

Turkey and Russia: *Whither modernization?*

Gökhan BACIK*

“And it should be considered that nothing is more difficult to handle, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage, than to put oneself at the head of introducing new orders.”
N. Machiavelli

Abstract. This article, after a short theoretical discussion of the methodology of comparison in the first section and an attempt to define "political culture" in the second, focuses on two processes of modernization: the Turkish and the Russian. "Political culture" is defined as a kind of imagined formula that includes varying values, intuitions, characteristic features, and even social manners (modus operandi) of a defined political system. In this paper it serves as a key concept in the comparison that is done. The third section, then, deals with the historical dimensions of the Turkish and Russian processes of modernization. It examines what the main aims of the Russian and Turkish modernizers were, what they did, what the main limiting factors were, what was common to the two modernization experiences, and what the role of religion in both countries was. The article also discusses modernization in Turkey and Russia from another point of departure: whether it was European or not. Following upon the discussion of the modernization experiences in both Turkey and Russia and some of the current debates, the article summarizes the meaning of Europe for Russia and Turkey.

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1. Introduction: Some Notes on Comparison

What is the gist of a simple comparison? *X* is long, but *Y* is short. This is a simple and perfect comparison. However, how we compare two complex

* Lecturer, Department of International Relations, Fatih University, Istanbul Turkey.
E-mail: gbacik@fatih.edu.tr

and different objects or concepts is difficult since the logical basis for any comparison is highly problematical. In other words, do the things compared have the capacity to be subject to comparison? We need to construct different categories to analyze them, and doing so related to social or political phenomena is a purely philosophical effort. Comparison of such phenomena is also an exercise fraught with inherent difficulty. Is our personal construction just imagined in order to produce a functioning conclusion? Are there any two things that cannot be compared in any way, or is there actually a limitless logical basis that makes comparisons between any two kinds of objects feasible? It is clear that constructing binaries (short/long; early/late) is a kind of theoretical imposition. This type of logocentrism, as used by Derrida, depends upon hierarchical assumptions.

As for political scientists, they have used comparison as a very significant method to analyze important concepts such as modernization and revolutions.² As is clear, social events are very complex. Thus, “the core methodological problem” is generalization (Nicholson, 1996, p. 62). For example, the French Revolution of 1790 and the Russian Revolution of 1917 had some similarities but also many dissimilarities. The way in which a social scientist or historian can appropriately work on such complex events has been described as follows: “The procedure which can be adopted is to break down the complex social events into a set of simple ones” (Nicholson, 1996, p. 65). Not long after the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, this revolution became the topic of new comparisons carried out a number of times: the Iranian Revolution and the Russian Revolution or even the Iranian Revolution and the French Revolution. Probably the most famous book in this context is Theda Skocpol’s *States and Social Revolutions*. What Michael Adas (1998) wrote in praise of this book is useful in understanding how a logical comparison can best be undertaken: “She has chosen these cases carefully, and cogently argued her reasons for employing them. In part because she organizes the study by themes and topics rather than case samples, her comparisons are clear and sustained, her variables consistently and effectively employed, and her theoretical testing and findings persuasively argued” (p. 84). More theoretically, Adas (1998) has stated that “comparative analysis also requires the identification of independent and dependent variables and conscious decisions about the logic(s) of comparison to be employed,” and that “care must then be taken to apply

² For example Crane Brinton’s famous book is one of the best studies on the comparison of several revolutions: Crane Brinton, *The Anatomy of Revolution*, (New York: Random House, 1965).

these variables consistently in analysis both within and across the case studies selected and to distill explicitly from this analysis recurring patterns and causal explanations for similar or contrasting outcomes” (p. 102).

Following a similar line of logic, modernization in Turkey or the Turkish case (sometimes labeled the Turkish reformation, Turkish modernization, or other labels) has been compared to other cases of modernization. It has been the Japanese process of modernization that has attracted the most attention, especially among Turkish historians and political scientists when doing comparisons. Why? Those in Turkey have perceived the Japanese process as the only successful non-western one. For the Turkish reformist elite, the Japanese process was the one to be studied for two reasons: it was smooth and successful and it provided a non-Western model of development. Also, both those in Turkish society in the anti-Western bloc and in pro-Islamic groups have from the beginning appreciated the case of Japan. To them it represents both development and conservatism (progress without change). Of course, it is open to debate as to whether the Turkish elite has ever tried to consider the idea of instituting a non-Western model of development in a broader philosophical framework. As a symbol, the Japanese process might just be an imagined creation (illusion) of the conservative Turkish elite. However, the idea of a non-western process of development should be analyzed. In fact, recently several Turkish sociologists such as Nilüfer Göle have again mentioned the idea of non-Western modernity. She suggested the famous Turkish expression “*Bati dışı modernlik*” (non-Western modernity) (Göle, 2000, pp. 159-174) and believes that it should be treated as an important sociological reality that helps explain the ongoing thinking and the process in Turkey. According to Göle, non-Western modernity is a modernity that removes the West from its formerly central position and replaces it with a new peripheral discourse still based on modernity. In other words, she claims that there is the possibility of producing a universal modernity language by analyzing local facts. In addition, this new modernity aims to abolish the former linear and progressive time model (Esendemir, 2001, p. 85).

Zbigniew Brzezinski in his widely read article, “Living with Russia,” compared the Turkish (the Ottoman) and the Russian cases. According to Brzezinski (2000), the Turkish case should be a lesson for Russia (p. 12). Of course, any such large-scale comparison will also include some relatively small-scale comparisons. As Brzezinski (2000) quotes Yuri Andropov, he claims that “Putin is no Atatürk”(p.12). At this point we should ask ourselves about what logical basis Brzezinski used to construct

his comparison of Russia and Turkey. I have previously noted that our minds can make up an imagined basis for a comparison. In other words, comparison involves personal perspectives. One can construct hundreds of ways of comparing very large-scale entities such as Turkey and Russia. "The lessons of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire," writes Brzezinski (2000), "are highly relevant to Russia's contemporary dilemmas" (p. 14). In the same paper Brzezinski (2000) goes so far as to write that "Turkey would not be contending today for membership in the European Union were it not for the fact that Atatürk and his bold reformers represented a critical mass capable of effecting a psychological break with the past..." (p.14). Writing about the modernization experience of any country also involves a kind of historiography. Thus, the writer becomes naturally immersed in the traditional problems of historiography. One of these problems is that of presentism. Presentism implies that the reading and writing of the history of past events can be done from the perspective of our present lenses. In the words of Meyerhoff, "historical inquiry must be controlled by the dominant problems and conceptions of the culture of the period in which it is written"(Dray, 1989, p. 169). Since we write history for today's world, we pick up our point of departure from current reasons, paradigms, and events. It is a fact that we have to consider "the natural embeddedness of observers in their own time and place and to the cognitive maps to the world."(Abu-Lughod, 1998, p. 76) However, the point made by Brzezinski regarding Atatürk and his reformers and Turkey's current interest in becoming a member of the European Union is a questionable one. Inferring such connections from history does not seem very logical. Of course, there is a kind of determination in social events and in history as well. In other words, no matter how limited it is, there is a room for prediction and generalization in history, but this is constitutive (teleological) determination rather than causal determination (Wendt, 1999, pp. 79-80). In this type of "determinism" we cannot obtain perfect conclusions and generalizations. Thus, one cannot infer conclusions, as Brzezinski did, from the past. For example, saying that if x had not been born in 1857, y would not have been happened indicates that the author of this sentence is assuming the existence of causal determinism, as in physics, that is involved in the development of historical events. How then can we colligate events in history? Since we have no universal causal method we deploy our personal methods and "logic" to tie things together. Thus, colligation is necessarily teleological (Dray, 1989, p. 41). When colligating events we look for connective facts, ideas, or whatever there is between historical events. A teleological approach can claim that Atatürk's reforms contributed to today's Turkish relations with Europe. Such a colligation can be consistent. However, Brzezinski

indicated that an event (or one set of events) was the absolute reason for another following event (or events), which can hardly be read as a consistent inference.

2. Political Culture

What follows is a study of Turkish and Russian modernization. A useful methodological concept to explain the Turkish and the Russian cases is the concept of "political culture" since it provides a common theoretical framework. Using the concept with reference to the Turkish and Russian political traditions can provide us with some similar facts and help us discover the social and political foundations of modernization in both countries.

"Political culture," to Gerhard Simon (1995), is a kind of imagined formula that includes varying values, intuitions, characteristic features, and even social manners (*modus operandi*) of a defined political system (p. 245). On the other hand, it is a fact that "historians give political culture a variety of meanings" (Formisano, 2001, pp. 34-35). For example, to some political scientists, political culture should be read as a process, it is "the term that describes how a society and a collection of leaders and citizens chooses, and has long chosen, to approach national political decisions" (Formisano, 2001, pp. 34-35). Following this line of logic, according to Gerhard Simon some of the outstanding features of the Russian political culture are: a strong center, a strong state-weak society model, and the dominance of significant social and political leaders. We can claim the existence of similar characteristics in Turkish political culture.

The strong Russian centralist political mentality can be traced back to the late Medieval Age. The Moscow autocracy came into existence long before its counterparts in Europe. To Boris Maizel (1999-2000), the Russian cultural and political initiative has long been dominated by an all-powerful state. Tim McDaniel (1991) writes that "the autocracy was so fundamental in Russian society that many, including a whole school of historians, regarded it as the only creative force in Russian history, the foundation of all other social institutions" (p. 49). Since the Grand Duchy of Moscow, central power increased under strong Russian rulers. "More so than in the Habsburg Monarchy or Prussia, or even in the Ottoman Empire", writes Stuart Miller (1998), "political and constitutional power was centralized in the person of the Tsar, divinely appointed to wield autocratic powers over the people of Russia" (p. 124). Any dissolution of the power-center in the Russian system

has meant the emergence of chaotic situations in Russia. There are some historical events that can be discussed to evaluate this view. One example is the chaotic atmosphere before Tsar Mikhail (1613-1645) became the first Romanov ruler in Russia in 1613. After the death of Fyodor I, the last Ryurikid ruler, in 1598 political instability became a problem that lasted until Mikhail Romanov became the ruler. During his reign, he established a unified Russian state while ending internal conflicts and resuming relations with foreign states. The basic reason for the chaotic atmosphere was the end of centralized state power in the late sixteenth century. In addition, the events of 1917 and the turmoil during the late 80s and early 90s can be seen as part of this same theoretical context. As for Turkey, a strong center has been one of the defining markers of the Turkish political system. During the Ottoman centuries, the center (*pay-i taht*) provided the only legitimate figure to rule the empire. As in the Russian cases, political turmoil would peak as a result of instability at the center of the empire, and it is the notion of a strong center (or that of an almighty state) that constitutes one of the most important aspects of the Ottoman legacy to the Turkish Republic. The secular Turkish state has been very sensitive regarding the issue of domination over the polity. The question is what is the meaning of this shared fact. Obviously, dissolution of the central power configuration is of considerable importance to any country. However, in Turkey and Russia the center placed itself as the only source of legitimacy. Boris Maizel (1999-2000) claims that "Russian communities are unable to produce a civil society at large." The situation is the same in the Turkish political system. A strong central authority tradition has hampered the initiative and evolution of civil society. Society in these countries find its orientation according to the center. What is deviation and what is good are decided at the center.

The strong-center model has naturally affected modernization in both countries. Like Peter the Great or Mahmud II (or Atatürk), the leaders at the center in both political systems have always been the principal actors throughout the periods of modernization. Thus, rules are decided by the center. The center usually represents *modernity*; the periphery has represented the ancient and the obsolete. Modernization in Russia and Turkey has been the choice of the center as opposed to the periphery for hundreds of years. In this division of labor, the periphery has felt itself to be committed to protecting the *status quo*. According to Şerif Mardin, the basic characteristic of Turkish politics is the placement of the center and the periphery at opposite poles. This opposite placement is a key element, which helps explain the dynamics of Turkish political life. The periphery has been perceived of as the source of deviation by the center (Mardin, 1999, p. 79-

104). Both in Turkey and Russia, opposition groups have been located at the periphery. When struggling against the innovative and reform policies of the center, the masses have quickly gathered around religion, as a peripheral institution, to protect their identities. The tension between the center and periphery not only has been reflected in the struggle over values but has also resulted in conflict over the national market. Throughout history, in both Russia and Turkey, there has been another second peripheral market that stands on its own feet.

Peasant, the adjective used for describing the masses, not surprisingly, indicates weakness in such a structure. "The Russian crisis," writes Vishnevskii (1994), "is in particular and above all an agricultural crisis" (p. 22), and the peasant masses living under a strong Russian government over the centuries developed the notion of an almighty state. Only four percent of the population lived in towns in Russia in the early nineteenth century. Stuart Miller (1998) has noted that "the enduring problem of Russia throughout the nineteenth century was whether to look towards the western example, and seek to modernize an archaic society, economy and administration, or to turn away from these influences." After that he depicted Russian society as having a backward economy with low productivity, poor communications, and limited trade along with worker conditions that were very poor, agricultural production that was low due to inefficient techniques, and a peasant market that was very limited. "It took two years for grain from the lower Volga to reach St. Petersburg." There was also a large budget deficit (Miller, 1998, p. 124). The Communist regime hardened this reality in Russian society with the new policies it introduced. In Turkey, peasants, during the Ottoman period, were totally subordinate to the *sultan* (monarch). They were one part of the Sultan's *teb'a* (subjugate) along with the other parts, i.e. the *zanaatkars* (craftsmen) and the *tuccars* (tradesmen) (Karpat, 1996, p. 83). Until the seventeenth century even though rural production levels were not high, peasants lived in circumstances of subsistence. However, especially after the seventeenth century, because of the large numbers of ongoing wars, the peasant economy almost collapsed (Karpat, 1996, p. 83). The peasantry, as a basic social element, has remained in a dominant position even in post-Ottoman Turkey.³ In all national elections since the beginning of the republican era, Turkish peasants have voted for right-wing parties. The image in people's minds of a dominant state has remained intact. The state is referred to as *devlet baba* (father state).

³ According to the 2000 census, the total population of Turkey is 63 million. 22 million (almost 35 percent) of the population lives in small villages.

In the historical and popular perception of it, it is the source of bread, employment, and rule. Anarchy has always been perceived of as a demonic concept in Turkish villages. According to many experts, study of these models of agrarian society reveals that they are the basic reason for the collapse of the two empires. For example, Çağlar Keyder (1997) discusses “. . . the patrimonial-crisis model which assumes that the classical empire [the Ottoman Empire] is basically agrarian, governed by a strong center that uses non-hereditary tax collecting administrators to control the peripheral area” (p. 30). Mark von Hagen (1997), regarding the Russian case, stated that “at the base was a socioeconomic crisis that Leon Trotsky formulated as uneven development, a pre-modern largely agrarian economy afflicted by rural overpopulation and very low productivity that coexisted with a rapid, state-sponsored industrialization drive. The industrialization drive was financed by taxation of the agrarian population, supplemented by extensive foreign borrowing”(pp. 60-61).

3. Modernization as a Historical Concept

Russian modernization is a process that began in the mid-seventeenth century. In the following century Ottoman modernization (though at first limited to the military) began. The reforms were first aimed at the restoration of military power, and there was a strong French influence in the early military reforms. A century later the Ottoman army came under German influence. Step by step the spirit of reform in the Ottoman Empire widened and produced important and innovative outcomes for the Empire’s social, political, and economic life. The apex of the Russian Westernization and modernization movement is seen as occurring during the reign of Peter the Great (1672-1725). “Peter borrowed ideas, technology, and personnel from the West on a scale unmatched in Russian history, and he introduced far reaching military, administrative, and economic reforms” (Petro & Rubinstein, 1996, p. 3). His modernization efforts included almost every aspect of the Russian sociopolitical structure. Peter the Great tried to reform the state, the economy, the church, the military, education, and even private life in Russia. He forbade the seclusion of women and commanded both sexes to adopt European styles of dress. He even made the use of tobacco compulsory among the members of his court. Beards were prohibited. Peter’s modernization of the military occurred early on as it had in the Ottoman Empire with the creation of a regular army and a navy. The early steps taken to found the Russian Navy began in 1695. Then, in 1696 Peter the Great issued the declaration that entailed the creation of a regular navy on the Azov Sea. A naval school in Moscow was also opened, and the

Navigation School was opened in 1701. Other reforms included the introduction of new administrative and territorial divisions within Russia. In 1725 the Russian Academy of Sciences was founded. In the early years of the eighteenth century still more innovative steps were taken such as the publication of the first newspaper in St. Petersburg. Although Peter the Great's military reforms can be seen as his major focus and achievement, one should keep in mind the fact that the influence of Europe in Russia can be traced back to earlier times thanks to trade. Peter did accelerate the process and gave it a more radical direction (Burns, 1968, p. 552). Another very important era involved in modernization was the reign of Alexander II (1855-1895). Alexander II can be seen as a typical "great reformer." He had both progressive and traditional views. Similar paradoxical reformist monarchs, such as Abdulhamid II, also came to the power in the Ottoman Empire. Viewed from another standpoint, the modernization carried out by Alexander II can be said to represent a higher level of modernization. In other words, his aim was not to restore but to change life in Russia. During his reign he introduced key concepts of western jurisprudence including equality before the law, trial by jury, and the separation of criminal and civil laws (Lee, 1995, pp. 94-100)

In the Ottoman system, even before the 1839 Tanzimat (reorganization) Decree, Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839) was involved in carrying out reforms intended to bring about a total social transformation. Changes from the style of dress worn to the establishment of new legal institutions were made. The initiatives carried out by Mahmud II were wide-ranging. Regarding his policy towards the traditional reactionary coalition of the *ulama* (the religious elite) and the Janissaries (an army corps that formed the nucleus of the Ottoman army), Mahmud II from the beginning pursued a balanced policy. He did this despite being quickly labeled the *gavur padisah* (the infidel monarch) by the Ottoman religious cadres of the era. Cognizant of these reactions, Mahmud II actually named his new army "the triumphant soldiers of Muhammad" to silence the religion-based reaction to his reforms. In 1827 Mahmud II opened a new medical school for army personnel, which became the School of Military Sciences in 1834. During his reign, the first official newspaper (*Takvim-i Vekayi*) was founded.⁴ Of course, the peak in modernization was reached during the Tanzimat Era. It was on 3 November 1839 that the *Tanzimat Fermani* (decree) was declared. Accordingly, it was at this time that truly innovative and revolutionary principles were

⁴ For the details of Mahmud II's reforms, see William Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1994), pp. 76-78.

introduced into the Ottoman system. There were two especially notable changes: “One was that all Ottoman citizens were to be perfectly equal before the law regardless of race or creed. The other was the introduction of a new legal code which was distinct from that of the Islamic *sharia* administered by the *qadi*(s) or Islamic judges” (Mansfield, 1992, p. 63-64). For many scholars, the adoption of non-Islamic or Western legal codes was the most innovative part of the *Tanzimat* reforms.

Tension between the reforming elite and the religious authorities was experienced in both Turkey and Russia. In both locations religion played a very important role. From the very beginning Islam shaped the character of the Ottoman political and social system. Although it was only after the eighteenth century that the official label of “caliphate” was used, Ottoman monarchs definitely had a religious character. Islam was also one of the sources of legitimacy for the Ottoman political system. However, the Ottoman system was not solely focused upon religion. Playing a significant role were both *realpolitik* and *örfi* (customary) law (Timur, 1994, p. 65). The reforms introduced met with opposition, and in general, it was the religious elite who opposed the reforms.

In Russia, Christianity was first introduced according to tradition in 988 by Prince Vladimir whose grandmother, Olga, was converted to the Eastern Orthodox faith in Constantinople. Mikhail V. Shkarovskii has written concerning its role that “during its (the Russian Orthodox Church’s) long history it frequently exerted a stabilizing, consolidating effect on the nation, especially during times of national crisis, and even during the civil war it maintained a neutral position.” According to the Church itself, “in the 12th century, the period of feudal divisions, the Russian Church remained the only bearer of the idea of unity of the Russian people, resisting the centrifugal aspirations and feudal strife among Russian princes.”⁵ In general, the Russian Tsars always considered themselves to be successors of the Byzantine emperors (the third Rome ideology) and the political protectors and financial supporters of Orthodoxy throughout the Balkans and the Middle East. However, several periods of tension occurred between the church and the tsars. For example, Nikon (reign of 1652-58), aimed to restore the power and prestige of the church by declaring that the patriarchal office was superior to that of the tsar. One can predict that the question of who was to be considered superior was the basic cause of the tension between the church and the tsar. Historically speaking, the Russian tsars

⁵ http://www.russian-orthodox-church.org.ru/hist_en.htm

were always on the winning side in this struggle. The nature of Russian political culture was that it always produced strong leadership. Friedrich von Genz, the advisor to Metternich, once said that “the facts that limit the other monarchs of Europe are totally invalid in the Russian system. The Russian tsar may even try to carry what he dreamed last night out” (Kissinger, 1998, p. 126). One historian, S. Oldenburg, wrote on the autocracy of Tsar Alexander II as follows: “He believed that he alone was responsible for the destiny of Russia and that he would answer for this trust before the throne of the Almighty. Some might assist and others might obstruct him, but God would judge him alone for his custodianship. As the responsibility was solely his, so too was the power” (McDaniel, 1991, p. 49). Peter the Great tried to annihilate the authority of the patriarch of the Church. I should note that in the Ottoman model the monarch also had an unquestionable superiority. The Ottoman system had no counterpart to the Orthodox Patriarch; but there was the office of the *Seyhulislam* (the religious leader responsible for all religious concerns) within the imperial system. There were some symbolic behaviors that show that there was a kind of respect-based relationship between the monarch and the *Seyhulislam*, but in general the supremacy of the Ottoman monarch was the rule. During the reign of Peter the Great, the Russian Church became the major opponent of the Tsar’s modernization program. According to the Church, the aim of the reforms was to change the historical dimension of Russia from the Byzantine line to a new European line. Peter the Great even abolished the patriarchate in order to subject the Orthodox Church of Russia to the state (1721). He also transformed the central administration of the church into a department of the state with the title of the “Holy Governing Synod.”⁶ In addition, the tsar appointed a secular official, the *ober-prokurator* or the chief procurator, to supervise the Holy Synod’s activities. Peter also ordered those delivering sermons to the peasants to give sermons that would make the peasantry “listen to reason.” The aim of such sermons was to teach prayers to children so that every one would grow up in fear of God and also in fear of the tsar. During the eighteenth century, Empress Catherine the Great secularized Church properties. In short, both the Russian and the Turkish religious elites, after initially trying to oppose or influence the course of the reform movements, eventually passively accepted the modernization policies of the center. However, this is not to say that the religious elites in both countries

⁶ The Holy Governing Synod was formed after Peter delayed the election of a new Primate of the Church following upon the death of Patriarch Adrian in 1700. The Synod remained the supreme church body in the Russian Church for almost two centuries. See http://www.russian-orthodox-church.org.ru/hist_en.htm

never attempted to produce a kind of unofficial agenda to protect their status in social life. The crux of the tension in both countries can especially be seen in specific areas such as the secularization of education. Peter was the first ruler of Russia to subsidize education in a secular framework while bringing an element of state control into the field. Various secular schools were opened during his reign. The Ottoman Sultans also opened such schools. In the late nineteenth century, secular education, from military to medicine, expanded greatly.

Considering what has already been said, a number of questions arise. One wonders how the Turkish and the Russian elites perceived modernization. What did modernization entail to them—was it about accepting Western standards or about reforming their traditional way of life? Was it a process that should involve concrete steps such as the opening of new schools and the changing of the calendar, or was it an abstract concept that referred to a state of mind? One should realize that modernization could be explained as the expansion of the Western system. This is implied in the following comment: “we can view some historical trajectories, such as the Renaissance, the Reform, global exploration of the West, the Enlightenment, the French and American Revolutions, the industrial revolution(s), colonization, and globalization, as the way stations in the long march of modernity” (Kuru, 2001). In other words, implied is that a modernization policy that includes industrialization and secularization is the only way to become a respected state in the modern international system. This approach depends on a staunch belief that makes the claim that “industrialization leads to wealth, urbanization, public education, mass literacy, communication, the rise of organized labor, and equality” (Kuru, 2001). Clearly, modernization is a complex phenomenon. It includes technological and other areas including the social, political, and economic realms of life. The experience of modernization in Russia and Turkey (the Ottoman Empire), including the early periods, fit well within the approach just mentioned.

Considering modernization in general, even though it refers to a complex process from economic reform to social reform, it depends on a simple logic: a progressive idea of history. In addition, Turkish and Russian modernization (and the modernizing elites in those locations) faced a fixed point: the West as a model and the West as a threat. Also, in both modernization experiences, the army was perceived of as an instrument of development. As an example from Ottoman modernization, the main effort involved in the reform program during the reign of Selim III was developing a new army. In fact, his reform program, the *Nizam-i Cedid* (New Order)

was intended to restore state power. Eventually, these military reforms produced important effects on Ottoman social and political life. This indicates that the changes that occurred did not remain limited to the actual military reforms that were implemented. Similarly in Russia, military reforms undertaken during the reign of Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible) also rapidly affected Russian politico-social life. The reforms not only defined the local system of recruiting troops, but they also marked the beginning of the creation of a permanent army and the restriction of the estate privileges of the large numbers of feudal nobility in the army (Lobov, 1992, pp. 43-44). The emphasis upon army reform in both modernization experiences also resulted in the army taking a very important place in the political life of both countries. The armies became the intrepid defenders and guarantors of the political systems in Russia and Turkey. Additionally, in the early stages of modernization in both Russia and Turkey, the elites and also the masses searched for concrete fruits of the process. Accordingly, modernization in both Russia and Turkey came into being on the basis of a process understood to be almost a technological process (Kahraman, 2001, p. 9). This was a process independent of the historical background to modernity in the West and of the process that led to modernity in the West. In Russia and Turkey modernization was explained and understood not as an abstract phenomenon but as a measurable and concrete process of development. In the words of İlber Ortaylı, a kind of *industriamania* gripped the minds of people in both societies. Peter the Great devoted himself to the metallurgical and manufacturing industries. During the late decades of the nineteenth century, significant progress in industrialization was achieved in Russia. The Ottoman Sultans achieved similar results. As can be observed even today, factories are equated with the concept of progress. In Turkey persons taking part in political demonstrations will still shout: *Fabrika istiyoruz!* (We want a factory!). For the modernizing elite also, progress oriented to concrete innovations as opposed to philosophical concerns was of greater importance. Of note is that neither the Russian nor the Turkish (Ottoman) modernizing elites discussed the potential problems inherent in imitating the West. The West was perceived to be the indisputable superior actor. Thus, modernization and westernization soon became synonyms. The discussion over the problems related to the sort of modernization and westernization that occurred at the philosophical level would be the concern of the following generation. Finally, both in Russia and Turkey other similar steps in the name of modernization were taken. These included such measures as sending students abroad (to Europe), establishing newspapers, founding new schools for military and civil personnel, borrowing legal codes from Europe,

changing the style of the clothes worn, as well as implementing calendar reforms.

4. *To be (part of Europe) or not to be (part of Europe)*

Clearly, both Turkey (the Ottoman Empire) and Russia did modernize themselves. However, if their aim involved restoring their military might or preventing the disintegration of their empires, they failed in their endeavors. Neither the Russian nor the Ottoman modernization efforts could stop the decline of these empires. Both empires collapsed at almost the same time. A Turkish thinker (Said Nursi) once said; “Turkey is pregnant to give birth to a European state.” Now hundreds of years after the first modernizing elites began their reforms, the same question for Turkey and Russia arises: Did they give birth to a European state/child? In other words, have they become a part of Europe? Technically this question implies different answers. Firstly, considering the recent developments in European politics such as the formation of the European Union (EU), we can ask whether Europe is willing to accept Turkey and Russia. Secondly, considering their modernization experiences, we can ask whether Turkey and Russia are willing to be part of Europe. Was being a part of Europe intended to be the final stage of their modernization?

In fact, such a question brings up another one: What is Europe--is it a physical geographical area, or is it a way of life, a psycho-socio-economic political area that any nation can “join” after a kind of *Europeanization* process? The Greek *polis* offers an example of such an imagined political concept rather than an administrative or geographic definition. As for Europe today, is there one fixed notion of Europe or are there a number of different Europe's? Martin Walker in explaining the mental maps of Europe, as viewed from America, puts forward the idea that there are various Europe's rather than one. Walker's account (2000) involves such “maps” of Europe as a security map, an economic map, a cultural map, a religious map, a geographic map, and finally a political map (pp. 459-474). The question then becomes which map of Europe most appropriately includes Turkey and Russia after their extensive periods of modernization.

Regarding the security map of Europe, the legacy of the Cold War is the determining factor. During the decades of the Cold War, Europe was divided and the security of Western Europe was defined according to the so-called Russian threat. Now, NATO is pursuing an expansionist agenda, and

Russia is extremely sensitive about this. “The war in the former Yugoslavia”, writes James E. Goodby (1993), “has shown that neither the collective defense system of NATO nor the economic integration of the European Community has been truly relevant to this crisis” (pp. 299-300). Even though an undivided Europe in terms of security now seems almost utopian, for such a secure Europe, Russia and Turkey are especially important. Though Turkey is a member of NATO, which is the core of the European security system, her relations with the EU can hardly be depicted as healthy. It also seems highly unlikely that Russia will become part of the European security system any time soon (Sestanavoich, 2000, pp. 5-16). However, a Turkey or Russia totally outside of the European security map would result in their being a source of threat or a source of instability for Europe.

In terms of the cultural map, there are a large number of problems. According to Montesquieu’s classification, the Turks and the Russians do not appear to be European nations. For İlber Ortaylı, who is concerned about what Turkey’s position should be, the discussion about whether or not Russia is a part of Europe strongly resembles the Turkish case and indicates the conclusion that will be drawn about Turkey. He points out that despite the role of Russia in European political history, it is a fact that Russia has not been perceived of as a European country (Ortaylı, 1999). In short, given the current accepted cultural map of Europe, it seems unlikely that either Russia or Turkey will be perceived of as parts of Europe. In 1997 Turkey was in fact rebuffed by the European Union at the Luxembourg Summit. The implicit reasons given were those tied to cultural differences mainly those related to religion. Viewing Turkey as suited to being a part of Europe requires not only a technical or political discussion dealing with the expansion of Europe, it also requires raising issues related to reconsidering the classical structural basis of Europe. In other words, the admission of Turkey implies the acceptance of the existence of an Islamic Europe.

From the standpoint of Europe viewed as a geographical area, some claim that the eastern border is capable of expanding towards the East, and that the present expansion would reach its “natural” limit when it arrives at the eastern borders of Turkey. There is no doubt that Turkey is currently working on new reforms in its endeavor to become a full member of the EU, and it makes sense to view them as the current phase of Turkey’s turn towards the west, which began in the eleventh century. However, despite such a long and historic “endeavor,” it seems that pinpointing the eastern border of Europe is still difficult. The newspaper, *Liberation* (1999,

December 13) pointed out that Jean Quatremer and Nathalie Dubois have claimed that this expansion might not stop after Turkey but could reach the Caucasus and then on further to Central Asia. Walker Conner also shares this very liberal perspective. To Conner, the expansion of the European border towards the eastern adjoining areas cannot really be halted. He indicates that “the matter is further complicated by the fact that the Ottoman Turks came originally from Central Asia, but at least since the time of Atatürk have considered themselves European. Does Europe stop even at the eastern border? Turkic peoples stretch almost uninterruptedly from Turkey to western China. Moreover, how is one to explain the exclusion from Europe of the Indo European language area of Iran, West Pakistan, and northern India? Cultural contacts and political borders have shown a remarkable disregard for continental divisions” (Walker, 1994, p. 135). Interestingly, there are also some who have depicted the new Europe as a borderless continent.

Assessing the position of Russia in this debate is also difficult. Vladimir Baranovsky summarizes three options. According to the first, Russia is already a part of Europe (Baranovsky, 2000, p. 444). This line of thought suggests that since Russia descends from a Christian civilization, it should be perceived of as a part of Europe. Along these same lines Baranovsky indicates that even though at this time Russia may not be a perfect copy of Europe, it represents another type of Europe. The second option focuses on Russia’s closeness to Asia (Baranovsky, 2000). In this line of thought the Byzantine-Orthodox Slavic identity comes to the forefront. On this subject Fernand Braudel (1993) has said that “the fact that the world and civilization of Russia were sucked into the orbit of Byzantium from the tenth century onwards helped to distinguish Eastern from Western Europe” (p. 532). The third option claims that Russia does not actually possess a Western or an Eastern identity; it is neither Western nor Eastern (Baranovsky, 2000, p. 444).

As for the citizens of the two countries, they are divided on the issue of “Europeanization.” Some Russians and Turks defend it. Some reject it. In Turkey according to some polls, 65 percent of the entire population support European Union membership. The recent socio-economic crisis in Turkey is the key factor behind this support. Many analysts say that for the first time in history the Turkish people now support Westernization *en masse*. Scholars in Russia suggest that “there are two tendencies in Russian history, the deepest and most powerful of which is the tendency toward a liberal evolution of society, uniting Russia and Western countries” (*Russian Social Science*

Review, 1999, p. 48). However, various polls in Russia show that the West, especially for a short time after the end of the USSR, was perceived of as the second enemy of the nation (Pain, 2000, p. 51). These anti-Western feelings were based on the view that Russia's national wealth has been sold or taken by foreigners and that the reforms were inspired by agents of influence such as the CIA or that they benefited only the West. The U.S.A., western businesses, and western culture along with western institutions such as NATO and the CIA were also distrusted. Perhaps this quick rise of the anti-Western feeling can be explained as a temporary feeling. Emil Pain (2000) explains this as follows: "what is usually called Russian nationalism is actually a pathological response to the disintegration of the foundations of Soviet society as well as a pathological adaptation to new economic and geopolitical realities" (p. 52). Similar anti-European feelings regularly arise in Turkey due to ongoing conflicts between Turkey and European Union member states. A recent case involved Italy related to Abdullah Öcalan, the Kurdish leader of the PKK. When Italy hesitated to extradite Öcalan, anti-Western feelings in Turkey quickly ignited.

So far the answer to whether or not Turkey and Russia are a part of Europe seems unclear. David Rowley (2000) has written about Russia that "it will be of great interest to see whether Russia follows the European model or continues to be a special case" (p. 39). He seems to be suggesting that Russian may fail to achieve the necessary reforms or sufficient modernization. When assessing what factors might prevent the "unification" of Turkey or Russia with Europe, such failures must be considered. These particular failures in fact originate in the domestic politics of Turkey and Russia. Faults related to Europe are not involved. After long centuries of modernization, both Turkey and Russia face a critical decision: Are they ready or not to offer the same opportunities and civil rights to their citizens as the European states do? "The experience of history tells us that minor and major reforms in our country," writes Aleksandr S. Akhiezer (1996), "have usually ended in failure" (p. 43). The reasons Akhiezer (1996) gives to explain why reforms have failed in Russia can also be used to explain the Turkish experience: "The first and central requirement of a reform flowing from the necessity of observing socio-cultural laws is the necessity of making the schism or the conflict between different value systems into the principal problem of the reform" (p. 49). He also writes that "reform must be reflective, that is, it must also be directed inward, toward itself and toward improving the reform's effectiveness; it must continually reform itself on the basis of accumulated experience" (Akhiezer, 1996, p. 49). Regarding the traditional strong central power configurations of these two countries, it is

clear that neither the Turkish nor the Russian establishments have wanted to dispose of this tradition in order to give a greater voice to their peoples. On this issue there is still a need for further reform, and the reform needed will have to occur within the current Russian and Turkish establishments. However, both the Turkish and Russian “reformists” remain far behind the demands voiced by the people’s. It is already clear in the Turkish case that the traditional periphery is now trying to force the center to move forward with reforms. It should be noted that neither the Russian nor the Turkish modernizing elites began their endeavors with the intention of becoming part of Europe. Their aim was to increase their capacity to compete with Europe. The idea still expressed today that “we should obtain European technology but should avoid European values” reflects the psycho-pathological origin of the Russian and Turkish modernization. It was done to imitate the West in order to compete with the West.

6. Conclusion

Historically speaking, McDaniel's term “autocratic modernization” is an apt way to describe the Turkish and Russian experiences with modernization. Thus, the “dilemmas of autocratic modernization” should also be considered. However, instead of focusing on the failures of modernization at this point, I want to consider the broader picture indicated by the details provided already. First of all, no matter what their historical origin and no matter how they were implemented, the concepts of modernity along with Westernization and Europeanization are inseparable parts of both the Russian and the Turkish mindsets, and they still have the power to inspire people. Second, no matter how different the systems both countries had before, both Russia and Turkey today have analogous systems, and they represent problematic models. Thus, both in Turkey and Russia such similar issues as the question of identity, corruption, and nationalism are faced. An important problem is the incapacity of Turkey and Russia to produce a model. One should remember the discussions on Turkey’s possible future roles that followed soon after the end of the Cold War. As for Turkey, Western countries including the United States for a short time perceived Turkey as a model country to be imitated by the newly independent Turkic states. Was it because Turkey was involved in an original project? Obviously not. It was also not because of the characteristics of the Turkish project. Rather western states chose to present Turkey as a model because of Turkey’s closeness to European values and Turkey’s secular and western identity.

Finally, what can be learned from the historical modernization periods in Russia and Turkey? In my personal view, the long modernization experiences in Russian and Turkish history have contributed to clarifying the fault line between the state and society. Consequently, today the “center” in both the Russian and Turkish political systems has almost lost its capacity for reform. We can no longer expect anything but very limited reform from the Turkish or the Russian establishment. In other words, dynamism as a political frame of mind now belongs to peripheral actors in both political systems. Historically, modernization was the project of the central authority and central elite in Russia and Turkey, and it was aimed at improving the ability to cope with the West. The notion of modernity that we discuss today is mostly a peripheral concept. This peripheral type of modernity has the capacity to produce a synthesis based on universal values that include those of the West. Paradoxically, the Russian and the Turkish centers (the establishment) today stand as actors likely to hinder this process.

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