

## **SOCIAL CHANGE: DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STRUCTURE**

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By far the most common sociological approach to questions of development and underdevelopment rest upon a kind of before-and-after model that is rarely made explicit. In focusing upon the multitude of questions raised by rapid social transformation, sociologists often imply a preceding "traditional" stage and a succeeding "modern" stage. These traditional and modern stages are conceptualized in the ideal-typical fashion and constitute polar extremes -- not only in terms of economic base and technology, but also in terms of institutions, including values and organization. The defining characteristics of the traditional stage include subsistence agriculture, primitive technology based on human and animal energy, the village community, ascriptive, particularistic and diffuse role structures and finally, conservatism, fatalism, low achievement motivation and resistance to change in outlook. The fully-modern stage is the antithesis of the traditional--industrial, urban, universalistic, achievement oriented, dominated by motives of maximization, etc.

Societies "in transition" within this model display the characteristics of both the traditional and the modern, and hence merit the term "dual" societies and economies. The assumption is that one part of the economy has been importantly affected by intimate economic relations with the "outside" world, and hence has become modern and relatively developed. The other part is variously regarded as isolated, subsistence-based, feudal or pre-capitalist and therefore underdeveloped.

The virtues and failures of each part of this model are nowhere more apparent than in the literature dealing with the impact of economic and social change on family and kinship systems. Some sort of natural "harmony" or "fit" is presumed to exist between the modern complex of industrialism and the nuclear family on the

one hand, and the non-urban, non-industrial setting and the extended family on the other. Thus social change and development presumably entails a change in the extended family towards the small nuclear or conjugal family. Also, in any transitional society at any point in time, the extended family, in which several generations of nuclear families live under one roof, is likely to be the modal form in rural areas (the traditional sector), and the nuclear family, consisting of parents and their immature children, is likely to be modal in urban and metropolitan areas (the modern sector).

The difficulty here arises from the fact that concepts such as "urbanization", "industrialization" and "modernization" involve the juxtaposition of many heterogeneous factors. To be able to understand and explain the processes of change from one family type to another, it is necessary to isolate the prime causal factors and their interrelationships. The two books under review here tackle precisely this problem in that they are both concerned with processes of family change within the Turkish context.

Timur's book basically challenges the duality thesis so prevalent in most family literature by arguing that it simply does not reflect the empirical reality in Turkey. Beginning with a detailed definition of various family types in Chapter I, the author goes on to examine in Chapter II, the incidence and prevalence of these types in Turkey. Chapter III, the bulk of the book, analyzes the factors which produce and maintain various household types. The final two chapters are devoted to a discussion of marriage customs and family interaction patterns associated with different household types.

Timur's findings<sup>1</sup> indicate that contrary to prevalent opinion, the majority of families in rural areas live in nuclear households. Patriarchally extended families (composed of a man and his wife, their sons and wives with their children and their unmarried sons and daughters) are clearly the minority type, comprising only one fourth of the households in rural communities with less than 2,000 population and one fifth in small towns of 2,000-15,000 population. (p. 31) The proportion of nuclear families does show a continuous increase as one goes up the hierarchy of settlement sizes, from villages to metropolitan centers of Ankara, İstanbul and İzmir. But

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(1) The study is based on data taken from a nationwide multi-stage probability sample survey on family structure and population problems in Turkey, conducted by the staff of the Hacettepe Institute of Population Studies in the summer of 1968.

clearly, urban residence is not a necessary condition for the establishment and maintenance of nuclear family households in Turkey. Similarly, variables such as income and education, when taken by themselves, fail to show consistent relationships with family type.

According to Timur, the crucial factor in the maintenance of a certain family type is property and work relationships. Where the family is the unit of production and income is dependent of family resources, the extended family is likely to resist fragmentation. Where income and occupation depend on individual labor power, the likelihood that nuclear families will prevail increases vastly. Timur substantiates this argument in Chapter III, by showing that in rural areas, the proportion of nuclear families is highest among farm-workers (79 per cent), drops to 64 percent among sharecroppers, and is lowest among land owning farmers (44 per cent). In urban areas, on the other hand, the percentage of nuclear families is highest among professionals and civil servants (77 per cent), lowest among businessmen and entrepreneurs (64 per cent). Thus where a family can use property (landed or other) as the base for consolidation, the tendency is toward extended households. In the case of wage-labor and salaried work, the likelihood that nuclear households will prevail increases. The author's emphasis is on property and work relations as the major explanatory variable in family change.

Kongar's study, in contrast to Timur's, adopts the postulate of interdependence and causality between the urban-industrial complex and the small nuclear family as a point of departure. The first half of the book, Section I, is devoted to an elaboration of this conceptual framework. In the second half of the book, the author examines the extent to which family structure in metropolitan İzmir conforms to the model in terms of household composition (Section II), bonds of kinship (Section III) and interdependencies with formal organizations (Section IV).

Kongar's findings, based on a stratified probability sample of households in İzmir, reveal that cross-sectionally, 63.5 per cent of families in İzmir live in nuclear households. Patriarchally extended families constitute only 0.1 per cent. (These percentages are consistent with those given by Timur for the three metropolitan centers of Ankara, İstanbul and İzmir). What Kongar interprets as highly significant is the relatively large proportion (around 25 per cent) of households which include either the mother and or the father of the married couple. Such households (which conform neither to the

traditional patriarchally extended nor modern nuclear types) represent, according to Kongar, a stage in the evolutionary sequence of family types and may be labeled as 'famille souche'. The use of the term *Famille souche* in this context is open to controversy. Also, it can be argued that such households simply represent a phase in the life cycle of the family and not a distinct family type as such. Nevertheless, the high incidence of households which incorporate the mother and or father of the married couple appears to be characteristic of the urban configuration in İzmir. As Kongar points out, the lack of complex social security measures as well as the absence of various formal agencies for taking care of the aged and the dependent, necessitates the assumption of this burden by the younger generation.

In terms of kinship bonds, physical proximity to relatives appears to be characteristic of the İzmir family. Of the families included in Kongar's sample, 11.3 per cent had close relatives living in the same building, 35.4 per cent in the same neighborhood, 17.5 per cent in an adjacent neighborhood and finally 19.8 per cent in the same city (p. 81). The majority of families visit close relatives at least once a week. Thus the important role of kin in providing the typical İzmir family with close, intimate and personal contacts is revealed. The significance of kin in providing relationships that can be counted on in an emergency, especially in case of financial need, is also indicated. The percentage of families in the sample which indicate having borrowed money from close relatives is around 30 per cent (p. 88) whereas only about 16 per cent have borrowed money from formal organizations (p. 116).

In summary, Kongar's study reveals that while the majority of families in metropolitan İzmir live in nuclear households, the wider kinship network retains its significance in providing close, intimate and personal relationships as well as functioning as an agency of social security.

Both Timur and Kongar's books are must reading for those interested in social change, development and family structure with special reference to Turkey. The present review hardly does justice to the breadth of material covered in them. A number of questions still remain unexplored however. One such question which strikes this reviewer as problematic, is the distinction between "household" and "family". It is conceivable and perhaps likely that many extended families which have residentially split into a number of nuclear house-

holds, continue to function as a single economic unit, especially in rural areas. Admittedly, this question would be very difficult to explore through surveys. Further refinements await the appearance of in-depth studies, dealing with the problems of family change at the micro level.

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