terror, and there were only a very few ‘political’ executions during the entire process. The Turkish Courts of Independence, the equivalents of the Committee of the Public Safety, appear mild when compared to their French parallels. Their victims seem to have been mostly members of the lower classes and not aristocrats. The Jacobin aspects of Republican policy—a term which has had some vogue in Turkey—are more misleading than illuminating, and there are definitely no Turkish Robespierres.

The French Revolution was not only violent because of the violence of its leaders, but because it harnessed behind it the revolutionary mob, *sans culottes* or castle-burners. Here there is even less of a similarity between the two revolutions. The Turkish Revolution was not a movement buttressed by mass support. The Turkish War of Independence, which was the first stage of the Turkish

¹ *Ibid.* pp. 84–5.

² *Ibid.* p. 82.

³ Carl J. Friedrich, ‘An introductory Note on Revolution’, in *Revolution*, p. 5.

⁴ In Turkey there was no systematic disestablishment and banishment of an entire class of the *ancien régime*, a feature of the French Revolution which Tocqueville found highly objectionable. See Melvin Richter, *loc. cit.* p. 83.

Revolution, had much support from the lower classes in so far as it embodied resistance to a despised invader. The civil aims of the revolutionaries, i.e. the political and social modernization of Turkey, however, were not paralleled by popular demands. The Turkish transformation did not originate in the thrust of the masses. Even if a more sceptical view of mass support is taken and mass participation is seen as the mobilization of the masses by the élite, even then the Revolution cannot be characterized as a mass phenomenon. At any rate, there are no Turkish equivalents of the *tricoteuses* watching justice being carried out, of castle-burning, and of the revolutionary commune radicalizing the policy of the Revolution.

If we look at the French Revolution from the vantage points of the targets it attacked, then, too, there is no striking similarity with the Turkish Revolution. The upper stratum which the Turkish Revolution disestablished consisted first and foremost of the imperial dynasty. Another structure aimed at was the palace, the Sultan's staff. But the extent to which the Sultan had been shorn of his prerogatives, already a decade before the instauration of the Republic, has been extensively described by Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil. In his memoirs, he shows that already in 1909 the palace as an institution was a ghost, a myth only kept alive by Sultan Abdülhamid II's personal idiosyncrasies.¹ Sultan Hamid used it as a center for administration and communication and as a convenient peg for sinecures. His successor, Sultan Mehmed V Reşad, collaborated with the Young Turks in disengaging the palace from politics. Sultan Vahdettin tried to re-establish his influence after World War I, but he was working with an institution that had been emptied by politics. As to the Turkish equivalents of battles with the nobility, of virulent attacks on holders of feudal privileges and heartless rent-squeezers who ransacked family archives to reimpose long-forgotten dues on their peasant dependants, here the picture becomes totally unfamiliar. A parallel to the French onslaught against the privileged exists only in a much looser context. If the French Revolution is seen as the thrust of an emerging élite who had been excluded from the privileges of the nobility,² then leaders in the Turkish Revolution had comparable grievances. But in Turkey the struggle was an intra-bureaucratic one of much narrower scope. Except for a small cone on top of the hierarchical pyramid, not much of an adjustment of class relations was involved. At most it was a new generation of bureaucrats who were replacing an older one.

This dynamic is intelligible only in terms of the meaning of 'class' for Turkish society. If social classes are social formations which crystallize round economic interests ultimately shaped by the 'market situation', then social classes were

¹ See Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, *Saray ve Ötesi* (Istanbul: İnkilâp ve Aka, 1965), pp. 55, 104, 110-11.

² See George V. Taylor, 'Non-capitalist Wealth and the Origins of the French Revolution', *American Historical Review*, vol. LXXII (January, 1967), pp. 469-96. Especially page 495 on the Kaplow thesis.

very embryonic and scattered in Turkey.¹ The groups that had the greatest weight in determining policy in the Ottoman Empire were those who, in some form or other, were integrated in the political structure. The form of this integration and the extent to which economic formations acquired autonomy in Ottoman society varied markedly in the centuries that preceded the establishment of the Republic. But groups shaped by market processes were unable to displace officials as those primarily responsible for the conduct of the affairs of the Empire, political or economic.²

At its inception, the Ottoman Empire had been a patrimonial structure with the Sultan as supreme arbiter, while his personal staff was in charge of the administration of the empire. With time, many transformations, which cannot be described in detail here, had come about in this order. Suffice it to say that such features of patrimonialism as the myth of a Sultan who was a father to his subjects, an economic system where the protection of the consumer was a paramount concern, a system of law which was diffuse and where administrative fiat played an important role, lived even at the end of the nineteenth century.³ More subject to change had been the staff of the patrimonial ruler, which started modernization and began by modernizing itself and the army. By the middle of the nineteenth century this patrimonial officialdom began to assume the appearance of a modern bureaucracy.⁴

The officials had, by the same token, acquired policy advantages which placed them ahead of their predecessors. Their practical knowledge of European affairs enabled them to deal with situations which the Sultan, brought up in the dim intellectual atmosphere of the Palace, was hardly able to cope with. By the 1840s bureaucrats were in charge of policy-making. Their access to information relevant to the modernization of the administration and their control over policy could not be compared with that of bureaucrats in earlier epochs of Sultanic eclipse.⁵

Once upon a time the fortunes of officials had been liable to confiscation by the state at their death. The reforming officials of the nineteenth century had seen to it that this should cease. In charters inspired by European constitutionalism they made 'citizens' out of subjects of the Sultan and extended to them the pro-

¹ Max Weber, 'Class, Status and Party', *Class, Status and Power: Social Stratification in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Reinhard Bendix and Seymour Martin Lipset (New York: Free Press, 1966), pp. 21-2.

² See Halil Inalcik, 'The Nature of Traditional Society: Turkey', *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey*, ed. Robert E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 42-63.

³ See Şerif Mardin, 'Power, Civil Society and Culture in the Ottoman Empire', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (June 1969), pp. 258-81.

⁴ Stanford Shaw, 'Some Aspects of the Aims and Achievements of the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Reformers', in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century*, ed. William R. Polk and Richard Chambers (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1969), pp. 32-5. Also Stanford J. Shaw, 'The Central Legislative Councils in the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Reform Movement Before 1876', *IJMES*, vol. 1 (1970), pp. 51-84.

⁵ See my *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought* (Princeton, 1962), *passim*.

tection of 'life, property and honor'. These charters had the felicitous side-effect of protecting their own property. There thus grew up a new social set which was able to perpetuate itself more easily than earlier generations of officials. More important than the inheritability of wealth, however, was the transmission to succeeding generations of a new style of life. This western veneer could be monopolized by the upper officials and their families because the new ways were foreign to Ottoman-Turkish culture and because educational mobility was very limited. Officials' sons had a head start that was hard to equal. A fluent knowledge of French and *alla Franca* (Western) social graces was the foremost requisite of advancement; and who had a better opportunity to learn them than children of the *Tanzimat*? But within two generations the game got more difficult. Advances in technology and human organization, and the superiority they provided in power confrontation, were noticed in Turkey.¹ These new demands of power could no longer be filled by a knowledge of diplomatic correspondence or even by a vague familiarity with the tortuous path of European cabinets. Professionalism had high priority beginning with the 1870s and Sultan Abdülhamid II, for all his conservative leanings, saw the writing on the wall. Most of the schools from which the revolutionary bureaucrats graduated were given new foundations during his reign (1876-1909).² These schools produced a new type of official somewhat contemptuous of the earlier generalists and of their dandified sons.

Thus the social undercurrent of the last years of the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II was the warfare between officials who acceded to positions because they were part of the *Tanzimat* set and those whose advancement—or lack of it—was based on merit. In a way this was the last phase of an endemic clash between achievement and ascription in the history of the Ottoman Empire.

The revolutionaries, the Young Turks, were persons who were convinced that they knew more and better than those who were in charge of the interests of the Empire. Their revolution was carried out in 1908 and its signal victory was the eventual dethronement of Sultan Abdülhamid II. The fathers of what we usually call the Turkish Revolution, i.e. the founders of the Turkish Republic, brought this process to a logical end, having also profited from the mistakes of their predecessors. With the Young Turks, legitimacy begins to assume a new cast. True, the traditional upper classes had also ultimately based the legitimacy of their rule on the contention that they knew what was best for the ruled. But their legitimation was partly based on things having always been this way. The extent to which the new élite based its legitimation on knowledge alone was new. Tocqueville had identified such an emphasis on secular ideologies with the 'esprit révolutionnaire', and if one takes the long view of revolution³ this might well be one of the more 'revolutionary' aspects of the Turkish Revolution.

¹ See Ed. [ouard] Engelhard, *La Turquie et la Tanzimat*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1882). Especially on the military reforms of 1868-9, vol. II, pp. 36-7.

² See Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi VIII: Birinci Meşrutiyet ve Istibdat Devirleri 1876-1907* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1962), pp. 383-401.

³ Richter, *op. cit.* p. 87.

This innovation did not realize its full potential because and to the extent that some aspects of the traditional ideology of the state still affected the Young Turks and the founders of the Republic. Not the least important among the stimuli which led both to the Young Turk Revolt and the Turkish Revolution was the ancient ideal of the preservation of the state. Systems for training bureaucrats might have changed, but the Ottoman tradition that the state counted more than did individuals had remained. This is one point where the structure of the Ottoman Empire diverged from Weber's type of patrimonialism. Gradually, concern for the state was transformed into an ideology of nascent nationalisms. In the sense that they had no real, new revolutionary theory but were just refurbishing ideals of the preservation of the state, the fathers of the Turkish Revolution showed one further failing as revolutionaries by Tocqueville's standards.¹

Among Tocqueville's criteria of evaluation, the use of violence, which we have described as absent in the Turkish Revolution, was the foremost. A revolutionary theory was the second of his principles which up to this point we have not been able to detect in Turkey. Tocqueville's third principle, change in the 'essential principle of society', also seems, on the surface, to be missing in our case. We shall see that this is only half true.

The Turkish Revolution was not the instrument of a discontented *bourgeoisie*, it did not ride on a wave of peasant dissatisfaction with the social order, and it did not have as target the sweeping away of feudal privileges, but it *did* take as a target the values of the Ottoman *ancien régime*. In this sense it was a revolutionary movement. The characteristic is sufficiently interesting to justify a pause in the argument presented here to examine it in some detail.

All revolutionary movements, to the extent that they question and attempt to destroy existing social-structural arrangements also try to disestablish the value systems of *ancien régimes*. The attempt to disestablish the Catholic Church together with the pressures to make its personnel conform to the new ideology are features of the French Revolution which are well known. The simultaneous attempt to replace religion by *civisme* is also familiar. But when destroying the values of the *ancien régime* assumes the overwhelming importance that it acquired during the Turkish Revolution, and when this is accompanied by fewer blows dealt to the infra-structure, then something of particular interest seems to be involved. It should be added that this approach was that of the radical faction of the revolutionaries led by Atatürk which eventually came to direct the Revolution. For the Turkish Revolutionaries, the symbolic system of society, culture, seems to have had a relatively greater attraction as a target than the social structure itself. And within culture, religion seems to have been singled out as the core of the system. By the same token, the 'moderate' wing also relied on a cultural argument to define its position, and it often criticized the religious policies of the radicals as extreme. The radical's strategy of change begins to make sense if used in connection with a long-standing characteristic of Islamic societies. According

¹ *Ibid.* p. 82.

to this view, Islam has a more direct relation to the content of social structure than many other religions. This has been expressed by Orientalists,¹ Anthropologists,² and even by casual observers. In the Ottoman Empire it was particularly strong, and part of this went back to Ottoman historical experience.

The Ottoman Empire was founded by a group of warrior-knights, the *Gazis*, who carried the burden of its expansion in its formative years.³ Underlying this formation were nomadic Turkic groups whose economic basis was that of the redistribution of spoils in potlatch-like institutions. When the Ottoman state gradually assumed the feature of an urban-centered empire, the building of centralized institutions had to rely on a system less generous in terms of redistribution.⁴ A surplus had to be taken by the central power. Thus, for many years the heirs of the *Gazi* tradition, who objected to this change, and the state were locked in an endemic, if only periodically overt, struggle. The *Gazi* team gathered around itself nomadic structures, the successors of the religious leaders of the *Gazi*, heterodox Islam, and the remains of the Central Asian culture. On the other side were the officials and the supporters of the state religion. With time, a compromise was achieved between these 'popular' and 'élite' structures, and an amalgamation of the two took place. But popular religion now institutionalized in the form of *derviş* orders and its leaders, who had rendered the services of colonizing and settling many parts of the empire, among others, continued to function as a link between the lower classes and the élite.⁵ They provided educational institutions at lower levels, also 'parallel universities' for persons who could not go on to the great religious universities in Istanbul. They acted as a center for cultural training for minor state positions and for the religious establishment. They partly controlled charitable foundations; they also disposed of many economic resources, partly the result of gifts. The 'monasteries' of the Turkish mystic orders owned part of the income of hundreds of villages.⁶ Altogether, they provided cultural services, functioned as a channel for social mobility, and took on responsibility for various forms of social assistance. Wherever the aloof state failed they moved in.

¹ See H. A. R. Gibb, 'The Evolution of Government in Early Islam', in *Studies in the Civilization of Islam*, ed. Stanford Shaw and William Polk (London: Routledge, 1962), pp. 36–37.

² Raphael Patai, *Golden River to Golden Road* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962), pp. 286–302.

³ P. Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire* (London: Luzac, 1958, first published 1938).

⁴ See Halil İnalcık, 'Kutadgu Bilig'de Türk ve İran Siyaset Nazariye ve Gelenekleri', in *Reşid Rahmeti Arat İçin* (Ankara, 1966), p. 270. For the concept of 'redistribution' see Walter C. Neale, 'Reciprocity and Redistribution in the Indian Village', in *Trade and Market in the Early Empires, Economics in History and Theory*, ed. by Karl Polanyi, Conrad M. Arensberg and Harry W. Pearson (New York: Free Press, 1957), pp. 218–36.

⁵ See H. A. R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West: A study of the impact of Western civilization on Moslem culture in the Near East, vol. I, Islamic Society in the Eighteenth Century*, Part II (London, New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 77, 102, 127, 138, 156, 183. Also 'Ghazi' EI², vol. II, p. 1043.

⁶ See İsmail Hüsrev [Tökin], *Türkiye Köy İktisadiyatı* (Ankara, 1934), p. 163.

The general administrative set-up of the Ottoman Empire worked to reinforce religion as the core of the Ottoman community. The lowest rung of the Ottoman administration which was directly in contact with the metropolis was headed by a religious official, the *Kadı*.¹ Thus it was the religious officials who were most closely involved with the day-to-day problems of the individuals' confrontation with authority and in disagreeable confrontation, gave the non-religious authorities the main responsibility and the *Kadı* an auxiliary one. The image of the *Kadı* was thus protected from being stained relative to that of the secular officials of the 'Ruling Institution'.²

A striking example of the function performed by the Ottoman religious officials may be found in the 'time of troubles' that swept the empire during the seventeenth century. At this time, when members of the governmental class were trying to get the best of the state, of each other, and of the peasants, anarchy engulfed Anatolia. Many officials took up brigandage, and the reverse also happened quite often. Local, village-based militias were established to hold these official brigands at bay.³ These organizations were founded and led by *Kadıs*.⁴ The reported spearheading of local liberation movements by clerics during the War of Independence shows that centuries later the same means of mobilizing rural energies still obtained.⁵

Religion had thus a double function: for the rulers, that of linkage with the lower classes, for the ruled, that of an alternative to the polity and a buffer against officialdom.

With regard to linkage, religion and the religious establishment performed services which are provided by the state in modern politics. In a sense, then, religion assumed importance in the empire because the administrative structure was undifferentiated and because there were no autonomous structures that could have taken over the functions of a differentiated administration.

This lack of institutions intermediate between the state and the individual seems to be a general characteristic—among others—of Middle Eastern politics. Gibb describes it as the limited extent of the state's interference in daily life.⁶

¹ Mustafa Akdağ, *Celali İsyanları* (Ankara, 1963), p. 63. This system was replaced by that of secular administrative employees during the *Tanzimat*.

² In the city the administrative link was the guild; see Gabriel Baer, 'The Administrative, Economic and Social Functions of Turkish Guilds', *IJMES*, vol. 1 (January 1970), p. 33.

³ Mustafa Akdağ, *Celali İsyanları*, pp. 118, 150-1.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Sabahattin Selek, *Millî Mücadele I: Anadolu İhtilali* (Istanbul, 1963), pp. 62-5, esp. p. 65.

⁶ 'Yet the paradox remains of a government, generally apathetic, unprogressive, and careless of the welfare of its subjects, and often arbitrary and violent in its dealings with them, and a society upon whose institutions and activities such government had little or no effect. The explanation is to be found in the very lack of a complex, all-embracing political organization. As we have already suggested, we may visualize Moslem society as composed of two coexisting groups, the relations between which were for the most part formal and superficial. One group formed the governing class of soldiers and officials, the other the governed class of merchants, artisans, and cultivators. Each organized inter-

Berger brings out these aspects that shape modern political behavior,¹ and Eisenstadt speaks of it as the problem of the 'channelization' of political power.² Eisenstadt also shows that, in the absence of institutions linking political and social structures, the 'channeling' is effected by 'formulating and institutionalizing various norms of political behavior and process'.³

We have here a very useful explanation of the importance of the ideological and institutional function of the official-orthodox structures of religion in Middle Eastern societies. In the absence of linking institutions, the religious establishment and the pre-patterned political ideology that came with it were used as substitutes for linkage.⁴ In the Ottoman empire this was quite clearly the case: religion was the mediating link between local social forces and the political structure. The process worked at two levels. The institution of religion was one where popular structures were linked with the Ottoman ruling institution, and religion provided the cultural fund which shaped ideals of political legitimacy

nally on independent lines and neither group interfered with the organization of the other in normal circumstances. From time immemorial the governing class had lived on a percentage of the produce of the land, supplemented by various duties on goods, and the social structure of the other class had accommodated itself to this situation' (Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, vol. 1, 1, p. 209).

¹ 'Another Egyptian (and perhaps Near Eastern) legacy is the tension between the local community and the central government. The village has fiercely resisted the advent of national or imperial authorities even where economic necessity has dictated it. Paralleling this tension has been a pervading difference in the pattern of social control between the periphery and the center. The village, especially in Egypt, is loosely structured, practically barren of formal controls and those it has have been administered informally by the *umda*, the notable or mayor. The central government, in contrast, has been highly organized and has claimed control (on either secular or religious grounds) over the most minute and private aspects of life, although usually in effect it has scarcely touched the local community. Thus, in the village authority has been wielded by the heads of the patriarchal families and by notables. The absence of formal, political controls, however, has had a curious concomitant: a tendency to 'politicize' interpersonal relations. Individuals tend to judge and assess one another in terms of social position and social power. The result is a pattern of ingratiation and manipulation which is political in motivation and effect but which proceeds on a level of interpersonal relations which virtually excludes concern with politics as a struggle for, and the exercise of formal governmental controls' (Morroe Berger, *Bureaucracy and Society in Modern Egypt* (Princeton, N.J., 1957), pp. 17-18).

² S. N. Eisenstadt, *The Political Systems of Empires* (New York: Free Press, paperback ed. 1969), p. 25.

³ *Ibid.* p. 303.

⁴ Turks were prepared for such a function in so far as their own polity gave very great importance to tribal law which no doubt had the same function in Central Asia. See Halil Inalcik, *op. cit.* pp. 268-9. Weber distinguishes between two basic processes in the formation of 'imperatively coordinated groups'; one he calls the *political* and the other the *hierocratic* (Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*). Political associations are based on the use of physical force, whereas *hierocratic* associations are based on the use of 'psychic' coercion and enforced by 'psychic' sanctions. Weber thought of these two principles as polar opposites or as alternative principles of organization. In terms of his terminology, then what we have in Islamic society is that the *hierocratic* works as *part* of political and not as an alternative to it. But although Weber allows us to name the processes connected with Islamic society, he does not indicate why they do take the special form that they assume here.

among individuals. But religion was also the core of a much wider process of socialization than that connected with politics. In so far as religion was the main institution controlling culture, there was found in it a means of establishing a generalized social control otherwise lacking. Such a mechanism as developed during the growth of the modern centralized state as, for example, differentiated provincial administration, or earlier linkages such as the *rechtsgemeinschaften*,¹ had in Europe provided the major institutional facilities for the shaping of these controls. The same is true for norm-formation: the institutional and symbolic aspects of Islam took over this function in the Middle East and in the Ottoman Empire.

Because of the gap in these linking institutions and because of the relative undifferentiatedness of Ottoman society, religion had a major role in this respect. Once established this pervasively, it assumed the reference-group functions, the perspectives which voluntary associations provided in more-developed, and kinship structures provided in less-developed, societies. Because of the split between official and 'popular' religion there was a divergence of function here: the religious institution proper established much of the upper class politico-ideological basis, while 'dervish' religion functioned more as a community-reinforcing and identity-forming process among the lower classes.² A few dervish orders appealed to intellectually sophisticated officials and notables. But the function of the orders for the middle and lower classes seems to have been more fundamental than for the upper classes as a whole. Thus although the socializing agent, religion, seemed to provide a single road to integration in Ottoman society, in effect it contained two alternatives: through official religion or through 'popular' religion.³ These shared many aspects of Islam, but also differed significantly from one another.

For the population at large religion was a moral prop, something to lean on, a source of consolation, a patterning of life; for the ruling élite it was in addition, and probably much more, a matter related to the legitimacy of the state. Both groups could at times neglect religion or by-pass it, but the form of this by-passing was different: for the masses it consisted of breaking religious taboos and then atoning for it later; for the ruling it consisted in pushing religion into the background when required by secular political purposes. 'Religion and the state are twins' was the way in which this close association was expressed, but in the Ottoman empire one of the twins could often become more equal. To the extent that Islam was 'bifurcated', its use as linkage in the Ottoman empire was only partially successful: a universe of discourse was established, but the lower

¹ Reinhard Bendix, 'Social Stratification and the Political Community', in *Class Status and Power: Social Stratification in Comparative Perspective*, *op. cit.* p. 82.

² See Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *Suyu Arayan Adam* (Istanbul, 1967, 5th printing), pp. 37-9, for a description of this integrative function.

³ This is the truest for the populations of towns and cities. Aydemir recounts how in the less-developed parts of Turkey many peasants could not even identify their religion. Many believed in obscure heterodox cults which were cut off from the main stream of Islamic culture in the empire (*ibid.* p. 112).

classes had partly independent criteria of political legitimation such as generosity and 'direct' democracy,¹ which reflected pre-Ottoman tribal arrangements.

The dual institution which performed such central functions for Ottoman society did not have to bear the destructive impact of a reformation movement. Neither did the new group formation, the communities and the institutions of capitalism, deal it a blow similar to that encountered in the West. Also, since the religious institution in the Ottoman Empire was to a great extent integrated with the state, it lacked the well-marked estate characteristics of Western churches, which set these churches off against the state in the West.² Finally, an important aspect of religion in the Ottoman Empire was that many of the most solid 'burghers' in the empire, owners of vineyards or even of farms, and estates were also persons who filled religious offices. This was so because the most stable institution in the empire was the Religious Institution, which was the most protected from imperial fiat.³

The young revolutionaries of the 1900s were faced with religion under all of these headings: as a strongly anchored basis of community, as a philosophy and world view which seemed to perform more substantive function than ideas usually did, as one of the social and economic bases of power in the provinces, and as a state institution and ideology. Given that the élite origin of the Young Turks already predisposed them to a manipulative-instrumental attitude toward religion, their training in modern schools increased this tendency. Since the religious establishment of their time had lost all semblance of sophistication, greasy preachers mouthing incoherent arguments was all they saw in it.⁴ Ignorant fanatics could say 'What could stop 20,000 Ottoman horsemen from marching into Moscow?' 'Indeed', answered a Young Turkish officer

¹ For a much clearer form of this dichotomy, see Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*, pp. 2-3. I am not taking up the further problem of the bifurcation between urban and rural Islam described by Gellner in *ibid.* pp. 7-8. A political theory transposing the legitimizing values of the lower classes into modern dress is that of Ali Suavi; see my *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought* (Princeton, 1962), pp. 365-84, esp. p. 384.

² Some parallels to the Western quarrels between Church and State showed up in the Ottoman rivalry of the slave bureaucracy with the religious organization. But religion was both a more bureaucratic and a more popular institution than in the West. For the special characteristics of the Church in the West, see Reinhard Bendix, *Nation-Building and Citizenship: Studies of our changing social order* (New York, London and Sydney: John Wiley, 1964), p. 34. Notice also, as Ernest Gellner points out that dervish Islam is much more liberal in its compromises with social structures than 'central' Islam, see Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas* (London, 1969), p. 11.

³ For early development, see Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, vol. II, p. 109. For a case study of a *hoca* (priest) as a small capitalist owning and operating a bus in the 1930s, see Reşat Nuri Güntekin, *Anadolu Notları* (Istanbul, 1965), pp. 37-42.

⁴ Not only modernists but the Sultan himself could show contempt for the *ulema*. On the occasion of a ceremony where homage was due to the Sultan Abdülmecid (1839-61), a Doctor of Islamic Law, the Minister of Public Instruction Vehbi Efendi kissed the Sultan's feet instead of the hem of his coat. 'This is how it is done,' said the Sultan, showing the edge of his frock. Turning to his ministers, he added after the man had retreated in confusion, 'A fine imitation of a cleric'. See Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir 1-12* (Ankara, 1953), p. 46.

already in the 1830s, 'what could, if they had their passports visa'd by the Russian Embassy?'¹

The personal rule of the *Tanzimat* upper bureaucracy had clashed with the requisites of bureaucratic rationality; these requisites clashed even more with the religious values of the masses. But the radical wing of the bureaucracy was adamant in its pursuit of the kind of tight organization that would stop Ottoman decay. Where it could afford it, it had no intention to compromise with traditional structures. The 'sala' type of intermediary bureaucracy was not its ideal.²

As a conscious but often camouflaged ideology, secularism was already in action at the time of the Young Turks; it was only brought to its logical end by the Founding Fathers of the Turkish Republic.

Both the Young Turks and the founders of the Republic confronted an additional aspect of religion which, in their view, undermined the power of the state. This was the alliance of the local religious interest with non-religious notables. The religious and non-religious notables together made up local power in the Ottoman provincial cities during the twentieth century. Both the Young Turks and Mustafa Kemal were obliged to use them, but did this somewhat reluctantly. By controlling elections to Parliament through a laicized People's Party, Atatürk was able to divest the religious notables of one of their power bases: he eliminated their uncontrolled candidacy to political office.

In so far as they knew that religion was a multi-functional peg on which values, personalities, ideologies and power could be hung, the founders of the Turkish Republic saw it as a real impediment in their way. Distrust added to disgust was their attitude toward Institutional Islam. Here we have an attitude on their part which is close to Voltaire's hatred of the Church. Yet Voltaire was freer than the Turkish leaders. Though he was subject to the pressures of the religious establishment, he did not have to take into account a population for which religion had such a primordial social function. To achieve his goals, Atatürk thus chose to strike at the foundations of official religion, making little effort to impose the new ways in the daily lives of the peasant masses or the provincial towns. Republican laicism was therefore a Janus-like affair: on the progressive side the Caliphate was eliminated in 1924, but on the other, platoon practice in officer training in the 1950s still culminated with the storming of a hill with cries of 'Allah, Allah!'³

The most important function of 'official' religion was that it provided a legitimating framework for the religion of the lower classes. By replacing the official religion with the principle of *laïcisme*, Atatürk erased the possibilities of

¹ Helmuth von Moltke, *Moltke'nin Türkiye Mektupları*, trans. H. Örs (Istanbul, 1969), p. 282.

² Fred W. Riggs, *Administration in Developing Countries* (Boston, 1964), pp. 267-72.

³ Around the turn of the century fights between boys of the Moslem quarters of Edirne and those of the Christian quarters were high-lighted by the same cries when Moslem boys charged their opponents (Aydemir, *Suyu Arayan Adam*, p. 19).

legitimation offered by the framework. The 'little man's' religion was thus placed in an ambiguous situation: tolerated but not secure. It was this tension which Atatürk hoped would work in favor of secularization in the long run.

The preceding provides an explanation of the Turkish Republican intolerance of the values of the *ancien régime* as a threat to its existence. But this 'idealistic' attitude is one which appears in other policies of the Turkish Revolution. Atatürk has been much criticized recently for spending too much effort on trying to change people's ideas. These critics point out that the extraordinary amount of energy spent on elaborating national consciousness and historical myths and on changing headgear and dress was not paralleled by an equal effort to create an economic basis for the republic.

But his attempts to create a new ideology had two distinct dimensions. The first one of these has often been described in studies of modernization. We know that ideological change is an area on which many Asian societies on the way to modernization have focused intensely. The usual explanations of the function of such ideologies has been that they are guides to the ideal polity of the future.¹ People need a map to orient them in building the new polity. My own contention here—somewhat reminiscent of that of Geertz—is that the modernizing ideology has also had the function of grappling with an already important traditional ideology. The new men have to accept a fight in the religious arena because this area is unusually important in the traditional system.²

All of the attempts to change the 'superstructure' of Turkish society have thus to be understood in the light of two features: first, the real importance of the superstructure for Ottoman society and secondly, the difficulty for someone raised within such a structure to realize that the importance of the superstructure was idiosyncratic to his society.

The Turkish Revolution was, then, primarily a revolution of values, but one in which the revolutionaries still showed the influence of their Ottoman-Islamic background. Their innovations, such as the introduction of a new civil code and the reform in the status of women, were directed at changing prevailing values, but it was their Ottoman heritage which obliged them to selectively direct their energies to the destruction of social norms. They were at a disadvantage even

¹ This appears for example in Kamenka's argument: 'The Indonesian rebellion against the Dutch was utterly different from the Jewish rebellion against the Romans; it was not merely a movement of national liberation from foreign masters, but a struggle for *control* over political, social and economic processes that were now recognized as the key to the future. In this sense, it seems to me, the movement of national liberation and the more or less peaceful transfer of power in Asian, African and Pacific countries have to be seen not only as revolutions, but as *revolutions within the history of Europe*, the transfer of social power from one governing class to a new class. It is only because Asia, Africa and the Pacific have entered the history of Europe that such true revolutions have become possible to them. It is because Turkey had entered the history of Europe that Kemal Pasha Atatürk's *coup d'état* aspired to become a revolution.' See Eugene Kamenka, 'The Concept of a Political Revolution', in *Revolution, op. cit.* p. 132.

² See Clifford Geertz, 'Ideology as a Cultural System', in *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David Apter (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), p. 67.

here in that they did not realize that legislating for the family does not mean bringing new values to existing families.

But their stance was characteristic in that the radical élite had legislated at the level of the élite and given little thought to the 'little' culture. In other countries of Asia where the élite was less cut-off from popular culture there was greater concern with such popular values.

All of this does not mean that the revolutionaries gave no importance to economics. As observers who had witnessed the economic weakness of the Ottoman empire, they were well aware of the importance of a modern, prosperous economy. They were also extremely sensitive about having the controls of this economy placed in Turkish hands. But their image of modern Turkey was not centered in electrification or the abolition of rich peasants as a class. *Proletkult* posters of square-jawed workers fulfilling their norm was not their vision of the future, although in the 1930s this did become the vogue for awhile. Their focus was a new national identity.

One point which has emerged from this survey is that the so-called Turkish Revolution goes as far back as the Young Turk Revolution, and that the foundations of the Republican regime were laid in 1908.

Only a short time ago the origins of the Turkish revolutionary movement in a subcategory of the ruling élite would have added to the aspects that disqualified it as a 'real' revolution. This is also true by Tocqueville's standards since he traced the basic instability at the root of revolution to 'a contradiction between the structure of civil society and the make-up of the political régime'.¹ Such a line of thought has also been prominent in the Marxist analysis of revolution and in modern attempts at typology: revolutions occur when the social and economic substructure bursts the political superstructure. In a recent article Gillis has shown that this is a one-sided and incomplete account of European revolutions.² Part of the preparation for revolution is that numerous elements in the bureaucracy and the army – parts of the existing ruling group – become alienated. Gillis goes on to illustrate this for 1789 and 1848.

To the extent that it fits this model of revolution, the Turkish revolution is thus belatedly being partly vindicated as having some aspects of a 'real' revolution. But what is most interesting about Gillis's approach is that he uncovers how closely linked with the concept of 'civil society' our understanding of revolution has been. Marx, in so far as he used the concept of civil society as an antithesis to the state, falls in the same category of categorizers. Both Tocqueville and Marx gave explanations of revolution that depended on the presence of an autonomous civil society. This was not the case in the Ottoman Empire.³

¹ Richter, 'Tocqueville's Contribution . . .', *loc. cit.* p. 80.

² John R. Gillis, 'Political Decay and the European Revolutions 1789-1848', *World Politics*, vol. xxii (April 1970), pp. 344-70.

³ See *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe*, I, I, i, 492, cited by W. G. Runciman, *Social Science and Political Theory* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 32-3.

By and large, the Turkish Revolution has some idiosyncratic features which make it difficult to study against the background of the American Revolution, the Russian Revolution, or even the Mexican Revolution. If there is something called an Indonesian Revolution the pattern is closer, although, again, difficult to compare. What this suggests is that up to the present our discussions of revolutions have taken place within the framework of what may be called the 'Western type of polity' and its system. What I mean by this are the characteristics of modernization which eventually derive from Western feudalism: estate structures, later the growth of municipal autonomy, the rise of the *bourgeoisie*, and the related political mechanisms. Our use of revolution seems to be much colored by these systematic characteristics, some of which came into being *after* the Turkish Revolution in Turkey.

One characteristic, however, relates the Turkish Revolution to other, similar movements of the beginning of the twentieth century. The Turkish Revolution was one of the many echoes of a global upheaval. It was a Turkish answer to the great turmoil that marked the end of the nineteenth century. In these developments, technological innovation, mass social unrest, economic fluctuations with world-wide repercussions, imperialism, and new ideas concerning nationhood occupied a prominent place. The reaction to these global convulsions in Turkey, however, was specifically Turkish.

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