

Women, Power and Political Systems

Edited by Margherita Rendel



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EDITED BY MARGHERITA RENDEL
WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF GEORGINA ASHWORTH



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Nermin Abadan-Unat

Introduction

When compared to other cultural areas, predominantly Muslim nations have low rates of reported economic activity, low female literacy rates and low female school enrolment at all levels. For women in these countries, seclusion from economic activities and economic dependency are the norm.

Two types of restrictions operate to affect women's status in Muslim societies. The first includes the legal and religious restrictions and inequalities mentioned in the Quran, Hadith, Sunna and Sharia law codes, and the second is that imposed by the practice of purdah or seclusion (White, 1978). Turkey, however, together with the Soviet Republics of Central Asia and Albania, represents those Muslim countries which following major revolutions have eliminated the Muslim inheritance pattern and introduced secular, civil law into all spheres.

Indeed, for the founder of modern Turkey, Kemal Ataturk and his close collaborators, the abolition of women's inferior status had been a major goal from the beginning of the War of Liberation (Abadan-Unat, 1978a). Ataturk strongly believed that the modernisation of Turkish women could only be realised by the reform of two major institutions: education and law. Thus, in a series of bold strokes, the theocratic edifice of the Ottoman state was destroyed. In 1923 the Ministry of Education took over the administration and control of all religious schools and all their means of support (endowment and funds). The abolition of the Caliphate in 1924 was followed by the closing of all medreses (religious seminars) and other separate schools. In 1928, Article 2 of the first Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, which had made Islam the state religion, was amended to provide for dis-establishment and, in 1937, the principle of secularism was incorporated into the Constitution. In the meantime, the jurisdiction of the Shariat courts were taken over by the lay government.

Through the adoption of the Swiss Civil Code in the new Turkish Civil Code in 1926 and the creation of courts modelled on those in

Western countries, orthodox Islamic laws and their application were discarded. As a result, a series of reforms affecting women's status, such as the establishment of a minimum marriage age and registration of marriage, prohibition of polygamy, abolition of *talaq* (one-sided divorce, pronounced by the husband), recognition of the right to divorce and the enactment of a secular inheritance law, and a civil code replacing all religious laws were effectively carried out.

Parallel to the adoption of the Swiss Civil Code, Article 6 of the Civil Service Law, no. 788 was amended in 1926, so as to secure women the right to be employed as civil servants. Thus, Turkish women, who had already begun to enter public service in 1880 as teachers, were given a sound legal basis for their employment rights.

Turkish women were granted political rights much earlier than women in many European countries. They were enfranchised for municipal elections in 1930 and four years later were given the right to participate in national elections. Thus, secularisation not only meant the adoption of new laws and the sweeping away of the religious elites' traditional power, but it also meant a change in the patterns of authority and in the value system of Turkish society.

The realisation of these legal and educational reforms in Turkey has yielded significant results. Female educational achievements have been great. Female school enrolment at all levels in Turkey is far ahead of all other Muslim countries, with the exception of Soviet Central Asia and Albania (White, 1978). Turkey has produced a greater percentage of women lawyers and physicians than the highly industrialised Western countries such as the USA or France. Similarly, government positions related to high-level policy-making have greatly attracted Turkish women. The ratio of female judges, prosecutors and top rank administrators in government in Turkey outnumbers many of the more advanced Western countries (Abadan-Unat, 1978b).

In this light the chapter aims to find some answers to the following questions: can modifications in the superstructure alone, such as reforms in law and education, produce noticeable changes in the mentality and outlook of women? Do they influence the sex-role distribution noticeably and thus produce a different perception of politics and society? Or, does education as a dependent variable merely determine status and class identification, and thus primarily act as an instrument for social mobility? If so, do equality before the law and expanded educational opportunities facilitate only the growth of the middle class? In order to answer these questions the author has attempted to evaluate the impact of the modernisation of Turkish

women by analysing their role and function in public administration — the sector which has recorded the highest and fastest growth over the past 40 years.

The hypothesis adopted here is that, because no systematic effort has been made in public policy or ideologically to assert the ethical value and social function of work outside the home, the prime motivating factor for women to enter employment is economic need, and only in rare cases the quest for social prestige. Consequently, social institutions such as the family and the powerful mass media, especially television and its consumer oriented advertisements, have become the major framework for value judgements and preferences. This is one of the reasons why women are relatively less interested in training programmes which increase chances of promotion.

Since the transition to a multi-party system, no new definitions of women's role in Turkish society have been made. On the contrary, the conservative ideologies of successive governments have caused a tacit elimination of innovative activity such as intensive efforts to expand female literacy and women's rural programmes. The most important factors inducing noticeable changes in the outlook and attitudes of Turkey's young female generation have been urbanisation, migration and industrialisation (Kazgan, forthcoming). In this respect, a striking similarity with Tunisia is to be noted. In contrast to Bourguiba's early efforts in 1956 towards the adoption of the Personnel Status Code, which replaced segments of Quranic laws with new statutes, and his strong support for women's education and political involvement, Tunisian policies of the 1970s marked an increasing tendency to conservatism and a significant reduction in government programmes for cultural reform and resocialisation (Tessler, 1978). Thus, only indirect factors such as urbanisation have continued to modernise women.

In order to throw some light on questions specifically pertaining to women in government service, a brief reassessment of women's position in economic life seems pertinent.

Women in Economic Life

Although Turkey embarked some decades ago on a programme of accelerated industrialisation, it still retains some of its basic agrarian aspects, indeed the major socio-economic characteristic is one of economic dualism, as defined by Adelman and Morris (1973). Such a dualism is characterised by the coexistence of low productivity, a

subsistence agriculture sector, along with high productivity in agribusiness and the industrial sector. In this type of sectoral disharmony women suffer more economic hardships than men. Classified by the same authors as a 'moderate dualism country', women's share in economic life in Turkey closely follows the pattern of decreasing employment opportunities with growing urbanisation that Boserup so ably described (1970). Table 5.1 gives us a clear picture of the evolution over the last 20 years. It can be seen that no more than 11 per cent of Turkish women are employed outside the agricultural sector. Furthermore, the 1975 census revealed that only 15 per cent of all urban women are employed. More than four-fifths of all urban women are housewives.

Table 5.1: Women in Agriculture, Industry and the Services 1955-75 (%)

Sectors	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975
Agriculture	96.6	95.0	94.1	89.0	88.9
Industry	2.3	2.7	1.5	5.1	3.5
Services	1.6	1.9	2.6	5.0	7.4
Others	0.5	0.4	1.8	0.9	0.2

Source: DIE, censuses of 1955, 1960, 1965, 1970 and 1975.

The overwhelming majority of women working in agriculture are unpaid family members. They represent the major source of 'cheap labour', a significant portion of Marx's labour reserve army. Being lodged and fed free in the parental home, the girls of peasant families secure a sizeable income for their fathers through the 'bride price', which in practice is actually an indemnity paid for the loss of (unpaid) service. In the case of wage-earning female agricultural workers, such as cotton, tobacco and fruit pickers, the discrepancy between male and female wages still persists. Owing to the absence of an effective agrarian trade union organisation, and the absence of voluntary payments into social security for the rural sector, this discrepancy has so far not been eliminated.

Within the industrial sector a trend similar to India (ICSSR, 1975) can be registered. Though total employment in factories has been increasing steadily, women's employment in this sector has decreased since 1965, their share being reduced from 11.5 per cent in 1965 to 3.5 per cent in 1975. (Kazgan, forthcoming). Owing to the absence of comprehensive studies, it could be assumed that this decline is partly attributable to the extent and nature of modernisation methods, and

partly to external migration. Industries which have adopted a higher capital-intensive technology resulting in the displacement of labour have found it easier to displace women than men. Furthermore, a significant number of female migrant workers have taken industrial jobs. In Federal Germany alone their absolute number increased from 173 in 1960 to 143,611 in 1975 (Abadan-Unat, 1977). Whether these women would have taken up industrial jobs in their home country remains a debateable issue. In contrast to the general neglect of social policy in the agrarian sector in Turkey, a number of protective labour laws have been adopted in the industrial sector to secure women's social welfare. However, actual implementation of these laws is lacking. Moreover, the number of trade union affiliated female workers is minimal. Only 9 per cent of all women employed in industry in 1977 were covered by social security – a function that is fully dependent on affirmative action by trade unions (Tezgider, 1978). Again as in India (ICSSR, 1975), women have increasingly shown a growing interest and determination to enter government jobs. Since empirical studies dealing with the attitudes and behaviour of Turkish women in the executive and judiciary are not available, the author has preferred to make extensive use of the findings of Oya Çitçi's comprehensive survey (1979), embracing a large number of governmental agencies, including all kinds of clerical, administrative, managerial and specialised occupations, and to deduce from these findings some implications applicable to top-ranking women policy-makers.

Turkish Women in Public Administration

During 1938-76, the number of female civil servants in Turkey increased 19 times, while the number of male civil servants rose six-fold. In order to assess this growth, a chronological table listing the various types of government agencies is necessary (see Table 5.2). At first glance one significant feature becomes evident: the greatest concentration of female civil servants can be observed in agencies covered by the general budget, while there is a decline in municipal agencies – the reason being that a great number of recently created municipal agencies are located in rural areas where limited educational opportunities have not permitted women access to government jobs.

When measuring the educational level of these women officials, the first fact to be noticed is their higher level of educational attainment compared with men. While 54 per cent of all male civil servants are only

Table 5.2: Distribution of Female Civil Servants in Absolute Figures and Percentages, 1938 and 1976

Type of administration	1938	%	1946	%	1963	%	1970	%	1977	%
General budget	4.287	8	12.573	15	47.414	20	80.099	22	190.313	27
Annex budget	824	4	3.813	6	3.487	10	3.748	8	7.783	21
State economic enterprise	731	10	2.502	13	15.623	13	26.116	19	48.380	
Local administration	6.874	18	11.140	21	6.178	10	4.838	8	7.829	12
Total	12.716	9.5	30.046	13.5	72.702	16	123.812	19	244.305	25

Note: General budget covers all ministries and administrative agencies in the provinces representing the central government.

Sources: DIE, *Memurlar İstatistiği*, no. 149 (DIE, Ankara, 1938); DIE, *Memurlar İstatistiği*, no. 288 (DIE, Ankara, 1946); DIE, *Devlet Personel Sayımı*, vols. 1-3, nos. 473,503,518 (DIE, Ankara, DIE, *Devlet Memurları Sayımı*, no. 664 (DIE, Ankara, 1970); Devlet Personel Dairesi, *Kamu Personeli Anket Raporları*, vol. 1.

primary or secondary school graduates, 68.5 per cent of women are educated to high school (*lycée*) level or beyond. As other authors have noted, women have to be better qualified for particular posts than men. Thus, there seems to be a rather clear relationship between educational level and non-agrarian employment. According to the 1975 statistics, showing the occupational mobility of girls, 5 per cent of Turkey's primary school graduates, 12.5 per cent of its secondary school, 30 per cent of its high school, 56 per cent of its vocational and 70 per cent of its university graduates were able to find a job in the non-agrarian sector (Die, 1976). In addition, the most qualified female labour seems to be concentrated in the service sector— be it private enterprise or government service; 41 per cent of all women working in this sector have some form of higher education. Although university graduates represent only 1.9 per cent of the total active female labour force, they represent 16.6 per cent in public administration.

Another interesting aspect of women's entrance into the civil service is the fact that, unlike the prevailing pattern in Western countries, there is no visible interruption in the pattern of Turkish women's working life. While in industrialised countries there are two peak periods for participating actively in the public domain, namely the 20-25 and 40-60 age-groups, in Turkey entrance into employment is a kind of apprenticeship before marriage. Those women who remain in employment after marriage, make no interruption at all. Partly owing to the unwillingness of the women themselves, and partly from the country's prevailing structural unemployment and the lack of part-time jobs, there is practically no chance of women returning to employment once they have left to raise a family.

In 1963, 43.9 per cent of all women employed in the public sector were under the age of 30; in 1976 this percentage rose to 55 per cent for the same age-group. The highest percentage of women working in public administration belongs to the 18-24 age-group (Çitçi, 1979). After the age of 25, a definite decrease can be witnessed. Therefore, it is not erroneous to state that the great majority of women serving in public administration possess little commitment; they do not wholeheartedly embrace a career, but work to obtain an additional source of income. This tendency has been confirmed by the Hacettepe Population Census of 1973 which revealed that among those women who gave up their jobs, 35 per cent gave marriage as the major cause, 18 per cent child-raising and 5 per cent the negative attitude of their husbands (Özbay, forthcoming).

With this in mind, one might ask what kind of positions are occupied

by women? This question can be answered by evaluating both the distribution pattern of women among the various agencies as well as their occupational activity. The census taken in 1976 by the State Personnel Directorate reveals that the highest number of women working in the government agencies are located in the Ministry of Education (31.6 per cent), similar again to India with a heavy predominance of pre-school and primary school teachers. The second favoured ministry, requiring adequate foreign language knowledge, is the Ministry of Tourism and Information which employs 26.3 per cent of the women. In third place comes the Ministry of Health and Social Assistance with 22.2 per cent, representing once more a government agency with a heavy concentration of 'feminine occupations', such as nursing and midwifery. It is interesting to note that this tendency to work in ministries with specific, female-oriented tasks has increased over the years. Those three ministries were employing 55.7 per cent in 1963, 67.9 per cent in 1970 and 69.1 per cent in 1976 of the women (Özbay, forthcoming).

Overall it appears that women tend to work in occupations from which men are excluded or which have a general social service content, or which require upper-class multilingual training. As to the jobs, the 1976 census reveals that almost half (44 per cent) of the female employees are performing clerical work. The typists and bureau clerks are the most numerous (70.3 per cent), while 1.5 per cent occupy assistant directorships or higher positions.

With regard to professional women, another trend familiar to studies of Third World countries seems to be the rule in Turkey. It is characterised by the following: (i) the percentage of professional women is relatively higher than in capitalist countries; (ii) women are mainly concentrated in metropolitan and urban centres; and (iii) since they seek security and facilities related to their work rather than quick promotional opportunities, they prefer government employment to private practice. Thus, while the total percentage of female lawyers in Turkey is 18.6 per cent, they are over-represented (with 42.1 per cent) in institutions covered by the general budget or classified as state economic enterprises. Similarly the proportion of women engineers in these enterprises is 7.9 per cent – higher than in most capitalist countries.

The reciprocal relationship between education and employment, however, becomes most evident when the distribution of women according to their educational level and labour force participation is examined. Since the growing participation of Turkish women in public administration is essentially the result of long-range educational policies

rather than a specific special element of an egalitarian, democratic, nondiscriminatory public philosophy or political programme, its impact has remained instrumental and class-oriented. Apart from the early years of the Republic, when successful, professional *avant-garde* women were presented to the public as model pioneers on the path of the new, Western-inspired civilised society, no political party or government programme has committed itself to improving the status of women other than through small legal changes in favour of urban civil servants. Indeed, after the transition to a multi-party regime in 1946, a sizeable number of political parties have publicly reiterated traditional values, constantly praising the function of housewives and mothers. The findings of the first comprehensive empirical research on Turkish women employed in various public agencies, carried out by Oya Çitçi, furnishes convincing evidence that women enter the public domain with an internal set of values based on an ideal housewife model.

Socio-economic Characteristics of Turkish Civil Servants and Emancipatory Values

Çitçi's sample consisted of 742 women civil servants out of a total of 14,838, representing 15 administrative agencies in Ankara, the capital, each employing more than 500 women (1979), and 68.5 per cent of the respondents of the survey were high school or university graduates. Most of them were from upper-middle-class families and their fathers were employed in liberal professions, business or bureaucracy. More than half of the respondents (52.1 per cent) were married, two-thirds coming from nuclear families. The majority classified themselves as additional breadwinner – only 8 per cent of the women were heads of families. The average number of children was 1.6. Because of the relatively high percentage of low-age children (70.8 per cent), the question as to who is entrusted to take care of them was very relevant. The survey indicates that 63.1 per cent were entrusting their children to their mothers or mothers-in-law and only 12.1 per cent were using the facilities of day-care centres, while another 6 per cent were employing domestic help. Equally important is the fact that 79.2 per cent had no additional household help.

These characteristics determined to some degree the response concerning the function and role of women in society. Although 75.3 per cent consider women's emancipation – here conceived as women's

ability to benefit from all legal and educational reforms — quite important, only 5 per cent thought that equality between men and women had actually been achieved. It was felt by 30.2 per cent that men should retain their superiority. This superiority was explained having been sustained for the following reasons:

(i) The patriarchal character of the Swiss Civil Code, which became the Turkish Civil Code. Article 159 limits the married women's 'actual ability' to take employment by requiring her to seek her husband's permission. In case of refusal, the women may apply to the court, and, there, must furnish convincing proof that her prospective employment will serve 'the genuine interests of her family'.

(ii) The persistence of tradition and mores in favour of male supremacy.

(iii) The fact that by-and-large men are the major breadwinners and heads of the family.

Participation in the public domain can produce profound changes in the mentality of women only if the socialisation process for girls places a different emphasis on sex-roles. Oya Çitçi's survey furnishes detailed data indicating that granting equal educational opportunities — even for those who make the best use of them — is ineffective for the majority of women in society as long as 'the family, educational institutions, mass media and books are uniformly reinforcing the traditional outlook emphasising that women have to primarily be good homemakers and mothers'.

This attitude is also reflected in the 1973 Hacettepe Survey, which revealed that only 33 per cent of women would continue to work if they did not need money. Thus, it becomes clear that two-thirds of the married women work to help the family income and tend to stop working as their economic situation improves (Özbay, forthcoming). All these figures indicate that, by and large, Turkish women in employment acquiesce in the dual role of women (first defined by Alva Myrdal) and, without attempting to introduce significant changes into their lives, aspire to return to their traditional functions. On this particular question, the place of residence plays a minor role. Women of rural origins approve of male supremacy by 93.4 per cent and urban ones by 83.6 per cent. Education, however, seems to be a more important factor. Respondents with a primary education approve of this option by 93 per cent and university graduates by only 75 per cent. Nevertheless, the fact remains that three-quarters of all female civil servants attribute a secondary importance to their own employment and career.

On the other hand, these same women give way to some contra-

dictory thoughts and feelings when confronted with a set of alternatives fitted to delineate the ideal way of life for women. Table 5.3 indicates that a negligible percentage of the respondents considers a career lifestyle as an ideal. The majority would like to achieve self-realisation and the best combination of career life and housework. In other words, if society is ready to provide women with various supportive services and build up institutional assistance, there appears to be a readiness to work outside the home in spite of the traditional climate of opinion that has been outlined. Women want to use their innate abilities and talents but, apparently in the absence of affirmative action and strong organisational support, these women do not find the courage, zest and determination to fight for their rights. The lack of a value system based on a work ethic, encourages many women to make use of the early pension plan. With only partial unwillingness they assume the roles of sex-object and passive homemaker.

This early retirement scheme (Law no. 1992, 3 July 1975) makes it possible for female civil servants to retire after the completion of 20 years of active service. The justification for it has been the stress women have to endure because of their dual role. It is significant that the legislators, instead of introducing unpaid extended maternity leave or broadening various forms of social assistance, have opted for a solution which actually sends women home at an age when they could devote most of their time to work outside the house.

When the Oya Çitçi survey was undertaken the law had not yet been passed, and this early retirement plan was met with great enthusiasm; 80.9 per cent of the respondents indicated their intention to make use of this right. Of the university graduates, 71.9 per cent wanted to give up their career. However, since the passage of the law, only a very limited number of working women have actually used this option. During the period between July 1975 and July 1977 the number of female civil servants who retired after 20 years of work was 2,058, while 24,114 women officials continued to work (Çitçi, 1979). There is a discrepancy between stated intention and actual behaviour which could reflect many factors, particularly the pressure of economic necessity.

Female officials have been conditioned by traditional values to such a degree that, when asked whether they would consider a better job with better opportunities for promotion and higher pay, but requiring longer working hours and absence from home, 74.2 per cent refused to consider such an offer.¹ Oya Çitçi intelligently tried to detect the extent of this 'self imposed' limitation to liberation by gauging the

Table 5.3: Views on the Ideal Way of Life for Women, According to Marital Status, Residence and Education (%)

Women in public administration	To be only a good homemaker	To get a professional education and use it eventually	To be a successful career woman	To combine the roles of housewife and career woman
<i>Marital status</i>				
Married	17.5	16.2	0.2	65.8
Bachelor	12.5	15.2	0.3	71.7
Widow	16.3	9.1	—	75.5
<i>Residence</i>				
Rural	21.7	17.3	—	60.8
Small town	24.4	16.3	—	50.1
Urban	13.4	19.9	0.3	71.1
<i>Education</i>				
Primary	27.9	6.9	—	65.1
Secondary	16.9	17.1	0.2	65.7
University	5.6	14.6	0.5	79.2

Source: Oya Çitçi, 'Türkiye' de Kadın sorunu ve çalışan Kadınlar', mimeographed unpublished PhD thesis, Ankara, 1979, Tables 58-60.

behaviour of the respondents with regard to their marriage, use of income, degree of participation and activity in association. With regard to marriage, Çitçi presented a set of alternative solutions almost totally centred around the preponderant role of the family: 60.2 per cent of the respondents declared they had independently chosen their spouse; 11.7 per cent disregarded the choice made by their family and opted for their own choice; 19.5 per cent were married through an intermediary or a 'matchmaker', and another 8.6 per cent concluded a pre-arranged marriage. Although about 79.6 per cent said that they made their final decision after a harmonious consultation with their family, only one-tenth actually acted totally on their own.

The attachment of economically active women to their family is also reflected in the interesting survey which Kandiyoti carried out on a sample of two generations among urban women in Istanbul (Kandiyoti, forthcoming). Her findings confirm the trend described above. In her conclusion she states that while the education of the daughters is very high (especially when compared with their own mothers) and their level of employment is not negligible, their ways of meeting their future marriage partners have been quite traditional and their definition of the 'successful woman' is one who reconciles the traditional and modern demands. Kandiyoti indicates that in spite of the considerable degree of social change in the mothers' generation, the daughters have not been able to modify their traditional expectations in any fundamental way, but have just taken on some new roles. This might also explain why puritan values related to chastity are still strongly supported, punishment of adultery with imprisonment is upheld, and the double standard in morality not protested against. While some young Turkish women, belonging to leftist political groups may be strongly in favour of radical change in the economic and social order, they consider a strong stand against sexism irrelevant, alien to the social structure and distracting from the basic social issues.

The close relationship of working women to their families is likewise reflected in the way they use their income; 60 per cent add all, or the major portion of their income to the family budget. In this respect marital status plays a determining role. While only 17 per cent of married women officials spend more than half of their income for their own needs, this percentage reaches 69.7 per cent for unmarried women. As may be anticipated, the amount of income working women contribute to the family budget is closely related to the general income of the household.

Another important criterion which might help to establish the

degree of emancipation of Turkish female employees is their participation in family decision-making matters. Table 5.4 casts light on the major issues in which women actively take part. As would be expected from the idealised dual feminine role, women have the most say in their traditional stronghold, that is household management. Although the percentage of matters decided jointly is relatively high, there is a kind

Table 5.4: Distribution of Sex-ratio in Decision-making Within Families (%)

Subject	Female	Male	Both sexes
Food expenses	25.7	8.1	66.1
Clothing	18.6	5.7	75.5
Furniture	6.5	4.7	88.7
Social problems concerning womens' professional life	34.9	7.8	57.2
Special problems concerning mens' professional life	—	57.9	41.9
Family size, family planning	3.9	3.9	92.1
Education of children	11.2	2.3	86.3
Household chores	67.7	0.7	31.4
Invitation of guests	9.1	9.4	81.3
Holiday, travel	2.8	5.5	91.6
Political behaviour of women	39.1	12.8	48.0
Political behaviour of men	—	52.0	48.0
Selection of newspaper subscribed at home	10.2	25.7	64.0

Source: Oya Çitçi, 'Türkiye' de Kadın soruna ve çalışan Kadınlar', p. 242, Table 100.

of tutelage in settling professional matters solely concerning women. In this domain 7.8 per cent of men are taking the decisive steps.

A slightly higher degree of individual freedom prevails in political matters, although there, too, 12.8 per cent unconditionally accept the political choice of the men they live with (husband, father and brother). With regard to the political participation, namely voting, a number of surveys have shown a definite pattern wherein Turkish women's voting participation is lower than men's — married women are less inclined to vote than unmarried girls or widows, while working women show a greater interest in politics than housewives (Tekeli, forthcoming). Çitçi's survey confirms these findings. Only 64.2 per cent of her respondents admitted to having voted in the last election. Differentiated according to their marital status, 72.9 per cent of the married,

50 per cent of the unmarried and 81.6 per cent of the widows went to the polls. This means that bearing responsibility as 'head of the family' leads to increased civic interest and political participation. As can be expected, education plays the most important differentiating role. While 88.7 per cent of the university graduates voted, only 56.3 per cent of the primary school graduates made use of their citizenship rights.

Finally a few words on the attitudes of women civil servants towards membership of associations. Only 23 per cent of the respondents admitted belonging to any kind of association. Here, membership in a professional association seems to dominate (77.1 per cent). Thus, a number of general tendencies can be summarised:

(i) Irrespective of the positions occupied, both women officials and professional women with higher education adopt a conciliatory, dependent, passive role in the public domain. Their readiness to fight for greater equality and wider liberties for women at large is relatively weak with the exception of those who have a strong political or ideological commitment.

(ii) The importance attached to emancipation is determined by education and place of residence as well as by class affiliation. The urban middle-class families seem to place the greatest importance on emancipatory values.

(iii) Ambivalence towards continuing a career while assuming the role of housewife and mother is the rule rather than the exception.

(iv) The beginning, duration and termination of active participation in government service is more dependent on special conditions (economic needs or child-raising) than on personal feelings and preferences. The highest level of motivation to continue work outside the home seems to prevail among those jobs outside the country, namely among blue-collar and white-collar workers abroad. The dominant climate of opinion in favour of high productivity and a high standard of living in those highly industrialised countries seems to play a determining role for these migrant workers.

(v) Where there is conflict arising from the clash of loyalties, solutions favouring the smooth functioning of family life are preferred.

(vi) The job status of women officials does not automatically increase democracy within the family or political participation. Here again educational level, marital status and class affiliation produce diversified patterns.

Women in the Judiciary and Executive Positions

Can the findings of Çitçi's survey covering a broad range of women civil servants be equally applied to the women elite in the executive and the judiciary? In the absence of empirical findings, we are forced to do some speculative thinking. Law and medicine have traditionally been exclusively male professions. In Western industrial societies very few women have been able to penetrate these strongholds until recently (Epstein, 1970). Yet in Turkey both of these professions have attracted a surprisingly large number of women. One in every five practising lawyers in Turkey is a woman. Again, one in every six practising physicians is a woman. This surprisingly high ratio has not been confined to the middle-range positions, but has also produced a significant number of women in higher positions. In fact, the very first woman judge in the highest court of appeal was a Turk, the late Melahat Ruacan, whose nomination in 1954 attracted worldwide attention and praise. Similarly female judges have been elected as chairmen of sections in the highest administrative court of Turkey, the State Council, for over 20 years. Not only have women been eager to enrol in law schools, but with equal enthusiasm they have tried to be active within the judiciary, as reflected in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: Sex-ratio Distribution According to Occupations Within the Ministry of Justice (as of 3 February 1978)

Position	Female	%	Male	%	Total	%
Judges	102	3.1	3,172	96.9	3,172	100
Prosecutors	13	0.6	1,891	99.4	1,904	100
Other women employees with non-judicial background	2,525	11.3	19,800	88.7	22,325	100

Source: State Personnel Directorate, unpublished data.

The sex-ratio distribution within the Ministry of Justice reflects a strong male dominance with a slight inclination to admit a few women into top positions. A similar trend can be observed in another traditionally male-oriented ministry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Women became eligible for diplomatic posts only after the promulgation of the new Constitution in 1961, in which Article 12 categorically prohibits all forms of discrimination based on sex, although previously

they were not legally prohibited from entering such posts. Here, as in the other ministries, only a few top positions are occupied by women.

Table 5.6: Sex-ratio Distribution According to Occupation Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (as of 11 May 1977)

Position	No. of females	No. of males	Total
Head of section	5	63	68
Second secretary	5	20	25
Second secretary (abroad)	6	45	51
Counsellor	1	100	101
Consul	8	48	56
Expert	1	30	31
Administrative asst	49	130	179
Total	75 (14.6%)	436 (85.4%)	511 (100%)

Source: State Personnel Directorate, unpublished data.

The significant difference in male/female recruitment within two traditional/conservative ministries obviously lies in a class-determined educational requirement. Diplomatic service, as well as service in the Ministry of Information and Tourism, requires fluency in a foreign language. These skills are acquired in expensive, foreign-sponsored and financed private schools, available only to the daughters of the upper-middle-class families whose parents consider this kind of education the best investment for a desirable marriage. It is usually these girls, who are not taught the value and gratification of work, that are able to compete with men and get easy access to these positions. However, after the first stage of apprenticeship in the home country, when the time comes for appointment abroad, a surprisingly large number of diplomatic candidates resign. This results from the policy adopted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which prohibits the appointment of married couples together in one embassy or consulate. To be a liberated woman, ready to face the many difficulties of professional life alone, requires a new mentality. If this mentality has not been acquired, only a temporary solution such as the appointment of the spouses to nearby cities may be tried, or resignations occur.

By analysing the sex-ratio in the key positions of two other central administrative agencies, namely the Ministry of Commerce and the State Planning Organisation, interesting differences can be observed. The Ministry of Commerce is one of the major administrative units dealing with the male-dominated business world. Thus, the women who

Table 5.7: Sex-ratio Distribution According to Positions in the Ministry of Commerce, 1977

Position	No. of females	No. of males	Total
Asst commercial adviser	2	15	17
Asst commercial attaché	1	8	9
Commercial attaché	1	35	36
Asst rapporteur	6	18	24
Rapporteur	16	89	105
Head rapporteur	1	9	10
Head of section	10	86	96
Adviser	4	18	22
Total	41 (13.2%)	268 (86.8%)	309 (100%)
Other positions	295 (19.6%)	1,180 (80.4%)	1,505 (100%)

Source: State Personnel Directorate, unpublished data.

work in this ministry function are engaged chiefly in research (that is, securing foreign and domestic statistics, summarising reports and making diplomatic contacts) as well as in the usual clerical domain. In the key positions, as in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, young women with fluency in foreign languages are able to compete with men – once again proving the importance of the connection between education and class affiliation.

In the most recently created central administrative unit, the State Planning Organisation, the situation has improved a great deal in favour of women. Planning is a future-oriented activity requiring constant fact finding, compilation of statistics and the carrying out of predominantly advisory and co-ordinating functions; it seems to appeal more to women than to men. Here, too, some sort of imbalance is evident – the secondary positions related to expertise and specialised planning are fairly well staffed with women, while the strategy-determining positions are still preponderantly occupied by men. This agency appears to be the only one where there is remarkable balance in the ratio between men and women in positions higher than clerical.

It is interesting to note that in those ministries where the heaviest concentration of women in lower positions is to be found – such as Education, Health and Social Assistance – promotional opportunities for women have been very limited. Only 3 out of 27 general directors in the Ministry of Education are women. In the Ministry of Finance, the general director of the treasury is a woman, but other senior positions are heavily occupied by men.

Table 5.8: Sex-ratio Distribution According to Positions in the State Planning Organisation (as of 3 February 1978)

Position	No. of females	No. of males	Total
Head of section	2	10	12
Planning expert	27	58	85
Asst expert	24	44	68
Total	53 (32.1%)	112 (67.9%)	165 (100%)
Other positions	129 (30.3%)	296 (64.7%)	425 (100%)

Source: State Personnel Directorate, unpublished data.

Can one expect that the relatively high number of professional women active in public service will continue, and is it possible to assume that their value judgements differ essentially from the values of their sisters in the middle and low ranks? In view of an overall climate of opinion favouring the traditional social function of women, it would be erroneous to answer in the affirmative. The basic difference between women officials in the higher and lower ranks lies in the nature of their informal activities. The choices of those in higher ranks will be heavily determined by the choices of the upper class, and include especially leisure activities such as sports, card games, attendance at fashion shows as well as charity work and voluntary association affiliation. As pointed out by Vida Tomsic, a Yugoslav social scientist, the influence of traditional values and ideas concerning the role of man and woman in the family and society has its own obstinate persistence long after the circumstances in which a certain value or prejudice originated have disappeared. This is especially true when the living conditions cannot be changed as quickly and profoundly as legal regulations (for example educational and employment possibilities). Research on the attitudes towards the new status of women in a socialist society shows that people have changed more in theory than in practice. One cannot help but get the impression that some of the new values accepted during the National War of Liberation in Turkey – when women's emancipation was one of the objectives as well as one of the reasons for women's active participation in the revolutionary movement – have been lost in today's practical life. Fighting tradition is a long and complex process (Tomsic, 1975).

Conclusion

I return to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter: what has been the impact of legal and educational reform in Turkey with regard to women? It can be said that among all Muslim countries, Turkey has definitely been able to achieve remarkable results. But, as underlined by Özbay, class privileges in education particularly affect the female population. Furthermore, education by itself is incapable of equipping women or men with a new outlook on society and its social and economic structure. Education may eventually help to develop a stronger personality, but it does not contribute directly to a new consciousness. The presence of the relatively large number of professional women in the various government agencies has not been sufficient to open up new avenues towards a strong movement for a more egalitarian society. The modernisation of women through education has primarily enlarged the ranks of the middle classes. The increasing interest of women in politics, mostly observed during large-scale meetings and political rallies, has so far remained rather emotional. Women in responsible executive positions have done little or nothing to channel these growing aspirations into new activities, where the female work force could have had a positive effect on production.

Women in the executive and the judiciary are really freed in the public domain from all sex-defined stereotypes. Their performance can be summarised as asexual and totally adjusted to the standard male behaviour rules. Only in the realm of private life does one encounter the traditional, conformist way of life. The degree of self-assurance, gained through work outside the home, permits these women to shoulder this ambivalent way of life.

The number of women participating in public administration could be a misleading indicator of equality, as they are predominantly assuming secondary roles with limited responsibilities. Systematic efforts and specially designed policies have induced women to appear satisfied with non-demanding jobs and slight responsibilities. The fact that the general right to strike has so far not been granted to civil servants, men and women, has reduced the potential for pressure for specific demands concerning women officials. Justified claims for better working conditions, longer maternity leave, paid maternity leave and the creation of part-time jobs are all demands which have not been expressed through the activities of the associations, but rather through nongovernmental organisations with limited influence.

No doubt the most significant progress has taken place in the level of participation in the professions. In this respect Turkey is displaying the characteristics of 'developing' Third World countries, where women enjoy access to the prestigious professions despite the low rates of participation in the non-agricultural labour market. As Öncü correctly stated, the ready availability of lower-class women as domestics in private homes has significantly contributed to the 'emancipation' of upper-class women to pursue professional careers. Furthermore, the need for qualified personnel has so far encouraged women from elite backgrounds to enter the prestigious professions. Thus, this process is to some extent historically specific.

Looking to the future, it may be expected that the growth in number of both Turkish civil servants and professionals will steadily continue, noticeably in regions with fast rates of urbanisation and industrialisation. But unless the question of female employment in general is treated as a subject on its own merits, and specific policies and programmes developed for urban and rural women, women's role and impact on government affairs will not produce effective changes in society. The essence of efforts to advance the social position of women and their complete integration in development goes beyond the problem of legal and educational equal opportunities. It requires a deep structural transformation of society, a growing awareness of the need to use human resources fully and a strong ideological commitment to fight all forms of discrimination between the sexes.

Note

1. A recent survey of Turkish civil servants shows that fewer women than men move between departments and that a smaller proportion of women than of men are fully satisfied with their jobs. See Omer Bozkurt, *Türkiye' de kamu bürokrasisinin sosyolojik görünümü (Sociological Portrait of the Turkish Civil Service)* (Memurlar, Ankara, 1980), pp. 214 and 215.

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