

THE PHENOMENON OF LATE MODERNIZATION IN TÜRKİYE AND MEXICO: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS IN THE CONTEXT OF NON-WESTERNISM

Türkiye ve Meksika’da Geç Modernleşme Olgusu: Batı Dışılık Bağlamında
Karşılaştırmalı Bir Değerlendirme

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Bu çalışma, yazarın doktora tezi olan “Tek Parti Yönetiminin Karşılaştırmalı Analizi: Türkiye ve Meksika Örnekleri” (Isparta, 2019) temel alınarak hazırlanmıştır. Yazarın doktora tezi dört bölümden oluşmaktadır ve bunlardan üçü tek parti yönetimiyle ilgili olup Siyasal Kitabevi tarafından Türkçe olarak kitap halinde yayınlanmıştır (Ankara, 2023). Tezdeki geç modernleşmeyle ilgili bölüm, tarihsel arka planı karşılaştırmalı olarak ele almakta olup kitaba dahil edilmemiştir. Bu nedenle, tezin bu bölümü bu dergi için İngilizce olarak makale halinde yayınlanmak üzere düzenlenmiştir.

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Abstract

All societies that have entered the modernization process experience the pain of a transition from tradition to modernity. In this transitional period, each (traditional) society has its own course. It is normal for this process to shift in different directions from time to time or to have regressions in the short term especially in late modernizing societies. On the other hand, the fact that non-Western societies experience the modernization process unique to their own dynamics in their own path has revealed different modernization models such as Turkish modernization, Japanese modernization and Iranian modernization. The efforts of Türkiye and Mexico, which are among the most prominent examples of the modernization efforts of non-Western societies, to get rid of the tradition that started in the 19th century and their experience of the national revolutions in the 20th century as the most radical stage, encouraged this study to be carried out on these two countries with a comparative method.

Key Words: Modernization, Tradition, Revolution, Türkiye, Mexico, Non-Western.

Özet

Modernleşme sürecine girmiş bütün toplumlar, gelenekten moderne doğru bir hareketin sancısını yaşarlar. Bu geçiş sürecinde her (geleneksel) toplumun kendine özgü bir seyri vardır. Özellikle geç modernleşen toplumlarda bu sürecin zaman zaman farklı yönleri kayması ya da kısa vadede geriye dönük sapmalar olması olağan bir durumdur. Öte yandan Batı dışı toplumların, kendi yollarında kendi dinamiklerine has bir modernleşme sürecini tecrübe etmeleri farklı modernleşme modellerini karşımıza çıkarmıştır: Türk modernleşmesi, Japon modernleşmesi, İran modernleşmesi gibi. Batı dışı toplumların modernleşme çabalarının en öne çıkan örneklerinden olan Türkiye ve Meksika'nın, 19. yüzyıldan itibaren başlayan gelenekten sıyrılma çabaları ve en radikal aşama olarak 20. yüzyılda ulusal devrimleri tecrübe etmeleri, bu çalışmanın karşılaştırmalı yöntemle bu iki ülke üzerinden yapılmasını teşvik etmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Modernleşme, Gelenek, Devrim, Türkiye, Meksika, Batı Dışı.

Introduction

Comparative history method enables to make the compared examples, specifically about social events, more comprehensible by means of a systematic generalization by establishing relation of causality. Works employing this method are significant in that they help uncover the distinctive features of the compared cases, phenomena, events, societies, or countries in all their dimensions, while also drawing attention to previously overlooked details. This study, in which comparative history method is used, is an attempt to explain and analyze the modernization processes that Türkiye and Mexico began to experience in the 19th century, through the phenomenon of *non-Western society*.

While the two countries are discussed from a comparative perspective, the elements that they differ from Western modernization are presented and the points where they are similar to each other are detailed. Therefore, this study aims to give the opportunity to interpret the phenomenon of non-Western modernization through Türkiye and Mexico. In the West, replacement of modern mentality with traditional religion-based institutions took place through a parliamentary tradition. The will of the people took its place in the parliament instead of the religious will through political representatives. Backward, outdated and dysfunctional religious institutions were tried to be eliminated under the leadership of modernist and revolutionary leaders who determined secularization as a bottom line in countries such as Türkiye and Mexico that modernized afterwards.

In this study it was examined why Türkiye and Mexico, two examples of non-Western societies, were evaluated in the category of late modernizing societies, firstly discussing the concept of modernization and the phenomenon of late modernization under different headings. The similarities in the context of non-Westernism were analyzed with a comparative perspective by comparing the pioneers of modernization and processes of modernization in both societies.

1. Concept of Modernization

In the field of social sciences in particular, the phenomenon of modernization has been conceptualized through terms such as Westernization, industrialization, development and progress. While modernization and Westernization tend to evoke notions of political and cultural transformation, industrialization and development are more closely associated with economic change. Nevertheless, all of these concepts are employed to describe the political, economic, social, and cultural advancements that began in the West at the end of the Middle Ages and have continued to the present day.

According to Huntington, who had many studies on the phenomenon of modernization, modernization is a complex process; this process cannot easily be reduced to a single factor or a single dimension; it requires changes in almost all areas of human thought and behavior. These changes include industrialization, urbanization, social mobilization, differentiation, secularization, expansion of means of communication, increased literacy and education as well as broadening of political participation (Huntington, 1971). As to Rustow and Ward, they defined modernization as a historical concept, with notions such as industrialization, secularization of thought, social mobility, the spread of secular, scientific and technical education, the transition from innate status to acquired status and the rise of the standard of living materially (Rustow & Ward, 1970). Black explained the phenomenon of modernization, which he considered as *aggiornamento*, as “the process of adapting institutions developed throughout history to rapidly changing functions that reflect the unprecedented increase in human knowledge”. According to Black, the origins and early impacts of this adaptation process were seen in Western European countries; however, in the 19th and 20th centuries these changes extended to all other societies and led to a global transformation that affected all human relations (Black, 1986). On the other hand, these historical, cultural, political and economic developments that emerged in the West were the beginning of a transformation process that has extended from the traditional to the modern and the start and ending point of which has been unknown. This process, which originated in the West and gradually spread across the globe, has given rise to some of the most far-reaching transformations in human history, marked by widespread restructuring and secularization in all spheres of life (Hamşioğlu, 2006). In her study, in which she examines the Atatürk revolution as an example of *aggiornamento*/modernization, Kili evaluated the concept of modernization as industrialization and development as well as social, psychological and political change. According to Kili, in the process of modernization, there becomes a change or, in other words, differentiation in the political structure and institutions. There is a growing centralization of power in the state and thus a weakening of traditional sources of authority (Kili, 1995).

The definitions of modernization offered by various scholars highlight, in their most basic sense, the transition from traditional agricultural societies to urbanized industrial ones. As societies modernize, they evolve from a fixed and static way of life toward a

more dynamic and productive social structure. The meaning of this is also the growth of qualified manpower in parallel with the increase in educational opportunities and the literacy rate. Therefore, social welfare has been achieved in societies that have made the transition from traditional society to industrial society. As the productivity of the modernized society increases, the standard of living rises equally for everyone and there are no great inequalities in income distribution. A modernized state is expected to provide equal and fair public services for all; in doing so, all members of society can benefit equally from the services that social life brings or requires.

Renaissance, Enlightenment, Reform, American Revolution (1776), French Revolution (1789), Industrial Revolution, which were the turning points in the transition from traditional society to modern society, paved the way for great changes in Europe in a few hundred years. With the Renaissance, the Reform and the Enlightenment, rational thought and science overthrew the static and fixed rules of medieval dogmatism; the foundations of modern democracy were laid and the understanding of the nation-state was born with the revolutions that broke out in England, America and France. In addition, with the Industrial Revolution, the capitalization process accelerated and all these developments enabled the Western world, which created its modern institutions, to pass from the traditional structure to the modern society. Thus, the main elements of modernization such as secularization of the state and social structure, emergence of nation-states, establishment of democratic institutions, urbanization and industrialization first appeared in Europe. Modernization thus developed as a product of changes in social, economic and political systems in Western Europe and North America from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, and continued to spread to South America, Asia and Africa until the twentieth century (Kaya, 2015; Eisenstadt, 2007).

In modernizing Europe, the conception of the state came to be grounded in reason and science; political power increasingly derived its legitimacy from the people rather than from divine will. As a result, church dogma ceased to serve as a source of political authority, giving way to rational thought and the principle of popular sovereignty. However, the clergy were one of the important parts of the feudal order, sharing political authority in the feudal structure in pre-modern European societies. The dominance of these clergy, who stated that they acted in the name of God over society was even greater than that of the aristocrats (Durgun, 2018). The same is true for all traditional societies. The element of religion is effective in every field such as law and administration in traditional societies. For this reason, the church, which felt that it started to lose its political power in the Mexican Revolution, approached the revolutionary process with suspicion and clashed with the state during the establishment of a secular order in Mexico during the institutionalization phase. Likewise, the revolutionary cadre faced resistance from traditional religious circles while a secular republican regime was being established in Türkiye.

Since the opposite of modern society is traditional society, it can be said that modernizing countries have begun to get rid of traditionalism, but they also have some modernity deficiencies. Traditional societies have quite different characteristics from each other. On the other hand, they begin to resemble each other as soon as they move to the modernization stage. Because progress or transformation towards modernity in social, political, economic and cultural dimensions increases the tendency of convergence between societies. For example, Mexico, which gained its independence when it was a colonial administrative unit, went through similar processes with Türkiye, which had to establish its own nation-state while being the main element of a multinational empire in terms of its efforts in the process of statehood and nationalization in the modern sense. While two different traditional societies, one of which was a colony and the other an empire, were creating secular state institutions and modern nations during the modernization phase, they both faced resistance stemming from tradition and made similar changes/transformations towards modernity. The modernization process inevitably has similar consequences for all (developing) societies. Elements such as laws and the legal order, the market mechanism, political parties, professional organizations, employment agencies and trade unions are some of the main institutions of modern society (Baransel, 1974). Therefore, societies trying to establish these institutions in their countries in the modernization process are similar.

Another issue that should be emphasized regarding the phenomenon of modernization is that societies which take part in this process late when compared to the West have to carry out modernization in a much shorter time. As a matter of fact, institutions that are traditional for Western European societies were medieval institutions. With their rough lines, similar traditional periods in the West were seen in all other societies before modernity forced the tradition. This process, the traditional period, continued until the 20th century in the least developed societies. Since the compulsion of modernity was actually internal in the earliest modernized societies, this transformation process took place gradually over the centuries, while in the societies that modernized later, this coercion gained an ever-growing external character, and therefore became more rapid and even abrupt (Black, 1986). For this reason, while the phenomenon of modernization developed quite slowly and depended on internal dynamics in Western societies, in non-Western societies it was initiated at a later stage and efforts were made to achieve progress in a much shorter period. In terms of non-Western societies, the modernization process can be considered as a period in which traditional societies that joined this stage late in the historical process tried to change and transform themselves and to catch up with the modern societies in terms of modernity by taking them at the upper levels of the modernization stage as an example. On the other hand, the shortening of the modernization period for late modernizing societies caused this process to be carried out not by a (social) movement from below, but by progressive reform movements dictated from above (by the modernizing or revolutionary elites).

Democratic representative governments are the form of governance adopted by all societies undergoing the modernization process. However, the ideal functioning of this system is not always achievable. This form of governance, which is the most ideal administrative tool for advanced industrial societies that have resolved the significant complex problems arising from modernization, is also best implemented in these countries. However, according to Apter, the West has two problems to solve until it reaches this ideal stage: to ensure a peaceful change of power with a regular and systematic change. Modernizing countries also face similar problems that need to be resolved (Apter, 1965). In non-Western societies undergoing a radical transformation process, there are regressions in the functionality of democratic institutions. As a matter of fact, as Apter emphasizes, almost all of these societies in which the modernization process continues – while few of them can be defined as totalitarian – have a populist appearance. It is possible to define these societies not as anti-democratic, but as societies that have not yet reached democracy – *predemocratic* (Apter, 1965). Therefore, many representative institutions may be faced with situations in which they are/can be unsuccessful in modernizing societies.

The establishment of a pluralist understanding of democracy in a society depends on the level of modernization; in other words, as a society becomes more modern, representative democracy begins to function more effectively. Therefore, in societies that have not yet reached advanced levels of modernity, various difficulties may arise in both the implementation and perception of democratic governance. As countries that joined the modernization process at a relatively late stage, both Mexico and Türkiye—the subjects of this study—have experienced the various challenges and tensions of this process, just as many other societies have.

2. Delay Of Modernization Process: Late Modernization

Early modernizing Western societies are more advanced in terms of industrialization or technological development than non-western societies that began to modernize late. Therefore, the best solution for underdeveloped or developing societies is to catch up with the West as much as possible in terms of modernization level. In a process where the West is advanced, others naturally lag behind and they are on the scene as ‘lagged’ societies (Altun, 2000). Türkiye and Mexico are two non-Western countries that are examples of delayed societies that later joined the modernization adventure. While the traditional societies of the two countries before entering the modernization process were not similar, both countries went through similar processes in the later modernization phase.

The modernization processes of non-Western societies are also called westernization; however, it would be more accurate to define the phenomenon that we call modernization independently of any geography. According to Eisenstadt, who evaluates modernity in

various forms, the best way to understand the contemporary world is to consider the present time from the past as a continuing formation and the story of the re-creation of a wide variety of cultural structures (Eisenstadt, 2000).

In this sense, one of the most important implications of the term multiple modernity is that modernity and Westernization are not identical; Western patterns of modernity are not the only authentic modernity or the only true modernity, although they have historical precedence and remain the main point of reference for others (Eisenstadt, 2000). Therefore, societies that have come a long way in the modernization phase are not Europeanized or Westernized, but modernized. Societies entering the modernization process transform in order to reach the same values towards modernity, while their similarities increase as they approach the target.

The main feature of late modernizing societies is that they are agricultural societies based on traditional production relations. Moreover, they lack the necessary tools or compelling internal dynamics to move into the structure of modern industrial society. Religious relations or community ties occupy an important place in social life. Religious traditions and customary rules are also at the forefront in state affairs. In general, the legitimacy of state administration is based on religion and custom. Of course, urbanization or urban dynamics, which are the main elements of modernization, are not in question. On the contrary, peasantry and rural settlement dominate in all areas. Therefore, the phenomenon of modernization has been a ‘compensatory’ ideology for these societies and a means of eliminating ‘historical belatedness’ (Çiğdem, 2007). In this sense, modernization efforts started in Mexico in the 19th century with independence, and in Türkiye at the end of the 18th century with the Ottoman renewal movements. The fact that Mexico was a colonial society and the Ottoman Empire had classical traditional central empire structure are the reasons for the delay in the modernization process in these countries. In the period when Europe began to industrialize, secularize and democratize, Türkiye and Mexico were preserving their traditional social structures based on agricultural production. In both societies, there were no internal dynamics that would create a driving force for Western-style modernization. Therefore, modernization in two countries emerged by following a different course than in the West.

The phenomenon of modernization entered countries such as Türkiye and Mexico through the Westerners. For this reason, the modernization process in such countries developed primarily under external influence and partially as a result of the transformations and initiatives of some internal groups (Eisenstadt, 2007). One of the external influences was that the Europeans influenced the indigenous peoples in the lands where they established colonial rule, as in Mexico, as a model in line with their social and political development. In addition, another external influence was the inevitable interaction of independent states, such as Ottoman State, which encountered the threat of occupation by the Western powers and which were attached to their traditional

culture and identities. While colonial societies took the developments in the West as a guide during the statehood phase, traditional governments that wanted to preserve their independent state structure chose the path of modernization with a defensive understanding. Therefore, the modernization adventures of Mexico and Türkiye developed in two different ways: being born again (becoming a state for Mexico) and survival (maintaining the existence of the state for the Ottomans).

The modernization of the Ottoman Empire was initiated by the reformist statesmen's desire to prevent the weakening of the empire and then continued with the intervention of other states from the outside and sometimes with the will of the sultan and state officials who considered Westernization as the only solution. The reformist statesmen of the Ottoman Empire, who had some contact with the West, believed that the turbulence in the society would be stopped and the disintegration of the state would be prevented through reforms. Since they thought that the state would eventually collapse due to external attacks and internal chaos if there were not reforms, they tried to impose the administrative, military and educational institutions of the West on the country from above (Hale, 1996). The modernization process, which was started as a necessity for survival as a state during the Ottoman period in Türkiye, was realized by the initiatives of the ruling elites from above. The fact that the Ottoman social structure regressed while Europe was advancing or the fact that social structure of the Ottoman stayed stagnant while Europe was progressing on the basis of society and the individual changed the balance in the international system and this situation inevitably weakened the Ottoman Empire. Uyar explained why the Ottoman Empire could not adapt to the transformations in Europe, while it was an independent and powerful empire:

“The cause of the disruption was the transformation that West experienced. The Ottoman Empire began to see the first effects of this in two areas: Financial problems (budget deficit) and military defeats. It can be said that the Ottoman budget had three basic revenues in the classical period: agricultural revenues, war revenues, and trade revenues. From the middle of the 16th century, the Ottoman treasury began to lose these sources of income. The increase in population, the price increase caused by the flow of valuable gold and silver in Europe to the Ottoman lands, the Jelali revolts, the tax burdens brought by the protracted wars caused the peasants to leave their land and flee. This meant a reduction in agricultural taxes. The decrease in agricultural taxes also meant a decrease in the Timariots, one of the two main pillars of the army. The need for soldiers, which arose with the decrease of the Timariots, was met by the Janissaries. Thus, the balance was broken in favor of one of the two military powers that balanced each other. Another source of income for the Ottoman Empire was the income from wars (booty, taxes, etc.). The situation changed with the establishment of centralized kingdoms (and the development in firearms) in Europe, which could not hold on against the Ottoman Empire, a great central power until the 16th century. Easy military victories – the last of them were Mohacs (1526) and Preveza (1538) – were replaced by protracted

and increasingly defeated wars. The longer the wars, the higher the costs. Wars were no longer a source of income, but a source of expense. The change of trade routes was one of the factors that reduced the income of the Ottoman Empire” (Uyar, 2014).

These developments identified by Uyar for the Ottoman Empire were also valid for other non-Western traditional societies, which were independent states like the Ottoman Empire. In this process, traditional states began to weaken in line with their own internal dynamics after the defeats they suffered in the face of the military, economic, cultural and technical superiority of the West. When the traditional rulers, whose power was shaken, questioned the reasons for these defeats, they realized their own technical weaknesses (in the face of the increasing political, military and economic superiority of the Westerners). They thought that the solution to this situation was to modernize in certain areas. As a matter of fact, non-European states such as the Ottoman Empire, the Chinese Empire and Tokugawa Japan needed to appropriate and adapt new ideologies emerging from the West. Thus, it can be said that they were compelled to take up positions in the previously autonomous areas of their own society (Bayly, 2014). On the subject, Black stated that the Turks and Russians, the border neighbors of the first modernizing western societies, had governments that were strong enough to control the direct influences of the West in their own lands and that they had far-sighted governments to understand that they had to accept Western methods in order to protect their independence. Indeed, these governments initiated the process of modernization in their own countries by systematically implementing policies —beginning in Russia at the end of the 15th century and somewhat later in Türkiye— first by modernizing the military and bureaucracy, and then by constructing fortresses and official buildings, establishing factories, and developing natural resources, often with the assistance of Western technicians and experts (Black, 1986). Therefore, in Türkiye, modernization started with a defensive understanding as the main political problem and this defensive modernization approach lasted from the period of Selim III to the 1908 revolution in the Ottoman Empire.

As a remedy to prevent the weakening of the empire in the face of Europe, Western methods were adopted, and reforms were first introduced in the military, followed by changes in finance, administration, education, and law (Rustow, 1966). However, the rise of modern capitalist society in the West brought the end of the Ottoman Empire despite all the modernization efforts.

Mexico’s late modernization stemmed from the fact that it was a colonial unit until the 19th century. Unable to become an independent political entity until 1821, Mexico inevitably modernized late. In the majority of colonial Latin American societies, such as Mexico, political modernization was often restrained by the minority of the population of European (Spain and Portuguese) descent and their unwillingness to share political power with mestizos and natives, and in some cases with African immigrants who made

up the majority of the population (Black, 1986). Although Mexico, which passed from the colony to the stage of becoming an independent state* made a progressive move by becoming a state, those who carried out the independence movement established a state in the style of absolute monarchy in Europe because they were Mexican-born Hispanics. The unequal distribution of land, the emergence of caudillos in this system and the weakness of the central government also caused the supporters of reform and modernization to be weak and unable to hold on. Starting from this point of view, it can be expressed that the characteristic of Mexican independence is that it is conservative, not liberal (Yarar, 2016). As a matter of fact, the motivation behind Mexico's declaration of independence is to protect the economic institutions that made Mexico an unequal society during the colonial era. These institutions, established on a society based on the exploitation of indigenous people and the creation of monopolies, hindered the economic incentives and initiatives of the majority of the population. During this period, while the United States—Mexico's northern neighbor—began to experience the Industrial Revolution in the first half of the 19th century, Mexico emerged as an independent yet impoverished country, still shaped by its colonial institutions (Acemoğlu & Robinson, 2014).

Camp attributes Mexico's inability to progress at a level equal to or comparable with its northern neighbor, the United States—a country it took as a model in terms of political system and modernization and which also had a colonial past—to the presence and influence of the Catholic Church in Mexico. According to Camp:

“During the colonial period in Mexico, there was a contractual relationship between the Catholic Church and the Spanish authorities. The Spanish conquistadors embarked on their mission in the New World primarily with the sacred duty of converting the indigenous population to Catholicism. As a result, Catholicism became the only officially recognized and permitted religion in the colonies. Another dimension of this arrangement was the integration of church and state. In contrast, although the United States also had a colonial past, the foundational principle of its political evolution was the separation of church and state. Indeed, most of the immigrants who settled in the British colonies were not seeking religious monopoly but rather religious freedom. In this context, the colonial powers in the United States chose not to merge state and religion, but to establish their clear separation” (Camp, 2007).

Huntington claimed that if Spanish or Portuguese Catholics had settled in the USA, the USA would be no different from Mexico and Brazil today arguing that religion is the most important determinant of political culture in this regard. He attributes the USA's difference from Latin America to the fact that Anglo-Protestants settled there first (Roskin, 2014). Similarly, in *The Fall of Nations*, Daron Acemoğlu and James A.

* In Mexico and other Latin American countries, the concepts of independence, republic and democracy were synonymous with progress and modernity (Paz, 1997).

Robinson answered the question “why are the US institutions so much more conducive to economic success than those of Mexico, or similarly other countries of Latin America” by citing their colonial past. According to Acemoğlu and Robinson, the answer to this question lies in the way different societies were formed in the early colonial period. The effects of institutional differentiation, which occurred due to the British establishing a different colonial administration from the Spanish and Portuguese, have survived to the present day. Therefore, it is necessary to look at the establishment of the colonies in North and Latin America in order to understand this differentiation (Acemoğlu & Robinson 2014). From this point of view, according to Samuel Ramos, whom Camp quotes, it was Mexico’s destiny to be conquered by a Catholic theocracy (Spain) struggling to isolate people from the modern movement of ideas that emerged from the Renaissance. All Spanish colonies were isolated from all non-Catholic ideas – considered heretical by Catholics. Ports were closed and trade with all countries except Spain was denied. The only civilizing instrument of the New World was the Catholic Church. The pedagogical monopoly of the Church had shaped Latin American societies on a medieval model. The direction of education and social life was also left to the control of the Church, which was the state within the state. Therefore, legacy of Catholicism caused vital consequences for Mexico. It did not remain only as a religion, but established a monopoly on educational institutions and social organizations; it spread deeply into political culture, influencing social organizations such as hospitals and charities (Camp, 2007; Ramos, 1962). Considering that the Inquisition was also established in colonial units in Latin America, it should be stated that the smallest oppositional action that would undermine or criticize church authority and religious beliefs was strictly punished. As publishing was censored, special customs inspectors were appointed to prevent Western intellectual ideas from entering the colonies. Although these activities were still not entirely successful, the church and civic authorities in general left no room for divergent views and secular thought (Camp, 2007). In this sense, one of the main reasons why British colonial institutions were different from Spanish colonial institutions was that these institutions did not contain religious dogma and did not carry any Christianization mission. Another important difference was the approach to how people should be managed. The fact that the British recognized the right of representation and property and the Spanish were skeptical of these two concepts differentiated the development of the colonies. In this sense, “North America’s better condition than South America was entirely the result of the British model based on widespread-based private property rights and democracy which worked better than the Spanish model based on small-scale concentration and authoritarianism” (Ferguson, 2015). Thus, while the legacy of British colonialism gave birth to the global power USA, the institutional legacy of Iberian (Spanish and Portuguese) colonialism, which was highly conservative and influenced by the medieval tradition, created Latin American societies with problems of development and democratization.

The progress of Iberian colonialism along a very different line from British colonialism - with traditional and conservative practices - is the main reason for the late modernization of Latin American societies. After gaining independence in the 19th and 20th centuries, Latin American societies—cultural heirs of the Spanish and Portuguese colonial empires—adopted a series of modernization projects inspired by the models of the United States and Europe. However, even today, they have not achieved a level of modernity comparable to that of the countries they sought to emulate. In the words of Paz, “donkey and airplane, the illiterate and avant-garde poets, straw hats and steel looms all coexist” in Latin American countries. According to Paz, the climax of this contradictory modernity of Latin America is that while institutions are apparently democratic, what is actually practiced is dictatorship (Paz, 1997).

The political reality that Paz mentioned above – the existence of dictatorship in practice while the institutions were seemingly democratic – was most evident in the governments established by Latin American countries after their independence in the 19th century. In the 20th century, the pains of the modernization process led to coups and military regimes in many countries in Latin America. The same is true for Türkiye. Institutional weakness first led to the disintegration of the empire in Türkiye and the anti-democratic practices of the elected governments could not be prevented after the radical modernization breakthroughs in the Republican period gave way to the multi-party system. The existence of institutions alone was not enough for institutions to function strongly. Military coups arising from this fragile structure took place in Türkiye in different decades following 1960.

3. Pioneers of Late Modernization in Türkiye and Mexico

Progressive leaders who initiate, conduct or guide the modernization process in non-Western societies can be defined as the pioneers of modernization. While modernization is a process that occurred spontaneously in the West for a few centuries, intervention was needed to initiate this process in non-Western societies. In order to catch up with the general progress in the world or not to be left behind, it is necessary to go through the modernization phases in a much shorter time compared to the West. For this reason, this process is applied as the modernization of societies by leaders and governments with a modernizing ideology (Yüksel, 2006). The modernizing element is the state in this process which was started or realized by the power. Unlike in the West, it is not the modernizing (being modernized) of the state with the pressure of society; there is an effort to modernize the society with the pressure of the state. This modernization model, in which the modernizing state apparatus is actively involved, includes countries such as Türkiye and Mexico.

In non-Western societies experiencing the modernization process, the compulsory leadership of the state is inevitable in the process of change, transformation and

development. The state, as an accelerating factor to realize this change and development, penetrates every aspect of political, social, cultural and economic life. The reason for this is related to the social and political infrastructure and traditions of the societies in question. The state, which assumes a regulatory role here, also wants to control the process (Hamşioğlu, 2006; Çetin, 2003-2004). The state's desire to operate the inspection or control mechanism in this regard is to eliminate the negative reflexes that can be given against the rapid modernization initiatives. In non-Western societies, the state's attitude that initiates, conducts and controls modernization stems from the lack of the will of the society to realize and carry out this process. Therefore, since modernity is not a spontaneous process in such societies, a new impetus is needed against the stagnant traditional structure. The fact that the majority of the society, which maintains its existence in a traditional structure, is not a driving force for the modernization process and cannot contribute enough to the process shows that more responsibilities fall on the guides in such societies (Sevil, 2005; Eisenstadt, 1966). At this point, bureaucrats and those with military backgrounds who have received secular education and have come into contact with the West come into play in carrying out the state-led modernization in non-Western societies. As the modernizing catalysts of the state, this group that guides the society towards modernization is aware of the backwardness of the country they belong to against the West. The pioneers of modernization, who generally have interaction with Western societies and have weak ties with the traditional values due to their modernizing worldview, emerged from the ruling elites (Metin, 2011; Köker, 2000). In the example of Türkiye, the contributions of people who were educated according to the Western mentality in schools such as engineering, medicine and civil engineering established during the Tanzimat Reform Era to the modernization process (Kona, 2005) can be evaluated in this context. In addition, foreign experts coming from European countries to teach in these schools and modernize the army ensured the spread of modernizing ideas. Soldiers and bureaucrats trained in line with these ideas have become the main elements of Turkish modernization. In Mexico, the first pioneers of modernization efforts that started with independence were Mexican-born Spaniards who belonged to the creole class. Both the education they received and their communication with the West created a social class that would affect the fate of Mexico in the following years. As a matter of fact, creoles started to make their presence felt in the field of culture and thought with the rise of cultural levels and the ideas of enlightenment reaching the Spanish colonies as of the 18th century. This is related to the fact that the majority of independence leaders in Latin America emerged from the creoles in general (Kutlu, 2012). Creoles also played a significant role in the transmission of ideas of freedom and equality to the continent, helping them take root among the masses. This class, which is economically and culturally equipped, became influential in the spread of these ideas in their own circles after they went to Europe, lived there for a while developing themselves in line with Western ideas and returned to their homeland (Latin America).

In addition, universities established in important cities were the main institutions that raised the awareness of Latin American elites in this period. Faculties to provide education in branches related to law and administration were also established in many of these universities and thus the Spaniards raised the generations that would form the legal ground and administrative mechanism in the rebellion process in the educational institutions that they established or at least allowed to be established (Kutlu, 2012). Similarly, in order to prevent the weakening of the state and to reinforce the classical Ottoman structure, the Ottomans established Western-style educational institutions. However, these schools inadvertently laid the groundwork for the modernizing elites educated there to later come into conflict with tradition.

Mostly the bureaucracy, which is the main executor of the state mechanism, modernizes and the modernized bureaucracy both leads the society and imposes it in the direction of modernization in order to realize social modernization in the states that tend to modernize by their own will (Metin, 2011). It has been possible to see this phenomenon in Türkiye and Mexico since the 19th century. Liberals who started the reform period by taking over the government in Mexico and those who carried out the reform movement in the Ottoman Empire first equipped themselves with modernist ideas and then tried to apply these ideas from the center to the periphery. As a matter of fact, the two countries have experienced a transformation from the backwardness of the pre-capitalist period to “modern peripheral underdevelopment” in this process, which can be called the longest century (19th century) for both Türkiye (Ottoman) and Mexico (Erol, 2013).

The Tanzimat Edict, proclaimed in the Ottoman Empire in 1839 as a political response to internal and external pressures, introduced modern concepts into administrative practice while maintaining respect for sharia and the traditional state structure. It restructured governance with a new understanding of law and state, driven by practical objectives (İnalçık, 1964). The most important development that took place in the administrative field with the edict was the replacement of the old administrative class of the Ottomans by a new class of civil servants. The civil servants were freed from the insecurity arising from being the slaves of the sultan and they gained the assurance of ascending to a secular and bureaucratic hierarchy, which had legal protection and which was not affected by the changes in fate often experienced in the old order (Shaw & Kural Shaw 2017). This right granted to civil servants was actually a regulation aimed at protecting the existence of the state. As a matter of fact, it was believed that the state would be modernized by concentrating the state authority in the hands of bureaucracy that would implement the reform with the proclamation of the Tanzimat. In this sense, the Tanzimat period was the era of bureaucracy. Reformers, who wanted to renew the country in the last century of the empire, tried to create a central administration and bureaucracy that served it in order to overcome the obstacles they faced (İnalçık, 1964). As a result of these efforts, a powerful bureaucratic class emerged, from which many key figures of Ottoman-Turkish modernization were drawn.

Just a few decades after the declaration of independence, the modernizing elite, known as liberals in Mexico, advocated the complete separation of church and state and pursued the ideal of establishing a modern nation-state. In this process, the leader of the liberals was Benito Juarez, a native of Mexico. Mexican liberals of the 19th century lived in the cities. University-educated pioneers consisted of lawyers, journalists, teachers, bureaucrats, and army officers. While the majority belonged to the creole and mestizo classes, some of them, such as Juarez, came from the indigenous class. What these people primarily reacted to was the preservation of colonial structures, the old order in other words, in Mexico. Poor rural peasants and mestizos were still excluded while the wealthy creoles were reaching the heights of their ruling power. They were unable to enter important civilian or military positions and to gain real economic power. Because all ways of reaching and advancing them were blocked by the old colonial oligarchy (Gledhill). Therefore, liberals first sought to clean up the remnants of the colonial period and then to establish a modern, secular, constitutional order. In line with this goal, they started the reform process called La Reforma.

The supporters of modernization in the 19th century in the Ottoman Empire were soldiers, bureaucrats and intellectuals who were educated in western-style schools. The soldiers were the first group to take courses such as mathematics, history and French apart from traditional Islamic Arabic curriculum. In the second half of the 19th century, military cadets and officers became the main spokesmen for liberal constitutional ideas in the Ottoman Empire. This group (military-civil intelligentsia union) carried out the 1908 Revolution at the beginning of the next century. The victory of the 1908 movement brought the role of the army to the fore in the political arena (Rustow, 1965). They were the only leading force that would change the society/state anyway. As in the case of Mexico, traditional classes (peasants, artisans, etc.) did not have the power to bring about change. Modern social classes (bourgeoisie, working class) were not yet formed (Uyar, 2014). The opening of military schools which followed the Western system and the dedication of the officers trained in these schools to the salvation of the state enabled them to emerge as a new modernizing class. A knowledgeable generation who grew up in the Military, Civil and Military Medical Schools had a Western worldview (Çetin, 2003). Therefore, the pioneering role of modernist soldiers in the reform movements in the last period of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century and the establishment of the Republic in the first quarter of the 20th century cannot be denied. Considering that those who restructured the country in the revolutionary process in Mexico were generally of military origin, it can be expressed that the modernizers in both countries were reformist, revolutionary, liberal and strong leaders who had a constitutionalist worldview and aimed to unite the society, starting from the 19th century. Thus, the pioneers of modernization in Mexico and Türkiye, who were able to distinguish the traditional from the modern and advocated to abolish or reform obsolete, useless institutions, were generally made up of intellectual, bureaucratic, professional and military groups that held prominent

positions in the previous structure and that did not completely alienate themselves from large sections of society (Eisenstadt, 2007).

Weak, unstable and conflicting state structures in Türkiye and Mexico in the last quarter of the 19th century were replaced by stronger, centralized, stable modern nation-state systems modeled after the major capitalist countries of the West in the first half of the 20th century. The new nation-state structures in Türkiye and Mexico both lacked the presence (on a meaningful and necessary level) of the national bourgeoisie that normally forms the essential component of the modern nation-state and that is in the forefront of building nation and state structure processes (Erol, 2013). As a matter of fact, with the beginning of the 20th century, the leaders of the modernization process in societies where non-Western modernization was seen consisted of those who belonged to the military-bureaucratic class with strong secular, populist, nationalist and revolutionary ideas instead of the national bourgeoisie. These leaders were generally the children of middle-class families (Metin, 2011). The most distinctive features of these leaders or pioneers were their determination to modernize in all aspects, their aim to transform these societies into urban industrial ones by changing the traditional-rural structure, which is the general appearance of their societies, and their desire for a rational state and an integrated society that would turn into a nation-state (Metin, 2011). The struggle of the modernizing elites in Türkiye and Mexico in the first half of the 20th century was exactly in this direction. The supporters of the constitutional government who adopted the secular world view that seized power in both countries tried to change the history of their own country (forward) and to create a new identity for their citizens by transforming their societies.

In both the Mexican Revolution and the Turkish Revolution, the military and educated middle class played a leading role, but instead of transforming the administration into a military regime, the leaders civilianized the army by drawing it into barracks. While bureaucrats and intellectuals formed the leading class in Türkiye in addition to the army, Mexican entrepreneurs were also included in this group in Mexico. In the case of Türkiye, the existence of an entrepreneurial middle class is out of question among those carrying out the revolution (Özbudun, 1969). Therefore, there are various bureaucrats, intellectuals, lawyers, industrialists and businessmen, especially soldiers, among the representatives of the Mexican Revolution. It was the educated middle class constitutionalist generals such as Carranza, Obregon, Calles and Cardenas who seized power in Mexico during the revolutionary process and who tried to transform the country and society.

As can be seen from the examples of Türkiye and Mexico, modernization is a top-down, mostly state-organized process of change in non-Western societies (Metin, 2011). This form of modernization, which is applied with an imposing style from the top down and called authoritarian modernization (Kaya, 2015) was applied radically in Türkiye

and Mexico, especially during the single-party periods (CHP 1923-1946, PNR 1929-1940). In the countries where this modernization style was applied, during the change process - as in Türkiye and Mexico - the pioneers of modernization put on their agenda the concepts such as freedom, equality, unity and progress produced and conceptualized by political and social events such as the Enlightenment and the French Revolution; they gave a dominant role to perspectives such as secularism, nationalism, populism and democracy in their own political thoughts (Metin, 2011). They tried to embody these abstract and progressive thought patterns in their own countries, provided that they applied or tried to implement them with some institutional arrangements. In this sense, the state, especially modernizing leaders, takes on important duties in the modernization processes of non-Western societies. First of all, these leaders are faced with the problem of transforming the traditional structure of their own society into modern structures and/or reconciling these structures with modern ones and developing policies in this direction by obtaining / seizing power (Hamşioğlu, 2006). Therefore, the political-bureaucratic elite, called modernizers, are indispensable elements of modernization for non-Western societies. Modernizers, whose mission is to establish a new society, are -in a sense- modifiers who undertake the function of social change (Sevil, 2005). The main element required while fulfilling this function is first national independence and then national development. The leaders of modernization therefore constantly talk about freedom, but this is national freedom rather than personal freedom. Freedom is desired first and foremost for the nation (Kili, 1995; Sigmund 1963). As a matter of fact, the prerequisite for any undeveloped country/society to engage in a revolution, a development, industrialization, modernization action and to get rid of its traditional structure and attain a modern society structure is the independence of the country and its liberation from the colonial situation (Kili, 1995). In this sense, it is an extraordinary historical phenomenon for people and communities that have not been independent and have not known how to live as a nation to have attained a country, and especially an independent one. If modernization is to be initiated in a society that has not yet become a nation and is not politically independent, the first thing to do is to achieve an independent state structure. And then, it is necessary for the modernist national leaders to create citizenship awareness by providing national unity (Kili, 1995; Sigmund, 1963) -the unity of the people- without prioritizing the benefit and interest of any class for the development/improvement of the country. At the same time, modernizing leaders must carry out rapid industrialization and (in many cases) land reform in order to achieve tangible progress and prosperity in their underdeveloped countries and to enforce values such as equality and participation. To do this, they must control the government, that is, they need to seize the power and thus get rid of the traditional aristocracy or colonial power, or both (Kautsky, 1969). The ideal characteristics of revolutionary modernizing leaders who can achieve these are to be a good thinker, a good writer, a good orator, and a good mass organizer (Kautsky, 1969).

In Mexico, which became independent after three centuries of colonial rule, the leaders first established a state, then built the constitutional order and tried to create the Mexican nation and the modern *Mexican* by giving vital importance to secularization. In order to ensure the welfare of their own society, the revolutionary Mexican elites aimed for national development under the leadership of the state after establishing the one-party rule. Türkiye, on the other hand, switched to the nation-state model after experiencing a multinational empire for six centuries under the rule of the Ottoman dynasty. The modernist cadre, which had fought for independence after the disintegration of the empire, tried to create a new state with a revolutionary attitude, a modern society, a secular order and individuals who had attained citizenship consciousness under the Turkish identity. Just as in the case of Mexico, after establishing the one-party rule, national development and political development under the leadership of the state became the main concern of the revolutionary elites. Therefore, in both countries, single-party governments, which were established primarily to ensure national unity, took their places with their critical roles in the history of their own countries as the tools of the modernization project in the revolutionary process.*

Conclusion

As the phenomenon of modernization first emerged in Western Europe, this concept is perceived as being peculiar to the West or belonging to the West. After all, modernization is generally referred to as westernization. Although the events that can be considered as the beginning of modernization, such as the outbreak of the Renaissance in Europe, justify this perception, the results or ideas arising from movements such as the Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, and the French Revolution are universal and do not recognize the right to belong to any geography. The expansion of Europe to own colonies later promoted the recognition of these ideas among the indigenous peoples living in the lands it had conquered. Thus, values that seemed to belong to the West found the opportunity to spread overseas. In this case, the spread of ‘western’ ideas also created a resistance to western imperialism (Rustow, 1971). For instance, the spread of nationalist and liberal ideas in Latin American societies, especially among creoles, sparked the idea of independence and societies that broke away from colonial powers tried to create their own nation-states. Mexico, which declared its independence, was occupied by the French in 1861 to be exploited again while experiencing conflict between liberals and traditionalists during the state-building process. The independence war was fought for the second time under the leadership of the liberals and a nationalist attitude was displayed and the French forces were expelled from the country in 1867. In the next period, steps were taken in the direction of statification, nationalization and

* For detailed information on the revolutionary single-party governments in Türkiye and Mexico, see: Yazar, Ayşe. (2023). *Tek Parti Yönetiminin Karşılaştırmalı Analizi: Türkiye ve Meksika*. Siyasal Kitabevi.

modernization in Mexico. Likewise, Türkiye, after the War of Independence against the expansionist policies of the Western powers, has embarked on the path of building a modern state and nation at the standards of Western countries. It can be claimed that modernization ideas, which seem to be Western but are universal, have also been a mechanism of resistance against Western imperialism.

In conclusion, Türkiye and Mexico missed the early modernization process as their internal dynamics differ from those of the West. It would be appropriate to start from the 19th century if we need to address and concretize the late modernization processes of these two countries, which do not contain the developmental elements of the West in their social, political and economic structures. Weiker discussed Türkiye's political development in four stages. The first stage was the stage of *pre-revolutionary republican modernization*, which started in the 1800s and lasted for about a hundred years. Many new ideas and political movements, which would later bear fruit with the republic, sprouted in this period. Political parties were established, modern education developed, interaction with many elements of European politics and culture increased and the core of a modern, strong and talented managerial staff began to form in this period. On the other hand, the spirit of Turkish nationalism emerged in this period (Weiker, 1973). The period that Weiker considers as the second stage covers the years between 1923 and 1930. At this stage, which was called *strict one-party rule*, a series of reforms planned by Mustafa Kemal were implemented quickly and without compromise (Weiker, 1973). The third stage was *flexible one-party rule*, covering the period from 1931 to 1946. In the relevant years, emphasis was placed on modernization, democratization and educational mobilization (Weiker, 1973). In this process, the leaders or ruling elites in Türkiye tried to create a modern state based on secular, productive and egalitarian institutions (Weiker, 1973). The last, fourth, stage of Weiker's periodic classification for Türkiye is the *multi-party period* that entered in 1946.

Mexico's late modernization process can be analyzed in six stages as Independence, Conflict, Porfiriato, Revolution, Post-Revolution and Transition to Democracy. The first stage, the process of *independence*, covers the period between 1810 and 1821. In this period, Mexicans broke away from Spain and passed to the stage of becoming an independent state from the colony. The stage that we can call the *conflict* is the period after independence until 1876. During this period, Mexican politics was the scene of a clash between the modern and the tradition or the liberal and the conservative. In the conflict phase, in which significant progress was made in terms of modernization, the constitutional period was passed and laws were made to secularize the country. *Porfiriato*, on the other hand, is a stage where Porfiro Diaz ruled Mexico with an iron fist for more than thirty years (1876-1910), when the constitution was not applied politically, freedoms were shelved, there was integration with the world in the economic field and works such as railway, hospital and school construction were carried out. *Revolution* period broke out in 1910 and continued until 1940, passing through various phases. A

state of civil war, formation of a new constitution, formation of a revolutionary single-party government, reforms towards modernization in many areas, various efforts to secularize the country and the execution of a nationalist policy called *Mexicanidad* (Mexicanness) were in question in this process. It was attempted to create a modern, secular nation with its institutions and mentality in Revolutionary Mexico. The *post-revolutionary period* covers the years 1940-2000 in Mexico. During these years, the party of the revolution (formerly PNR), Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), changed its nature; shifted to the right; revolutionary struggles ended and Mexico was governed by right-wing policies. At this stage, the PRI was the dominant party in the country. Moreover, neoliberal economic policies have gained weight since 1980. The *transition to democracy* can be considered as the period from 2000 to the present. In 2000, the dominance of the PRI as the only party in Mexican politics came to an end; the candidate of the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), who remained in opposition for years, took the presidency and opened a new page in Mexican political life.

What has been explained above indicates that Türkiye and Mexico continue their modernization process by being included in the category of developing countries despite the fractions in the historical process. Structural problems that both countries have to deal with force the ideal functioning of institutions, create development challenges and cause violence and security problems. Although they have made great progress in terms of modernization through all these struggles, they are still not among the developed welfare states in the 21st century. In today's world, the current problems that slow down or hinder the development of these two countries can be examined as the subject of another study.

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Extended Abstract

This study offers a comparative historical analysis of the late modernization processes of Türkiye and Mexico, focusing particularly on the pre-revolutionary period in both countries. Through a non-Western lens, the article analyzes the distinctive trajectories of these two societies, which embarked on modernization under different historical conditions yet followed converging patterns of top-down transformation. By employing the method of comparative history, the study aims to identify the structural and conceptual features of late modernization, particularly within societies situated outside the Euro-Atlantic core.

Modernization, in its classical sense, refers to a complex and multidimensional transformation process encompassing industrialization, urbanization, secularization, bureaucratization, and rational-legal authority. However, this study highlights that such transformations did not emerge uniformly across all societies. Unlike Western European states where modernity evolved gradually through internal dynamics, Türkiye and Mexico encountered modernization as a necessity imposed by historical crises, military defeats, and external threats. Their trajectories, therefore, are characterized by rapid, state-led reforms driven by bureaucratic and military elites, rather than organic societal evolution.

The article first contextualizes modernization theoretically, drawing from prominent modernization theorists such as Huntington, Eisenstadt, Black, and examines how modernization in non-Western contexts is shaped by different temporalities and institutional constraints. In late-modernizing societies, the modernization process tends to be compressed and externally influenced, often lacking the social bases—such as a developed bourgeoisie or a politically active civil society—that characterized the Western path to modernity. The traditional structures of religion, community, and agrarian economy continued to dominate, necessitating an elite-driven intervention to initiate change.

In both Türkiye and Mexico, the state emerged as the primary agent of modernization. The study underscores the phenomenon of “etatist” modernization, in which the state is not only the initiator but also the regulator and enforcer of reform. This was a direct consequence of the limited capacity of society itself to generate bottom-up demands for transformation. In both cases, the modernizing elite—comprising bureaucrats, military officers, and Western-educated intellectuals—viewed modernity as a strategic imperative to preserve or establish national sovereignty. The legitimacy of their rule, and of the reforms they undertook, was rooted not in popular support but in the perceived necessity of national survival and progress.

The article elaborates on the socio-political and institutional structures of traditional Türkiye (under Ottoman rule) and colonial Mexico, highlighting the reasons behind their delayed entry into modernity. In the case of Mexico, Spanish colonial rule had left a legacy of strong ecclesiastical dominance, social stratification, and economic monopolization, all of which hindered the emergence of a dynamic, reformist structure in the society. In Türkiye, the Ottoman Empire’s centralized and patrimonial governance structure, combined with the absence of an autonomous bourgeoisie, resulted in the state assuming the task of modernization through selective reforms beginning in the late 18th century.

One of the critical arguments of the study is that modernization in both countries was conceptualized as a corrective response to historical backwardness. The absence of the structural prerequisites of Western-style development—such as secular legal traditions, industrial economy, or representative institutions—meant that modernization was perceived as a remedy to developmental lag. Consequently, reforms were imposed from above, often by a narrow circle of elites trained in new schools or exposed to Western administrative and military models.

In the Ottoman Empire, this reformist elite began to form during the late 18th century and especially throughout the 19th century, supported by institutions such as the Imperial Military Engineering School, the Mekteb-i Mülkiye, and the Tıbbiye. These institutions played a critical role in producing a new cadre of administrators and officers who envisioned reform as essential to state preservation. Similarly, in colonial and post-colonial Mexico, the creole elite—particularly those exposed to Enlightenment thought and European political ideas—emerged as the intellectual forerunners of modernization. This group sought to eliminate the remnants of colonial ecclesiastical control and to lay the foundation for a secular, centralized state.

The article further explores how both societies experienced significant resistance to reform from traditional institutions, particularly religious authorities. In Mexico, the Catholic Church, which maintained a dominant role in education and public life, fiercely opposed liberal efforts to secularize the state. In the Ottoman context, reforms introduced during the Tanzimat period also encountered opposition from conservative

segments of society who were deeply entrenched in religious and customary norms. In both cases, this resistance reinforced the necessity of state centralization and elite cohesion in order to implement reforms.

While the historical origins of Turkish and Mexican modernization differ—one being an imperial core state, the other a former colony—their experiences converge in terms of method and structure. Both countries entered the modernization process belatedly, under conditions of crisis, and relied on state-centered strategies to catch up with Western developmental benchmarks. The consequences of this compressed modernization included authoritarian tendencies, institutional fragility, and partial democratic development.

In sum, this study demonstrates that Türkiye and Mexico represent two salient examples of late modernizing, non-Western societies whose early modernization efforts were shaped primarily by state actors in the absence of strong social demand. By focusing on the pre-revolutionary phase, the article contributes to a more differentiated understanding of modernization as a historical process that manifests unevenly across different geopolitical contexts. It suggests that non-Western modernization is neither derivative nor incomplete but rather constitutes a distinct trajectory shaped by specific historical constraints and strategic imperatives.