Rıdvan Turhan

The Effect of Dependency Theory on Discussions of ‘Underdevelopment’ in Turkey

Abstract: Since the establishment of the Republic regime in 1923, one of the main discussion topics of intellectuals and of people who govern in Turkey has been ‘development’. Even though these two groups mostly had different approaches with respect to development strategy, they had a common belief that development would be achieved through industrialization. In a similar manner, the suggestions for development strategy put forward by different intellectual circles were not homogeneous. Despite all their differences, the clarity of Western paradigms forms the common point of these suggestions. Even the theoretic endeavors that have the claims of authenticity and of being domestic are not free from this effect. Approaches that try to understand and explain underdevelopment in Turkey within the theoretical frame of ‘dependency theory’ constitute one of the most typical examples of this.

Introduction

In this essay, I aim to examine the approach of Turkish intellectuals to the problematic assessment of underdevelopment and development that has been one of the main discussion topics throughout the history of the Republic, with respect to its relation with ‘dependency theory’, which was popularized in Turkey after 1960. The essay consists of three sections. In first chapter, the main claims of dependency theory, which are manifested in the context of historical studies in Latin America, will be presented with respect to their criticisms of existing progress/development strategies. Even though dependency theory was effective in 1960s, it is predicable that the theses (about underdevelopment, dependency and development strategies) of the authors of *Kadro Dergisi* (*Kadro* [Cadre] *Journal*) in first half of 1930s in Turkey foreshadowed the theses of dependency theory in some ways. Hence, the second section will deal with the resemblance between the theses of dependency theory and of *Kadro Journal* and the possible sources of this resemblance. In the third section, I will discuss the effect of de-

Rıdvan Turhan, University of Istanbul (UI)

pendency theory on the literature of underdevelopment and development in 1960s Turkey.

A brief history of dependency theory

During the post World War II era, ‘modernization theory’—the theoretical frame of the USA’s process of organizing intersocietal relations—defined the status of being underdeveloped not as the opposite of being developed/advanced, but as the state of not entirely appearing as such. According to this theory, the difference between underdeveloped societies and developed societies was just one phase; underdeveloped societies could also develop if they carefully analyzed the phases that developed societies went through and followed the same route.¹ This theory, which had held influence in the 1950s and 60s, was the subject of staggering criticisms after the late 60s, and lost its being dominant appeal soon thereafter. In this period, hectic criticism was being leveled at the negative sides of capitalist industrialism and development plans, which failed to ensure economic growth. These criticisms, which were intensely salient in the texts first of several Latin American authors, then of social scientists such as Andre Gunder Frank and Paul Baran, uncovered the frame that became known as ‘dependency theory’ (Altun 2005, p. 13).

Dependency theory, which can also be identified as harmonically increasing the voice of the Third World, became the dominant point of view in many countries that are identified as underdeveloped—particularly Latin American countries in the 1970s. The main objective of the theory is to put forth the idea that the dependence of Latin American countries (or more generally, countries identified as underdeveloped) on other countries cannot be overcome without a qualitative change in the former’s microstructures and foreign affairs. Dependence indicates that certain countries’ economies are conditioned by the development and expansion of economics to which they are subjected. According to the theory, while two or more economies and the relationships of dependence between them and world trade evolve for the benefit of the dominant ones, the dependent ones can only execute this development as the reflection of others’ evolution (Dos Santos 1970, p. 231).

It can be asserted that the dependency theory, as briefly identified above within the scope of its objective and key notion, is fundamentally nourished

¹ W.W. Rostow’s work titled *The Stages of Economic Growth* (subtitled “A Non-Communist Manifesto”) is the presentation of this belief with the claim of being scientific.

from two different sources: structuralism and Marxism. The approach of structuralism was developed by Raul Prebisch and Celso Furtado. Both philosophers agree that *de facto* economy is not proficient enough to explain the Latin America truth. Prebisch, who held the presidency between 1950 and 1963 of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) subsidiary to United Nations, states that the international division of labor scheme is not valid in its indication that the specific role of Latin America among the order of world economies is producing raw material for industrial centers. Prebisch presents that center and periphery countries don't benefit from technical developments equally, and demonstrates with empirical data that there was a decreasing ratio of end item price to raw materials price from the 1860s to the end of World War II. Thus, he claims that in this relationship, industrialized countries are always the main beneficiaries and international trade always works against underdeveloped countries. Briefly, according to Prebisch, who handled the developing problem associatively with international trading, there is a close link between economic progress and foreign trading. This economic situation in which Latin America finds itself can be only understood through this relationship (Prebisch 1950, pp. 8–14).

The main concept of Paul Baran, who is one of the most important representatives of the Marxist approach that influenced dependency theory, considers the reason for underdevelopment is *exploitation*. According to Baran underdeveloped countries that provide raw materials and investment areas to developed capitalist countries always represent an essential hinterland for the West. That is the exact reason why the exploitation of underdeveloped countries played a vital role in the development of capitalism in West. Baran openly identifies Western European countries as looters and freebooters when he explains this exploitative relationship. This exploitation was hidden behind the curtain of trade while the West stole the world's treasure from everywhere within its reach (Baran 1957, p. 142). In this way, a big portion of the economic surplus created in those countries that were exposed to exploitation was transferred to the West, and the exploited countries' chance to build up an accumulation of capital was taken away (Baran 1957, pp. 142–143). In this framework, Baran states that economic development in underdeveloped countries contrasts with advanced capitalist countries' economic interests. In other words, according to Baran the price of capitalist development is the others' not being able to grow (Baran 1957, p. 162).

Thanks to the work of Andre Gunder Frank, who shared Baran's point of view on development and underdevelopment topics, dependency theory became popular worldwide in the 1970s. Frank was impressed by Baran's conceptual framework correlating the feature of being developed and underdeveloped directly with capitalism. According to Frank, the historical development of capital-

ism as a whole system has a critical importance for the comprehension of these facts. In other words, the reasons for these facts of development and underdevelopment should be sought through the dialectic of this total system. When the historical development of capitalism is inspected in this frame, it can be seen that cases of development and underdevelopment came to light as a result of some inner contradictions. The West's development and others' underdevelopment throughout historical processes arose because of the West's exploitation others and usurping economic surplus values. In other words, capitalism rose on others' devastation. This situation is the first contradiction that Frank underlines. The second contradiction to which he drew attention is the hierarchical structure on the world scale that capitalism created. He explains this hierarchical structure with metropolis and satellite concepts, and links the development of the metropolis to its withdrawing of the economic surplus from satellites and using it for its own development. As a result, satellites can't use their economic surplus for their own development and hence remain underdeveloped. Frank didn't limit this analysis of metropolis-satellite to international relations—he says that capitalism embeds this contradiction into each satellite's internal economy and hence a similar polarization is also created within the satellite (Frank 1966, pp. 17–31).

Dependency theory, which takes its shape and main theses from its aforementioned important representatives, develops a method of analysis that plots broader external factors and the international capitalist system against the progress perspective, which links the reasons for underdevelopment to internal, specific conditions. It draws attention to the imperialist relations between countries, asymmetrical relations between classes and unequal trading relations. Dependency theory was effective in the 1960s and 1970s, especially in third world countries defined as underdeveloped, and deeply affected the analyses put forward by intellectuals in those countries in the context of subject matters like dependency on imperialism, problems of development and the reasons for underdevelopment.

In this context, dependency theory was also effective in Turkey as an account of the global capitalist system, and as a challenge to that system, or at least an endeavor of changing the balance of power within it. In the 1960s, the theory led the searches by various Turkish intellectuals for a strategy by which to understand their country's economic and social structure, and to overcome underdevelopment. But even before the 1960s—in fact, already at the beginning of 1930s—a group of intellectuals who had started to publish the *Kadro Journal*, asserted theses very similar to dependency theory on subject matters like the development of capitalism, development, underdevelopment and dependency on imperialism. In the following chapter, the similarities and differen-

ces between the theses of dependency theory and those asserted in *Kadro Journal* will be discussed.

Discussions of imperialism, dependency theory and *Kadro Journal*²

The modern Republic of Turkey was established in 1923 after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. One of the main problems facing the new government, which retained no economic legacy from the Ottoman one, was how economic development would take place. When the effects of the Great Depression—which manifested before even 10 years had passed since the establishment of modern Turkey—added to the existing economic problems, and the problem of economic development became the most important discussion topic of the intelligentsia and the people who governed. While trying to construct a new ideological frame for the Turkish revolution according to the genuine conditions of the era, a group of intellectuals who started to publish *Kadro Journal* in the first half of the 1930s emphasized the need for a new development strategy and alleged authentic and extensive opinions about this matter. Their theoretic frame didn't just include Turkey, and they discussed the facts that had universal aspects—such as national liberation movements, the crisis of 1929, capitalism, colonialism, dependency on imperialism and the historical reasons for underdevelopment—with respect to their endeavors of determining Turkey's position within the international system. It is thus predicable that there are critical resemblances between their theses and those of dependency theory.

While a total overlapping of these two doctrines is beside the point, their delivered perspectives on the subjects of dependency on imperialism, reasons for underdevelopment, progress of capitalism and the exploiter-exploited contrast

² *Kadro Journal* was published between 1932–1934 by an intellectual group whose founding members were Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, İsmail Hüsrev Tökin, Vedat Nedim Tör, Burhan Asaf Belge and Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu. Apart from Karaosmanoğlu, the mentality of the group's members was significantly influenced by Marxism. The *Journal*, which was published in the times when discussions of development and statism were most intensive, didn't just join the ideological and economic discussions, but also undertook as its agenda to give Turkish revolution a theoretical frame by interpreting it. *Kadro* was shut down by Atatürk, who didn't lean toward any idea of modernization other than his own. Hence *Kadro Journal* passed into history as a concrete example in which the pathological relation between Turkish intellectual and state can be traced. For further information about *Kadro Journal*, see: Türkeş 1998, pp. 92–119; Türkeş 1999, pp. 47–68.

are all analogous to one another. All these facts are the cornerstones of the theoretic frame of the *Kadro* movement. In its totality, this theoretic frame considers each fact as taken on the basis of its causal relation with the other. The international aspect of this approach—which can also be seen as a macro theoretical endeavor—is built on the qualitative differences and contradictions between industrialized countries and non-industrialized ones. In this contradiction, defined by Burhan Asaf Belge³ as the relation of metropolis-exploited, non-industrialization/underdevelopment of some countries relates to exploitation by Western imperialism, just as in dependency theory (Belge 1934, p. 38). At the center of the doctrine's national aspect were the national independence wars. *Kadro* claimed to offer the scientific explanation of all national independence wars, including the Turkish one. In this context, its authors claimed that the theory of revolution in Turkey hadn't been established, and that for the revolution to reach success required that the objective acts of this movement must be known and its ideology created. According to Şevket Süreyya Aydemir,⁴ who was the lead ideologist of *Kadro*, Turkish revolution was a national independence movement, and national independence movements were the main decisive progresses of twentieth century (Aydemir 1932, pp. 6–12). The future of both the Turkish revolution and the international order was bound to the scientific explanation of these movements. This is the main object and claim of the *Kadro* movement.

3 Belge was one of the students sent to Germany in service of the Turkish-German Friendship Association established in the atmosphere of World War I. While studying architecture there, he met with the Spartacist movement led by Rosa Luxemburg and leaned toward socialist thought. In 1923, he returned to Turkey for good. In 1928 he wrote columns in the *Hakimiyet'i Milliye* newspaper that had an organic connection with the new regime. In 1931, at the same newspaper, he met the other authors of *Kadro*—Aydemir, Tör and Karaosmanoğlu—and while analyzing the huge economic collapse of 1929, he began to search for ways to get out of the crisis. Eventually, this endeavor turned into the idea of publishing a journal: this journal was *Kadro* (Yıldız 2011, pp. 29–59).

4 Şevket Süreyya Aydemir (1897–1976) was the child of a landless peasant and studied to become a teacher. In 1919, upon the Azerbaijan government demanding teachers from Turkey, he went to the Nuha district. He attended the Congress of the Peoples of the East in Baku in 1920, and as a Nuha teacher representative he met with members of the Turkish Communist Party based there. Influenced by their anti-colonialist vision, he began to lean toward socialism. From 1921–1923, he studied at the Communist University of the Toilers of the East in Moscow. During his time in Baku and Moscow, he followed the discussions (that included names like Lenin, Trotsky and Zinoviev) about how to struggle against Western imperialism. Throughout this process, one of the most important issues that bothered Aydemir was how the peoples of the east would be freed of Western imperialism's oppression. For Aydemir's biography and the progression of his thoughts, see: Aydemir 1965; 2003.

The authors of *Kadro* used historical materialism as a method while building such an assertive and extensive theory, and brought it into connection with Marxist theory. But it must be said that this connection is a limited one. The theoretic authenticity of the authors of *Kadro* becomes evident at this point. According to *Kadro*, even though the historical materialism based on the class struggle was functional for understanding Western European societies in nineteenth century, it is insufficient for understanding national liberation wars. Hence, historical materialism is taken as a method independent from Marxist theory. Even though this approach doesn't mesh with the main principles of Marxist theory, this did not concern the authors of *Kadro*. Besides, this is not the only point on which they differ from Marxist theory. Even though they accepted that Marx had made the most thorough analyses of capitalism (Belge 1932, p. 29), they nevertheless criticized those analyses. They contended that Marx was wrong to say that capitalist accumulation occurred by means of exploitation of the working class. The *Kadro* authors instead primarily base the development of capitalism upon colonialism (Tökin 1934c, p. 17–21; Aydemir 1933, p. 5–10). In other words, accumulation of capital is based upon the exploitation of other countries *before* the exploitation of the immediate producer, who turned into the waged worker. In this process, capitalist accumulation took place in Europe beginning with the exploration of America in fifteenth century (Aydemir 1933, pp. 5–10). This emphasized precedence of colonialism with respect to the development of capitalism is the second main point shared by the theses of *Kadro* and dependency theory. Accordingly, the development of capitalism didn't cause interclass contradiction to become universalized, as Marx claimed, but instead caused colonialism to locate itself across the world, and the contradiction between exploited countries and exploiter countries to become universalized. So according to the *Kadro* authors, the national independence movements of the twentieth century emerged as a result of this contradiction.

As can be seen, the *Kadro* authors adopted a dialectical approach when explaining historical progress; but on the other hand, they construct their theory on the axis of their discussions—implicit or explicit—of Marx. In this context, they claim that the contradiction between exploited and exploiter countries (which they determine as the decisive element of twentieth century) wouldn't resolve with class struggle, as Marx had alleged. The *Kadro* authors replace the class struggle—a key concept of Marxist theory—with national independence wars (Aydemir 1932, pp. 7–12; Belge 1934a, pp. 28). In developing an alternative approach to Marx with regard to explaining historical progress, they again foreshadowed dependency theory. The unequal distribution of modern technology that emerged worldwide with industrial revolution is one of the main points that the *Kadro* authors underlined, as would dependency theory three decades

later. According to the *Kadro* authors, unequal distribution of modern technology changed the structure of production and international tradership, after which the economies of non-industrial countries began to be transferred to the metropolises of Europe. This process not only hindered the progress of non-industrialized countries, but also began the process of exploitation (Tökin 1932, pp. 19–32; Belge 1933, pp. 22–28).

Aydemir emphasized that for this unequal structure to be destroyed, ‘the relations of dependency’ between industrialized and non-industrialized countries should first be destroyed (Aydemir 2003, pp. 43). According to the *Kadro* authors, this unequal structure can be made to disappear by establishing modern techniques in countries that succeed in their national independence wars (rather than by class struggle within the capitalist system), and the main contradictions that emerge at the international level can thus be resolved.⁵ The suggestion of the *Kadro* authors for establishing modern techniques in these countries is clear: instead of the chaotic production structure based on the private enterprise system of capitalism, a planned development model in which the government is the engine should be adopted as a development strategy that won’t cause any class differentiations or class struggle. More clearly, they suggested a development strategy that wasn’t capitalist. But it should be mentioned that it was not socialism either. Among the *Kadro* authors, İsmail Hüsrev Tökin,⁶ who evinced the most advanced analyses of class structure in Turkey, clearly mentions that a socialist development model can’t be applied to Turkey because it didn’t have a developed working class like those in the West (Tökin 1934a, pp. 34–37; Tökin 1934b, pp. 20–26). Another *Kadro* author, Vedat Nedim Tör,⁷ took things one

⁵ They also mention that the 1929 economical crisis created a good opportunity for non-industrialized countries like Turkey: it prompted industrialized countries to undersell their companies, the purchase of which could help Turkey to make a move to become industrialized. According to Mustafa Türkeş, the *Kadro* authors expressed these theses thirty years in advance of dependency theory (Türkeş 2001b, pp. 464–476).

⁶ İsmail Hüsrev Tökin (1902–1994), who was a child of a middle class family, had graduated from an Austrian high school in Istanbul. In 1922, he decided to study in Moscow with a scholarship granted by the Embassy of the Soviet Union in Turkey, and enrolled in the Communist University of the Toilers of the East. There he met with Marxist concepts like historical materialism, capital and surplus value, and with the works of Marx, Lenin and Buharin. After graduating, he stayed in Moscow until 1926 and continued his education in economics (Tökin 1990; Türkeş 2001a).

⁷ Vedat Nedim Tör (1897–1985) graduated from Galatasaray High School in 1916 and went to Germany to study economics. In 1922, he wrote a PhD dissertation titled *Turkey, Being Subjected to Imperialism*. Tör mentions in his memoirs that he met with the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Kautsky and Sombart during his time in Berlin.

step further, claiming that Turkey would build a classless society by overcoming the capitalist and socialist experiences (without living these experiences), and stating that history refutes Marx (Tör 1933, p. 24). If we remember that dependency theory saw socialism as its development model, it should be noted that this is the most essential theoretical point on which the *Kadro* authors and the 'dependency school' differ.

With respect to this endeavor, the *Kadro* authors, who were ultimately trying to create the ideology of the Turkish revolution that took place after the national war of independence, built an extensive and complicated theory around how Turkey would develop away from being an underdeveloped country dependent on imperialism, and how the economic development would be established. The *Kadro* movement can be seen as an endeavor to understand the world system and Turkey's place in it; for them, dependency on imperialism as a critical factor in the matter of development constituted the central problem of an extensive and systematic theory for the first time in Turkey. In this context, it can be claimed that the *Kadro* authors alleged in the 1930s rather similar theses to those of the dependency school (which appeared in 1960s), with regard to subjects like the progress of capitalism, colonialism, underdevelopment, unequal distribution of modern technology, metropolis-exploited contradiction and dependency on imperialism.⁸ In the 1930s, the *Kadro* authors contributed new topics of discussion to development literature, especially in Turkey. Their ideological approach became a source for understanding socialism in various underdeveloped countries in that particular era. In the 1960s, this ideology found its counterpart in Turkey in the *Yön hareketi* ['*Yön* movement'], lead by Doğan Avcıoğlu. In the following chapter, the effects of dependency theory in Turkey between 1960 and 1980 will be discussed, placing the *Yön* movement at the center of this discussion.

An endeavor of macro theory to overcome underdevelopment: The *Yön* movement

In the 1960s, even though almost half a century had passed since the foundation of modern Turkey, its development still didn't measure up. Underdevelopment and the problem of how to develop were still the most important discussion top-

⁸ The main reason for these theoretical similarities can be shown to be that both the *Kadro* authors and those of the dependency school read and were influenced by the same intellectual sources, such as Marx, Engels, Lenin, Buharin and Luxemburg.

ics occupying both social scientists and those who govern. This topic's centrality was of course related to more than just the condition of Turkey's development not measuring up. In the 1960s, the global rising of the left wing found its counterpart in Turkey, and the political and financial dependency on West—especially on the USA—began to be questioned radically.⁹ This questioning also touched on the huge social transformation occurring in Turkey during these years. Since the 1950s, industrialization and urbanization in Turkey had been rapidly growing, and in parallel to this, contradictions between social classes (which are peculiar to modern capitalism) were sharpening, and unfairness in distribution of income was increasing. All these developments had turned Turkey into an unusual arena for social and political struggle. In these conditions, especially subjects like development, apportionment and economic order, underdevelopment, imperialism and dependency set the agenda in the social sciences.

In the 1960's, dependency theory presented a convenient frame for Turkish intellectuals who were trying to explain in details these matters that set Turkey's intellectual agenda. These effects can be clearly seen acting on the authors of the *Yön Dergisi* [*Yön Journal*],¹⁰ also known as the 'Yön movement' in Turkish social science circles. In his *magnum opus* titled *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*¹¹ [*Order of Turkey*], Doğan Avcıoğlu,¹² who was one of the founders of the movement, makes connec-

9 In the 1960s, one of the most important features of the Turkish economy was its dependency on foreign capital. But it must be said that this dependency met the needs of the consumer goods industry (Bulutoğlu 1970, p. 162).

10 The *Yön Journal*, published weekly between 20 December 1961 and 30 June 1967, is seen as one of the most important intellectual movements. The *Yön Journal*, published articles about Turkey's economical, social and political progress, covering two hundred years of progress from the seventeenth century to mid-1967. Among its authors wide-ranging interests, it can be said that topics like the historical reasons of underdevelopment, development strategies, third world countries, dependency on imperialism and socialism in Turkey stand out. For further information on *Yön Journal*, see: Özdemir 1986.

11 *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* [*The Order of Turkey*] incited reactions to its handling of economical, social and political subject matters. Published in 1968, it was a popular work that corresponds to the search for a common left wing thought among young generations until the end of the 1970s. The work, which reached its 13th printing within 10 years, argumentatively examines the historical roots of Turkey's underdevelopment and its dependency on imperialism, and offers a rapid, non-capitalist, nationalist-revolutionist development model by which Turkey might overcome this dependency.

12 Doğan Avcıoğlu (1926–1983), after studying political sciences and economics in France, returned to Turkey in 1955 and worked as a research assistant in the Public Administration Institute for Turkey and Middle East, which was founded based on a technical assistance agreement between Turkey and the United Nations. He wrote for dissident media organs when the Democratic Party was in power, and participated in the group commissioned to prepare the 1961 con-

tions between underdevelopment and dependency on imperialism, referring to the works of Furtado and Baran, and presents analyses that correspond to the theses of dependency theory. In this context, Avcıoğlu, who defines Turkey as a country under the oppression of imperialism, links the growing difference (in progress) between Turkey and the West to a couple of external historical events. The West, with its geographical explorations connected to colonialist pillage, expedited its accumulation of capital, and with the driving force of the class that made this accumulation possible, the pre-capitalist order was dissolved and merchant capitalism (developed within that order) gave way to industrial capitalism. Avcıoğlu stated that the balance of power between East and West went in the West's favor, and mentions that Turkey was affected by this process: roles had changed in the world system, Turkey had lost its limited supervision over international tradership and the structure of commerce within Europe had shifted (Avcıoğlu 1969, pp. 105–106). He highlights the trading deal signed in England in 1838 as turning Turkey into Europe's open market and raw material store, and thus preventing development, which is only possible if the economy moves along its own path (Avcıoğlu 1968, pp. 50–53). According to Avcıoğlu, if Turkey—as one of the most developed countries in its heyday—hadn't come under the oppression of imperialism, it possessed the features that could have enabled it to initiate industrial capitalism before Western societies did (cf. Baran 1957, pp. 139–141). But Turkish society stumbled, restrained by the West, and never had the chance to develop set against a Western capitalism entering the imperial stage; and so Turkey created a semi-colonized order dependent on European imperialism. Thus, Avcıoğlu clearly states that Turkey is not an underdeveloped country but *a country whose development was hindered by imperialism* (Avcıoğlu 1968, p. 106).

In the 1960s, the relation between dependency on imperialism and development propounded by intellectuals in *Yön Journal* overlapped with the theses put forward by dependency theory. In his efforts to enhance the perspective on dependency and underdevelopment, Avcıoğlu especially used Baran's *The Political Economy of Growth*. Baran's identification of economic surplus as one of the most important elements determining underdevelopment also has critical importance in Avcıoğlu's work. Avcıoğlu states that even though the crofter, the sharecropper and the agricultural worker were the main creators of national revenue, they were entitled to consume a very small portion of what they produce. The

stitution. He was the lead author of *Yön Journal* and one of the most influential intellectual personalities of the era. He passionately defended the idea of a socially and financially independent Turkey and the principle of anti-imperialism—not just in his writings for *Yön Journal*, but throughout his life (Macar 2001, pp. 162–169).

bigger portion of the economic surplus went to the proprietors, usurers and middlemen. On this point, Avcıoğlu especially pointed towards the Rûm and Armenian minority groups who exported Anatolian farmers' products. Just like proprietors and usurers, those Rûms and Armenians (Avcıoğlu defines them as compradors) also used the economic surplus they gained by their mediation for luxury consumption rather than for investment. According to Avcıoğlu, these groups wasted the main sources of economy, thus obstructing the development, and were the weak collaborators in the coalition of conservative powers in cooperation with imperialism. The strong collaborator of this coalition was the industrial bourgeoisie. The industrial class rising in Turkey, as distinct from the one in Western societies, didn't have the ability to play a progressive role in development. On the contrary, it was in alliance with the abovementioned undeveloped class of the pre-capitalist order, which refused the change of order. Hence a coalition of conservative dominant classes consisting of industrialists, usurers, squires and comprador minority groups was detected as the prevailing power of the Turkish economy (Avcıoğlu 1968, pp. 402–412).

Avcıoğlu's analyses of imperialism's class structure is rounded out by a definition of the international aspects of dependency relations. Developed capitalist countries (the USA foremost among them) and their companies were the strong allies of this coalition that defended the status quo. For this coalition, the USA, as well as being a source of enrichment through foreign capital and partnership, was a safety fuse against revolutionist tendencies. Such alliances aimed at protecting the status quo were constructed within all the undeveloped countries within the USA's orbit. Avcıoğlu, referring to the works of Furtado, mentions Mexico as one of the most brilliant examples of the American model of development, and emphasizes that even though there were foreign investments and millions of dollars of capital transferred to this country, development was still not achieved and Mexico remained an underdeveloped country (Avcıoğlu 1968, pp. 466–473). Hence Avcıoğlu states that because of such dependency relations, which appear both on the international and the domestic level, enterprises of capitalist development weren't and never will be successful—in Turkey or in any other country.

Avcıoğlu's views, summarized above, can actually be seen as a frame of an analysis that emphasizes the historical perspective. He explains Turkey's underdevelopment in terms of dependency on imperialism, while emphasizing the relations between domestic and foreign structures. Avcıoğlu clarifies the nationalist-revolutionist model of development that he believes should be adopted for development to be achieved. According to this model, the capitalist development model should first be abandoned and new colonialist dependency relations (in which capitalist countries are dominant) should be terminated such that their

bases within the country would fail. Thus, the sources that are wasted in the hands of the coalition of conservative powers that is dominant in tradership and industry should rapidly be nationalized. While agriculture should lean on huge cooperative farms, non-agricultural land should be subjected to public economic organizations (Avcıoğlu 1968, pp. 477–492). The details of his explanation also clearly reveal Avcıoğlu's understanding of development: by development, what is meant is *industrialization*. According to this nationalist-revolutionist development model, to be applied by a leading revolutionist party, a big portion of the financial sources should be used for establishing heavy industries. Turkey would thus develop, overcoming its dependency on imperialist countries by achieving economic independence within 15–20 years, and would reach the level of contemporary civilizations that Atatürk—the founder of the Republic—had determined as the main goal (Avcıoğlu 1968, p. 508).

The relation between underdevelopment and dependency also has central importance for other authors of *Yön Journal*. According to Erol Ulubelen, imperialism makes countries that have yet to complete their industrialization fall into its clutches by means of tradership and financial aid, and exploits them in both material and nonmaterial ways. This exploitation is not just limited to the transfer of economic surplus from underdeveloped peripheries to advanced capitalist countries; it also includes the transfer of a qualified work force, specialized in areas like medicine and engineering. The mission of the comprador class in the aforementioned dependency relations in underdeveloped countries is also an important and decisive element in Ulubelen's analysis (Ulubelen 1966, p. 12).

İdris Küçükömer explains the reasons for underdevelopment in terms of international tradership. After World War I, prices of industrial products rose to the detriment of raw material's prices, and the limits of foreign trading went in favor of developed countries. Thus, world foreign trade turned into a mechanism for robbing the undeveloped countries that were trying to become industrialized by exporting raw material. Under these circumstances, the way of development that was offered to undeveloped countries was, according to Küçükömer, both utopic and to their detriment. He emphasizes that firstly, the dependency relations present in foreign trading should be annihilated. After that, he states that an endeavor of industrialization with its trust placed in the domestic market is necessary for Turkey to develop (Küçükömer 1964, p. 10).

Fellow *Yön* author Fethi Naci, who drew attention for his aggressive discourse, states that imperialism—which he defines as a special, historical phase of capitalism and as a monopolist capitalism—turned Turkey into a semi-colonized country (Naci 1965b, p. 16). According to Naci, this process had started with the trading deal signed in 1838 in England, which opened the

wide Ottoman market to Western European capitalism. The Ottoman Empire was weakened politically and economically, leading to its collapse after World War I, after which Western imperialist countries virtually occupied Anatolia. Even though the Turkish national war of independence that began with this occupation had an anti-imperialist character, Turkey became a country dependent on imperialist powers once again after World War II (Naci 1965c, pp. 8–9). Imperialism was exploiting Turkey's sources and by transferring economic surplus, it was blocking the accumulation of capital. Also, by putting up the prices for the goods sold to Turkey, and cutting down the prices of agricultural products bought from Turkey, it was robbing Turkey and forcing it to trade only with capitalist countries (Naci 1965a, p. 5).

According to Naci, after World War II economical foreign aid from capitalist countries to underdeveloped ones were a new form of imperialism. Naci, who states that it seemed impossible for Turkey to overcome its dependency on imperialist powers with the existing foreign politics and method of economy at the time of his writing (Naci 1964a, p. 10), concludes that the only available way to achieve true independence is through a development that isn't capitalist, and that trusts in its own resources rather than in foreign investments and aids. He explains that the first precautions to be taken are the nationalization of foreign monopolies, developing the public sector, planned economy, and industrial and agricultural reforms (Naci 1965d, pp. 8–9). However, Naci doesn't forget to mention that he doesn't mean *socialism* by a development that is 'not capitalist'—because socialism is only possible through achieving true independence in underdeveloped countries, by democracy becoming functional in society, and by the rapid spreading of advanced methods of production that are not inherently capitalist. Thus, the development model that Naci suggests seeks to both overcome dependency and to clear the way leading to socialism (Naci 1964b, p. 6).

Niyazi Berkes emphasizes that examining the process of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire should reveal the reasons for Turkey's underdevelopment, moving the search's frame back to the seventeenth century (Berkes 1965, p. 12). He connects the underdevelopment of Turkey with the rise of modern capitalism in the West. In this context, Ottoman history is defined as a process of decline and dissolution under the effects of Western development. Like his *Yön* colleagues, Berkes considers the 1838 Trade Agreement as a breaking point. The agreement led to the dissolution of many Turkish industrial branches, foremost among them the cotton industry, and hence to Turkey's dependence on imperialist nations (Berkes 1970, pp. 370–372). According to Berkes, the underdevelopment of Turkey can't be explained away as an idiosyncrasy of Eastern society, as alleged by modernization theories, but must instead be understood as intercon-

nected with dependency (Berkes 1966, pp. 12–13). Therefore, he defines imperialism as one of the fundamental determinants that restrained social and economic progress in Turkey, rendering those endeavors inefficient or detrimental (Berkes 1963b, pp. 7–8). Consequently, he states that Turkey must eliminate reactionist factors in the country that collaborate with imperialist powers, and must abolish its dependency on those powers in international relations, in order to actualize social and economic progress (Berkes 1963c, pp. 8–9).

Conclusion

As stated above, the subject of development has been of fundamental concern to Turkish intellectuals since the constitution of Turkey. Associating Turkey's underdevelopment with imperialism was not an unfamiliar perspective, as evidence by *Kadro Journal's* authors. However, in the 1950s, development discussions in Turkey came under the influence of modernization theory, the framework of which was established by W. W. Rostow. This paradigmatic effect can be observed clearly in the social sciences, especially in discussions of agriculture and urban planning. The left-wing intellectuals gathered in *Yön Journal* criticized this linear/unilateral perspective for its emphasis on the effects and importance of inner dynamics for development, in contrast to dependency theory. They reinitialized discussion of underdevelopment and imperialism with their synthesis of various approaches into the form of dependency theory. Avcıoğlu—the most important theoretician of the *Yön* movement—reproduced the arguments from both neo-Marxist and structuralist factions pursuant to Turkey's underdevelopment. The other *Yön* authors mentioned above were also diligent agents of a similar endeavor of synthesis. Therefore it can be stated that the essential references of their domain of thought come from Western paradigms, even though they claim their analyses to be peculiar to Turkey.

The modalities regarding this phenomenon of rejecting underdevelopment as a state of nature (explained by modernization theoreticians as simply a 'delay') have held an important place in treatises on left-wing development in 1960s Turkey. Nevertheless, it is an exacting task to find in this body of work any radical investigation of development itself; analysis of the causes, factors and historical backgrounds of underdevelopment or progression take center stage. There is notable attitude of agreement among the writers of the *Kadro* and especially of *Yön* journal on the subject of development and on the explanation this phenomenon (industrialization); where they differ is on the proposed methods to achieve the determined objectives. From this point on, development gains a contested character and thus any interrogation of the subject becomes

impossible. This situation, which can be called an epistemological imprudence, resulted in the unquestioned acceptance of the hypotheses related to the subject of development. *Yön Journal* authors in particular clearly express that their means of development is through industrialization itself.

As detailed above, underdeveloped or oppressed Turkey was considered to be able to reach the level of contemporary Western civilizations aimed at by Atatürk only based on its degree of independence from imperialism through industrialization. At this point, the paradoxical structure of all these debates referring to dependency theory becomes more evident. The theories that are put forward are so contradictory: on the one hand, the ‘delay’ argument of modernization theory is being criticized; while on the other hand, the competition metaphor, the traditional-modern duality and a typology of societies sorted according to their development levels within a linear course of history are preserved intact.

Then in all these analyses, just as in dependency theory, what is considered undeveloped is still being defined according to the West. The main cornerstone of these acts of definition is the perception of the phases of development and social formation undergone by the West. In other words, in these analyses, a Eurocentric approach dominates. It seems to have escaped these authors’ notice that even characterizing one country as developed and another as underdeveloped means positioning them within the very same paradigm as the modernization theory that they criticized, and accepting the same presuppositions of linearity/unidirectionality. Hence it can be said that both *Kadro* and *Yön* authors, while they were producing ideas about Turkey’s economic and political *dependency*, despite their claim of authenticity, were *dependent* on Western concepts and paradigms, and so they reproduced the West’s economic and political domination at an epistemological level. Moreover, it is true that this epistemological dominance is also one of the main problems of the Turkish intellectual world today. So, it should not be forgotten that dependency is not just an economic and political problem, but really begins when we need others’ concepts and categories of analysis to comprehend and to produce solutions for our own society and social problems.

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